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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AEB	Afrikaner Eenheidsbeweging (Afrikaner Unity Movement)
ANC	African National Congress
APK	Afrikaanse Protestantse Kerk (Afrikaans Protestant Church)
AVF	Afrikaner Volksfront (Afrikaner People's Front)
Avstig	Afrikaner-Vryheidstigting (Afrikaner Freedom Foundation)
AVU	Afrikaner Volksunie (Afrikaner People's Union)
AWB	Afrikaner-Weerstandsbeweging (Afrikaner Resistance Movement)
BBB	Blanke Bevrydingsbeweging (White Liberation Movement)
BDF	Bophuthatswana Defence Force
BKA	Boere-Krisisaksie (Farmers' Crisis Action)
BSP	Boerestaats Party (Boer State Party)
BVA	Boere Vryheids Aksie (Boer Action for Freedom)
CNF	Christelike Nasionale Forum (Christian National Forum)
Cosag	Concerned South Africa Group
COSATU	Congress of South African Trade Unions
CP	Conservative Party
HNP	Herstigte Nasionale Party (Reconstituted National Party)
IRA	Irish Republican Army
MP	Member of Parliament
NA	Nasionale Aksie (National Action)
NGK	Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk (Dutch Reformed Church)
NIA	National Intelligence Agency
NP	National Party
NNP	New National Party
OAU	Organisation of African Unity
OB	Ossewa Brandwag (Ox-wagon Sentry)
OFS	Orange Free State
PAC	Pan Africanist Congress
SABRA	South African Bureau of Racial Affairs
SACP	South African Communist Party
SADF	South African Defence Force
SANDF	South African National Defence Force
SAP	South African Police
SAPS	South African Police Service
TRC	Truth and Reconciliation Commission

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Just after midnight on 30 October 2002 eight bomb blasts rocked Soweto, South Africa's largest black township. Seven of the blasts destroyed commuter railway lines running through the township, inconveniencing more than 200,000 commuters. The eighth blast occurred at a mosque forcing parts of the building to collapse. A hitherto unknown organisation, Die Boeremag (Boer force/power), claimed responsibility for the bombings.

During 2002 almost two dozen alleged Boeremag members—including serving military officers—were arrested and charged with terrorism-related offences, sabotage and high treason. After uncovering a Boeremag weapons cache, the national commissioner of police, Jackie Selebi, revealed that there were about 100 key Boeremag members in the country, many of whom have access to defence force weapons. Selebi pointed out that most of the suspects were young—all between the ages of 17 and 40 years—and that many of the suspects were qualified professional people and prosperous farmers.

South Africa's industry, wealth and human capital are concentrated in a few metropolitan areas. A number of powerful bombs, strategically placed, could cause considerable harm to South Africa's fragile economy. Alternatively, the assassination of a handful of cabinet ministers and popular black political or religious leaders could take the country to the brink of a race war.

To evaluate the threat the contemporary white right poses to South Africa's internal security, it is vital to understand the historical context in which the white right—and more particularly the Afrikaner right—came about. The emergence of the contemporary white right must be understood against the background of the rise of Afrikaner nationalism in the twentieth century. Throughout their history Afrikaner nationalists believed that the only way to protect the status and identity of the Afrikaner, and to prevent the group from being dominated by other ethnic groups or races, was to exercise power through self-determination in an ethnically homogenous territory.

Important weaknesses of the white right are its internal divisions on issues of policy and strategy, and personality-driven differences. Notwithstanding such divisions, however, Afrikaner nationalists argue that they share three common ethnic attributes: the Afrikaans language, Calvinist religion and Afrikaner history with its claim to an own territory or *volkstaat* (people's state). While race is not specifically mentioned as an attribute, it is implied in the Afrikaner right's understanding of ethnicity.

In the late 1980s the white right had significant support among Afrikaners. In the 1989 election the white right enjoyed the support of the majority of Afrikaners in the then Transvaal and Orange Free State provinces. In 1992 close to a million white South Africans voted against sharing political power with black people at central government level. In the run up to the country's first democratic election based on universal adult suffrage in 1994, the white right arguably had the capacity to push the country into a civil war and unilaterally establish an exclusive white, Afrikaner *volkstaat* in a part of South Africa.

In the post-1994 era most right wing whites, disillusioned by the political impotence of right wing organisations and leaders, have withdrawn from political activity. Some try to withdraw from the realities of the new South Africa by moving into gated communities. Others—especially the younger generation—are emigrating.

Yet a few isolated, but significant, violent incidents after 1994 reveal that there is some activity on the fringes of the white right. The most significant of these have been the actions of the Boeremag. The unexpected appearance of the Boeremag showed that there are groups of hardcore right wingers who are tenaciously devoted to creating an Afrikaner state.

The story of the Boeremag makes a fascinating case study of how the extreme right mixes religion and politics. The Boeremag's sabotage campaign was driven by a philosophy based on extreme nationalist views and a sense of God-given purpose: a lethal cocktail, given the damage religiously-inspired terrorism has caused in other parts of the world. The Boeremag makes a good case study for another reason. Initially underestimated by the police and the intelligence community, the danger posed by the organisation grew to become South Africa's primary security threat in late 2002.

The police successfully identified and arrested key Boeremag suspects, bringing to a halt the bombing campaign before it resulted in any major loss of life.

The police's success was largely based on good intelligence work. With the arrests the police seriously disrupted the plans of the Boeremag. However, if the Boeremag is organised in a cell-like structure (which seems likely), it is probable that some individual cells have gone unnoticed by the police.

The number of extreme right wingers who are prepared to use violence to achieve their aims is likely to be small and unlikely to ever engender the active participation of most Afrikaners. It is a sobering fact, however, that for a sabotage campaign to be successful and create long term instability this is not necessary. At the height of its activities the IRA (Irish Republican Army) did not have more than a few hundred active members. The secret of the IRA's success was that it had a large number of sympathisers who provided the organisation with logistical support. In South Africa a small group of right wing saboteurs will be difficult to apprehend if they enjoy widespread sympathies among the general Afrikaner community.

A confiscated Boeremag document reveals how the organisation seeks to give a populist spin to its activities. The document cites post-1994 levels of crime, unjust affirmative action policies and the sidelining of Afrikaans as reasons why an independent Afrikaner state is justified. Given the real high levels of violent crime, rising white unemployment, and the state-sponsored campaign against farmers in neighbouring Zimbabwe, such arguments may be capable of eliciting widespread sympathy among conservatively minded Afrikaners.

The extreme white right cannot attract sufficient popular support, and develop the organisational capacity, to execute a coup d'état. However, under certain circumstances, and a right wing organisation capable of exploiting popular Afrikaner grievances, it is possible that a right wing sabotage campaign could be condoned—and even tacitly supported—by a significant number of Afrikaners.

To crack an isolated terror cell is possible. To defeat a band of terrorists who are abetted in their actions by a growing group of sympathisers spread across large parts of the country is almost impossible. The former can be done through good police and intelligence work alone. The latter requires a political solution.

To ensure their long-term success, terrorists need the support of parts of the community in which they live. Terrorists—besides the exceptional loner who works on his own—are members of bigger groups and gangs that provide them with logistical support and finances to further their cause. Terrorists who

live and hide among people who do not co-operate with law enforcement agencies can be a state's biggest nightmare. Such a scenario must be avoided at all costs in South Africa.

Map 1: South Africa with provincial boundaries



CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

It is difficult to define ‘the right’. Often the right is defined simply by contrast to the left.¹ For a definition of the right to be meaningful, consistent and precise, the right and its protagonists need to be defined in relation to a specific historical and political context.

For example, in some Western societies today the view that distinctions of gender are morally or politically significant, in such a way as to justify assigning different rights and standards of behaviour to the two sexes, is considered right wing and conservative. A century ago such an argument would have been considered progressive in many parts of Europe where the popular view was that women were in some respect inferior to men, in such a way as to justify assigning inferior rights to women. (In Britain women got the right to vote in 1918—provided they were married and over 30!) Similarly such a view would be progressive, even revolutionary, in countries such as Saudi Arabia and Iran today. (In Saudi Arabia women are not legally permitted to drive!)

Historically right wing radicalism is a product of the association between ethnic identity and territorial sovereignty, which became widely accepted in nineteenth century Europe. During the two decades following the First World War, nationalism achieved its most radical expression in the totalitarian dictatorships in, among others, Italy, Spain, Germany and Poland. The doctrinal underpinnings of these systems varied, emphasising race, cultural and religious heritage.² Associated with them are attitudes of ethnocentrism and an exaggerated form of patriotism. Movements of this sort were active, and continue to be active, in most parts of the world.

Right wing radicalism has a number of characteristics centred around the concepts of nation, race and *volk* (a people).³ Firstly, according to right wing radicals, individuals are primarily creatures of a nation, race and *volk*. Secondly, true identity is found in the community of the nation. Thirdly, nationalism and ethnic bonds are stronger and more natural than class-based bonds, as the nation transcends class divisions. Finally, nationalism bestows legitimacy on

certain senses of democracy. Democracy, when devoted to the primacy of the nation, is superior to bourgeois representative democracy. Worst of all, for right wing radicals, is the mutual contamination of socialism and democracy. "In such a case the best aspects of socialism and democracy—their collective devotion to nation—are lost in the mists of internationalism and the false equality between peoples."⁴

For right wing radicals freedom coincides with the purposes of some wider entity like the nation or state. The stronger the nation, the greater the freedom of its citizens. Freedom is seen as a spiritual idea, contrasted with the materialism of liberal freedom. True freedom is therefore an inner condition of the individual, willing a higher national purpose.⁵

Because of its multi-faceted nature, it is difficult to find a satisfactory definition for the white right in South Africa. According to Van Rooyen the right wing in South Africa is:

[a] segment within the white, and in particular Afrikaner, society which adheres to a specific ideology founded on the dual pillars of the separation of the white and the black races and on Afrikaner nationalism.⁶

Nationalism is the guiding principle of the South African white right. The Afrikaner right considers racially determined nationalism to be an important, but not primary, mobilising force. Generally, and notwithstanding some notable exceptions, the Afrikaner right is as opposed to integrating with, and being dominated by, black people as it is opposed to integrating with other white ethnic groups that are not easily assimilated into the Afrikaner nation/culture such as, for example, British people, European Catholics or white Muslims.

For the Afrikaner right, nationalism entrenches the belief that Afrikaners form a distinct and separate nation which has a right to self-determination. Zille argues that this type of ethnic nationalism is particularly effective as a cohesive force: "Ethnic nationalisms which cleave homogeneous racial groupings are the primary force binding groups with a common historical experience, language, religion and culture."⁷

Ethnic nationalism is a potentially powerful mobilising force by extending the scope of an ethnic community from "purely cultural and social to economic and political spheres: from predominantly private to public sectors...

Nationalism endows ethnicity with a wholly new self-consciousness and legitimacy, as well as a fighting spirit and political direction."⁸

Writing in the early 1990s Van Rooyen distinguished between three categories of the South African white right.⁹ First, the moderate or pragmatic right which favours an autonomous, non-racial Afrikaner region within a united but federal South Africa. Secondly, the traditional right which wants to re-implement apartheid and, failing this, establishing a sovereign white homeland loosely linked to a South African confederation. Thirdly, the radical or extreme right which operates mostly outside the confines of institutional politics, openly propagates racism or white supremacy and has no misgivings about using violence.

Things have changed since 1990. The white right is fighting for ethnic survival. As a result, few on the right are striving for a white state or white supremacy—the essence of the fight today is about achieving an ethnic Afrikaner state or autonomous region.

The contemporary South African white right encompasses a broad range of individuals, organisations, beliefs and attitudes. While the term 'white right' may be too broad, it is used in this monograph to exclude the black right, and include the small group of racially motivated white supremacists. The bulk of the monograph focuses on the Afrikaner right, and in sections of the monograph 'white right' and 'Afrikaner right' are used interchangeably.

Adam and Moodley point out that the extreme white right is but a small component of the broad white right in South Africa. They quote liberal writer, Denis Beckett, to effectively make their point:

For every rightist who breaks up a black picnic, ten anguish over their role in Africa. For every barfly telling Kaffir-jokes, there's a pious householder praying for guidance. For every Terre'Blanche rattling sabres, there's a Boshoff seeking good neighbours through good fences. For every CP farmer who donders [assaults] his labourers, twenty deliver their babies.¹⁰

Perhaps unfairly, not much attention is given to the *relatively* moderate views of the broad white right in South Africa. However, to analyse the threat the white right poses to the country's national security it is necessary to focus on the extreme fringes of the right: its historical roots, philosophy and capacity to create insecurity. This is not to say that the monograph completely ignores the

more moderate right. To contextualise the extreme right it is necessary to sketch the most important developments within the broad white right movement in South Africa.

The aim of the monograph is to focus on the white right's threat to security and stability in South Africa. This came about as a result of extensive enquiries about the extreme white right in the aftermath of a number of bombings committed by a previously unknown right wing organisation in late 2002. The monograph should not be seen as a definitive analysis of Afrikaner nationalism and ethnicity.

For the sake of clarity the reader should note that in the monograph the term 'black' excludes the coloured and Indian communities in South Africa. 'Afrikaner' refers to Afrikaans speaking whites, while 'Boer' refers to Afrikaners in a certain political or historical context.

CHAPTER 2

EVOLUTION OF THE WHITE RIGHT

The emergence of the contemporary extreme white right must be understood against the background of the rise of Afrikaner nationalism, and the divisions that have plagued Afrikanerdom for over a century. Moreover, that throughout their history Afrikaner nationalists tended to believe that the only way to confirm and protect the status and identity of the Afrikaner, and to prevent the group from being dominated by other ethnic groups or races, was to exercise power through self-determination in an ethnically homogenous territory.

1899–1947: Ethnic mobilisation

The Anglo-Boer War (1899–1902) was an event of great consequence in Afrikaner right wing mythology. The courageous manner in which the outnumbered Republican Boers fought the war against the might of the British Empire, the suffering of non-combatants in British concentration camps (leading to the death of some 28,000 Boer women and children), the aggressive post-war Anglicisation policy, and the resultant poverty and loss of freedom, left an indelible mark on the national consciousness of the Afrikaner.¹¹ Moreover, the guerilla war which the Boers fought with considerable success against the British created popular heroes still revered by right wing Afrikaners today.¹²

Towards the end of the Anglo-Boer War deep divisions developed among the Boers between the *bittereinders* (literally die-hards; those who fought to the bitter end) and the *hensoppers* (those who surrendered prematurely), over whether or not to continue the war. This emotionally charged distinction is used by the right wing today to describe FW de Klerk's (and even retired General Constand Viljoen's) 'capitulation' to the ANC.¹³ A related theme derived from the war is that of treachery, used in this context to describe the behaviour of any member of the Afrikaner people who is deemed to have turned his back on his people.¹⁴

The Anglo-Boer War and the disastrous consequences of defeat left the Afrikaners in the conquered Boer Republics demoralised, who "seemed destined to be

absorbed by British culture, without ever having had a reasonable opportunity of establishing themselves as a distinct and coherent nation".¹⁵

In the face of this adversity Afrikaner nationalism blossomed. The notion of being second-class citizens boosted Afrikaner nationalism and led to ethnic mobilisation—a process which eventually led to the electoral victory of the National Party in 1948. Central to the mobilisation process was a secretive organisation restricted to professional protestant Afrikaner males, the Broederbond (Band of Brothers). The Broederbond played a crucial role in the "three-pronged strategy to promote and establish Afrikaner nationalism and to promote a separate Afrikaner identity by creating consciousness among Afrikaners based on their language, religion and traditions".¹⁶

In 1914 the National Party of General JBM Hertzog opposed South Africa's participation in the First World War. With South Africa's participation in the war a rebellion broke out. The rebellion, led by former Afrikaner military leaders who opposed South Africa's participation on the side of Britain, virtually resulted in an Afrikaner civil war. The suppression of the rebellion by government troops led to the death of a number of Boer heroes from the Anglo-Boer War and the execution in 1915 of an army officer, Jopie Fourie, who had joined the rebels without resigning his commission.

According to an article published in a right wing newspaper in 1990, "the rebellion imprinted a great truth into the consciousness of the Afrikaner, namely that the nation's honour is often saved by small groups of men and women who face the greatest odds against them".¹⁷ The rebellion also produced legends and martyrs (such as Jopie Fourie) which would inspire the Afrikaner right wing in the years to come.

In 1939 South Africa's prime minister, Jan Smuts, decided to enter the Second World War on the side of Britain. This resulted in many of the old anti-British and anti-imperialist feelings being rekindled among Afrikaner nationalists, who again refused to fight on the side of Britain. Initially the nationalists were themselves divided between the National Party on the one hand, and the paramilitary organisation, the Ossewa Brandwag or OB (lit. Ox-wagon Sentry), on the other.

The OB espoused a local version of National Socialism (with a strong Christian flavour) and attempted to disrupt South Africa's war effort through acts of intimidation, sabotage and assassination.¹⁸ During 1940 and 1941 a total of 25 bomb explosions occurred in the Witwatersrand (Gauteng) area alone, targeted mainly

at newspaper offices, cinemas, shops and railway lines.¹⁹ The OB enjoyed considerable support among Afrikaners, with almost half a million members at its peak.²⁰ When Germany's defeat appeared inevitable, the Ossewa Brandwag's popularity began to wane and many of its members placed their loyalty firmly behind the National Party.²¹

1948–1993: Growth and militarisation

With its electoral victory in 1948 the National Party under the leadership of DF Malan made it a priority to maintain Afrikaner unity. Malan focused on bringing closer together the party and other Afrikaner organisations such as the Broederbond, the Afrikaans press, and Afrikaner business and civil society organisations. To strengthen its support among Afrikaners the National Party introduced measures aimed at promoting Afrikaner interests, reaffirmed its commitment to creating a republic, and actively endeavoured to reduce the English speaking dominance in the economic and political sphere. It also implemented stringent new racial laws.²²

Already in the early 1960s—under the premiership of Hendrik Verwoerd—discontent was developing on the right fringe of the National Party. A group led by Robert van Tonder, who later founded the Boerestaat Party or BSP (Boer State Party), voiced its dissatisfaction with the government's white immigration policy.²³ The government's policy strongly encouraged European immigration to boost white numbers in the country. However, most of the immigrants came from the United Kingdom and not the Afrikaner's ancestral homelands of the Netherlands, Flanders and Germany. According to the Van Tonder group, British immigrants could not be assimilated into the Afrikaner culture and threatened to make a minority out of Afrikaners among whites in South Africa.²⁴

In 1969 four Members of Parliament (MPs) were expelled from the National Party because of their opposition to the government's decision to allow the New Zealand rugby team to include a Maori in its tour of South Africa. The rebels formed the Herstigste Nasionale Party or HNP (Reconstituted National Party) under the leadership of Albert Hertzog.²⁵ The founding of the HNP had been preceded by a bitter power struggle between the *verkrampptes* (conservative; right wing) and *verligtes* (moderates) of the Afrikaner community.²⁶

Months prior to his expulsion, Hertzog delivered a speech dealing with the influence of Calvinism on Afrikaners. Hertzog felt only Afrikaners with their

Calvinistic value-system could survive the “onslaught against whites in Africa, since liberalism formed an integral part of the English-speaking psyche”.²⁷ Like the aforementioned Van Tonder group, the HNP was opposed to the immigration of English speakers and Catholics.

The HNP’s support base has always been largely class-based, rooted in the Afrikaner working class and poor farmers.²⁸ The HNP’s economic policy contains socialist elements and favours the creation of jobs and businesses for Afrikaners with the help of the state. The HNP interprets world affairs, and domestic political developments, through the lens of a conspiratorial world view whereby a small international moneyed elite manipulates world affairs and strives to create a centralised one-world government (see text box).²⁹

Conspiracy theory

The extreme right tends to interpret important historical and political events in the context of a perceived worldwide conspiracy.³³ The primary aim of the conspirators is to create a totalitarian and secular One-World Government or ‘New World Order’. To achieve their aims the conspirators seek to destroy national and cultural differences and the sovereignty of nations. Institutions such as, for example, the United Nations, the European Union and the World Bank are believed to be tools of the conspirators.

The conspirators are most commonly said to be the world’s financial elite, usually international bankers and financiers. Through their wealth this financial elite is said to control most of the world’s media, politicians and other important opinion formers such as academics, the media and religious leaders. Other popular conspiratorial agents are, among others, Freemasonry, Zionism, New Ageism, the World Council of Churches and the Vatican.

According to conspiracy theory, international bankers have for centuries reaped vast fortunes by financing nations in the wars against each other. As one popular book on the conspiracy theory states: “History records that these nations were being plundered, pillaged and bled dry by war debts to the bankers. Only one group won in every war: the big bankers!”³⁴

A school of thought popular among the religious right is that the conspiracy began with the formation of the ‘Illuminati’, a secret organisation found-

ed in the 18th century. It is argued that the word Illuminati is derived from the word Lucifer, meaning bearer of the light.³⁵ This interpretation implies that the conspirators are not only after power and wealth but that their ultimate aim is to destroy Christian civilisation and create a one-world government ruled by the anti-Christ. Seen like this, politics is a struggle between good and evil with no room for compromise.

It is alleged that the Illuminati's plans for South Africa have always been to establish a surrogate black government which can be easily controlled and manipulated by the conspirators. To achieve this the conspirators had to destroy Afrikaner nationalism and apartheid. A booklet published by 'Think Right' in the late 1980s puts it as follows:

Before the New World Order can be imposed, racial identity and a sense of nationhood have to be eradicated and mankind standardised into a passive, hybrid society... This can be brought about only through the integration of blacks with whites... The election to power in South Africa of a segregationist government in 1948 caused great consternation among the one-worlders. Ethnic self-determination was anathema to their plan and could not be allowed to succeed.³⁶

The white right's opposition to the government's white immigration policy and the inclusion of a Maori in the New Zealand rugby team is a good example of the complex interplay in white right discourse around race and ethnicity. For the white right—or more correctly, the Afrikaner right—politics revolves around protecting the *volk*. White English speaking South Africans, while an irritation to the Afrikaner right, did not constitute a real threat to the survival of the Afrikaner *volk* provided they remained a minority among whites (i.e. those who had the vote), and Afrikaners were not assimilated into the English or Anglo-Saxon culture. However, with the immigration of a large number of British people and other whites who would not assimilate with the Afrikaner *volk*, Afrikaner political dominance, and by implication Afrikaner self-determination, was threatened.

In respect of black South Africans, the Afrikaner right could not afford to be as generous as it was to white English speakers, given the numerical dominance of the former. Moreover, much of the Afrikaner right's discourse at the time was based on the presumption of white superiority. In principle, how-

ever, the perceived threat black people or large numbers of British immigrants posed to the *volk* was very similar for right wing Afrikaners.

At the time of the New Zealand rugby tour, the Afrikaner right interpreted the inclusion of a Maori in the New Zealand team as the beginning of the end for Afrikaner self-determination.³⁰ The Afrikaner right's argument was that the inclusion of a Maori in the team would necessitate racial mixing in social events surrounding the rugby tour. If this was accepted it would, in principle, be difficult to oppose racial mixing in a social setting between black and white in South Africa generally. Mixing on a social level would make the segregation of places of entertainment untenable which, in turn, would undermine segregated public amenities, schools and residential areas. Invariably, the Afrikaner right argued, this would culminate in South Africa becoming a multi-racial society with a common voters' roll. At that point the Afrikaner *volk* would lose political control of the country, resulting in a loss of Afrikaner self-determination.

In principle, therefore, the Afrikaner right feared domination by white English speakers as much as by black people. In practice, however, many on the Afrikaner right expressed their views less in ethnocentric and more in racist terms. Moreover, significant sections of the Afrikaner right entered into tactical alliances with white right wing English speaking South Africans. This was especially the case in the 1980s when a white right victory at the polls seemed within reach, and the Afrikaner right needed to augment its electoral strength with as many white votes as it could get. As a result, the claims by many supporters of Afrikaner right wing organisations, and even those of some of their leaders, that their aspirations are based on ethnicity and not race often appear insincere and expedient.

The frequently confusing and even paradoxical discourse around race and ethnicity among the white right can be illustrated with an example from a militant Afrikaner right wing organisation, the Afrikaner-Weerstandsbeweging or AWB (Afrikaner Resistance Movement). Although the leader of the AWB, Eugene Terre'Blanche, denies that his organisation is racist, he is on record as saying: "We will govern ourselves with our own superior white genes."³¹ Yet, in the early 1990s the AWB formed a non-aggression pact with the Transvaal branch of the Inkatha Freedom Party—a Zulu based political movement.³²

Following the HNP's poor showing in the 1970 election, the AWB was founded in 1973, to act as an extra-parliamentary pressure group alongside the HNP.³⁷ The AWB emblem—three black sevens in a white circle surrounded by a red background—remains controversial given its similarity with the

swastika. The AWB argues that the three sevens represent the diametric opposite to the triple-six of the anti-Christ, while the red background symbolises the blood of Christ.³⁸

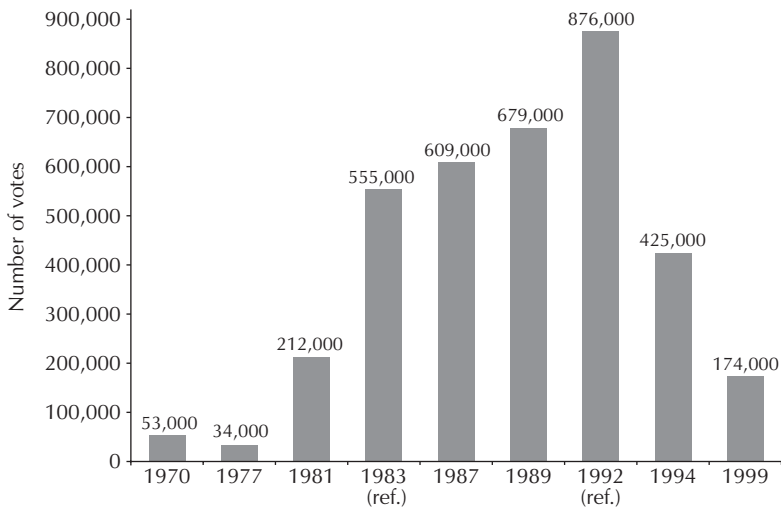
According to the AWB, its main purpose is “to assure the survival of the Afrikaner Boer nation free in his own country”, and “to establish a free, Christian, republican Afrikaner Boer Nation-state, seceded from the RSA [Republic of South Africa] on the grounds of the nation’s inalienable right to the Boer Republics”. The AWB’s philosophy is based on, *inter alia*, that “the Afrikaner Boer nation came into being through Divine Providence, and is called to live in service to Him”.³⁹

The AWB has not been averse to the use of violence to further its aims. In the early 1980s members of the AWB were convicted of terrorism for possessing explosives and arms, and conspiring to blow up the casino resort Sun City, a multi-racial hotel in Pretoria and the President’s Council in Cape Town. AWB leader, Eugene Terre’Blanche, was convicted of the illegal possession of arms and ammunition, and received a suspended sentence.⁴⁰ These incidents were a harbinger of more violent acts to come from the side of the AWB in the run up to the country’s 1994 election.

In 1982, 18 National Party MPs formed the Conservative Party (CP) under the leadership of Andries Treurnicht. The CP’s initial constitutional policy was one of partition, which largely implied a return to Verwoerdian apartheid. However, beginning in the early 1990s the CP’s policies, under pressure from moderates within the party and changing political circumstances, began moving closer to the concept of Afrikaner self-determination in a smaller white, Afrikaner homeland.⁴¹

In comparison to the HNP, the CP had a much wider appeal among middle class Afrikaners and public servants, including a small number of English speaking whites. The formation of the CP was a watershed in white—and especially Afrikaner—politics. After 1982 the white right became a significant electoral force, at times seriously obstructing the government’s reform programme which sought at first to reform, and then to dismantle, the country’s apartheid policy (Figure 1).

In the 1981 whites-only national election the right obtained 212,000 votes (about 16% of the vote). In 1983 a referendum was held among whites on the government’s proposal to enact a new constitution which provided for power-sharing with coloureds and Indians at central government level. Some

Figure 1: Number of votes received by the white right, 1970–1999

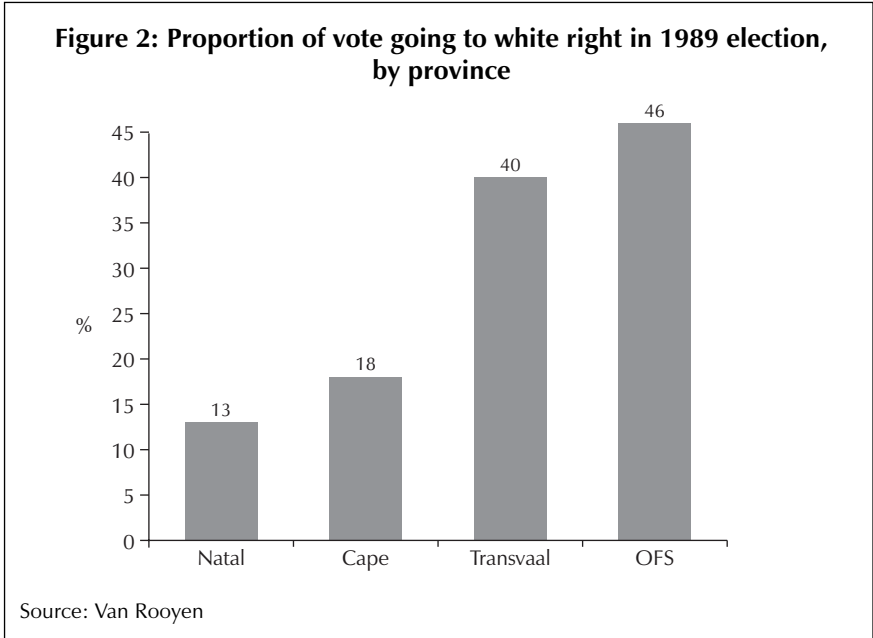
Sources: SA Institute of Race Relations, and Van Rooyen

692,000 people voted against the proposal, of which an estimated 555,000 (27% of the votes cast) were from the white right (the remainder being from the liberal Progressive Federal Party which also opposed the government proposal).⁴²

In the 1987 election—the first one in which the CP participated—the white right obtained 609,000 or 30% of the vote cast, and the CP became the official opposition in the whites only house of parliament, the House of Assembly.

Analysts of the election result concluded that support for the right wing lay predominantly in the rural areas of the two northern provinces: Transvaal and Orange Free State. In addition, a significant urban support base for the right was the Pretoria–Witwatersrand–Vereeniging region, where the Afrikaans speaking middle and lower sections of the white public service voted for the right.⁴³

In the 1989 general election the white right obtained 679,000 votes. While the white right obtained less than a third (31%) of the white votes cast, it did enjoy the support of about half of all Afrikaners, and arguably the majority support of



Afrikaners in the Transvaal and Orange Free State (OFS) provinces where the white right obtained, respectively, 40% and 46% of the votes cast (Figure 2).⁴⁴

The AWB also experienced substantial growth in its support during this time. In the late 1980s the organisation successfully disrupted National Party meetings throughout the rural Transvaal and Orange Free State. In 1988, at the height of its strength, the AWB was estimated at having between 5,000 and 9,000 signed-up members, 150,000 supporters and about 500,000 tacit sympathisers.⁴⁵

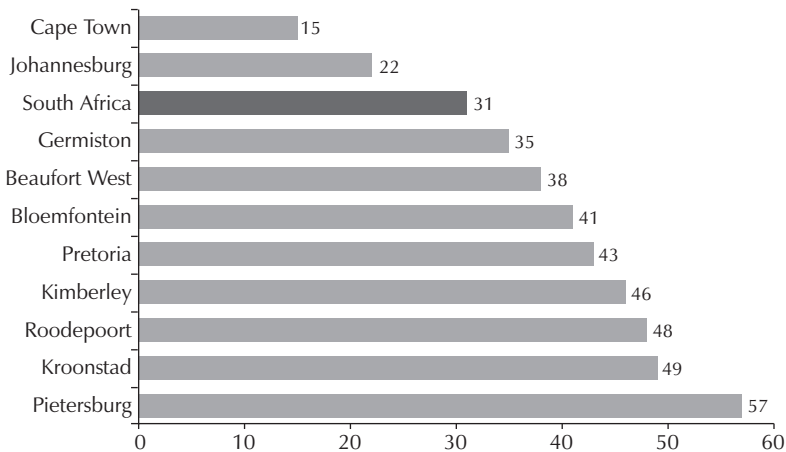
The office of the Minister of Law and Order issued a list in early 1992 of “right wing armies” which it said were a menace to state security. The list comprised the Afrikaner Monarchist Movement, Blanke Veiligheid (White Security), Blanke Weerstandsbeweging (White Resistance Movement), Boer Republican Army, Boere Kommando (Boer Commando), Foundation for Survival and Freedom, Ku Klux Klan, Orde Boerevolk (Order of the Boer People), Pretoria Boere Kommando (Pretoria Boer Commando), Volksleër (People’s Army), Wenkommando (Victory Commando—the paramilitary wing of the AWB) and White Wolves.⁴⁶

In 1992 a referendum was held among whites about whether they supported the reform process of the National Party government, which was leading to a power-sharing arrangement between the different race groups at central government level. The pro-reform, or 'Yes' campaign, received the full backing of the liberal opposition Democratic Party, the media, the international community, and the vast majority of commercial institutions and organised business in South Africa.⁴⁷ A publication by a Washington DC think tank, the Center for Strategic and International Studies, concluded that the governing party had 'all the advantages':

In the referendum campaign the National Party had all the advantages. Television and (in many parts of the country) radio are government controlled. The business community raised money, and most newspapers helped by giving discount rates to the "yes" advertisements... The Conservative Party, with no comparable funds and no access to discounts, was effectively locked out of the mass media, relying on posters to get its message across.⁴⁸

Nevertheless, some 876,000 white South Africans voted against the reform process (31%). Again there were strong regional differences, with around half

Figure 3: Proportion of 'no vote' in 1992 referendum, selected regions



Source: Van Rooyen

of votes cast in large parts of the Transvaal and Orange Free State voting 'No'. For example, in the Transvaal regions of Roodepoort, Kroonstad and Pietersburg (now Polokwane) 46% or more of the voters registered their opposition to the reform process (Figure 3).

After the white right's referendum defeat, the CP shifted its focus from winning control of the ballot box to a less ambitious goal, the attainment of Afrikaner self-determination in a sovereign Afrikaner, white homeland.

It was only after the referendum defeat, and the knowledge that another whites-only election was unlikely, that the mainstream white right began to seriously consider the idea of using force and violence on a large and organised scale to place pressure on the government to concede to their key demand of Afrikaner self-determination. Up to that point the main thrust of the right was to establish the CP as the torch-bearer of Afrikaner nationalism, and to "rely on this powerful force to sweep it into political office and thus give it the capacity, by constitutional means, to re-institute Verwoerdian separate development".⁴⁹

After the referendum the CP informally dropped its position that the whole of apartheid South Africa should be restored to white rule. The party began drawing up boundaries for a smaller Afrikaner, white state which would include the then Western Transvaal (North West province), including Pretoria, the Orange Free State, and the Northern Cape province.⁵⁰ The party was, however, split on whether such a partition plan should be negotiated with other parties through participation at the ongoing all-party talks taking place at the time. For many in the CP it was anathema to negotiate with the African National Congress (ANC), which most CP supporters regarded as a 'communist-inspired terrorist movement'.

In August 1992 the CP split over its reluctance to participate in the all-party talks and its insistence for a completely sovereign independent state. Five MPs broke away from the CP and formed the Afrikaner Volksunie or AVU (Afrikaner People's Union). The AVU sought to secure negotiated Afrikaner self-determination in a smaller, not necessarily sovereign, state in parts of the then Transvaal and Orange Free State.⁵¹

In late 1992 the CP founded the Concerned South African Group (Cosag) in conjunction with other smaller white right wing movements, and three conservative black 'homeland' leaders: Mangosuthu Buthelezi of KwaZulu, Lucas Mangope of Bophuthatswana and Oupa Gqozo of the Ciskei. As a multi-racial

right wing alliance, Cosag sought to counter bilateral negotiations between the ANC and the National Party, and promoted the idea of a South African confederacy along largely ethnic lines.⁵²

In May 1993 the CP came together with 20 other white right wing groups and formed the Afrikaner Volksfront or AVF (Afrikaner People's Front), with the goal of promoting right wing unity and the realisation of an Afrikaner *volkstaat* (people's state). In July 1993, the AVF joined Cosag, and the latter was renamed the Freedom Alliance.

The leader of the AVF was General Constand Viljoen, retired head of the South African Defence Force (SADF). With his impressive military record Viljoen commanded the "respect and loyalty not only of the more threatening of the paramilitary forces of the Right (including over fifty retired security force generals) but also of sections of the South African Defence Force".⁵³ The fact that in addition to Viljoen, the AVF was led by a number of former security force generals, gave new impetus to the scope and prospect of violent resistance by the white right.⁵⁴

The AVF rapidly mobilised widespread support among the white right. According to Viljoen, within six weeks of the AVF's founding the organisation had enrolled 150,000 members many of whom had "expressed their willingness to take up arms in support of the AVF".⁵⁵ Viljoen initially declined to get involved in organising the white right to resist, by violence if necessary, the impending end of white rule. By mid-1993 Viljoen's views had changed, however:

The Afrikaner people must prepare to defend themselves. A bloody conflict which will require sacrifices is inevitable, but we will gladly sacrifice because our cause is just.⁵⁶

The AVF focused its mobilisation efforts on obtaining the support of the SADF's Commando units (officially called the Territorial Reserve Force System). Viljoen called on his supporters in mid-1993 to join the Commandos. The Commandos are civilian units within the SADF, provided with military rifles (including assault rifles), ammunition and communication equipment.

Until 1994 the backbone of the Commando system was formed by rural Afrikaner men—the traditional support base of the right wing. Towards the end of 1993 the AVF estimated that it enjoyed the support of about 100,000

(out of 140,000) Commando members. The white right was also believed to enjoy widespread support in the South African Police (SAP), especially within the lower ranks.⁵⁷

The threat of armed collusion between the SADF's 70,000 strong full time force and the AVF was limited. The SADF was a disciplined force, with a long tradition of professional loyalty to the government of the day. Adam and Moodley concur that the risk of the security forces openly rebelling was slim, but that there was "the danger of a 'soft coup'—a threat by the security establishment not to take over Pretoria, but, on the contrary, to withdraw cooperation".⁵⁸

The AVF used the structures of the Boere-Krisisaksie or BKA (Farmers' Crisis Action) to enhance its mobilising capacity in the country's northern provinces. Describing the military capacity he had built for the right wing, Viljoen felt that "the real force was the farmers. They could have fielded about 15,000 people."⁵⁹ The BKA was formed by right wing farmers to provide aid and drought relief to needy farmers who opposed the government's land reforms. With the rise and radicalisation of the white right the BKA became increasingly militant. It organised an 'invasion' and blockade of downtown Pretoria in 1991.⁶⁰ In late 1993 its members raided a SADF arms depot in the northern Transvaal (Limpopo province) town of Pietersburg (Polokwane). They stole more than three tons of military equipment, including 100,000 rounds of ammunition, 400 hand-grenades and 200 mortars, apparently to arm underground structures of the BKA.⁶¹

During the latter half of 1993 the AVF focused on preparing its members for armed resistance in the event of an ANC takeover of the whole South Africa. In such an event the AVF planned, with the help of sympathetic SADF and police units, to proclaim and defend an independent Afrikaner state in parts of the Transvaal and Orange Free State. Members of the AVF—and more specifically the Boere Krisisaksie—engaged in acts of sabotage in various parts of the country to place pressure on the country's constitutional negotiators to comply with the white right's demands for territorial autonomy in parts of South Africa. By early 1994 South Africa appeared to be at the precipice of a civil war, and serious analysts argued the white right potentially had the power to break up South Africa:

With some military back-up, technical know-how and the alleged loyalty of the well-trained and equipped forces of the 100,000 members of the commandos which the AVF claimed to enjoy, a secessionist

right wing might be able to successfully create and defend a secessionist region in one or more right-wing strongholds and enclaves in the northern or eastern Transvaal [Limpopo and Mpumalanga provinces, respectively].⁶²

In the run up to the 1994 election a state of emergency was declared in the Western Transvaal (North West province). This was done to counter an elaborate AVF-sponsored plan to establish an independent Boer state in a large part of the then Transvaal. The plan focused around some 50 towns and included the stockpiling of armoured vehicles and ammunition. Most of these towns were controlled by right wing councils, and many had awarded the AWB and other right wing organisations the 'freedom of the town'.⁶³ It was the first time that a state of emergency had been declared in South Africa in response to white political activity.

In what was to be a turning point for the white right, the AVF unsuccessfully attempted to support the ailing black 'homeland' government of Bophuthatswana in March 1994. ANC supporters in Bophuthatswana protested the 'homeland' government's decision not to take part in the forthcoming election. In places the protests escalated into strike action by civil servants, rioting and widespread looting. Fearing that he would lose control over his 'country', the president of Bophuthatswana, Lucas Mangope, asked a fellow Freedom Front ally, Constand Viljoen, for assistance. In response Viljoen mobilised some 1,500 AVF members who assembled outside of the Bophuthatswana capital of Mmabatho, where they were issued with Bophuthatswana Defence Force (BDF) rifles. At the same time about 500 members of the AWB also entered Bophuthatswana at the apparent request of Mangope (this has been disputed, however, and it is possible that the AWB acted unilaterally).

Some of the AWB members went on the rampage, firing at BDF troops and civilians in Mmabatho.⁶⁴ (This version of events is disputed by the AWB.)⁶⁵ In response the BDF fired on an AWB vehicle. With its driver critically injured the vehicle came to a standstill. In front of rolling television cameras the wounded AWB occupants of the vehicle were executed at point-blank range by a black member of the BDF. Moreover, as a result of the AWB's actions, even Mangope loyalists turned against the 'white invaders' and large sections of the BDF threatened to mutiny. Mangope ordered Viljoen to withdraw his supporters from Bophuthatswana, a request with which Viljoen complied.

The events in Bophuthatswana were to be the white right's undoing. The perception the extreme right had cultivated, that it was invincible, was shattered

as South African television viewers witnessed the execution of two AWB members by a black man. This one event arguably dealt a decisive blow to the morale of the rank and file of the white right throughout the country. The fact that the AWB entered Bophuthatswana separately from the AVF members mobilised by Viljoen, and refused to fall under Viljoen's command, also revealed fundamental weaknesses and divisions in the white right's military preparedness for armed resistance.

For Viljoen and his followers the events in Bophuthatswana were a turning point. Viljoen felt that sections of the white right were too undisciplined, and the white right too divided, to shape it into a credible and effective fighting force. As a result Viljoen abandoned his plan of violent resistance to establish an Afrikaner state by force of arms. With only a few weeks to spare before the election, Viljoen and his supporters formed a new political party, the Freedom Front. The Freedom Front took part in the April election hoping to achieve Afrikaner self-determination through the democratic process. Years later Viljoen would explain his position as follows:

My opinion was that a coup would not have been successful because of the division of the people within the country... For a coup you need some sort of great dissatisfaction. You have to have some support. That was my problem in 1994. I really did have a very lightly armed but a very big organisation ready and I could have stirred things up in 1994—but for what purpose? I don't think any action from my side would have resulted in a major part of the Defence Force siding with me.⁶⁶

Viljoen argues that he had another option, 'Plan B', whereby selected individuals among the extreme right would engage in a protracted guerrilla war to place pressure on the government and ANC. According to Viljoen, Plan B was his preferred option (above the unilateral declaration of a *volkstaat* in a part of South Africa). Crucially, according to Viljoen this plan did not enjoy the support of the Conservative Party:

Military Plan B was the IRA [Irish Republican Army] tactic. That's the one I really had in mind. When the IRA was at its peak there were never more than about 300 trained terrorists in the organisation. But they could maintain a lot of pressure. I realised this and this was where I differed with the CP... The second option [Plan B] could have been exercised not only during but after the election. The idea was to apply pressure to get what we wanted. That is the purpose of war.⁶⁷

Many among the extreme white right dispute Viljoen's statement. They argue that as an ex-general Viljoen was not enthusiastic about a non-conventional guerrilla war, especially as he had no practical experience of urban guerrilla warfare. Some further insinuate that Viljoen never had the intention of risking a war but actively sought to prevent one, thereby effectively betraying the Afrikaner's faith in him and the AVF.⁶⁸

Viljoen's decision to take part in the election, and Buthelezi's Inkatha Freedom Party's last minute participation were the primary reasons why war and large scale civil unrest were averted. Viljoen's decision was not welcomed by the extreme right which interpreted it as a betrayal of their cause. At the time AWB leader, Terre'Blanche, called Viljoen a "political Judas goat", a "Brutus" and "a government agent sent to split and lead the Afrikaners to slaughter".⁶⁹

In the run up to the election AWB members set off a series of bomb blasts, targeted mainly at taxi ranks, bus stops and terminuses where black people usually congregated, and at polling stations, ANC and National Party offices, and the Johannesburg International Airport, killing about two-dozen people and injuring some 200. Some of the bombs used (in excess of 100kg explosives) were the largest that had ever exploded in South Africa's history.⁷⁰

In 1998 the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) published its main findings and conclusions.⁷¹ Regarding the white right the Commission found that during 1993 and 1994 the AVF, and structures operating under its broad umbrella, had been responsible for gross violations against the ANC alliance, the National Party and the Pan Africanist Congress (PAC). In seeking Afrikaner self-determination and the creation of a *volkstaat*, the AVF had incited violence and attempted to mobilise for an insurrection. The TRC further found that members of the AVF had colluded with elements in the security forces and/or the Inkatha Freedom Party in various ways, and established paramilitary groupings to threaten revolution and derail the democratic process.⁷²

In its reaction, the Freedom Front said the TRC report could not be taken seriously as "it had not been tested judicially and was based on sob stories". The ANC's strategy, it alleged, was to use the report to "transfer collective guilt to Afrikaners and then press for compensation, either in the form of Nuremberg tribunals or in the form of veiled discrimination such as affirmative action and excessive taxation".⁷³ As leader of the Freedom Front Viljoen did, however, admit to both the proposal to establish a *volkstaat* by force prior to the 1994 election and his own role within it. He said that the plan had been called off

because of the loss of life it would have entailed and the difficulty of sustaining a *volkstaat* in the face of opposition from a new ANC government.⁷⁴ The CP described the TRC as a “witch hunt against Afrikaners” and refused to make submissions to it.⁷⁵

Right wing violence

Most of the violence committed by the extreme right, which was organised and had a political purpose in mind, was perpetrated by members of the AWB, AVF and BKA. The violence was primarily in the form of bombings. Many other right wing groups threatened and planned acts of violence but in the end did not actually commit them. There were, however, some small radical right wing groups and individuals outside of the aforementioned three organisations which committed acts of violence to further their cause:

- In 1980 the *White Commando* claimed responsibility for acts of arson and bombings targeted at multi-racial drive-ins, the offices of two liberal academics and those of the SA Institute of Race Relations, and the home of a liberal Durban politician.⁷⁶
- In 1990 Piet ‘Skiet’ Rudolph, founder of *Orde Boerevolk*, bombed an Anglo-Boer War museum, and the offices of a black trade union, Beeld newspaper and those of the National Party. *Orde Boerevolk’s* biggest exploit was the theft of firearms, ammunition and equipment from the Air Force headquarters in Pretoria.
- The *Orde van die Dood* (Order of Death) planned the assassination of cabinet members in the early 1990s. Two arrested members admitted to killing a black taxi driver to prove their commitment to the cause.
- The *White Liberation Army* claimed responsibility for a taxi-rank blast in 1990 and further threatened to assassinate the Minister of Law and Order.
- The activities of the *World Apartheid Movement* were curtailed after the arrest of some of its members following a spate of bombings in the latter half of 1990. The organisation was suspected of having links with international right wing organisations such as the Ku Klux Klan.⁷⁷

- The *Blanke Bevrydingsbeweging*, BBB (White Liberation Movement) propagated the view that the whole of South Africa and Namibia belonged to whites, and embraced other extreme racist ideas. The organisation was banned in 1988 in reaction to the fatal shooting of eight black people in Pretoria by White Wolves leader Barend Strydom.⁷⁸

1994–2002: Defeat and division

One of the preconditions the Freedom Front had to participate in the April 1994 general election was the official signing of an accord with the National Party government and ANC. The accord provided for the formation of a statutory council, the *Volkstaatraad* (Volkstaat Council), tasked with investigating the possibility of creating a *volkstaat*. The Volkstaat Council had to report back to the Constitutional Assembly (the constitution-making body comprising both houses of parliament), and in general prepare the ground for Afrikaner self-determination.⁷⁹ The CP rejected the accord as useless and the AWB described it as a “pathetic little sham masquerading as an historic agreement”.⁸⁰

In retrospect Viljoen’s belief that he had persuaded the ANC to agree to some form of territorial autonomy for Afrikaners was naïve. According to Waldmeir, the ANC’s negotiating strategy was simply to keep Viljoen and his supporters talking:

That way, they [Viljoen and company] would be kept away from their war councils; and they would be exposed continually to a barrage of reasonable questions which might in the end make them doubt the viability of their own *volkstaat* demands... The ANC never had any intentions of giving Viljoen his homeland—but they managed to make him think they were seriously considering it. They hoped to keep him talking right through the elections and beyond, certain that the demand for a *volkstaat* would diminish once Afrikaners had seen that they would not be victimized in the new South Africa.⁸¹

Giliomee, Myburgh and Schlemmer argue that the ANC secured the co-operation of Viljoen and his followers through introducing two clauses in the constitution. Namely, article 185 which envisaged the establishment of a Commission for the Protection of the Rights of Cultural, Religious and

Linguistic Communities, and article 235 which underwrites the right of self-determination of any community sharing a common cultural and language heritage. Giliomee and his co-authors comment cynically:

The ANC was probably never serious about either of these two clauses. It set up a Volkstaat Council, comprised of Viljoen's followers, to investigate the feasibility of an Afrikaner ethnic state. However, once the ANC felt confident that the security forces were sufficiently transformed to rule out any danger of armed rebellion, it first squeezed the Council financially before disbanding it in 1999. The ANC had managed to emasculate the white separatists at the cost of a mere R15 million!⁸²

During the 1994 election campaign Viljoen suggested that at least a third to a half of Afrikaners would have to vote for the Freedom Front in order to prove that sufficient support for a *volkstaat* existed.⁸³ Throughout the Freedom Front's election campaign, the party emphasised that although it had agreed to participate within the system, it still regarded the interim constitution as fatally flawed, and was only participating to prove support for the *volkstaat*.

The final results gave the Freedom Front 425,000 votes nationally, or just over 2% of the votes cast, with many right wingers abstaining from voting. In fact, both the CP and HNP refused to participate in the election. The Freedom Front came in at fourth place after the ANC, National Party and Inkatha Freedom Party, and was allocated nine seats in the 400 seat National Assembly.

It is estimated that the Freedom Front received 14% of the white vote (less than half of the right wing vote in the 1992 referendum). If it is assumed that the vast majority of the Freedom Front's votes came from Afrikaners, then the party received 27% of Afrikaner votes nationally.⁸⁴ The Freedom Front fared considerably better at regional level, where it received some 640,000 votes in the nine provinces, becoming the third strongest party in six of these. It is estimated that the Freedom Front received just over 20% of the white regional vote, and 41% of the Afrikaner vote at the regional level.⁸⁵ Viljoen's pre-election declaration that a third to a half of Afrikaners had to vote for the Freedom Front to prove sufficient support for a *volkstaat*, was thus realised—especially at regional level.

In November 1995 local government elections were held in most parts of the country. In its election campaign the CP said that a vote for it would be an indication of voters' support for freedom of the Afrikaner in an independent state.⁸⁶ The Freedom Front said it would campaign for Afrikaner interests at

local level and use the local government results to bolster its case for an envisaged Afrikaner *volkstaat*.⁸⁷ Of the 7,381 contested local government seats (proportional representation and ward-based), the Freedom Front won 141 (1.9% of the total) and the CP 46 (0.6%).⁸⁸ This was a disappointing result for the white right, and revealed that there were few wards in the country where its supporters were in a majority.

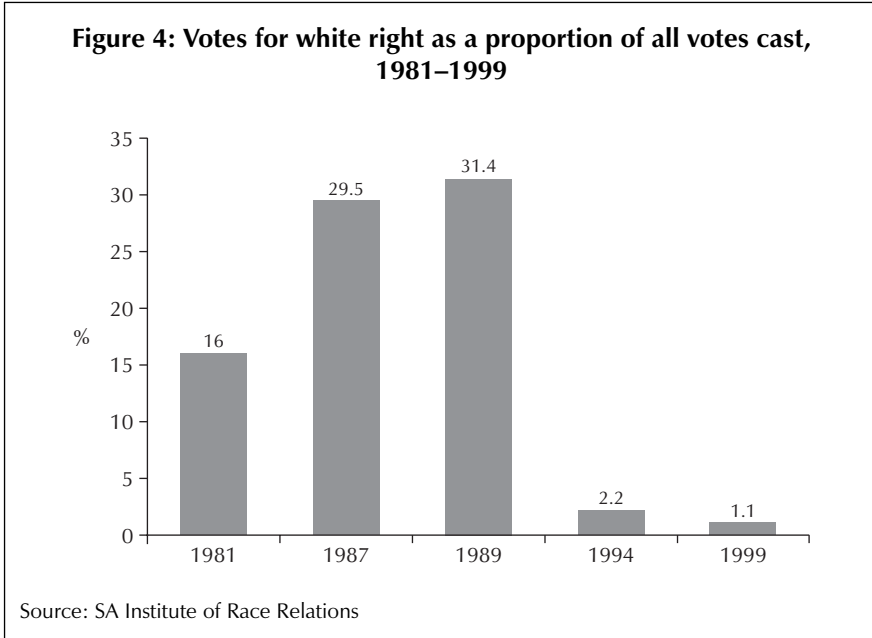
In February 1996 the Volkstaat Council presented its report on the feasibility of Afrikaner self-determination to the Constitutional Assembly. The Council proposed that a tenth province with exclusive judicial and legislative powers be created for Afrikaners. The proposed Afrikaner province would have concurrent powers with parliament, but have exclusive powers in respect of agriculture, education, health, local government, a provincial police force, provincial courts, taxation and welfare. The ANC rejected the proposals saying it would never agree to a separate Afrikaner constitutional entity.⁸⁹

The Volkstaat Council's recommendations were also not accepted by the Constitutional Assembly and were omitted from the final 1996 constitution. The 1996 constitution does, however, include a general provision guaranteeing the rights of cultural, language and religious communities.⁹⁰ The Freedom Front has expressed cautious satisfaction with the provision saying that it reflected "an extremely important first step in the process of implementing Afrikaner self-determination".⁹¹

The Volkstaat Council was officially disbanded in March 1999 without having had an impact on government policy. The Commission for the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Cultural, Religious and Linguistic Communities is intended to take over some of the functions of the Volkstaat Council. Legislation governing the status, objectives and powers of the Commission was promulgated at the end of 2002.⁹²

In the June 1999 national election the combined vote of the white right crumbled to 174,000, or only 1% of the votes cast (Figure 4). The vote was divided between the Freedom Front and the CP-backed 'Afrikaner Eenheidsbeweging' or AEB (Afrikaner Unity Movement). Out of the 400 National Assembly seats, three were allocated to the Freedom Front and one to the AEB.

In the wake of the 1999 election, divisions were reported in the Freedom Front. Some members felt that Viljoen, as the leader of the party, had neglected the party's demand for a *volkstaat* in favour of marginal issues such as



the reintroduction of capital punishment.⁹³ Viljoen vacated his position as leader of the Freedom Front in March 2001, and retired to his farm in Mpumalanga. Viljoen was succeeded by Dr Pieter Mulder as leader of the Freedom Front.

The CP had initially announced its intention to participate in the 1999 election, but subsequently withdrew from the process in favour of the AEB. In April 2000 the leader of the CP, Dr Ferdi Hartzenberg, said his party would disband in the interests of Afrikaner unity.⁹⁴ By early 2002 Hartzenberg had reversed his position and announced the CP's participation in the 2004 general election in opposition to the AEB. The CP is divided on the issue of electoral participation however. A group under the leadership of past MP, Jurg Prinsloo, is opposed to participating in an 'ANC election' and intends to abstain from voting.⁹⁵

Hartzenberg's decision to oppose the AEB is motivated by a statement made by the leader (and the party's only MP) of the AEB, Cassie Aucamp, that coloureds are welcome within the party. As a result of this Aucamp suffered a vote of no confidence from the AEB's members in North West province.

In August 2001 a dialogue forum, the Christelike Nasionale Forum or CNF (Christian National Forum) was established.⁹⁶ The organisation was comprised of right wingers and some New National Party (NNP) supporters, and was initially backed by the CP. In mid-2002 the CNF formed a new political party, Nasionale Aksie or NA (National Action), aimed at traditional Christian conservatives and disillusioned New National Party members.⁹⁷

A former Minister of Home Affairs in the De Klerk cabinet, Danie Schutte, and AEB leader, Cassie Aucamp, are co-leaders of National Action. At the time of writing there was some confusion about Aucamp's position as he could not formally join the NA until floor-crossing legislation had been promulgated, permitting MPs to change party membership without losing their parliamentary seats.⁹⁸ CP leader, Ferdi Hartzenberg, has rejected National Action as the "poor man's NNP," asking CP members not to get involved with the NA.⁹⁹

The tribulations within the white right have been exacerbated by the death of HNP leader, Jaap Marais, in August 2000, and the death of the founder and leader of the Boerestaat Party, Robert van Tonder, a year later. AWB leader, Eugene Terre'Blanche, is serving a prison sentence for attempted murder.

At the time of writing, morale within the white right is arguably low. An editorial published in the AWB's newsletter, *Storm*, in mid-2002 sums it up well:

Since the 1994 election, patriotic (*volkseie*) Afrikaner organisations have been debilitated by the uncertainty existing among their supporters about whether they should vote or not. The unity which existed prior to the 1994 election was destroyed within weeks. Our people ('*die volk*') are disappointed that the ANC has taken over power, and a feeling of powerlessness has overtaken us. Since then the attitude is one of 'every man for himself' and all interest in politics has disappeared. What a big mistake!¹⁰⁰

CHAPTER 3

COMMON PERSPECTIVES

Other than brief exceptions, such as the 1950s and the latter half of 1993, a characteristic of the white right has been one of division on issues of policy, strategy and tactics (and personality-driven differences). This has been a crucial weakness. It virtually reduced to zero the white right's bargaining power in the negotiating process for an interim and final constitution for a democratic South Africa.

Notwithstanding such divisions, however, in Afrikaner nationalist terminology Afrikaners or Boers share three indisputable common ethnic attributes: the Afrikaans language, Calvinist religion and Afrikaner history with its claim to an own territory or *volkstaat*. While race is not specifically mentioned as a fourth attribute, it is implied in the Afrikaner right's understanding of ethnicity. It is on the basis of these attributes that the Afrikaner right shares important ideological, political and philosophical perceptions. These shared perceptions and common values provide the broad parameters within which the Afrikaner right formulates its goals, identifies its enemies and forges its actions.¹⁰¹ Two of the central tenets of this shared worldview—the importance of national self-determination in an own territory and the role of religion—are discussed below. (The role of language in Afrikaner nationalist ideology follows in chapter 5 below.)

Territory

Throughout the world the nationalist right emphasises the primacy of a territorial base to ensure the survival of the nation. In *The Ethnic Revival in the Modern World*, Anthony Smith explores the awakening of ethnic feelings and nationalist aspirations in many parts of the world after the Second World War. Smith argues that one of the characteristics that distinguishes nations from ethnic communities is the territorial dimension:

[a] nation, by definition, requires a 'homeland', a recognised space and ecological base, if only to ensure cohesion and autonomy and the rights of citizenship, whereas an ethnic community, let alone catego-

ry, can maintain its sense of belonging or its distinctive cultural characteristics without such a territorial base.¹⁰²

For the South African white right the basic prerequisite of a nation wishing to secure its survival with its own culture, religion and language is a geographically defined territory. The white right argues that a nation that does not have its own territorial base is scaled down to the status of a group—and in the case of Afrikaners and even whites, a minority group.¹⁰³ Moreover, the white right contends that a unitary state (such as the present South Africa) cannot provide the Afrikaner with a meaningful future but will lead to the extinction of the Afrikaner people as a distinct nation.¹⁰⁴ The Afrikaner right wing has a firm conviction that it can lay claim to a historically distinct territory:

Historical evidence of the link between a distinct and separate territory and the Afrikaner people is fundamental to the demand of the right wing for self-determination in an Afrikaner fatherland.¹⁰⁵

For the AWB the right of a nation to its own territory enjoys Biblical support, and is crucial if a nation is to survive:

For a nation (*volk*) to have its own territory is an authentic Biblical concept. Nation and land are indivisible, the one is not conceivable without the other. To survive, a nation must have land which it can claim as its own. The bond with its own territory guarantees the survival and growth of a national identity... The future of the Boer *volk* is damned unless it obtains its own government to exercise its right to self-determination in an own territory.¹⁰⁶

To further its demands for a sovereign Afrikaner state the white right has developed a multiplicity of partition and secessionist models.¹⁰⁷ The idea of partitioning South Africa into various states, or into a confederation of states, has not been the exclusive preserve of the white right. The South African liberal icon of the 1930s and 1940s, Alfred Hoernlé, considered partition as a way of protecting blacks from white oppression and reducing the risk of racial conflict in the country.¹⁰⁸ More recently, German author and observer at the 1987 meeting between the ANC and Afrikaner academics in Dakar (Senegal), Klaus von der Ropp, has proposed partitioning South Africa to ensure genuine black independence and to provide whites with the security an independent enclave would offer.¹⁰⁹

Partition is the political division of a territory into autonomous sections in order to establish two or more sovereign governments.¹¹⁰ This can have two

implications for a partitioned territory. First, a state can be subject to partitioning to the point of vanishing altogether. An example is the division of Poland among its various neighbours in the nineteenth century. Secondly, two or more states can be created from one territory. This occurred in the 1990s with the partitioning of Yugoslavia into a number of independent states, and the partitioning of Czechoslovakia into a Czech and Slovak state.

Partition is “a complex negotiated process, where a spatial arrangement that is totally different from what existed before is reached between states within a common geographical area”.¹¹¹ Partition is usually fuelled by the recognition of a fundamental irreconcilability in the values and aspirations of identifiable population groups. Partition is frequently an attempt at solving conflicts in deeply divided plural societies along spatial lines.¹¹²

In contrast to partition which includes a process of negotiations, secession is usually a unilateral process where a definable geographic area opts out of union with another state within a common geographical area.¹¹³ An example is the secession of Slovenia and Croatia from the Republic of Yugoslavia in the early 1990s.

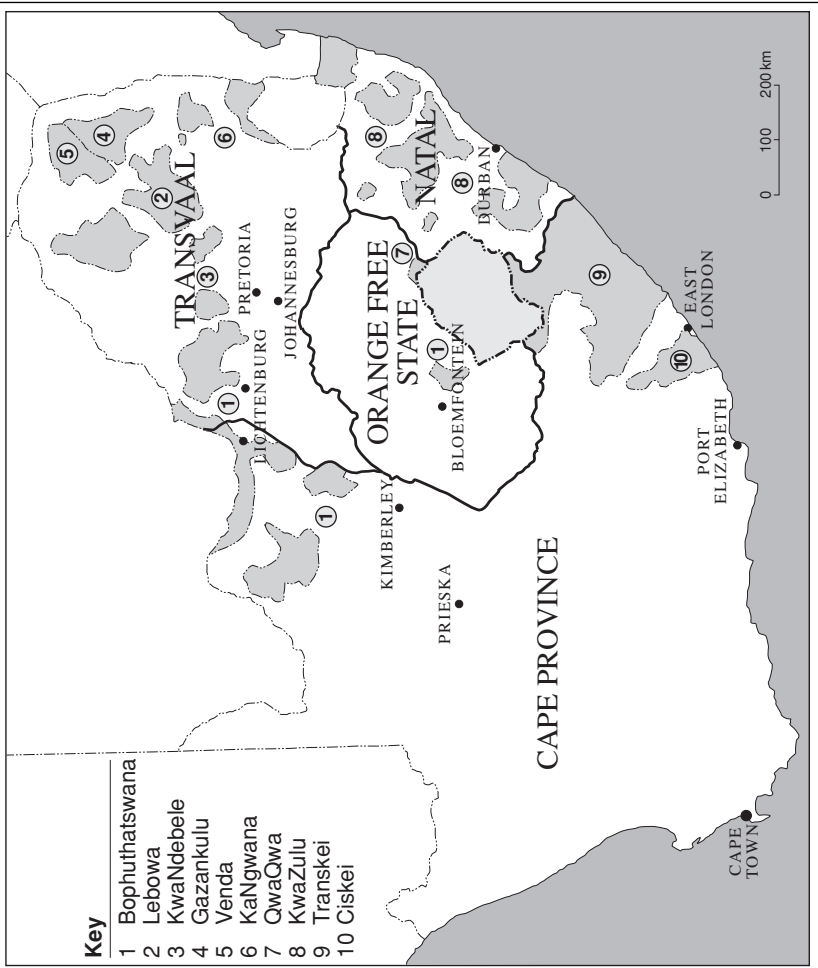
A potential future hurdle faced by the white right—or any other partitionist or secessionist movement in Africa—is the 1963 Organisation of African Unity (OAU) Cairo Declaration which determined African states’ acceptance of frontiers inherited from their ex-colonial rulers.¹¹⁴ This was largely motivated by a fear of a repetition of the fragmentation characteristic of the pre-War Balkans. According to Smith,

African politicians have used every tactic to avert the break-up of their often fragile and precarious political units, in the hope that, given sufficient time, their present crop of ‘state-nations’ can be transformed into genuine ‘nation-states’ based on the presumed European model.¹¹⁵

The secession of Eritrea from Ethiopia in 1993 may have set a precedent for a redrawing of Africa’s colonial boundaries. Eritrea may be deemed a special case, however, as it was an Italian colony until 1941. It was given to Ethiopia in 1952, initially remaining an autonomous region within the Federation of Ethiopia and Eritrea.

Writing in early 1993 Adam and Moodley argue that at the time the ANC was not in principle opposed to an autonomous Afrikaner territory. However, the

Map 2: Homeland partition model



ANC feared that recognising the Afrikaner's right to limited self-determination would have opened up a Pandora's box of ethnic claims to self rule which could have balkanised the country:

The recognition of an Afrikaner heartland is widely resented by the ANC at present, not for ideological reasons, but because the precedent would certainly encourage similar claims by Zulu and other black nationalists.¹¹⁶

Homeland partition

Traditionally the mainstream white right has favoured the original apartheid blueprint of homeland partition (Map 2). This entails removing the majority of black people from 'white South Africa'. Blacks would become citizens of a number of independent states, each with a dominant ethnic component. Blacks who remain in white South Africa would be prohibited from settling permanently, and exercising any political rights there. Some within the white right—such as the Conservative Party—further advocated the creation of a homeland or an autonomous area for both coloureds and Indians. The HNP initially advocated the repatriation of Indians to the Indian subcontinent.

The manifest weakness of the homeland partition model is that it allocates 13% of South Africa's land area for the settlement of three-quarters of the country's population, to be divided into ten separate black states. The remaining 87% is allocated to 'white South Africa'. Moreover, blacks are separated along ethnic lines, but South Africa (minus the black states) is allocated to all whites as a racial group.

By 1993 only the HNP and a diminishing section of the CP continued to support the homeland partition model, partly because of its inherent flaws and partly because right wingers realised they lacked the power to enforce a division of the country where the majority black population would receive only 13% of the land.

Restoration of Boer Republics

The resurgence of strong Afrikaner nationalist sentiments in the late 1980s led to an increasingly influential secessionist or *volkstaat* movement within the right wing. Propagated initially by the Boerestaat Party, and later popularised by the AWB and other smaller organisations, was the view that the Boer

Volkstaat versus Boerestaat

The Boerestaat Party (BSP) specifically strives for a Boer state for 'Boers' who it distinguishes from 'Afrikaners'. The late leader of the BSP, Robert van Tonder, argued that the citizens of the nineteenth century Boer Republics constituted a nation by themselves, and did not belong to the 'so-called' Afrikaans nation, even though they speak the same language. According to Van Tonder only Afrikaners of Voortrekker descent and whose forebearers fought on the Boer side in the Anglo-Boer War are regarded as Boer, which excludes the Afrikaners in the Cape and KwaZulu-Natal who Van Tonder referred to as, respectively, 'Cape Dutch' and 'Afrikaner liberals':¹¹⁹

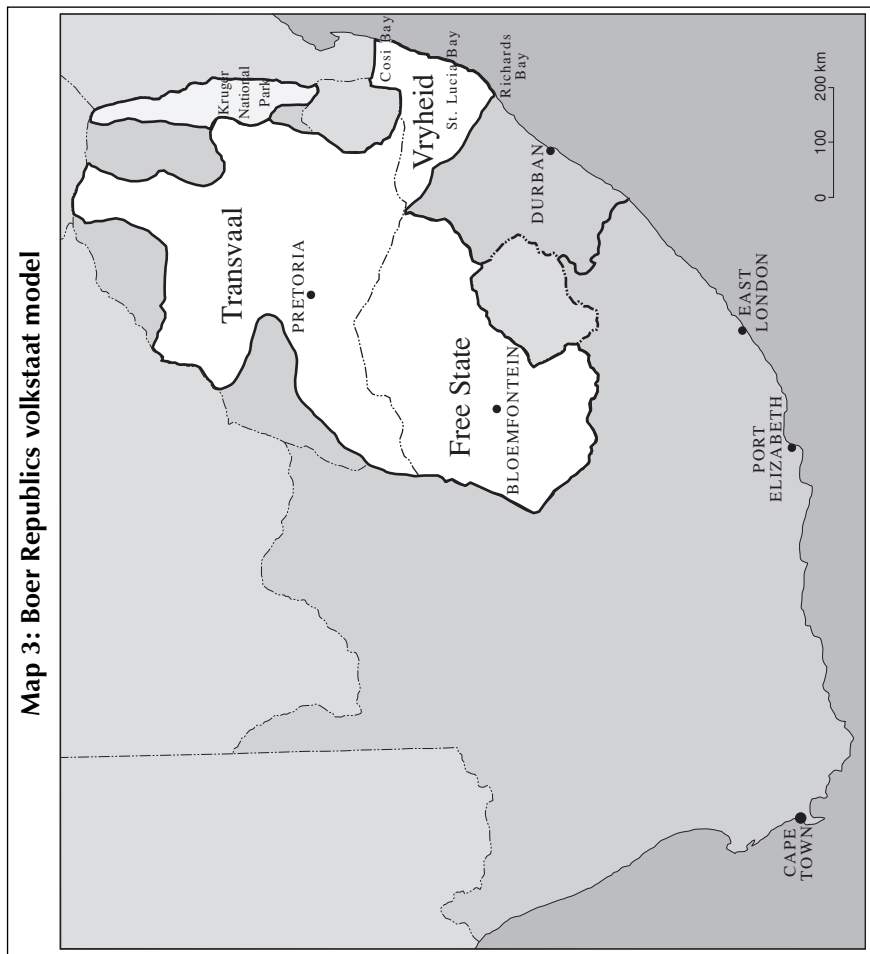
We Boere are not South Africans. Neither are we 'Afrikaners'. The history of the Boere is totally different from that of the Cape 'Afrikaners'. The case for the new Boer Republic rests on history, language, culture and an own territory (state). Not merely on colour. That is the basis on which any faulk's (sic) identity is determined.¹²⁰

Traditionally the AWB adopted a more pragmatic approach, advocating a restoration of the Boer Republics for all white Afrikaners, and Christian English-speakers prepared to assimilate and support the concept of an independent Boer state. More recently the AWB has adopted a position similar to that of the BSP, stating that the Boer *volk* is not merely a white or an Afrikaans-speaking group.¹²¹

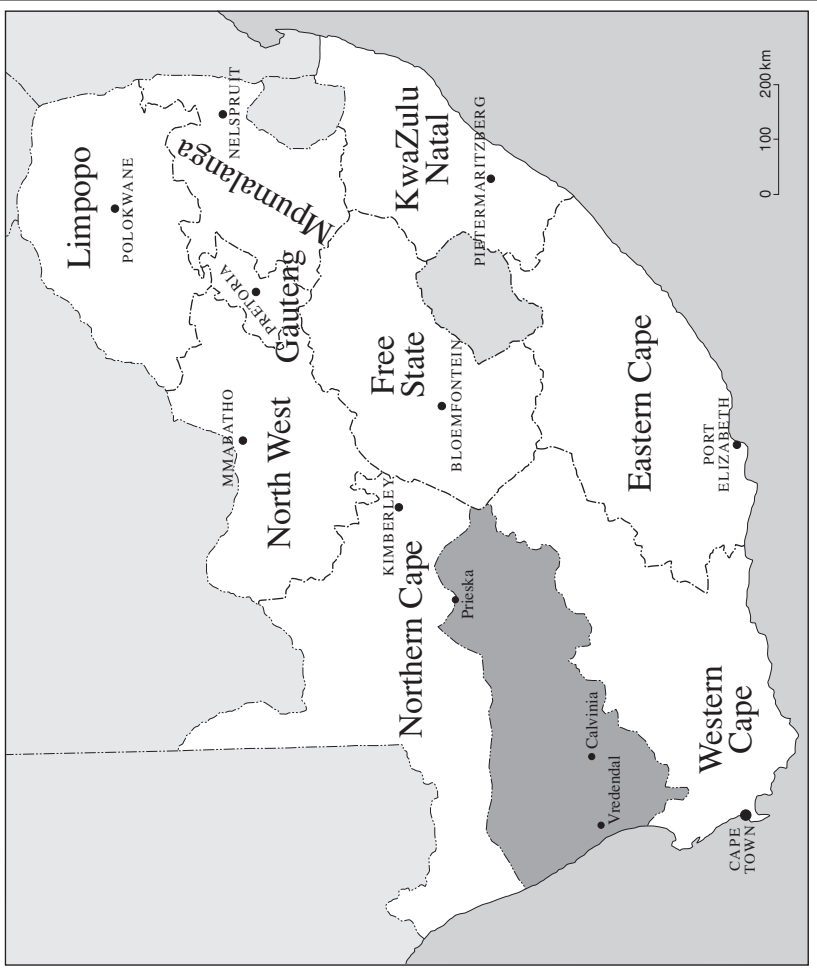
republics were robbed of their independence by the British during the Anglo-Boer War of 1899–1902.

The *volkstaat* or *Boerestaat* (Boer state) movement advocated that the former Boer Republics—the Zuid-Afrikaansche Republiek (South African Republic), the Orange Free State and Vryheid—be restored by way of secession from the remaining part of South Africa.¹¹⁷ This restoration would be based on cultural, historical and legal claims and not on the basis of race.¹¹⁸ In today's South Africa the restored Boer republics would cover the bulk of the provinces of Gauteng, Limpopo, Mpumalanga and North West (i.e. the former Transvaal province), the Free State and northern KwaZulu-Natal (Map 3).

Unlike the homeland partition model, the secessionist *volkstaat* model is not prescriptive by allocating certain areas or homelands to other ethnic groups.



Map 4: Avstig/Freedom Front volkstaat model



The *volkstaat* model strives for an independent Afrikaner state but is not concerned about the remainder of South Africa. Moreover, unlike the homeland partition model which allocates a state for whites, the *volkstaat* model proposes an ethnically defined state for Afrikaners/Boers. White British immigrants would, for example, generally not be welcome in such a state.

Compared to the homeland partition model, the *volkstaat* or *Boerestaat* concept based on the Boer Republics is more tenable on three grounds. First, it bases its claim for a sovereign territory on the right of a people—who are distinct and definable in terms of, inter alia, their common ethnicity—to self-determination. That is, the claim is not, or not primarily, based on race. Secondly, it does not prescribe to those who do not belong to the Afrikaner/Boer people how they should arrange their political affairs. Finally, the borders of the proposed Afrikaner/Boer state can be understood on historical grounds. In theory the demands of the supporters of the *volkstaat* model are not fundamentally different to the demands for national self-determination of other stateless peoples, such as the Kurds, the Tamils in Sri Lanka or the Chechens in the Russian Federation.

A weakness of the *volkstaat* model, based on the Boer Republics, is that Afrikaners or Boers do not constitute a natural majority within the proposed borders of such a state. According to a 1993 analysis, the reconstituted Boer Republics would encompass 61% of all South African whites. However, whites would make up only 24% of the population of such a state. If Afrikaners only were counted their proportion would be even lower.¹²² Moreover, such a state would encompass the economic heartland of South Africa centred around the province of Gauteng. It is extremely unlikely that blacks, or whites who oppose this *volkstaat* model, would permit a minority to secede from South Africa, taking with them the country's primary source of wealth.

Pragmatic secession

Intellectual Afrikaner nationalist thinkers, centred around the South African Bureau of Racial Affairs (SABRA), began developing models of an Afrikaner homeland in the late 1960s. These models strove to minimise the relocation of non-Afrikaners and left South Africa's economic heartland largely untouched.¹²³

In the late 1980s a well known right wing academic, Professor Carel Boshoff, founded the Afrikaner-Vryheidstigting or Avstig (Afrikaner Freedom

Foundation). The founding principles of the organisation were based on the belief that since black majority rule was unavoidable and white minority rule morally unjustifiable, Afrikaners would have to form their own *volkstaat* in a smaller part of South Africa.¹²⁴

Boshoff's plans for an Afrikaner state exclude the traditional Afrikaner/Boer areas in the Transvaal and the Free State. Boshoff's model envisages a state in the north-western Cape (Map 4). This area is economically underdeveloped and located mostly in the semi-desert environment, but has some potential for economic growth because of the presence of the Orange River, the Saldanha harbour and a variety of minerals.¹²⁵

A *volkstaat* according to the Avstig model would demand economic sacrifices from Afrikaners who move there from other parts of South Africa. Over the long run it is conceivable that some Afrikaner nationalists would make such a sacrifice. Zille points out that while many right wing leaders use economic factors, such as white unemployment, as important components of their mobilising strategy, there is little evidence to suggest that economic interests are the primary motivating factor behind right wing ideology.¹²⁶ It is frequently conceded in right wing circles that whites would have to be prepared to make significant economic sacrifices to implement right wing policies successfully. Boshoff puts it as follows: "We would rather be poor and free than rich in a common society."¹²⁷

In 1991 the Afrikaner Volkswag (Afrikaner People's Guard) bought the town of Orania, consisting of 90 houses and covering an area of 400 hectares. At the time of writing Orania had grown to a permanent community of about 750 residents, with a timeshare holiday resort on the banks of the Orange River, a home for senior citizens, two schools, a private hospital and a growing agricultural sector. According to Boshoff, Orania is intended to be the basis of the *volkstaat*, which would come into existence only once a large number of Afrikaners physically occupied Orania and other such 'growth points'.¹²⁸

Boshoff concedes that most Afrikaners might not move to the *volkstaat*. In his opinion it is nevertheless essential Afrikaners have this option, since this will make them feel more secure, thereby reducing tensions in the rest of South Africa. Boshoff regards this as being analogous with Israel, which serves as a refuge for Jews from all over the world.¹²⁹

The Avstig model is based on the principle of 'own labour'. That is, all work in the *volkstaat* is performed by its citizens. As a result the white residents of

Orania can be seen ploughing their fields, collecting the garbage and tending their gardens—work traditionally performed by blacks in South Africa.

The Freedom Front—of which Boshoff is a public representative—largely accepts the Avstig model for an Afrikaner *volkstaat*. The Freedom Front admits that a state can become a *volkstaat* only once its citizens predominantly consist of the same ethnic group. Moreover, all citizens in such a state (of which a majority would be Afrikaners) are to enjoy full political rights and be entitled to take part in regular elections.¹³⁰

Religion

The Dutch settlers at the Cape brought with them a fundamentalist form of Calvinism. Calvinism is firmly rooted in the scriptures and holds that all things are predestined by God, that man therefore has to accept that certain aspects of his life cannot be explained. Neo-Calvinist influences reinterpreted Calvinism as a philosophy of natural theology according to which God revealed Himself both in nature and in history. Consequently God must be recognised in everything and the will of God is apparent in all things.¹³¹ According to Leach such a neo-Calvinist interpretation has been used as a justification for the existence and protection of the Afrikaner people as a distinct nation:

The existence and the development of the Afrikaner people became an 'act of God' and, because God had created the nation, it had to continue. Another logical argument was that God had willed that there should be separate nations and races.¹³²

Early Afrikaner nationalism encompassed a distinct religious element—the Israelite myth. These were references to the Afrikaners as the chosen people and to South Africa as the promised land. Although the majority of early Afrikaners probably did not literally see themselves as God's chosen people, they interpreted the creation of the Afrikaners as a distinct racial and ethnic group as part of God's plan.

Until quite recently most Afrikaners—with their rural roots and largely isolated history—were, and many have remained, a deeply religious people. They traditionally have been attached to, and deferential towards, the ministers of their churches and the doctrines these ministers broadcast.¹³³

Church and politics

Even before the National Party came into power in 1948, the Afrikaans Reformed Churches became actively involved in the moral justification of apartheid ideology by providing it with a scriptural basis. Their collective philosophy was also based on the belief that the Afrikaners were a distinct people elected and sent by God to spread Christianity among the black nations of South Africa, while at the same time maintaining a separate identity and racial purity.¹³⁴ In 1944 the chairman of the Broederbond imbued the organisation and the Afrikaner people with a divine mission:

The Afrikaner Broederbond was born out of the deep conviction that the Afrikaner *volk* has been planted in this country by the Hand of God, destined to survive as a separate *volk* with its own calling.¹³⁵

After 1982, with the establishment of the Conservative Party, the political division among Afrikaners was also reflected in the churches. The largest and most important church associated with the Afrikaner right wing is the Afrikaanse Protestantse Kerk or APK (Afrikaans Protestant Church). The APK was established in 1987 after the departure of conservative theologians and right wing members from the Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk or NGK (Dutch Reformed Church), the largest of the Afrikaner churches. This was largely in response to the 1986 NGK synod where the church adopted the view that there is no biblical justification for apartheid. Moreover, the NGK accepted as official policy that racism and apartheid were sinful, and that membership of the church was open to all races.¹³⁶

The APK initially defined the Afrikaner people as a white nation (*'blanke volk'*). Only white Afrikaners, and whites who identified themselves with white Afrikaners, could become members of the APK. This changed at the turn of the century when all references to race were removed from the church's policy documents. It has always been up to individual congregations to decide who may or may not attend a church service, and special services such as marriages and funerals.¹³⁷

In July 1999 the APK advised its members not to take part in future elections. The church principally rejects the 'multi-cultural' and 'multi-religious' unitary state of South Africa. The APK argues that denying communities and nations the right to self-determination, and the idea that South Africa consists of millions of individuals of which 'half plus one' can demo-

cratically decide for everyone, results in democracy becoming a “tyranny of numbers”.¹³⁸

The Afrikaner right has had little difficulty finding biblical justification for a nation’s right to resist a government which acts against its interests and freedom. In 1990, the leader of the Conservative Party, the late Dr Andries Treurnicht (a moderate by white right wing standards), and a former minister in the Dutch Reformed Church argued:

The Bible does not take the side of tyrants who ignore the rights and freedom of their people and who destroy laws which protect them. The authority of a government is limited by the authority of God... If a law made by a government contradicts the authority of God or that of the freedom of the nation, it is not only permissible, but also acceptable, to disobey the government.¹³⁹

Religious prophecy

In the post-1994 era the Afrikaner right has placed increasing significance on the prophecies of Seer Nicolaas van Rensburg. Van Rensburg (1864–1926) lived on a farm in what is now the North West province, where he is said to have had more than 700 visions about the Afrikaners and their future. Van Rensburg was a simple man and the only book he read was the Bible. His visions appeared in symbols, which were objects he came into daily contact with. Van Rensburg’s visions were not always chronological and often even he failed to interpret them at the time.¹⁴⁰

Publisher and author, Adriaan Snyman, has written extensively on Van Rensburg and has spent years interpreting his visions. Snyman’s book *Stem van ’n Profeet*, (also translated into English, ‘Voice of a Prophet’) is widely available in the commercial book trade. It is likely that Snyman’s interpretations of Van Rensburg’s visions are shared by most believers of the Seer’s prophecies. Indeed, there are strong indications that the insurrectionist plans of the right wing Boeremag (Boer force/power), which resulted in a series of bombings in late 2002, were at least partly motivated by Van Rensburg’s prophecies. (Chapter 4 on the Boeremag follows below.)

Van Rensburg prophesised that “total reform” would take place before the Boer nation would get its own Republic, provided such reforms are similar to the reforms God expected of Israel during the days of Nehemiah (governor of

Judea around 440 BC).¹⁴¹ In the Old Testament book of Nehemiah 13, God tells Israel how they have sinned against Him and how He expected them to reform. Namely that all foreigners be excluded from the community, that the Sabbath be a day of rest and that there be no mixing between the people of Judah and those of other nations.

Van Rensburg predicted the coming into power “of a black government”, but that this would be of a short duration only.¹⁴² A moderate ‘communist-inclined’ leader takes over power which, according to Snyman, is Nelson Mandela. During this time, “hostility from Indian ranks reaches a crisis over the Afrikaans language... the language of the Boers and everything connected with it is now being denied and trampled upon. All the protests of the Boer fall on deaf ears.”¹⁴³ Van Rensburg further said “a day would come when the Indians would occupy positions of power in the country. The Christian values of the Afrikaner would then be in direct conflict with the religion of Islam.”¹⁴⁴

Thereafter, “the bloodiest period in our [the Boer’s] history begins—hundreds of innocents are murdered in their houses”, then “the blacks will first disappear, after which the jingoes and the English will flee”.¹⁴⁵ The Boer’s enemies will initially flee to Durban (in KwaZulu-Natal), but will eventually leave the country.¹⁴⁶

Van Rensburg had a vision of a large nationwide strike during which all trains would stop and there would be a massive power failure in Gauteng.¹⁴⁷ According to Snyman’s interpretation, the strike will occur just before or after South Africa’s second democratic election (which took place in mid 1999), “which would be the time when Afrikaners would finally turn their backs on the Government... Then revolution would break out and in the confrontation that follows the Afrikaners would take back the country.”¹⁴⁸

In a vision Van Rensburg revealed that it is only after the violent death of a black leader, and a massive strike cripples the country, that real trouble starts. As the black leader is buried,

[v]iolence and civil war will erupt... The first large-scale violence erupts and the Witwatersrand (Gauteng) in particular feels the brunt of black violence... However, when the armed forces advance on Pretoria at dawn, the Boers are ready for action and Johannesburg is bomb-attacked, which shakes the whole world.¹⁴⁹

In another vision Van Rensburg saw an unexpected night attack on Johannesburg by black people during which thousands of white people are killed in one night.¹⁵⁰ It is alleged that an Afrikaner woman by the name of Johanna Brandt was given a similar warning by an angel in 1916, that one day Johannesburg would be attacked by black people and thousands of white people murdered.¹⁵¹

Van Rensburg had a vision of German arms being supplied to the Boers by rail from the port of Lüderitz (Namibia) to the northern Karoo town of Prieska. It is at Prieska that the Boers are armed and become “a force to be reckoned with”.¹⁵² It is also in Prieska where an interim Boer government is formed.¹⁵³

After the death of the black leader Van Rensburg sees a man “in a brown suit rise very unexpectedly to gather the nation together and take matters in hand by means of a coup d’état”.¹⁵⁴ In another vision Van Rensburg saw the Boers being summoned to a hillock north of the town of Lichtenburg where the “man in the brown suit” makes his first appearance and is accepted by the Boers as their leader.¹⁵⁵

Van Rensburg further predicted that a “spiritual leader who will unite and arm the nation, will rise in the Eastern Province” (Eastern Cape). Although Van Rensburg did not say how this man would arm the Boer nation, Snyman believes it will be spiritual as well as physical:

This shows another clear parallel between the oppression which the Boer nation finds itself in and the experiences of the Israelites when they were subjected to oppression by God because of their disobedience. During such times, strong leaders and God-fearing people rose from the nation to lead them to freedom—and without exception that freedom was gained through Divine intervention.¹⁵⁶

Israel Identity¹⁵⁷

Most right wing Afrikaners adhere to their traditional nationalist religion, Calvinist Protestantism. However, some on the radical fringes of the right regard the Afrikaner as a chosen people destined to rule others because of a divinely ordained superiority. Use is made of the Calvinist distinction between the elect and the damned to make a natural classification of the ‘heathen’ blacks as the damned.¹⁵⁸ An even smaller minority of extreme right wingers

have misinterpreted aspects of Calvinist thought and Old Testament writings, and formed supremacist sects generically referred to as Israel Identity.

The Israel Identity movement is small in South Africa, and even among the extreme white right enjoys limited support. In fact, in a document attributed to the extreme right wing Boeremag, the Israel Identity movement is identified as a front organisation of the Illuminati which wants to destroy the Boer people (see below).¹⁵⁹ Nevertheless an analysis of the Israel Identity movement is important because of the disproportionate role its adherents have played in the commission of racially motivated violent crimes and acts of terror in South Africa.

Israel Identity originated in Great Britain and formed into a non-denominational historical society called the British–Israel World Federation in 1919. The basic belief of Israel Identity is that the ten lost tribes of Israel can be traced historically and archaeologically to the British Isles, the United States and the Nordic people of Europe.¹⁶⁰ Israel Identity believes that Adam is the father of the white race only. The argument is made that Adam is “a Hebrew word meaning: ruddy, to show blood, flush, turn rosy”—the implication being that only fair skinned people can be seen to blush.¹⁶¹

As a son of God, made in His likeness, Adam and his descendants, who are also the children of God, can know YHWH God as their creator. Adamic man is made trichotomous, that is, not only of body and soul, but having an implanted spirit, giving him a higher form of consciousness and distinguishing him from the other races of the earth (Deut. 7:6, 10:15; Amos 3:2).¹⁶²

Followers of Israel Identity believe in the scripture according to Jahweh—the name of God, expanded from the four letters, YHWH, that form the proper name of God in Hebrew.

Israel Identity divides people into two groups: the children of God or Adam, and the children of Satan. That is, there are two mutually exclusive genetically definable groups in the world. This biological classification is taken from Genesis 3:15 where God told the serpent (Satan): “And I will put enmity between you and the woman [Eve], and between your offspring and hers...”. The argument is then made that just as angels had intercourse with earthly women (Genesis 6:4), so Satan had intercourse with Eve. Eve produced three children: Cain, Abel and Seth. Cain is the offspring of Satan, and Abel and Seth the offspring of the union between Adam and Eve.¹⁶³

Israel Identity traces the lineage of ‘Satan’s children’ to a number of biblical ancestors. Cain is seen as the first ‘coloured person’ and rebel against God. Another ancestor of Satan’s children is Ham—the father of the ‘brown’ and ‘black’ African nations.¹⁶⁴ Ham was Noah’s second son. Noah’s first born, Shem, is the ancestor of Abraham and Jacob—who produced the white nations of the world. Japheth, the third born son, is said to be the father of the oriental or Asian peoples.¹⁶⁵

Abraham is the ancestor of the people of Israel. Israel Identity places strong emphasis on the historical separation between the southern kingdom of Judah, which includes the tribes of Benjamin and Levi, and the northern kingdom of Israel which includes the remaining ten tribes of Israel. According to Israel Identity, the greater part of the tribes of Benjamin and Levi mixed with the descendants of Esau. As Esau married Canaanite women—who, in turn, were the descendants of Ham—the lineage of Judea and Benjamin was mixed with the seeds of Satan.¹⁶⁶ For Israel Identity most Jews of today are descendants of Judea and Benjamin, and consequently they are Satan’s children. Thus, God’s chosen people are not the Jews of today, who are ‘Satanic impostors’. God’s true chosen people are the descendants of the ten lost tribes of Israel: the white peoples of the West.¹⁶⁷

Some Israel Identity groups are more radical than others.¹⁶⁸ The most radical groups espouse a hostile form of racism and white supremacy:

We believe the White, Anglo-Saxon, Germanic and kindred people to be God’s true, literal Children of Israel... This chosen seedline making up the ‘Christian Nations’ of the earth stands far superior to all other peoples in their call as God’s servant race.¹⁶⁹

Unsurprisingly radical Israel Identity groups advocate strict racial segregation lest there be biological mixing between the races (and thereby between the genetic descendants of God and Satan). Just as the Israel of the Old Testament had to be separate from the heathens, so the white nations of today need to remain segregated from other races:

We believe that as a chosen race, elected by God, we are not to be partakers of the wickedness of this world system, but are called to come out and be a separated people. This includes segregation from all non-white races, who are prohibited in God’s natural divine order from ruling over Israel. Race-mixing is an abomination in the sight of the Almighty God, a satanic attempt meant to destroy the chosen seedline, and is strictly forbidden by His commandments.¹⁷⁰

Phineas Priesthood

The idea of the 'Phineas Priesthood' developed on the fringes of the North American right in the early 1990s. The Phineas Priesthood is not a membership organisation in the traditional sense. Rather extremists become 'members' when they commit 'Phineas acts'—virtually any violent activity against people who are not white. In this way, achieving Phineas Priesthood status can become the goal of extremists who want to commit violent acts against black people.¹⁷³

The inspiration of the Phineas Priesthood comes from the Old Testament and the Book of Numbers (25:6–13). Phineas was the grandson of Aaron, who objected to the consorting of an Israelite with a Midianite woman and killed them both. Phineas' actions so impressed his peers that it assured his succession to the High Priesthood. The memory of Phineas' act also resulted in a faction of priests, after the Babylonian exile centuries later, claiming descent from Phineas and the special status this apparently implied.¹⁷⁴

South African Israel Identity is variously referred to as *Israelvisie* (Israel Vision), *Blanke Israelisme* (White Israelism) and *Wit Teologie* (White Theology).¹⁷¹ Israel Identity had an estimated 10,000 South African followers in the mid 1990s.¹⁷² At the time of writing the number of followers is likely to be significantly lower. The most prominent organisation espousing the views of Israel Identity is the *Gemeente van die Verbondsvolk* (Congregation of the People of the Covenant). Other Israel Vision groups include *Verstrooide Israel Sending*, *Gemeente van die Verbond*, *Dogters van Sion*, the Federation of the Covenant People, and *Phineas Priesterorde* (Phineas Priesthood).

South African Israel Identity groups place great significance on a statement attributed to the Old Testament prophet Zephaniah: "From beyond the rivers of Ethiopia my suppliants, even the daughter of my dispersed, shall bring mine offering" (Zeph. 3:10).¹⁷⁵ From the vantage point of Zephaniah, beyond the rivers of Ethiopia would have been south of Ethiopia. This is used to justify the settlement and control of southern Africa by white Europeans. One South African Israel Identity group, the Federation of the Covenant People, up it as follows:

... the land of ancient Ethiopia ends in a water line which in former days completely segregated the southern tip of the continent from

that to the north... a water line made up of rivers all of which have their source in ancient Ethiopia... the Cunene, the Cubango, the Cuando and the Zambezi... The land thus segregated is today known as Rhodesia, South Africa, South West Africa, the protectorates and Mozambique... The people living 'beyond the rivers of Ethiopia' are called 'my suppliants' and 'the daughter of my dispersed'. These are not just haphazard terms, as they are found time and again in the Bible and are applied to the Israel people who vanished from the land of Canaan after disobedience to the Laws of God... Thus with the occupation of the land from the Cape [by the European settlers] to the water boundary of the Cunene–Cubango–Cuando–Zambezi, the sons of Jacob are seen entering into their God-appointed heritage.¹⁷⁶

Israel Identity groups emphasise the following Old Testament verse: "Be careful not to make a treaty with those who live in the land where you are going, or they will be a snare among you" (Exodus 34:12). This verse is interpreted to mean that the white nations of the world who are descendant from Israel—such as the British settlers and the Afrikaners—are forbidden by God to enter into any agreement with the black inhabitants of countries they settle in:

The Lord did *not* even imply that Israel was permitted to make a covenant or any agreement with the inhabitants of the land [even] if they rescinded their own faith and accepted that of Israel—*He was adamant and said that they should not make a covenant and that was that. 'Majority Rule' was not the order of the day and certainly not supported by God.*¹⁷⁷ (Italics in the original.)

South African followers of Israel Identity justify their demands to bring back segregationist policies, and establish a white or Afrikaner state, as being a divine right. Moreover, irrespective of their present position of powerlessness, South African Israel Identity followers are emboldened by their belief that divine prophecy dictates that their aims will come to fruition. A book published by the Federation of the Covenant People states:

Only one thing is certain now. This land 'beyond the rivers of Ethiopia', is a God-given homeland and is part of God's Plan and Purpose for His people and so it can never be entirely lost and the Israel people in the land '*shall bring mine offering*'. God has stated it and so it *will* be accomplished although at present it may appear impossible.¹⁷⁸ (Italics in the original.)

Radical offshoots of the Israel Identity movement in South Africa go so far to argue that they have a divine duty to prevent racial mixing and fight for God's chosen people. Moreover, that blacks being the descendants of Satan do not possess a soul. This makes the killing of black people morally justifiable. A number of radical followers of Israel Identity have committed atrocities directed at blacks. For example:

- Barend Strydom (self proclaimed leader of the White Wolves) killed eight black people in the vicinity of Pretoria's Strydom Square in 1988.¹⁷⁹
- In 1990 two members of the Orde van die Dood were convicted of killing a black taxi driver. They claimed the murder was justified on biblical grounds.¹⁸⁰
- Eugene Marais was convicted of shooting and killing seven black bus passengers and injuring 27 in 1990, in retaliation for the stabbing of eight whites by blacks on the same day.¹⁸¹
- On Christmas eve 1996 three members of the *Boere Aanvals Troepe* (Boer Attack Troops) set off two bombs at a Worcester shopping centre killing four Coloured shoppers and injuring 60.¹⁸²
- In January 2000 Johan de Wet Kritzinger allegedly shot and killed two black commuters and wounded four others in Pretoria.¹⁸³ Kritzinger is a follower of the White Wolves.

CHAPTER 4

RISE OF THE BOEREMAG: A CASE STUDY

A few isolated, but significant, violent incidents after 1994 revealed that there was some activity on the fringes of the white right. On Christmas eve 1996 two bombs at a Worcester (Western Cape) shopping centre killed four Coloured shoppers and injured 60. A group calling itself the Boere Aanvals Troepe claimed responsibility for the blasts. The group demanded the release of all Boer 'freedom fighters', and that the Boers be granted their own territory. Two weeks later four explosions occurred in Rustenburg (North West province), of which two were at a mosque injuring one person. The Boere Aanvals Troepe again claimed responsibility for the explosions. The perpetrators of the bombings in both towns were convicted and sentenced to long prison terms.¹⁸⁴

In early 1997 a dozen right wingers attempted to steal weapons and military equipment from the Pomfret military base in the Northern Cape province. The leader of the group called the Pretoria Boerekommando (Pretoria Boer Commando) was Willem Ratte, a high ranking ex-special forces member of the SADF.¹⁸⁵ In February 2001 Ratte was convicted for the raid and sentenced to seven years' imprisonment, of which three years were suspended. Ratte made headlines in the run up to the 1994 election when he was placed in charge of protecting the transmission station of the right wing 'Radio Pretoria'. Ratte also led a group of armed men in the symbolic occupation of Fort Schanskop in early 1994.¹⁸⁶ Fort Schanskop is a Boer fort dating back to the Anglo-Boer War, located on the outskirts of Pretoria.

In May 1998 a group of men broke into the Tempe army base in Bloemfontein. Over 100 weapons, including machine guns, rocket-propelled grenades, mortars and night-vision equipment were stolen. Two weeks later the same group robbed a Tempe army truck (and murdered its black and coloured occupants) of rocket and grenade launchers, bombs and various weapons including machine guns and ammunition worth millions of rands. Four men have been arrested and tried for the theft, robbery and murder. They are alleged to be members of a right wing organisation known as 'Die Volk' (the nation/people).¹⁸⁷ The organisation was set up to arm whites to take

over the country after they had incited black people to murder each other and create chaos in the country. The group had allegedly also planned to assassinate president Thabo Mbeki, cordon off Bloemfontein, take over parliament and poison the drinking water in black areas. There are indications that the four accused are followers of the Israel Identity movement.¹⁸⁸ It is alleged that Johan Niemöller is Die Volk's leader in the 'Transvaal'.¹⁸⁹ Niemöller, an ex-special forces and paratrooper battalion member, has denied the allegation.¹⁹⁰

In March 2002 four followers of the Israel Identity movement were arrested for allegedly colluding to blow up the Vaal Dam on 6 April 2002.¹⁹¹ It is unknown whether it is a coincidence that it was on the same date, on 6 April 1652, that Jan van Riebeeck and his crew of seafarers landed at the Cape, setting in motion the beginning of white settlement in South Africa. (Up to 1994, the 6th of April was an official public holiday: Founders' Day.) During their trial the accused revealed they were staunch believers in the prophecies of Boer seer Nicolaas van Rensburg.¹⁹²

In late 2002 the National Intelligence Agency (NIA) revealed that a group calling itself the Boere Vryheids Aksie or BVA (Boer Action for Freedom) planned to plant bombs made from plastic explosives, chlorine and other substances in parliament. The group allegedly also planned to poison water reservoirs with Tetranium, an agricultural poison, in Soweto and the Pretoria townships of Atteridgeville and Soshanguve, and Laudium.¹⁹³

According to press reports, the NIA has been analysing the extreme right wing threat in South Africa since 2000. In terms of its analysis, the NIA identified several right wing groups that have been involved in plots against the government: *Verligte Aksie Groep* or Enlightened Action Group (1995–99), Niemöller Initiative (1997–98), the Willem Ratte group (1994–2002), and the *Boere Intelligensiediens* or Boer Intelligence Service (2001).¹⁹⁴

The Boeremag: fulfilling prophecy?

While some of the available information was unconfirmed at the time of writing, events during the latter half of 2002 revealed that a group of hardcore right wingers were tenaciously devoted to creating an independent Afrikaner state. The story of this group—die Boeremag (Boer force/power)—is a valuable case study of how the extreme right mixes religion and politics. It appears that the Boeremag's sabotage campaign was driven by a philosophy based on extreme nationalist views and a sense of God-given purpose: a lethal cocktail,

given the damage religiously-inspired terrorism has caused in other parts of the world.¹⁹⁵

The Boeremag makes a good case study for another reason. Initially belittled by the media, and underestimated by the police and the intelligence community, the danger posed by the organisation rapidly grew to become South Africa's primary security threat during the last quarter of 2002. In the ensuing panic the state's security forces overreacted and alienated sections within the conservative Afrikaner community. Such a mistake could have been costly had it not been for the rapid arrest of some of the ringleaders within the Boeremag in late 2002.

During 2002 almost two dozen alleged Boeremag members were arrested and charged with, inter alia, terrorism-related offences, sabotage and treason. Three of the arrestees were serving South African National Defence Force (SANDF) officers.¹⁹⁶ It is alleged that one of these SANDF officers met with former state president PW Botha to seek the latter's advice on the possibility of a white government ruling South Africa again. Botha is alleged to have responded that it was possible, but definitely not through an election.¹⁹⁷ The prosecution is linking the arrestees to documents which set out detailed plans for overthrowing the constitutional order in large parts of South Africa (see section on Boeremag documents below).

The activities of the Boeremag came to light in September 2001 when a lieutenant-colonel in the SANDF was contacted by alleged Boeremag members. The lieutenant-colonel was given a detailed military plan (Document 12— which is analysed below) setting out the steps that needed to be taken to rid the country of the 'Boer's enemies' and take over the country's strategic military, economic and communication centres. The document also contained sensitive information on police stations and military installations, including the number of personnel, weapons and models of aircraft and military vehicles.¹⁹⁸ The SANDF officer gave this information to his commander who reported the matter to the South African Police Service's (SAPS) Crime Intelligence. On another occasion alleged Boeremag members invited the second-in-command of the Mpumalanga Commando to a meeting where those present were asked to mobilise to take over the country. This was also reported to the police.¹⁹⁹

In response to these revelations the police launched Operation Zealot in May 2001 and placed suspected right wing extremist groups under covert police surveillance. In October 2001 the police conducted raids on homes of suspected right wingers in the towns of Brits, Warmbaths and Krugersdorp and confiscated documents stored on computer hard drives.²⁰⁰ One of the documents was the

incriminating Document 12. The residents of the homes in which the documents were confiscated were arrested in April 2002 on the allegation that they had been linked to plans to topple the government.²⁰¹ The arrestees were a former Vista University lecturer, an ex-policeman and a farmer.²⁰² At the time of the arrests a police spokesman was quoted as saying that they “do not consider these people to be a real threat because they are such a small organisation”.²⁰³

In mid September 2002 the police revealed that it had foiled an elaborate Boeremag plan to disrupt the World Summit on Sustainable Development. The Summit was held at the Sandton Convention Centre (Johannesburg) in early September 2002, and attended by dozens of heads of state and some 30,000 accredited delegates. The Boeremag planned to insert 120 powerful explosives into portable gas canisters that were to be delivered to the Summit venue as part of the catering equipment.²⁰⁴ It was later revealed that other Summit related targets included the Johannesburg Securities Exchange and the main bridge from Sandton across the M1 freeway—one of the busiest roads on the continent.²⁰⁵

On 13 September 2002 the police uncovered an eight-tonne truck which had been parked in an industrial area of Lichtenburg (in the North West province). It appears that the purpose of the truck was to serve as a mobile headquarter in a violent conflict. The truck was equipped with a computer, a scanner, medical equipment, food, two-way radios and thousands of R-1 rifle, shotgun and .22 rifle rounds of ammunition, one AK-47 rifle, pipe and petrol bombs, base compounds for homemade explosives, and small flags and insignia carrying the Odal rune (see text box on page 74 below).²⁰⁶

According to the police the truck was part of a convoy of vehicles that had been making its way from Nelspruit (Mpumalanga province) to Thabazimbi (Limpopo province). Along the way the convoy split up and the police’s Crime Intelligence Unit members who were following it “lost some of the cars”.²⁰⁷ The truck was eventually found in Lichtenburg, where police were aware of “planning for things that were going to happen in the area”.²⁰⁸ Letters had been sent to people in various parts of the country calling them up to attend a ceremony in Lichtenburg to celebrate the declaration of a Boer Republic on 14 September. The ceremony, which was planned to take place at the headquarters of the Lichtenburg Commando, never occurred. Recipients of the letter were also urged to bring with them weapons and ammunition, Bibles and a hymn book, military uniforms, medication, emergency equipment, headache tablets, suntan lotion, camping equipment, umbrellas, tents, caravans and enough food and water to last three days.

Letters had also been sent to the media and political parties announcing a 'state of war'. The letters were issued by the *Tussentydse Regering van die Suid-Afrikaanse Boere-Republiek* (Interim Government of the South African Boer Republic), stating that the *Boerevolk* (Boer people/nation) had declared war against the Republic of South Africa, its partners, "traitors of the Boerevolk and any other ally who tried to assist the ANC regime".²⁰⁹ Translated from Afrikaans the letter further read: "Our aim is to live in our own independent and autonomous [state] where we only answer to our Almighty Father and ourselves, as an autonomous nation, safe to live, free from murdering gangs who daily torment us."²¹⁰

'Liberation' in Lichtenburg: coincidence or prophecy?

It seems bizarre that the Boeremag advertised their plan to declare a Boer Republic by posting letters to this effect around the country. Declaration of a Boer Republic—backed up with a truck filled with bombs and ammunition—is an act of high treason which would certainly elicit a response by the police and SANDF.

One interesting explanation for this bizarre behaviour is that the Boeremag placed blind faith in their interpretation of a prophecy made by the Boer seer, Nicolaas van Rensburg, in the early twentieth century (see chapter 3). Convinced that prophecy was on their side, the Boeremag might have thought that their victory was preordained irrespective of the response of the state's security forces.

In his visions Van Rensburg saw a man "in a brown suit rise very unexpectedly to gather the nation together and take matters in hand by means of a coup d'état".²¹¹ Moreover, that the Boers are summoned to a hillock north of *Lichtenburg* where the man in the brown suit makes his first appearance and is accepted by the Boers as their leader (our emphasis).²¹² Could it be that the leader of the Boeremag (at the time of writing it was not clear who the leader is) saw himself as the metaphorical man in the brown suit who would lead the Boers to freedom?

Not only the location, but also the date, can be linked to historical events and visions of Seer Van Rensburg. With the outbreak of the First World War, Britain asked South Africa to invade German South West Africa. The South African government acceded to the British request. Many Afrikaners opposed the idea

of fighting for the British. They yearned for the days of the Boer Republics, and the outbreak of war in Europe seemed an opportune moment to throw off the English yoke and declare an independent republic. Amongst those who thought along these lines was the influential General Koos de la Rey of the western Transvaal. Within days of the outbreak of war notices were circulating in his district, Lichtenburg, calling on the burghers to arm themselves and assemble at Treurfontein (now Coligny, about 30 km from Lichtenburg).²¹³

On 15 September 1914 General Beyers resigned as Commandant-General of the Union Defence Force, and he and De la Rey left for Potchefstroom, intending to launch a rebellion in opposition to the planned South African attack on South West Africa. En route De la Rey was killed at a police roadblock and the Boer protest plan was thrown into confusion. Interestingly, Van Rensburg did have a vision of “a white piece of paper with two black letters written on it—a one and a five (15). This white paper with the black letters is hanging over Lichtenburg.”²¹⁴ Many Boers initially interpreted this as meaning that their liberation had been ordained to occur on the 15th day of the month.²¹⁵ As the Boer rebellion failed, the vision was later reinterpreted as foretelling the death of De la Rey on 15 September 1914.

Could it be that the Boeremag gave the vision its original interpretation—the 15th as the day of their liberation? Moreover, that their liberation would commence in Lichtenburg? This would imply the celebration to declare a Boer Republic would have taken place as planned on the 14th, but that the actual declaration of a Republic would have happened after midnight—on 15 September.

In early October 2002 the police uncovered a major arms cache, including 16 large cylinder bombs, R-1 and R-4 assault rifles, handguns, a box containing about 40 hand grenades manufactured from steel pipes and 24 boxes of ammonium nitrate (a basic ingredient for homemade bombs). The cache was found on a farm belonging to a suspected Boeremag member in the Modimolle (previously Nylstroom) area of Limpopo.²¹⁶

At a media briefing after uncovering the weapons cache the national commissioner of police, Jackie Selebi, revealed that there were about 100 key Boeremag members in the country, many of whom had access to the SANDF's Commandos and their weapons. Selebi expressed his concern about how young some of the suspects were—all between the ages of 17 and 40 years—and that

many of the suspects were highly qualified professional people and prosperous farmers. Selebi announced that a number of police stations would forthwith be guarded after it was revealed that police weaponry could be handed over to the Boeremag (presumably by Boeremag sympathisers within the police).²¹⁷ Shortly thereafter armoured vehicles and other extraordinary security precautions were deployed around a number of state buildings in Pretoria, inter alia, the Union Buildings, the Reserve Bank and the national headquarter building of the SAPS.

Only some six months previously a police spokesman had stated that they “do not consider these people [the Boeremag] to be a real threat because they are such a small organisation”.²¹⁸ It is apparent that both the SAPS and the state’s intelligence agency, the National Intelligence Agency (NIA), had underestimated the size of the Boeremag and the threat the organisation posed to the state.

Just after midnight on 30 October 2002 eight bomb blasts rocked Soweto, the country’s largest black township. Seven of the blasts occurred on main commuter railway lines running through the township. The damage to the railway lines was extensive and estimated at about R2 million. More than 200,000 commuters were inconvenienced. One of the explosions flung a piece of railway line a few hundred metres onto a shack killing its sleeping occupant—the only fatality of the explosions. The eighth blast occurred at a mosque forcing parts of the building to collapse. A ninth bomb was found at a disused service station and diffused by the police. Some hours after the Soweto blasts, the detonator from another bomb exploded at a Buddhist temple in Bronkhorstspuit, about 30 kilometres east of Pretoria, slightly injuring two security guards. According to national police commissioner, Jackie Selebi, the explosive used in the blasts was ammonium nitrate.²¹⁹

While one analyst described the extreme right’s ability to set off explosions in Soweto as “twitchings of an amputated limb”, the direct and indirect financial consequences of the bombings were substantial.²²³ The many commuters who did not go to work on the day of the bombings invariably made an impact on the local economy in Gauteng—the country’s economic powerhouse. News of the bomb blasts also caused the rand to lose 21 cents to the US dollar as the markets initially panicked, but recovered some of the lost ground at the close of trading that day. The Gauteng Tourism Authority felt the blasts could negatively affect visitor numbers unless quick action was taken to apprehend the perpetrators.²²⁴

In early November 2002 various newspapers received an e-mailed letter in which the Boeremag said that its enemies should know they were not challenging the lower ranks of the organisation, but the God of Blood River. The

Boer victories on 30 October in history²²⁰

There is no obvious historical significance of the date of the Soweto bombings (30 October) other than two battles of the Anglo-Boer War, both of which were won by the Boers:

- 30 October 1899: Battle of Modderspruit/Nicholson's Nek near Ladysmith, alias 'Mournful Monday', during which 1,764 British troops died. The day has been called "one of the gloomiest days in the history of the British Army". At the time it was "the most humiliating day in British history since Majuba".²²¹
- 30 October 1901: Battle of Bakenlagte near Bethal, in which the British lost 77 men including Lieutenant-Colonel G E Benson.²²²

group, describing themselves as soldiers of God, stated that the Soweto and Bronkhorstspuit bombings were the beginning of the end of the ANC government. Translated from Afrikaans the letter further stated:

We also declare that it is the end of suppression of the Boer nation, and for that we honour only God. For this reason the ANC must also know that it is not only dealing with the Boer nation, but with the revenge... of the God of the Boer nation. Here in the Southland we will establish a nation for our God that will honour only Him.²²⁵

The letter added that no "heathen temples or places of prayer would be permitted in the Southland". Declaring that farm attacks, murders, rapes or violent attacks on members of the Boer nation would no longer be tolerated, the writer(s) stated each of these would be avenged. The writer(s) demanded that 35 right wing prisoners—including the arrested members of the Boeremag—be released. "Should our demands not be met, the ANC will be held responsible for the results before and during this false outer-world festive season," the letter stated.²²⁶

In mid-November the NIA claimed it had uncovered a plot by the Boeremag to target specific days during the December period in a bombing campaign. Moreover, that a new bombing campaign would start on 16 December.²²⁷ The 16th of December is a historically and religiously significant day for conservative Afrikaners. Before 1994 it was a public holiday, the Day of the Vow, commemorating the Boers' victory over the Zulus at Blood River on 16

December 1838. In 2002 the day also marked the beginning of the ANC's 51st national conference held in Stellenbosch. All senior heads in the NIA were ordered to cancel their leave to monitor the situation across the country. The NIA further revealed that about 40 right wing individuals, spread throughout the nine provinces, were involved in the Boeremag planning process.²²⁸

On 23 November a powerful bomb badly damaged a building containing the Police Airwing at Grand Central Airport (outside Johannesburg). A police helicopter was slightly damaged. No one was injured or killed in the explosion which occurred on a Saturday night.²³⁰ In the early morning hours of 27 November an explosive device damaged the Umtamvuna bridge near the Wild Coast Sun casino and hotel complex on the border between the Eastern Cape and KwaZulu-Natal.²³¹ The bridge suffered structural damage and was closed to road traffic for about three weeks while undergoing repairs.

In a statement e-mailed to newspapers the Boeremag claimed responsibility for the aforementioned bomb blasts. It claimed it had damaged the Umtamvuna

An ammonium nitrate bomb

One of several types of fertiliser, ammonium nitrate is used in large quantities by the commercial farming sector in South Africa. The stable fertiliser is ideally suited for soil that farmers do not want to dig up, such as fields prone to erosion.

By itself, the fertiliser is not dangerous. However, purified and mixed with diesel fuel, and equipped with a detonator and a small amount of unstable explosive, such a fertiliser-based bomb can become "a concoction so cheap, powerful and easy to handle that it has largely replaced dynamite in the commercial blasting industry".²²⁹ As ammonium nitrate is very stable it requires a primary explosion to ignite. A primary explosion is created by adding an electric current to some unstable explosive such as flash powder (a mixture of black powder and saltpetre). Flash powder is used in commercial fireworks and is fairly easy to procure.

Ammonium nitrate was the main ingredient of the two-tonne truck bomb used by Timothy McVeigh to blow up a federal government building in Oklahoma City in 1995. The explosion caused the death of 168 people, and injured over 400.

bridge to prevent people entering a gambling house. "During the previous phase we [the Boeremag] have engaged ourselves in a power demonstration. We have deliberately identified targets which would have resulted in minimum loss of life," the e-mail stated. It further read that the government ignored the demands of the Boeremag, and that the organisation will take revenge for loss of life of farmers and its compatriots: "Therefore we will continue with the next phase, Operation Elohiem of Revenge, to include revenge attacks throughout the country."²³² (Elohim is a Hebrew word for God.)

On 29 November the SAPS launched 'Operation Hopper', and raided 94 farms and homes of right wing suspects and possible Boeremag sympathisers. The raids resulted in 11 arrests and the seizure of ammunition and 64 illegal firearms.²³³ In early December, during the second phase of Operation Hopper, the police searched the homes of 43, largely well-known, right wingers such as Barend Strydom (White Wolves), Piet Rudolph (Orde Boerevolk), Manie Maritz (AWB), Gustav Styles and Dries Kriel (executive members of the 'South African League of Former Police, Soldiers and Officials') and Willem Ratte.²³⁴ During the search of a particular house the police found a list containing the names of detectives investigating the Boeremag.²³⁵

In mid-December the police arrested five alleged Boeremag members who were wanted on charges of terrorism, high treason and sabotage. During the arrests police seized almost 900kg of explosives, firearms including an R-4 rifle and pistols, as well as other military type equipment and time delay devices.²³⁶ At the time of writing it was not clear whether the confiscated explosive was ammonium nitrate fertilizer and, if it was, whether it was in purified form ready to be used in the production of a bomb. To execute the arrest of key Boeremag suspects who the police had been looking for non-stop since the October bomb explosions, police secret agents were forced to blow their cover after two years of infiltrating the right wing underground.²³⁷

During the final days of 2002 the police revealed that the Boeremag had planned to bomb a Durban stadium during a concert with artists from India, attended by 50,000 people. It was further revealed that bombs were planned to be detonated in Durban, Port Edward, and in the Gauteng, Limpopo and Mpumalanga provinces simultaneously. A separate attack was also planned for Cape Town.²³⁸

With the December arrests the police seriously disrupted the plans of the Boeremag. At the time of writing the police were claiming that the persons responsible for the Soweto bombs, and the leadership of the organisation, were behind bars awaiting trial. If the Boeremag is organised in a cell-like

structure (which seems likely), it is probable that some individual cells have gone unnoticed by the police. Indeed, in a bail application by an alleged Boeremag member in January 2003, the state advocate admitted as much.²³⁹ In March 2003, police crime intelligence reports alleged that the Boeremag was planning a renewed bombing campaign, and that the remnants of the organisation were regrouping after the December arrests.²⁴⁰

It needs to be borne in mind, however, that members of Boeremag cells which have not been infiltrated by the police or intelligence agencies will have been discouraged by the state's successes against their organisation. The ability of the police to infiltrate the Boeremag to its highest levels will deter many members of the organisation from committing illegal acts any time soon, lest they be uncovered by infiltrated police agents. It is consequently unlikely that the Boeremag will engage in large-scale acts of sabotage or terror in the foreseeable future.

Boeremag documents

At the time of writing the prosecution intends using a number of documents, which were found in the possession of alleged Boeremag members, to prove charges of high treason against them. The documents set out detailed plans for overthrowing government authority in large parts of South Africa. While the three documents discussed below all contain plans to create an independent Boer state, they differ in the detail about how such a state should be created and what form it should take.

It is apparent that the author(s) of the documents are driven by fundamentalist Christian beliefs and a sense of God-given mission. It is probable that one of the documents was composed by someone well informed about the SANDF and the deployment of its equipment throughout the country, and the location of strategic key points in South Africa.

Contingency Plan

The document entitled *gebeurlikheidsplan* (Contingency Plan) is an easy to understand co-ordinated national emergency plan which can be implemented by civilians without military training. It can be deduced from the contingency plan document that it was written between November 2000 and early September 2001.²⁴¹

The Contingency Plan is based on the premise that a nationwide attack by blacks on whites is inevitable. The plan sets out how the Boers should react to the attack so as to reclaim territorial sovereignty for the Boer people and stabilise the unrest situation. The plan is primarily reactive as opposed to offensive. The plan stresses the importance of the Boers not taking the law into their own hands, but acting within the law until the enemy attacks them and other white South Africans. The plan does not identify all blacks as the enemy, but is based on the belief that some blacks will side with the Boer's cause. Such black people are to be protected and accommodated at Boer assembly points and eventually be given their own land where they can rule themselves.

Christian fundamentalism

Sections of the contingency plan contain deeply religious interpretations of the future of the Boers and their enemies. The document argues that God is punishing the *Boerevolk* or Boer nation because of its materialism.

According to the Contingency Plan, God never acts without informing his servants beforehand. In the case of the Boer nation, God informed 'Oom Siener van Rensburg' (Nicolaas van Rensburg, see chapter 3), and it is the responsibility of the Boers to comply with Van Rensburg's prophecies. The document states that God revealed to its author(s) the action which needs to be taken to counter the onslaught against the Boer nation. This 'discussion' between the document's author(s) and God resulted in a comprehensive national plan: the Contingency Plan document.

The document further argues that the struggle of the Boers has an important spiritual dimension. On a physical level the Boer people are threatened by the Illuminati, or international money-power, which manipulates international events to bring about a global one-world government. Such a government will be ruled by Satan, as has been foretold in prophecy in the New Testament book of Revelation.

Diverse enemy

According to the Contingency Plan, the Illuminati is opposed to the territorial integrity of states and the God-given right of every nation to rule itself. In South Africa the Illuminati advances its objectives by exploiting black nationalism and

establishing an ineffective and corrupt black government. Thereafter political unrest is created to enable the Illuminati to further its expansionist neo-colonialist project by extracting the country's minerals at low prices.

The document identifies a range of Illuminati front organisations, such as the United Nations, the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, multinational corporations, the world media, the Commonwealth, the World Council of Churches, the Roman Catholic Church, Zionism, the New Age movement, Freemasonry, the Palestine Liberation Organisation and international communism. According to the document the main Illuminati front organisations in South Africa are the Freemasonry movement, the South African Zionist movement, the 'ANC/PAC/SACP alliance', the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU), the public service, the South African media, all financial institutions, the South African Council of Churches and the Afrikanerbond (successor organisation to the Afrikaner Broederbond).

According to the Contingency Plan the forces opposed to the Illuminati are those who fight for what is right in God's eyes and what is in the interests of the Boer nation. This implies that there can be blacks who will fight on the side of the Boer nation, while many whites will be the enemy of the Boers. In terms of the Contingency Plan, whites who elect to leave the country during the time of the unrest, instead of making their way to the Boer assembly points, will not be allowed to return to South Africa. Blacks who flee the fighting in the cities and who are sympathetic to the Boer cause will be accommodated at the mentioned assembly points. After the Boer's have attained their freedom, black people also receive their own sovereign territory independent of any foreign bonds.

Enemy plans

The Contingency Plan discusses the most likely course of action the Illuminati and its front organisations will take to subjugate South Africans generally and the Boer nation in particular:

- Step 1: political phase. Mobilisation of the black masses, and discrediting the Boer nation.
- Step 2: guerrilla phase. Continuation of the pre-1994 bush war through farm attacks.

- Step 3: conventional phase. To occur in four stages:
 - Preparation by the enemy: organised violent crimes against whites such as shooting incidents at military bases, farm attacks and racially motivated urban violence.
 - National strike by blacks: discontent among black South Africans is fostered.
 - Death of an important statesman: the death may be from natural or unnatural causes. If the statesman is murdered, then it is likely that the perpetrators will be the 'black enemy' to radicalise moderate black South Africans to engage in violent acts.
 - National attack: midnight attack by blacks on Johannesburg, followed by a national attack on the white inhabitants of rural and urban settlements. This attack will encompass the murder and rape of whites and the looting of white properties.
- Step 4: takeover phase. Complete takeover of power by the ANC, its allies and the Illuminati and the redistribution of land and wealth.

The Contingency Plan describes in some detail how each of the above steps should be opposed. Considerable emphasis is placed on local protection, and the mobilisation of the Commando's at Prieska and Lichtenburg, and the establishment of an operations centre to secure first rural areas and small towns, then the provinces and ultimately the nation's capital.

The document describes detailed preparations Boers should take to prepare themselves for the enemy's actions. Preparations include the storage of fuel and foodstuffs, establishing alternative communication networks, setting up underground military cells, and reconnaissance of enemy infrastructure and strategic installations. It is only with the midnight attack on Johannesburg that the contingency plan comes into active operation with the withdrawal of the Boer people to the main assembly points in Prieska and Lichtenburg.

The Contingency Plan states that no unlawful or guerrilla-type acts should be committed by the Boers until the commencement of the aforementioned step four by the enemy (the 'takeover phase'). This is to prevent the arrest and incarceration of Boers before the real conflict begins and harming the Boer's international image, and to permit the Boers to enter the fight with "a clear conscience before God".

Midnight attack and German weapons

Step three of the Contingency Plan presupposes a midnight attack by blacks on Johannesburg, followed by a national attack on the white inhabitants of the country. Since 1994 South Africa has not suffered any violent attacks across racial lines involving mobs of people. On the face of it the prediction contained in the Contingency Plan seems peculiar.

It is likely that the prediction is taken from Seer Van Rensburg's prophecies. In one of his visions Van Rensburg saw an unexpected night attack on Johannesburg by black people during which thousands of white people will be killed in one night.²⁴² The Boer prophet also had a vision of the violent death of a black leader, whereafter "violence and civil war will erupt... The first large-scale violence erupts and the Witwatersrand (Gauteng) in particular feels the brunt of black violence."²⁴³

Both the Contingency Plan and Document 12 place great significance on the small Karoo town of Prieska as an assembly and consolidation point for the Boer forces. Moreover, that the railway line between Prieska and Lüderitz (a harbour town in southern Namibia) is safeguarded. The significance of Prieska is not readily apparent, unless the reader is aware of a vision Van Rensburg had, that German arms would be supplied to the Boers in Prieska by rail from the port of Lüderitz. It is at Prieska, Van Rensburg foretold, where the Boers would be armed and where an interim Boer government will be formed.²⁴⁴ Snyman, a well known interpreter of Van Rensburg's prophecies, puts it as follows:

When the new leader has ended his speech, Nicolaas van Rensburg sees many hobbled horses grazing around the hillock near Lichtenburg. This means the men are ready and willing to fight; there is no stopping them now. Even the new leader does nothing to stop them, as he urged them to unite, take up arms and meet the enemy as believers.

The Boers turn southwards towards Prieska from Lichtenburg. A miracle occurs and the Boers get unexpected help in the form of 'new guns' at Lüderitzbucht. For the first time since the War the Boer nation will rise up to reclaim his freedom and stolen heritage through the barrel of a gun.²⁴⁵

Finally, the Contingency Plan sets out how a Boer army will be established and consolidated in Prieska to launch a counter-attack. The operational and strategic purpose of such an offensive will be to free the whole of South Africa from the enemies of the Boer people, and to establish a sovereign Boer Republic in South Africa. The offensive will mainly be in the form of guerrilla-type activities and concentrated offensives against targets of opportunity.

Document 12

The second document linked to the Boeremag is, for reasons unknown, entitled Document 12. The document contains a detailed nationwide military plan to rid the country of the enemies of the Boers and take over the country's strategic military, economic and communication centres. The technical detail contained in the document indicates that it was written by a person(s) well informed of the military strengths and weaknesses of the SANDF.

Unlike the Contingency Plan, Document 12 is less restrained. The Contingency Plan makes provision for the creation of a Boer Republic as a defensive reaction to a black attack on whites (first in Johannesburg and then throughout the country). Moreover, the Boer's are admonished not to initiate the conflict but act primarily in self defence.

Document 12 provides two scenarios for the commencement of hostilities: an attack by blacks on whites in Johannesburg (as in the Contingency Plan), or an attack by the Boers on the country's infrastructure to create widespread chaos. According to Document 12 the latter Boer attack is to be conducted in such a way that the perception is created that Jews or Muslims were the perpetrators. Unlike the Contingency Plan, which hopes for some black support for the Boer cause, Document 12 proposes that all blacks and Indians are driven out of the country or into KwaZulu-Natal.

Five-phase plan

Document 12 refers to five phases culminating in the Boer forces taking over the country by force and establishing a Boer government.

- Phase 1: Organisation phase
During this phase the military wing of a new Boer government is established. Information is gathered on, inter alia, military installations, the

South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC), the cabinet and parliament with a view of taking over or destroying these institutions and other logistical and strategic key points. Boer personnel are identified to protect the country's towns and cities, and other important key points which should not be destroyed. During this phase the Boers of the Western and Eastern Cape, and KwaZulu-Natal are informed where they should report for duty. Identifying flags and signs in the form of the Odal rune are produced (see box below).²⁴⁶ Phase 1 continues until the start of the Phase 2.

- Phase 2: Creating chaos to achieve freedom of movement
This phase is activated by black attacks on the white community, or a Boer attack on the country's infrastructure to create widespread chaos (a Boer attack should appear to be the work of Jews or Muslims). The resulting chaos will allow the Boer forces to move freely and mobilise support without much government resistance.
- Phase 3: Coup d'état
During this phase the military wing of the Boer government comes into operation, and some 4,000 men are mobilised countrywide. The Odal rune—the battle insignia of the Boer forces—is displayed openly.

This phase includes shutting down the electricity supply to the greater Johannesburg area and Bloemfontein for ten days, the elimination of Boer traitors, the takeover of Radio Pretoria, Radio Oranje and Radio Jakaranda, the takeover or destruction of SANDF and SAPS helicopters and aircraft, the looting of military and police ammunition stores, the takeover of all SANDF bases containing military vehicles, the takeover of the National Intelligence Agency's headquarters and fuel depots, and the freeing of incarcerated right wingers and convicted apartheid-era police operatives.²⁴⁷ The railway line between Prieska and Lüderitz is safeguarded.

- Phase 4: Occupation of secondary targets and expulsion of blacks
During this phase the Boer forces take over secondary targets throughout the country, such as harbours and commercial airports, radio stations, telephone exchanges, water reservoirs, hospitals, engineering works, abattoirs and large shopping centres and food depots.

Blacks and Indians will be told to leave the country or settle in KwaZulu-Natal. To entice blacks and Indians to do so, food will be made available along roads leading out of the country and to KwaZulu-Natal. At the

Odal rune

According to Document 12 the Boer forces will use the Odal rune as an identifying sign. Small flags bearing the Odal rune were recovered by the police in an abandoned truck in Lichtenburg. The truck also contained ammunition, homemade bombs and medical equipment destined for Boeremag activities. The truck belonged to Dr Johan 'Lets' Pretorius—an alleged member of the Boeremag. At the time of writing Pretorius was awaiting trial on charges of contravening the Arms and Ammunition Act.

Runes were used by Germanic tribes as magical symbols and as characters in an alphabet. According to Germanic and Norse mythology Odin is said to have been the first to discover the secret of the runes. It was believed that Odin was the chief god who, with his brothers, created man and the universe. Odin was also the god of war and the god of victory in battle.²⁴⁸

The Odal rune represents “the ancestral home or property and fixed wealth and inheritance. This can include inherited characteristics from past generations that will be passed on to one’s children—or it can represent a united family’s strength.”²⁴⁹ The Odal rune has also been interpreted as being the rune of the farmers representing land, property and home country.²⁵⁰ Another, but similar, interpretation of the Odal rune is that it represents country, patriotism, commitment and prejudice.²⁵¹ Given the Odal rune’s pagan origins it is surprising that it has been chosen as the identifying sign of the Boeremag—an organisation with a professed Christian worldview.

It is not the first time that the Odal rune has been used by the right wing in South Africa. In the late 1970s the right wing Anglo-Afrikaner Bond used it (as did its aptly named youth wing the Odal Clan), followed in the 1980s and 1990s by the Blanke Bevrydingsbeweging and the Afrikaner Studentefront (Afrikaner Student Front). It has also been used by the HNP, first in party meetings in the then South West Africa (Namibia) and later in South Africa as well. The HNP, which contains Christian elements in its programme of principles, argues that “in earlier times the Odal sign was used by the white race as a sign of ownership and property, while later it also suggested the bond to a fatherland”.²⁵² The Odal rune has been adopted by a number of extreme right wing, and white supremacist, groups in Europe.²⁵³

same time black and Indian residential areas outside of KwaZulu-Natal will be bombarded to drive their inhabitants out of South Africa.

- Phase 5: Implement new government
This last phase comes into operation once most black people have been expelled from the country outside of KwaZulu-Natal and the security situation has been stabilised. The military wing of the new government in cooperation with the Boer president appoint the political arm of the new government which starts governing the newly established Boer Republic.

Proclamation by the War Cabinet

The third document linked to the Boeremag is a proclamation in the name of the *Oorlogskabinet van die Suid-Afrikaanse Boere Republiek* (War Cabinet of the South African Boer Republic). On 11 July 2002 the ‘war cabinet’ issued a proclamation announcing the establishment of an interim Boer governing authority. The war cabinet appeared to consist of different departments—known as the Council of Seven—who execute state functions. Each department consists of three members, creating a Council of 21. The activities of the Council of Seven are co-ordinated by a state secretary, (also called the deputy interim president).

According to the proclamation, on 11 July 2002 representatives of the Boer nation proclaimed the restoration of the former Boer Republics of the *Zuid-Afrikaansche Republiek*, *Republiek van die Oranje Vrystaat* and the *Republiek van Vryheid* as a new unitary state to be known as the *Suid-Afrikaanse Boere-Republiek* (South African Boer Republic). Geographically such a state would cover the present South African provinces of the Free State, Gauteng, Limpopo, Mpumalanga, North West and northern KwaZulu-Natal.

The document further claims the following areas for the Boer nation: the area of the Cape Colony (present day Western Cape and large parts of the Eastern and Northern Cape), Zululand (large parts of northern and central KwaZulu-Natal), Namibia, Swaziland and Delagoa Bay (Maputo and surrounds going inland up to the South African border).

Boeremag structure

Unlike the typical right wing saboteur of the early 1990s, the alleged Boeremag arrestees are not predominantly farmers, blue-collar mineworkers

Who is the real interim president of the Boer Republic?

The proclamation purported to be issued by the War Cabinet of the South African Boer Republic is signed by, *inter alia*, Theunis Krüger, as the "interim president of the South African Boer Republic".

The police allege that Theunis Krüger is, in fact, Marius Lamprecht. Lamprecht was a staff sergeant at the Tempe army base in May 1998 when large quantities of military equipment were stolen from the base by members of a right wing group Die Volk (see above). Police allege that Lamprecht was the mastermind behind the weapons haul.²⁵⁴ Lamprecht has been on the run from the police since May 1998.

or socially marginal individuals. Many of them appear to be middle class family men, and some hold senior positions in the SANDF. One of the alleged kingpins of the group was a self employed businessman with a home in a leafy eastern suburb of Pretoria.

The level of detail contained in the Boeremag 'coup documents' reveals that its authors were methodical and well informed about the personnel and military equipment kept at virtually every military base in the country. The technical detail contained in the documents was not dreamed up by a delusional idealist, but written by someone with a sound understanding of the military strengths and weaknesses of the SANDF. The documents reveal that it is the purpose of the Boeremag to, among other things:

- organise the community according to the Contingency Plan;
- recruit, train and employ receptive Boers in military structures and commandos;
- infiltrate military and police structures to obtain weapons, ammunition and communication equipment;
- attack selected targets according to the Contingency Plan; and
- employ strict security measures to prevent infiltration of the Boeremag by state security and intelligence agents.

It can be deduced from one of the confiscated documents that it was written more than a year prior to the first arrest of alleged Boeremag members. It is likely that its authors had some time to identify and connect likeminded people before the state's security agencies began observing them. The fact that the Boeremag arrestees, and the individuals sought by the police, are spread across the country is also indicative of this.

In July 2002 the 'war cabinet' appointed the command of the armed citizen's force (presumably the Boeremag). According to the proclamation of the war cabinet, the citizen's force is tasked with establishing armed commandos throughout the country which can enforce the authority of the South African Boer Republic and enable it to govern. From the information contained in the confiscated documents, it is likely that the Boeremag adopted an organisational structure used by successful guerrilla or terrorist organisations throughout the world to minimise their risk of being infiltrated by state intelligence agents. It is therefore possible that the Boeremag is organised into small cells consisting of three or four people, co-ordinated into commandos and sectors. The organisational structure of the Boeremag may look something like that shown in Figure 5.

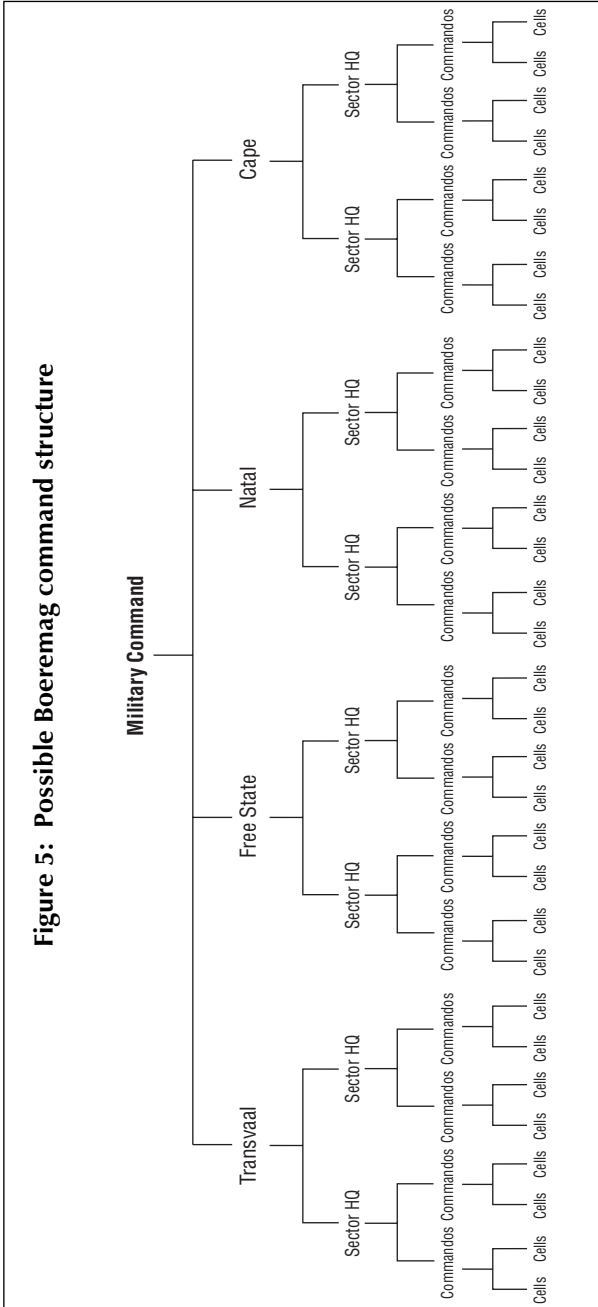
Information about the Boeremag's likely organisational structure can also be gleaned from an analysis of who was arrested (such as experienced SANDF officers) and the wide area over which alleged Boeremag members were arrested (suggesting that the organisation consists of geographically distinct cells). Given this, it is likely that the organisational structure of the Boeremag has been designed for an organisation that needs to operate in secrecy and commit acts of sabotage. Consequently, the *modus operandi* of members of the Boeremag could be based on known guerrilla and terrorist doctrine as practiced by Mao Tse-tung and Ernesto (Che) Guevara.²⁵⁵

State's response to the Boeremag

It appears that the SAPS and the NIA were not expecting the significant upsurge in right wing activity as occurred with the Boeremag during 2002. In the years prior to 2002 the annual Nation Intelligence Estimate evaluated the radical white right as a low level threat.²⁵⁶ As a result the NIA did not develop a strong intelligence gathering capacity on the white right.

The state's response to the right wing threat differed from the way it dealt with PAGAD (People Against Gangsterism and Drugs). PAGAD is a Western Cape Muslim based anti-crime organisation whose members have been implicated

Figure 5: Possible Boeremag command structure



in a bombing campaign and a number of murders that occurred in Cape Town in the late 1990s. The operations against PAGAD were co-ordinated within the National Operational Co-ordinating Committee (NOCOC), involving the SAPS, SANDF, NIA and local security agencies. The aim of the operations against PAGAD was to stabilise the urban terror situation in the Western Cape and arrest the perpetrators.²⁵⁷

The operation against the Boeremag was codenamed 'Operation Zealot'. Given the sensitive nature of the right wing threat, and the danger of isolated security force collusion with the white right, the operational aspects of Operation Zealot were co-ordinated and executed exclusively by the SAPS at national level. Co-ordination on the strategic level took place between the SAPS, Defence Intelligence and the NIA, within the ambit of the National Intelligence Co-ordinating Committee (NICOC).²⁵⁸

On an operational level a team of investigators was assembled from specialist police units, including bomb disposal experts, crime intelligence, serious and violent crime detectives, and forensic units.²⁵⁹ The SAPS' operational co-ordination occurred through the following institutional components:

- Crime intelligence
This is the police's Crimes Against the State (CATS) Unit which is responsible for intelligence gathering and investigation of crimes against the state, including illegal right wing activities. To deal with the Boeremag threat the police's CATS component was strengthened by police officers from provinces where right wing activity was suspected.
- Serious and violent crimes
This is a component of the police's detective services, and includes the Crimes Against the State Unit. The police's serious and violent crimes component is responsible for investigating serious crimes involving violence, including acts of terrorism committed by the Boeremag.
- Operational response services
The Intervention Units of the Public Order Police protect police investigators during arrests, engage in search operations and protect crime scenes. Operational response services includes the Special Task Force which provides armed backup to the regular police in high risk operations.

At the time of writing the police had arrested 23 alleged Boeremag members (the charges against one of the arrestees were withdrawn in late 2002). By and

large the police was successful in identifying and arresting key suspects, confiscating weapons and explosives, and bringing to a halt the bombing campaign before it resulted in any major loss of life. The police's success appears to have been largely based on good intelligence work. Months before the first bombs exploded in Soweto, SAPS crime intelligence agents reportedly infiltrated some of the Boeremag structures. Once ensconced, the agents lay low and waited for the most opportune moment to reveal their true identities and arrest key Boeremag members red-handed with bomb making materials in their possession.

CHAPTER 5

THE EXTREME WHITE RIGHT: A SECURITY THREAT?

In retrospect it is clear that the white right was at the zenith of its strength in late 1993 and early 1994. The Conservative Party was the country's official opposition in the whites only House of Assembly. The AWB successfully disrupted National Party meetings across large swathes of the country, and right wing rallies regularly drew thousands of enthusiastic supporters.

Moreover, significant portions of the officer corps in the SADF and South African Police (SAP) were white, and less than enthusiastic about the prospect of serving under an ANC government. A civil war, or right wing inspired secession, could have resulted in a number of rural army and police structures siding with AVF leader, retired General Constand Viljoen.

After the collapse of the Bophuthatswana homeland government, a key AVF ally, serious divisions within the white right emerged. At the last moment Viljoen decided to participate in the 1994 election. As a result civil war and large scale right wing political violence was averted. The 1994 election went ahead and ushered in the country's first black government.

Degree of support for the white right

In the post-1994 era most right wing whites, disillusioned by the political impotence of right wing organisations and leaders, have withdrawn from political activity. Many have joined the Democratic Alliance (DA) to find protection in an ideology based on individual rights, or are supporting parties such as the Freedom Front with the dim hope that Afrikaners will be granted some form of cultural autonomy by the ruling ANC government. Some have moved to Orania or are withdrawing from the realities of the new South Africa by moving into security complexes or boomed-off suburbs. Others, especially the younger generation, are emigrating.²⁶⁰ These whites—the bulk of the almost one million people who voted against majority rule in a unitary state in 1992—do not pose a security threat to the new South Africa.

Already in the mid-1980s an astute political observer of the right wing scene, ZB du Toit, argued that for political and economic reasons, the Afrikaner is unlikely to engage in violent resistance on a large scale:

I think this option [violent resistance] is an illusion because the Afrikaner has never rebelled on any significant scale. Look at the rebellion of 1914. This was only twelve years after thousands of women and children had been murdered by the British. Then the Afrikaners went and fought with those people and only a few hundred, two or three hundred, resisted! ... The Afrikaner has become a middle-class person with a nice Mercedes and a nice house. He is really more worried about whether his Kreepy-Krauly [automatic pool cleaner] is working than what is happening in politics.²⁶¹

Indeed, with a few historical exceptions (1914, 1940–44 and 1993–94), the bulk of right wing activity has always been contained within the ambit of parliamentary or constitutional activity.²⁶² However, what about the small number of radical fundamentalists on the outer fringes of the white right? What of the extreme right which is prepared to use violence, and break the law, to further its cause?

The number of extreme right wingers who are prepared to use violence to achieve their aims is likely to be small. Even in 1994, when the white right was organised and powerful, only a few dozen people got actively involved in acts of sabotage and terrorism. Today, with disillusionment and division rife within the remaining right wing organisations, the number of potential saboteurs is likely to be even lower.

While violent actions of the extreme right are unlikely to ever engender the active participation of most Afrikaners, it is a sobering fact that for a sabotage campaign to be successful and create long term instability this is not necessary. At the height of its activities the IRA (Irish Republican Army) did not have more than a few hundred active members. The secret of its success was that it had a large number of sympathisers who provided the organisation with safe houses and logistical support. In this way members of the IRA could plan their acts of sabotage—and evade the police after the event—among a fairly wide range of supporters spread throughout the Irish countryside. In South Africa, with its vast and often inhospitable rural hinterland, a small group of right wing saboteurs would be difficult to apprehend should they enjoy widespread sympathies among the Afrikaans farming community.

In mid-1987 Professor Barney Uys, who specialised in monitoring right wing electoral trends, estimated that about 2% of adult Afrikaners (approximately 70,000 people) would eventually be prepared to engage in, or actively support, an armed resistance struggle to defend their right to self-determination.²⁶³ So far history has proven Uys wrong. With some relatively minor exceptions—of which the Boeremag sabotage campaign in 2002 is the most significant—the threat posed to national security by the extreme right has been minor.

Under the right conditions it may, however, be possible for a small group of radicals to marshal the support of a much larger group of people: the 70,000 Uys refers to. These are people who are not in principle opposed to committing acts of violence and sabotage in furtherance of their political beliefs, but will get involved in illegal activities only if there is a real prospect of success. That is, people who are prepared to break the law provided they are persuaded that their acts will make a difference and are being co-ordinated by intelligent and capable leadership. In essence, the kind of people who would have followed the orders of AVF leader, Constand Viljoen, to commit acts of sabotage in the run up to the 1994 election.

Had the Boeremag, for example, been more successful in its sabotage campaign it might have generated a significant level of sympathy and even support. The AWB had an estimated 150,000 supporters in the late 1980s when majority rule was on the distant horizon and the enemy was the ‘liberal’ National Party. It is probable that the majority of these supporters sympathise with the actions of organisations such as the Boeremag. In fact, both the South African League of Former Police, Soldiers and Officials and a spokesperson for the AWB openly voiced their support for the Boeremag, while the HNP refused to condemn the bombings.²⁶⁴

Mobilising support

One of the Boeremag documents seeks to give a populist spin to its activities. The document cites post-1994 levels of crime, unjust affirmative action policies and the sidelining of Afrikaans as reasons why an independent Boer state is justified. Given the real high levels of violent crime, rising white unemployment, and the state-sponsored campaign against farmers in neighbouring Zimbabwe, such arguments may be capable of eliciting widespread sympathy among conservatively minded Afrikaners.

Liberal-left political analyst and a traditional foe of the white right, Max du Preez, argues that the appearance of the Boeremag can be explained in terms of real and perceived grievances that exist in the Afrikaner community:

Why do we have a right-wing resurgence now? It might have escaped an overconfident ANC government, but there is a substantial and growing feeling of alienation felt by many whites, especially Afrikaners. They feel their language rights are being disregarded, especially with moves to downscale Afrikaans in courts, the police, the military, the prisons and the public service. There are also fears that there will soon be no universities with a mostly Afrikaans character.

Conservative communities believe the government does not care enough about the large numbers of murders of white farmers. They fear that the government's softly-softly approach towards the land-grabbing and mistreatment of white farmers in Zimbabwe means that the same could one day happen in South Africa. Affirmative action and black empowerment make them feel that under the present regime there is no future for their children.

They feel despondent, fearful and believe that their room to manoeuvre as a cultural minority has diminished substantially. Their enthusiasm for the new South Africa started waning when the more assertive Thabo Mbeki, with much less appetite for reassuring whites, took over the presidency from Nelson Mandela.²⁶⁵

Other commentators who hold no brief for the white right have come to similar conclusions—namely, that there are a substantial number of white South Africans who feel threatened by their own government's ambiguity towards land seizures in Zimbabwe, violent crimes committed against white farmers in South Africa and the lack of official protection for the Afrikaans language and culture.²⁶⁶

Violent crime and farm attacks

The expectation which many whites had in 1994 that crime—especially violent crime—would decrease has not materialised. Consistently high levels of violent crime (and the media coverage of it) have resulted in a significant increase in the public's feelings of insecurity. This is especially so among white South Africans whose suburbs and farming communities received a disproportionate amount of protection from the state's security forces before 1994.

Afrikaners and race relations

In mid-2001 a national survey, commissioned by the South African Institute of Race Relations, sought to gauge South African's views on race relations and racism in everyday life. Overall the survey results were positive, with twice as many respondents stating that race relations in South Africa had improved in the five years prior to the survey compared to those who felt that they had deteriorated. The survey results did, however, indicate that Afrikaners (defined as "white Afrikaans speaking") were significantly more negative in their views on race relations in the country than respondents from other ethnic groups:²⁶⁷

- To the question: "Over the past few years, relations between people of different races in South Africa have: improved, stayed the same, or become worse?", a quarter of the respondents (25%) said that race relations had got worse. Afrikaners were the most negative, with 44% stating that race relations had got worse.
- To the question: "Compared to a few years ago, do you trust your fellow South Africans more, less, or about the same?", almost two-thirds (66%) of the respondents said they trusted their fellow South Africans less. Afrikaners were again the most negative with almost three-quarters (75%) expressing the view that they trusted their compatriots less.
- To the question: "What counts these days for a person trying to make progress in a career?", 14% of respondents said "one's race group". Afrikaans respondents were the most likely to give this answer, with 42% doing so.
- To the question: "These days some people complain about racism that has continued despite the changes that have taken place in South Africa. How serious do you think the problem of racism actually is?", 59% of respondents thought that it was serious. Afrikaans respondents were the most likely to say that it was serious, with 87% doing so.

Poorer communities, which are badly policed and bear the brunt of violent crime, are increasingly engaging in vigilante activity. However, more formal vigilante organisations such as *Mapopo-a-Mathamaga*, count a significant number of middle class Afrikaners among their supporters. Mapogo, which

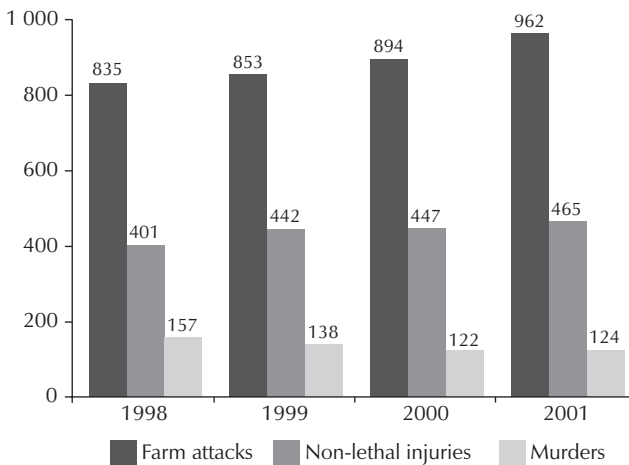
openly advocates corporal punishment for suspected criminals, claims to have 70,000 fee paying members.²⁶⁸

Among rural Afrikaners the violent attacks on farmers and their families have contributed significantly to a hardening of attitudes. A Markinor poll amongst commercial farmers in early 2001 found that almost two-thirds of respondents would “take the law into their own hands” if farm violence was not stopped.²⁶⁹ Such opinions hold serious implications for the internal sovereignty of the state. A substantial number of Afrikaners do not trust the state’s ability to fulfil one of its most important functions: to protect its citizens from violent criminals.

Between 1998 and 2001 there were some 3,500 recorded farm attacks in South Africa.²⁷⁰ The attacks have resulted in the murder of 541 farmers, their families or their workers. On average more than two farm attack related murders are committed every week (Figure 6).

Significantly, shortly after the commencement of the Boeremag bombing campaign, the chairman of the Waterberg District Agricultural Union (the area

Figure 6: Farm attacks, injuries and murders, 1998–2001



Source: SAPS Crime Information Analysis Centre

where a number of the alleged bombers lived), said that “while most farmers in the area do not condone the actions of the wanted and arrested men, they do understand their frustrations which inspired their actions”.²⁷¹

Conservative Afrikaners largely interpret farm attacks as a racially inspired campaign to force them off their farms. At its 1997 national congress the Conservative Party said the murder of farmers was part of a plot to drive farmers off their land.²⁷² In response to attacks on farmers across the country in the latter part of 1997, Freedom Front leader Viljoen said that “it could be a new form of terrorism”.²⁷³

In mid-2001 the Freedom Front appealed to the United Nations Human Rights Commission to place pressure on the South African government to do something about the murder of Afrikaans farmers, which “had taken on the shape of an ethnic massacre”.²⁷⁴ Freedom Front leader, Pieter Mulder, said most farm attacks seemed orchestrated, and that the motive for the attacks was not only criminal. Mulder further claimed that “a definite anti-Afrikaner climate had taken root in South Africa. People accused of murdering Afrikaners were often applauded by supporters during court appearances.”²⁷⁵

Comments made by senior black politicians that portray white farmers as the enemy and alien invaders are interpreted by the conservative farming community as offering a justification to farm attackers for their deeds. A comment in a speech made by the former ANC parliamentary chief whip, Tony Yengeni, illustrates the point: “Everything whites own, they stole from the blacks.”²⁷⁶

During the violent and protracted transition to democracy in the early 1990s, anti-white Pan Africanist Congress (PAC) slogans—of which the most famous was ‘One Settler, One Bullet’—were taken up by many ANC supporters. ANC youth leader and later the Minister of Environmental Affairs and Tourism, Peter Mokaba, led the chant ‘Kill the Boer, Kill the Farmer’ at the April 1993 funeral of assassinated South African Communist party leader Chris Hani.²⁷⁷ At Mokaba’s funeral in mid-2002 the chant was again used by the mourners.²⁷⁸

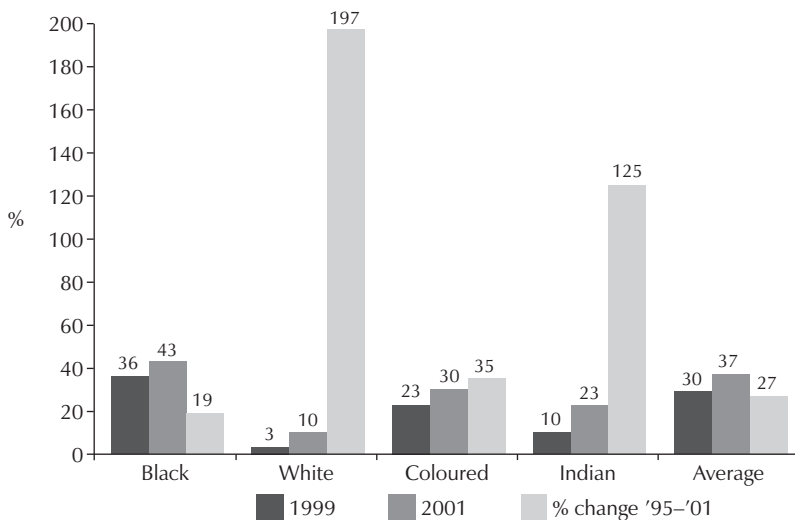
In late 2002 the South African Human Rights Commission, an official statutory body, found that the slogan ‘Kill the Boer, Kill the Farmer’ did not amount to hate speech. According to the Commission the slogan amounted to “undesirable speech” but did “not incite violence or warfare”.²⁷⁹ The decision was derided by the Freedom Front and white farmers in generally.²⁸⁰ Both the Freedom Front and the Transvaal Agricultural Union, the second largest commercial farmers’ union in the country, appealed the Commission’s decision.

According to the organisation 'Action Stop Farm Attacks', which is supported by commercial farmers' unions, "evidence strongly suggests that many farm attacks are concerted efforts to intimidate the farming community", which is why farm attackers "do not merely intend killing their victims, but instead want to inflict pain, humiliation and suffering, especially on elderly people and women".²⁸¹ A countrywide signature campaign launched by Action Stop Farm Attacks in May 2000, in protest against the high number of attacks on farmers, was endorsed by the Freedom Front and the AEB. Half a year later, the petition had received 372,000 signatures.²⁸²

White unemployment

White employment is low by South African standards: 10% in 2001, compared to a national average of 37%.²⁸³ White unemployment has, however, experienced the greatest proportional increase between 1995 and 2001: 197% compared to a national average of 27%. In 2001 some 228,000 economically active whites were unemployed (Figure 7).

Figure 7: Proportion economically active population unemployed in 1995 & 2001, and percentage change '95-'01 (by race)



Sources: Stats SA, and SA Institute of Race Relations

The government's affirmative action policy—and the legislation enforcing the policy—is frequently blamed by the white right as a cause of white unemployment. One consequence has been the membership growth of the trade union 'Solidarity', which has traditionally supported the white right. Until 2001 Solidarity was called the Mine Workers Union. The union is well represented in the chemical, electrical, telecommunications, motor, steel, engineering and mining industries. The union's membership grew from 33,000 in 1994 to 128,000 in early 2002.²⁸⁴

Speaking in March 2002, Solidarity's information and strategy officer expressed himself bitterly about how affirmative action was applied in South Africa:

Affirmative action is one of the most burning issues for our membership. We experience more and more a feeling of alienation in the workplace... The Employment Equity Act [affirmative action legislation] is primarily aimed at the racially driven transformation of the labour market, and not chiefly at the rectification of the inequalities that resulted from the past... It is our experience that numerous enterprises regard affirmative action programmes as methods of ridding themselves of whites in the workplace, in order to replace them with blacks. This is not affirmative action—it is ethnic cleansing.

The question arises whether there is any difference between confiscation of white farms in Zimbabwe on the basis that these are not proportionally owned, and the confiscation of white posts in South Africa because these posts are not proportionally occupied... numerous advertisements are encountered for posts which have been earmarked solely for affirmative action purposes. A feeling of powerlessness prevails, which could lead to various forms of resistance.²⁸⁵

Language

According to Smith, most nationalists identify nationality with language.²⁸⁶ Based on German philosopher, Johann Herder's work, nationalists argue that language is the primary social bond. Though communities are the product of various factors—biological, geographical and psychological—they are held together by human communication. In Eastern Europe, especially, nationalists have tended to single out language as the basic ingredient of nations, and the main issue fuelling nationalist movements.²⁸⁷

For Afrikaner nationalists the Afrikaans language is regarded as one of the major justifications for the belief that the Afrikaner constitutes a distinct and separate *volk* with a legitimate right to self-determination: "An own language is the most important precondition for the development and continued existence of a people, as a separate people among the peoples of the world."²⁸⁸

Giliomee points out that the reason the Afrikaner people survived as a distinctive ethnic group is not primarily because of political skill or military force, but the huge effort that went into developing Afrikaans as a high culture language:

Originally branded as a 'kitchen language', Afrikaans was deliberately turned into a white man's or 'civilised' language. Furthermore—and this was ultimately of paramount importance—the white Afrikaner nation came to see its distinctive identity as expressed by that language.²⁸⁹

Many Afrikaners feel their language is under threat in the new South Africa. In a survey conducted early in 1997 only 16% of Afrikaners felt that their language was adequately treated. Nearly 90% felt that Afrikaans enjoys less than its rightful place in public life. Amazingly, even half of white English-speaking respondents and more than a third of black respondents felt that Afrikaans is being discriminated against.²⁹⁰

In 2002 a number of towns and cities with historic Afrikaans names dating back to Voortrekker times—such as Pietersburg and Potgietersrus—had their names changed, often in the face of popular opposition to the change. In the same year the government decided that state departments had to choose a single language for inter- and intra-departmental communication, effectively compelling public servants to communicate in English with one another.²⁹¹

The government's language policy in respect of education has probably been the most contentious in the eyes of the Afrikaner right. The constitution recognises the right to mother tongue education in any of the 11 official languages, but this is qualified by the proviso that it must be reasonably practicable. The post-1994 educational authorities have resisted Afrikaner demands that public schools and universities should retain their cultural identity. According to Giliomee the government views "the right of blacks to have access to all public institutions in their preferred medium of instruction, namely English, as a higher priority than the claim to cultural rights or institutional autonomy".²⁹²

Of the 31 universities in South Africa, five were historically Afrikaans (Free State, Potchefstroom, Pretoria, Rand Afrikaans University and Stellenbosch). In mid-

2002 national education minister, Kader Asmal, announced that Afrikaans medium universities must implement parallel teaching in English, despite a proposal by a government appointed commission that two Afrikaans universities should be retained to further Afrikaans as an academic language.²⁹³

According to the government's language policy for higher education "the notion of Afrikaans universities runs counter to the end goal of a transformed higher education system, which... is the creation of higher education institutions whose identity and cultural orientation is neither black nor white, English or Afrikaans-speaking, but unabashedly and unashamedly South African".²⁹⁴ The language policy avers that the country's constitution limits the right of individuals to receive education in the language of their choice, but that the exercise of such a right may not negate considerations of equity and redress. Moreover, that "the values and shared aspirations of a democratic South Africa... require the Constitution to compel transformation".²⁹⁵

At primary school level a row erupted in early 2003 when the Limpopo province education department intervened in the admission policy of four Afrikaans-medium schools, compelling them to admit non-Afrikaans speaking pupils. This effectively obliged the schools to teach such pupils in a language they can understand, probably English. The AEB criticised the decision of the provincial education department.²⁹⁶

In late 2002, Freedom Front member of parliament, Corné Mulder, argued that in relation to Afrikaner frustrations the Boeremag bombing campaign constituted "the tip of the iceberg". Government's approach towards things like Afrikaans-language universities and the lower status of Afrikaans generally have put Afrikaners on edge, Mulder claimed.²⁹⁷

Creating martyrs

Any small group of right wing extremists requires the tacit support of its broader ethnic community to conduct a successful and lengthy sabotage campaign. One way of mobilising ethnic support is to exploit popular grievances as discussed above. Another way is to alienate the broader ethnic community from the agencies of the state, and to create martyrs whose 'suffering' and 'sacrifices' can be idealised and used to enlist new impressionable young recruits.

If conservative Afrikaners have any goodwill for the state's fight against right wing saboteurs, this could be rapidly undermined by security force excesses.

The perception can then be fostered that the security forces (and by implication the government), are victimising members of the ethnic group generally. With time, and depending on the extent of the abuses, a significant number of Afrikaners may begin to view the security forces as their real enemy instead of the right wing extremists. Once this happens a small but substantial number of Afrikaners may stop co-operating with law enforcement agencies, and even develop sympathies for the extremists amongst them.

According to well known terrorism expert, Paul Wilkinson, security forces in multi-ethnic societies such as South Africa have to be especially careful not to create the perception that they are victimising members of the public who share the same ethnic affiliation as the terrorists:

The terrorists can make enormous propaganda capital out of violations of the law by members of the security forces and use these as additional justifications for their own campaigns. Thus they conveniently divert the public's gaze away from the violations of the law and outrages stemming from their own petty tyranny, and attempt to portray the incumbent authorities as monstrous blood-soaked oppressors.²⁹⁸

In respect of the Boeremag the SAPS was able to arrest the bombers within a relatively short period of time. This was because of good intelligence, detective and forensic work, and the fact that the police knew within days of the first bombings who the likely perpetrators were. Yet it appears that the police used unnecessarily robust, and even extra-legal, methods in its activities against the Boeremag.

As part of Operation Hopper the SAPS raided some 90 farms and homes of right wing suspects. Reports soon filled the press of "police barging into private homes before dawn, without warrants, permission or explanations".²⁹⁹ An unnamed police legal advisor admitted "the police may have acted outside the law... if they were not in possession of a valid warrant".³⁰⁰ A number of people were arrested because they were unable to find their firearm licences quickly enough.³⁰¹ As one of the arrestees wrote in a letter published in a daily newspaper: "This [the raids] was a fishing expedition which has set back reconciliation many years."³⁰² One couple were kept in custody for almost two months, and then released without bail. The charge against them, of possession of an unlicensed firearm, was withdrawn.³⁰³

The Transvaal Agricultural Union complained that the police arrested several union members for offences such as being in possession of a firearm licensed

in a brother's name, and keeping a flare.³⁰⁴ In a press release the union stated angrily: "In typical Zimbabwe style the government is using the SAPS to intimidate law abiding citizens, some of whom are our members, through night time raids without search warrants."³⁰⁵

Potentially more serious are allegations that Boeremag suspects were tortured by the police. According to press reports a white homeless man was mistakenly arrested in connection with the Soweto Boeremag bombings. The man alleges that the police "tortured him, including electric shocks to his toes, and had demanded information about bombs and right-wing operatives".³⁰⁶ According to the newspaper report the police confirmed that the man was detained for eight hours and interrogated, but would not be drawn on whether he was tortured.³⁰⁷ Allegations have also been made by the legal representative of some of the Boeremag arrestees that their clients were tortured by the police.³⁰⁸ A right wing organisation, Orde Boerevolk, intends petitioning the International Committee of the Red Cross to intervene in the alleged maltreatment of incarcerated Boeremag suspects.³⁰⁹

It would be a victory for the extreme white right if any of these allegations turn out to be true. Firstly, it can result in the acquittal of guilty accused if crucial confessions were made under duress and torture. This would be an acute embarrassment to the criminal justice system and the government while providing a moral boost to the extreme right. Secondly, such abuses would enable the extreme right to create the martyrs they need to sustain support and enthusiasm for their cause.

Possibility of a coup d'état

Given the right circumstances, and a right wing organisation capable of exploiting popular Afrikaner grievances, it is possible that a right wing sabotage campaign could be condoned—and even tacitly supported—by a significant number of Afrikaners. What is unlikely, however, is that the extreme white right can attract sufficient popular support, and develop the organisational capacity, to execute a coup d'état. Writing shortly before the 1994 election, Adam and Moodley also rejected the likelihood of a right wing coup in South Africa:

The ultra-right is unlikely to provoke a military takeover under present conditions. Even if such a seizure of power were to take place during a future civil war, the right wing alone could not govern the

country. Unlike military juntas in Latin American states, who can count on domestic financial endorsement and influential international support, a military coup in South Africa would meet with determined opposition. The hope of the ultra-right, despite its military rhetoric, lies not in a takeover but in secession from an increasingly integrated non-racial state.³¹⁰

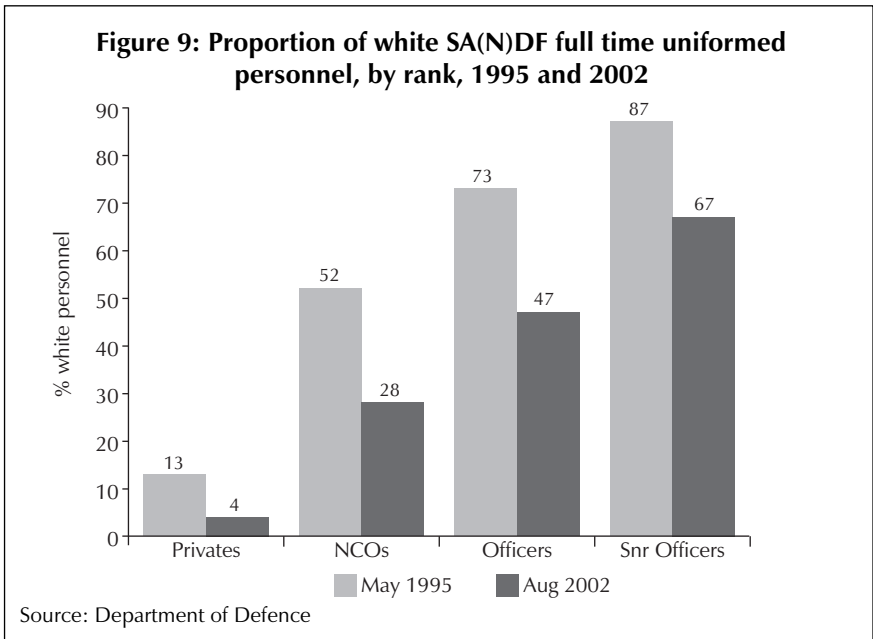
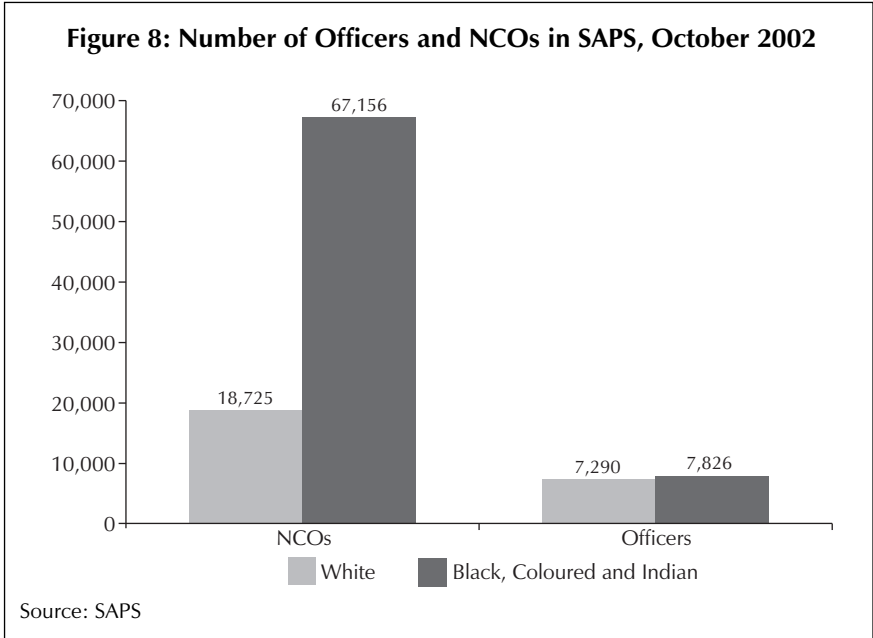
According to military analyst, Rocklyn Williams, the prospects of a successful right wing coup d'état are virtually zero. Williams argues that for a coup to be successful in any country it is vital that a number of preconditions are in place—all of which are absent in respect of the South African right wing:

- A high level of political will and mass mobilisation must exist to ensure that the coup plotters possess the required levels of legitimacy and political support.
- The coup plotters need to be able to secure control over the most important of the country's strategic installations. In a country as large, complex and organised as South Africa this is close to impossible to achieve.
- The bulk of the officers corps, or a significant part thereof, need to support the objectives of the coup, and possess the political will to govern.³¹¹

With every passing year since 1994 the extreme white right's chances of violently taking over the reigns of power, or establishing an independent Afrikaner state, have diminished. Most of the country's senior civil servants are ANC appointees. The SANDF and SAPS have become multiracial organisations at all command levels. Moreover, senior officers in the defence force and the police with right wing beliefs have been sidelined or given early retirement.

In mid-1991 some 43% of the police personnel in the former South African Police (SAP) were white. Officers' ranks were virtually exclusively white. Even in mid-1994, some 95% of the officer corps in the SAP was white.³¹² At the end of 2002 just over a quarter (26%) of all police personnel in the SAPS were white, and just under half (48%) of the commissioned officers and 22% of the non-commissioned officers (NCOs) were white (Figure 8).

In May 1995, the SANDF employed some 76,000 full time uniformed personnel (excluding civilians), of whom 28,413 or 37% were white. The proportion of white employees for the different rank categories were as follows:



private, 13%; non-commissioned officers (lance-corporal to warrant officer 1st class) 52%; officers (chaplain to captain) 73%; and senior officers (major to general) 87%. By the end of 2002, the proportion of white SANDF full time uniformed soldiers had declined significantly. Among senior officers, for example, the proportion of whites had declined from 87% in 1995 to 67% (Figure 9).

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

In a democracy it is not an easy task to deal effectively with a sustained terrorist threat. Civil liberties, constitutionally entrenched rights and the rule of law come at a cost when it comes to fighting terrorism: the state has to expend considerable resources and patiently collect evidence over frustratingly lengthy periods of time to successfully convict the kingpins in a closely knit terrorist network. This requires excellent teamwork between the various intelligence and law enforcement agencies, and a motivated and specialised investigating and prosecuting unit devoted to identifying and convicting terrorists.

Even more difficult to deal with is an ethnocentric and religious inspired terrorist campaign. Such a campaign can successfully take advantage of popular grievances against the central government, and exploit ethnically-based aspirations for greater political and cultural autonomy.

To crack an isolated terror cell is possible. To defeat a band of terrorists who are abetted in their actions by a growing group of sympathisers in large parts of the country is almost impossible. The former can be done through good police and intelligence work alone. The latter requires a political solution.

One way to respond, as the South African government has done, is to foster national integration and develop a true South African identity and national spirit among all ethnic groups. This may work to an extent. Not so much because of state-driven nation building campaigns, but because of national successes such as South Africa's 1995 World Cup rugby victory. In fact, Smith warns that government efforts at nation building may even be counterproductive:

In their desire for social integration, the leaders of these [poly-ethnic] states generally employ policies of cultural assimilation... unfortunately, the very act of integrating such divided peoples may well exacerbate ethnic antagonisms and highlight ethnic solidarities.³¹³

A political solution to a sustained right wing threat will invariably contain elements which are unpalatable for the ANC and many of its supporters. For

example, it will not be easy for an ANC controlled government to justify spending more resources on preventing and combating farm attacks while levels of violent crime are also extremely high in the country's townships. Fortunately many of the grievances farmers have about farm attacks are not directly related to resources. Many farmers believe that virtually all farm attack victims are white and that convicted farm attackers are not punished harshly by the courts. These are misconceptions which can be changed through a credible public information campaign targeted at the white commercial farming community. Moreover, black leaders who make inciting statements against white farmers need to be relieved of their public duties, and their statements must be condemned by senior government officials, up to the level of the president's office. The government's land reform programme, especially in respect of providing state land to the landless, should be expedited.

Given that affirmative action has been cited as a significant grievance for right wing and moderate whites alike, affirmative action policies need to be tempered by economic considerations, and the right of employees to employ persons of their choice. The implementation of affirmative action must be carefully managed so as not to demoralise and humiliate white male employees and job seekers. Consideration should be given to whether it is fair that future job seekers born after, say 1990, should be employed and promoted according to affirmative action guidelines. Present affirmative action legislation should not become a permanent fixture on the statute books, but be repealed at a fixed time in the not too distant future.

Probably the most controversial concession the government can consider is granting Afrikaners greater political and even territorial autonomy. Such an issue should be approached from the perspective of ethnic minorities generally in South Africa. South Africa is essentially a unitary state with some weak federal elements. It is also a country where voters vote largely along racial lines. For example, in the 1999 national election the ANC received over 80% of the black vote. In a post election poll 77% of black ANC voters said they would still vote for the ANC even if it failed to fulfil its promises over the following five years (and less than 9% said they would vote for another party).³¹⁴ This suggests that there is little prospect of a change in government for many years to come. A consequence of such racial consolidation is that "the opposition tends to be peripheral to the system".³¹⁵ Unsurprisingly, in a national opinion survey in early 2000, a third of white respondents indicated that they had not voted in the previous election (compared to 13% of black respondents)—a likely consequence of the political alienation experienced by white South Africans. Responses by Afrikaners only were not provided.³¹⁶

South Africa's political system, and the racial solidarity of its voters, sidelines ethnically based minority groups to a position of perpetual opposition and political marginalisation. Even liberal commentators argue that the drafters of the country's constitution should have given "more serious consideration to balancing the numerical principle with more substantial provisions for the incorporation of minority interests".³¹⁷

A compromise to the dilemma of accommodating the fair and reasonable aspirations of the ethnic Afrikaner minority may be to investigate forms of cultural or corporative self-determination. That is, a type of non-territorial federalism where distinguishable ethnic groups or communities live together, but take separate responsibility for their own cultural interests and, at the same time, strive towards co-operation in respect of matters of common interest.³¹⁸

It may be tempting to believe that large scale ethnic mobilisation and ethnocentrism is extremely unlikely in an era of globalisation and multiculturalism. The sad fact is that real and perceived ethnic grievances can quickly explode into ethnic conflict (and, in extreme cases, even 'ethnic cleansing'), as recent events in the Balkans, Chechnya, Rwanda and, indeed, South Africa in the run up to the 1994 election, have shown. While national elites often adopt cosmopolitan value systems, the much larger number of people who are not part of the economic or political elite tend to have a much more parochial worldview.

American political scientist, Samuel Huntington, argues that most decision makers and opinion formers in the Western world subscribe to what may be called the 'Davos Culture'. Each year about 1,000 businesspeople, bankers, government officials, intellectuals and journalists from throughout the world meet in the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland. Almost all of these people hold university degrees in the social or physical sciences, business or law, work with ideas, words or numbers, are fairly fluent in English, are employed by governments, corporations, non-governmental organisations and academic institutions with extensive international involvements, and travel frequently outside their own country. They generally share beliefs in individualism, market economies and political democracy. Huntington makes a convincing argument that while 'Davos people' are extremely important and powerful in world and national affairs, they constitute a small minority of the world's population.³¹⁹

In South Africa Davos-type people dominate the national economy, media and formal civil society, and constitute the bulk of the country's political elite.

It is probable that 95% or more of the readers of this monograph are Davos-type people. This, however, does not make Davos culture the national culture in South Africa. Davos culture is probably shared by not more than two to four million South Africans—less than a tenth of the population. Outside of the major cities, it is likely to be less than a fiftieth of the population. For Huntington this kind of reality leads to the conclusion that while globalisation might be taking place on an economic level, on a political level most people define themselves on the basis of ancestry, language, religion and custom:

Spurred by modernization, global politics is being reconfigured along cultural lines. Peoples and countries with similar cultures are coming together. Peoples and countries with different cultures are coming apart... Political boundaries increasingly are redrawn to coincide with cultural ones: ethnic, religious, and civilizational.³²⁰

Huntington's thesis, while useful, risks being too dichotomous. In South Africa's case the divergence between Davos and non-Davos type people is not always clear cut. There are many mainstream Afrikaners who subscribe to most elements of the Davos culture, but who are nevertheless concerned about the future and interests of their ethnic group. Since the late 1990s a number of discourses traditionally unique to the Afrikaner right have been taken up by the Afrikaner establishment. Over the last few years there has been a revival of Afrikaans culture and language, and a variety of Afrikaner civil society movements. The intellectual and cultural battle in defence of Afrikaans and Afrikaner culture, which was the preserve of the right wing in the 1980s and early 1990s, has been adopted by the broad Afrikaner mainstream.

In defence of cultural and linguistic rights which are perceived to be under pressure, many cosmopolitan and modern Afrikaners are beginning to mobilise around ethnic issues. This mobilisation is taking place not only within rural and conservative communities, but also among traditionally liberal Afrikaner academics, Afrikaans authors and artists and in the editorial offices of the country's largest Afrikaans-language newspapers.

Other, less ethnically aware Afrikaners, are emigrating. These are primarily well educated and prosperous people who are disillusioned with the new South Africa. A developing country such as South Africa crucially needs to retain the skills and human capital such emigrants are taking with them.

Government efforts at alleviating Afrikaner concerns need not be directed primarily at the concerns of the Afrikaner right. More importantly, such efforts

need to address the fears and reasonable aspirations of the Afrikaner mainstream. Once a significant portion of the Afrikaner mainstream emigrates, engages in ‘internal emigration’ by withdrawing from public life and its civic responsibilities, or interprets political events along mainly antagonistic ethnic terms, the threat to the country’s economic and political stability is likely to be greater than a few isolated bombings by the extreme right.

The extreme white right does not have the resources, capacity or support to successfully execute a coup d’état in South African. It also lacks the broad popular support and access to military weaponry to successfully proclaim and defend an Afrikaner or Boer state in any part of the country. It would be naïve, however, to presume that the extreme white right cannot create instability and destruction on a significant scale.

The twenty-first century may well see the world becoming increasingly vulnerable to small groups of extremists. According to Canadian political scientist, Thomas Homer-Dixon, this vulnerability is the product of two key social and technological developments. First, the growing complexity and interconnectedness of modern societies. Secondly, the increasing geographic concentration of wealth, human capital, knowledge and communication links. For Homer-Dixon the growing technological capacity of small groups to destroy infrastructure and people, and the increasing vulnerability of a country’s economic and technological systems to carefully aimed attacks, has empowered small groups of extremists.³²¹

South Africa’s industry, wealth and human capital are concentrated in a few metropolitan areas. A number of powerful bombs, strategically placed, could cause considerable harm to South Africa’s fragile economy by frightening away foreign investment, hard currency tourists and cash laden international conference attendees. Strategic targets are not difficult to identify. A dozen bombs targeting, for example, the Johannesburg Stock Exchange, the Reserve Bank, key bridges along busy national roads, one or two international airports, the Koeberg nuclear power station, a prominent foreign embassy and a luxury hotel filled with foreign tourists would see the rand plummeting, tourists fleeing the country and an end to foreign direct investment. Alternatively, the assassination of a handful of cabinet ministers and popular black political or religious leaders could take the country to the brink of a race war.

To ensure their long term success, terrorists need the support of parts of the community in which they live. Terrorists—besides the exceptional loner who works on his own—are members of bigger groups and gangs that provide

them with logistical support and finances to further their cause. Moreover, terrorists have families, friends, and lovers, and live in a bigger community in which they plan their deeds, build their bombs and talk about their ideas and actions. Terrorists who live and hide among people who do not co-operate with law enforcement agencies can be a state's biggest nightmare. Such a scenario must be avoided at all costs in South Africa.

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