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Minister's book slams pro-apartheid business

A new book co-authored by Kader Asmal is likely to cause embarrassment in some of South Africa's boardrooms, reports Mungo Soggot

SOME of South Africa's top business leaders come under fire in a new book on the Truth and Reconciliation Commission — co-authored by Water Affairs Minister Kader Asmal — which fingers companies which supported apartheid.

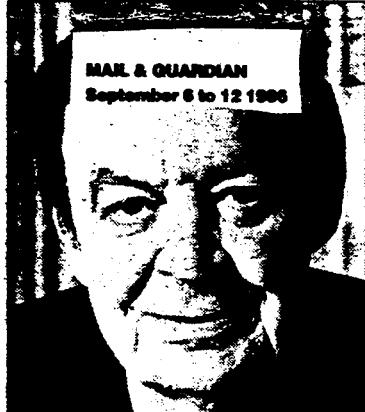
Reconciliation through Truth, soon to be published by David Philip, makes a strong case for the truth commission to seek testimony from company bosses who either supported apartheid or whose corporate practices trampled human rights.

The text recalls pro-apartheid statements from men such as Gavin Relly, who took over the helm of Anglo American when Harry Oppenheimer retired in 1982. Relly said at the time he, like Oppenheimer, did not favour "one man, one vote" as that would simply be a formula for unadulterated chaos at this point in time in our history".

The authors quote Oppenheimer's official biographer, Anthony Hocking, who said the magnate "never subscribed to the view that apartheid was morally wrong. In his view, it was at root an honest attempt to cope with overwhelming racial problems."

Rembrandt head Anton Rupert, now a member of the influential "Brentthurst Club" which advises the government on economic issues had similar views: "After many African countries became free they got dictatorships like Idi Amin's. We have to find a solution that won't end up giving us one man, one vote."

The authors — Asmal, his wife Louise and Trinidadian lawyer Ronald Roberts — show that in the 1960s big business had been even more open in



Anton Rupert: 'We have to find a solution that won't end up giving us one man, one vote'

its support of Pretoria. In 1967 the South Africa Foundation, whose members included Oppenheimer and Rupert, said in an advertisement in the *Sunday Times* that South Africans should stop apologising for apartheid and instead "substitute a tone of confident self-assertion which publicised the opportunities of apartheid".

In 1971, the foundation claimed its propaganda efforts had helped to "stem the tide of ignorance, criticism and misrepresentation against the republic".

The Asmals and Roberts say South Africa's truth seekers have so far not broached the idea of "corporate war criminals" — like Japan's Kajimi Gumi company, tried in 1945 for using war prisoners and kidnapped Chinese civilians as labourers.

Although the authors hint there is much light to be shed on the details of corporate connivance in apartheid, they signal the collaborating companies themselves were aware of the substance of their "crimes".

"In the late-middle 1980s, Anglo American directors privately dis-

cussed the fear their company would be remembered as the IG Farben of apartheid, a reference to the company that, through slave labour, became the industrial backbone of the Third Reich," they write.

The authors also accuse South Africa's mining giants of exploiting the migrant labour system, killing more than 69 000 workers in the past 94 years, and boasting of the availability of cheap apartheid labour to international investors.

But while the book implies the Truth and Reconciliation Commission should pay more attention to the corporate world's connivance in apartheid, it does not examine the sensational but unproven claims by human rights campaigners and lawyers that some companies indulged in "dirty tricks" operations — claims which would be ideal material for any truth commission.

One of the most celebrated of these allegations is that Sasol used KwaZulu police hit-squad operatives trained in the Caprivi Strip to help quell strikes in the early 1990s.

During the Goldstone Commission on "third force" violence, witnesses alleged that nine former Caprivi

trainees — including a man called Xesibe who was in charge of the trainees — were dispatched to Secunda, the hub of Sasol's sanctions-busting synthetic fuel operations.

MZ Khumalo, Mangosuthu Buthelezi's right-hand man, told the commission at the time that they were sent as "ordinary labourers". Asked how he could reconcile this explanation and the decision to send Xesibe to accompany the men, he said under cross-examination: "The atmosphere was very tense in the mines and all the places at the time and I was anxious about keeping control of the group that they did not get involved in any of the violence



Harry Oppenheimer: Apartheid was an 'honest attempt' to deal with South Africa's racial problems



Gavin Relly: Universal suffrage would be a formula for chaos

that was taking place there."

In written argument presented to the commission, lawyers cited evidence from Bongeni Khumalo that a Sasol official had on several occasions asked MZ Khumalo to organise men to act as strike breakers and that MZ Khumalo had personally selected Xesibe and the others to attack strikers. The commission was also presented with a letter sent to the KwaZulu Department of the Chief Minister, in which Khumalo referred to the seconderment of Xesibe to Secunda for "my project". However, a *Business Day* article quoted Khumalo denying that Sasol had used KwaZulu police members as hit men at Secunda.

The truth commission is unlikely, at this stage, to hold any hearings on human rights abuses committed by various companies during the apartheid era.

South African Court Orders Revisions in Proposed New Constitution

By Lynne Duke
Washington Post Foreign Service

JOHANNESBURG, Sept. 6—South Africa's highest court ruled today that the new, post-apartheid constitution must be amended to toughen its bill of rights, ensure the independence of "watchdog" agencies and enhance the powers of provincial governments.

The Constitutional Court accepted most of the proposed new constitution and called the document a "monumental achievement" in the transformation from white-minority rule to democracy. But the broad revision it ordered on provincial powers opened the way for a new round of political debate over the embattled province of KwaZulu-Natal, where the Inkatha Freedom Party, the Zulu-based rival to President Nelson Mandela's African National Congress, holds political power.

Provincial powers were among the most "widely, massively, intensely negotiated sections of the

constitution," said Kate Savage, a constitutional expert with the Legal Resources Center. "It really goes to the heart of the structure of governance."

Beyond the revisions, the court's decision could throw open political debate on issues previously settled, such as the death penalty, which last year was ruled unconstitutional. Recently, a groundswell of support for the death penalty has risen along with the level of violent crime. Political parties said today that they would restrain themselves during the revision process. But some legal analysts fear scores could be settled and axes ground during the coming 90 days of constitutional haggling, to be followed by a vote of the Constitutional Assembly, which must approve the new charter by a two-thirds majority.

Constitution-making here has been a long and tedious process dating from the multi-party talks of the early 1990s. Those talks laid the groundwork for the end of the sys-

tem of racial separation called apartheid and the first all-races election in 1994. Legal scholars and lawmakers are eager to see the transformation of the legal system concluded so its new democratic rights and protections can be exercised and tested. One such expert, Jody Kollapen, director of Lawyers for Human Rights, said the court's ruling represents a "short-term loss, but a long-term gain."

"One tends to think of South Africa now. Perhaps we ought to think of South Africa in the future," Kollapen said. "Once again, our Constitutional Court has reasserted its independence and has emphasized the importance of the constitution as the supreme law of the land."

Some here saw the court's ruling as a blow to Mandela's ANC, which hosted huge public and private celebrations three months ago when the Constitutional Assembly, made up of both houses of Parliament, passed the document. But Mandela welcomed the ruling, as did most other

party leaders. Mandela said the ruling "helps to clarify issues that were vaguely formulated" during the multi-party talks.

Those vague issues are contained in 34 democratic principles enshrined in an interim constitution that came into effect in April 1994 and remains a bridge from the old order to the new. The principles contain fundamental rights and protections and good-governance practices that were lacking or routinely flouted under the oppressive apartheid governments.

In that vein, the court said today that the bill of rights, a part of the new constitution, should be "safeguarded by special amendment procedures against easy abridgement." The

constitution now says the bill of rights may be amended by a two-thirds vote in one house of Parliament. The court said amendment of the bill should require a stricter standard.

The court also ruled that governmental watchdog agencies such as the public protector and the auditor general require stronger protection from political interference than is now provided for in the new charter.

But the most contentious issue to be debated in coming weeks will be the power of the nine provinces, especially KwaZulu-Natal.

Although it remained in Parliament, the Inkatha party walked out of the constitution-making process early last year to protest what it saw as the ANC's unwillingness to extend suffi-

cient powers to the provinces. Supporters of the ANC and Inkatha have been at war in the province for more than a decade, although fighting has abated of late.

By calling for enhanced provincial powers in line with the 34 principles, the Constitutional Court has in effect opened the way for Inkatha to return to the Constitutional Assembly.

Inkatha leader Mangosuthu Buthelezi today said his party's position had been vindicated and that Inkatha may return to the assembly. His party's position, however, is contained in the KwaZulu-Natal provincial constitution, on which the court issued a separate ruling today. The court rejected it as "fatally flawed" and a "usurpation of national power."

Ex-Security Agent Pulls Cover Off S. Africa's Past

Court Testimony of Confessed Assassin Implicates Former President in Killings

By Lynne Duke
Washington Post Foreign Service

PRETORIA, South Africa, Sept. 17—His bluish-gray suit is of nondescript cut. His hair swoops to the side, as if to cover a bald spot. His demeanor is awkward. His voice is flat. His thick glasses rest on a deadpan face. Eugene de Kock cuts a figure so unremarkable that he could be any pencil-pushing civil servant in the old South Africa or the new—except that this week he is talking, and his words are drenched with blood.

De Kock talks of killing children, blowing up bodies, bombing church offices, and being congratulated for his deadly endeavors by a racist government bent on ruling, as one

general allegedly put it, for "a thousand years."

Convicted last month on 89 counts stemming from his confessed occupation as an assassin during the apartheid era of white-minority rule, de Kock promised to sing before he was sentenced. This week, in an extraordinary series of allegations about dirty tricks under white-minority rule, he told a sentencing hearing of his work as a leader of an assassination squad, implicating former president Pieter W. Botha as well as cabinet members and a collection of generals from the 1980s.

These officials, de Kock said, either ordered, knew about or saluted the covert operations, which represented some of the

apartheid government's most brutal deeds aimed at stamping out the underground guerrilla struggle waged by blacks.

De Kock is the first high-level white security official to be convicted of apartheid-era crimes and to attempt to lay ultimate responsibility at the feet of high-level political and security officials. In fingering higher-level officials, he seemed to be trying to get a reduction in what promises to be a heavy sentence.

The accusations are part of the detritus of apartheid South Africa is trying to grapple with, the backwash from state repression that was the order of the day until the country's first all-races election in 1994. The Af-

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African National Congress won that election, which elevated its leader, Nelson Mandela, to the presidency.

Today, de Kock described a 1987 order to bomb the Johannesburg headquarters of the then-new Congress of South Africa Trade Unions (COSATU), a black labor federation. Initially, he balked at the order, he recounted, then asked who authorized it. "From the highest," he said he was told. "From where, the state president?" he responded. The answer, he said, was yes.

Botha was president at the time, serving from 1984 to 1989. After the bombing, de Kock testified today, the law and order minister, Adriaan Vlok, congratulated him at a barbecue held for members of the covert unit. Botha, who is 80, has kept a low profile since he lost the presidency in 1989 and has refused to take part in the new South Africa's process of truth-telling.

A truth commission, led by Anglican former archbishop Desmond Tutu, is attempting to ferret out the facts of apartheid-era human rights abuses by offering amnesty to perpetrators like de Kock and reparations to victims. But on a separate track, prosecutions like de Kock's are being heard in the courts.

De Kock has cooperated as a protected witness on related criminal cases, and he also has applied to the truth commission for amnesty. De Kock has confessed to six murders, and his testimony this week links him to far more.

Aside from de Kock's fate, however, several other cases hinge in part on his testimony. Prosecutors who hope to build other cases took notes in the front row of the court this week, adding to the cases they are building against other figures in the security branches.

In addition to the COSATU bombing, de Kock today admitted he took part in the planning or execution of:

- The 1982 bombing of the ANC headquarters in London. A detonation timer was set so that he and the

other bombers would be on a flight back to Johannesburg when the blast occurred. De Kock said he received a medal from Louis le Grange, then the law and order minister.

- The 1985 and '86 raids on neighboring Botswana in search of ANC operatives. On one of these raids, a couple and two children were killed when de Kock's operatives blew up a house. De Kock said no one told him children would be there. On another raid, four other people were killed, three of them Botswanan. Not naming which incident he was describing, de Kock said evidence taken from the scene suggested none of the victims was with the ANC.

- The 1988 bombings of Khotso House, the Johannesburg headquarters of the South African Council of Churches, followed by bombing of Khanya House, the Pretoria offices of the South African Catholic Bishops' Conference.

- The 1990 gun-running to the Inkatha movement of Mangosuthu Buthelezi, which helped fuel a conflict that claimed thousands of black lives in the townships around Johannesburg and in Natal Province. Before the so-called black "homelands" were dissolved in 1994, Buthelezi was chief minister of the

homeland called KwaZulu, whose seat was in the northern KwaZulu town of Ulundi, where de Kock said he made several weapons shipments.

De Kock, a colonel who led the South Africa police force's Vlakplaas hit squad during the 1980s, has emerged as the worst nightmare of the apartheid-era officials who wish to remain silent about their reign.

The web of conspiracy and murder that de Kock has described in the Pretoria Supreme Court this week contradicts earlier assertions that the Vlakplaas unit was a rogue element within the security establishment.

Former defense minister Magnus Malan, on trial in a separate hit-squad conspiracy case, has denied that police were used for military ends. But in testimony led by his attorney, Flip Hattingh, de Kock today portrayed his unit, based on a farm called Vlakplaas near Pretoria, as a kind of clearinghouse for weapons procurement, fraud, bombings and assassinations ordered by an array of police and military officials. Indeed, some of Malan's co-defendants also are implicated in de Kock-related crimes.

Day of the assassin promises to thrill

Pronounced guilty, Eugene de Kock will now have his turn to incriminate members of the old security forces, writes Eddie Koch

THE day of judgment had come. Yet there was no air of anticipation in the courtroom. No murmurs of approval in the gallery as the judge delivered his verdict. Not a single family member to sniffle as he was taken down to the cells. In fact, it was the kind of denouement that could have ruined the entire show.

After a courtroom series that took 18 months and cost at least R5-million to produce, the judge asked Eugene de Kock to stand up in the dock and, in just two minutes, summarised his judgment: guilty of six murders, two counts of conspiracy to murder, one of attempted murder, one of culpable homicide, one of abduction, one of serious assault, one of being an accessory to culpable homicide, one of defeating the ends of justice, nine of illegal arms and ammunition possession; and 66 of fraud.

In the old days these multiple crimes — a total of 89 counts, probably more serious than one person has ever been convicted of in South Africa, would have warranted the hangman's noose or at least a sentence of 200 years.

Yet De Kock sat down without flinching. A group of bored schoolkids who had been sent to write up a project about the case shuffled out of court clutching pens and notebooks. And the legal teams got down to planning, in a matter-of-fact way, their next episode: the one that everyone in court knows is going to be the blockbuster which will probably justify the extravagant costs of this drama.

On September 16 Colonel de Kock, a man who has described himself as the most accomplished of the many assassins who executed the apartheid government's covert wars, will explain why he did these gruesome things.

Political ideals, fears of a communist take-over, violent bush wars in Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe) and South West Africa (now Namibia), battle fatigue and shock, instructions from the political hierarchy ... all of these factors will be woven into a personal narrative that could turn this country's recent history into the stuff of a Frederick Forsyth thriller.

The mitigation hearings will also have serious implications for other political murderers and assassins.

De Kock has already stated he will, as part of his explanation for the murders he has confessed to carrying out,

give evidence implicating at least eight generals from the old security forces. Whether this information extends to members of the National Party Cabinet and the State Security Council remains to be seen.

Here there is an intricate interplay with the workings of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. That organisation's investigative unit has issued subpoenas to seven of the men De Kock could point out: Generals Johan van der Merwe, Mike Geldenhuys, Johan Coetzee — all former police commissioners — and Basie Smit, Krappies Engelbrecht, Johan le Roux and Bertus Steyn.

The timing is convenient. If the generals lie, or fail to volunteer significant details about their role in covert operations, they could well be caught out when De Kock begins to talk next month. This will effectively minimise the generals' chances of lodging successful applications for amnesty before the cut-off date, thus placing them under strong pressure to come clean when they begin answering questions in camera to the truth commission on Friday.

The colonel will also talk about his involvement in the supply of weapons, ammunition and explosives to leading members of the Inkatha Freedom Party in the early 1990s. war material that may well have been used to account for the huge number of murders committed during the low key civil war that still rages in that province.

IFP senator Philip Powell, former KwaZulu police minister CJ Mhetwa and IFP heavyweights in Gauteng, Humphrey Ndlovu and Themba Khoza have all been implicated in the supply of weaponry to Inkatha's self protection units and will be holding their breaths when the Pretoria Supreme Court hearings open on September 16.

But the true importance of De Kock's mitigation hearings lies not in political significance or the entertainment value of the event. They will, probably more than any judicial process ever held in this country, provide a nation desperate to come to

terms with its violent past the opportunity to hear and understand — from a member of the inner circle of

Pretoria's "total war" strategists — why they did the things they did.

More importantly, Justice William van der Merwe will have to take into account De Kock's own testimony, as well as that of a psychologist and criminologist, when he decides at the end of the hearings on what kind of punishment to hand down to the self-confessed killer. Although the comparison is both inaccurate and clichéd — it will be the closest that South Africa has come to an Eichmann trial.

This places an enormous burden on the judge. He will have to come up with a sentence that is not only balanced, but one that, he has indicated, will have taken into account the broader political imperative of the times: to understand and forgive if this can promote national reconciliation without undermining a culture that respects human life.

By taking into account De Kock's social, psychological and political background, Justice Van der Merwe's sentence could end up using the key "proportionality" test contained in internationally accepted principles on how to prosecute war crimes.

He will have to decide whether the acts that De Kock committed — including conspiracies to murder friends and colleagues who either told or threatened to tell the truth about the activities of his Vlakplaas unit at the time and gruesome ways of disposing of victims' bodies by burning them or blowing them up into tiny pieces — were in proportion to the political motives and the mindset that drove him to do it.

The judge has already indicated that, during the mitigation hearings, he wants to deal with issues like this that are beginning to shape the jurisprudence of post-apartheid South Africa.

He will weigh up any evidence that De Kock presents about the political nature of his activities, especially with regard to the charges of gunrunning to Inkatha, before he delivers sentence. He has also made it clear that witnesses who gave evidence against De Kock will not automatically be granted indemnity against prosecution for crimes they were personally involved in.

This means he could refuse to protect hitmen like "Chappies" Kloppe and Joe Mamasela, who are now receiving material benefits from the Justice Department, including witness protection and monthly stipends, just because they gave evidence against their former colleague.

The way this matter is handled will have a crucial bearing on how the judicial system's need to induce informants to come out of the woodwork is married with the creation of a culture that refuses to reward people who abuse human life.

The De Kock trial falls outside the ambit of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. But, just as that body was set up to do, the marathon case could help find the elusive formula to promote reconciliation and respect for all those who died.

If it succeeds, the taxpayers' R5-million may have been worth it.



THE WASHINGTON POST

Drug Trade Moves in on S. Africa

Traffickers Prey on Fragile New Democracy

By Lynne Duke
Washington Post Foreign Service

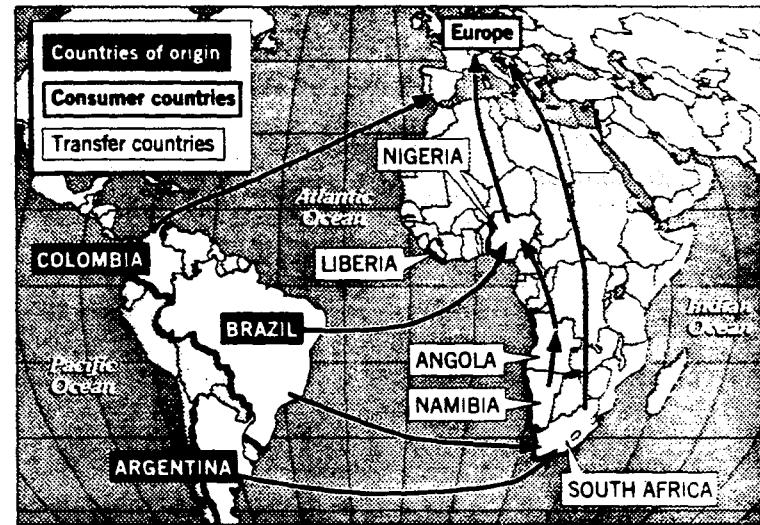
JOHANNESBURG, South Africa, Aug. 31—By land, by sea, by air, cocaine arrives daily in South Africa. It is hidden in cargo containers shipped to South Africa's poorly policed ports or stowed in cars driven across the nation's porous borders. It arrives at Johannesburg's Jan Smuts International Airport in false compartments of suitcases or stuffed inside aerosol containers, even in the soles of shoes.

Last month, however, a man named Martin Makengo Kinsombi performed an trafficking feat unprecedented here. Narcotics agents questioned Kinsombi, a Zairian, when he arrived on a flight from Rio de Janeiro frequently used by drug couriers. A search uncovered nothing in his luggage or on his person. But an X-ray revealed an alarming freeze-frame of the drug trade's intensity here: 92 thumb-sized cocaine packets filled Kinsombi's stomach.

Couriers like Kinsombi—black, white, young, old, local, foreign—are streaming into South Africa every day. They are the workhorses of the international drug trafficking syndicates whose tentacles have reached into this vulnerable nation in transition and made it one of the hottest new transshipment points and domestic markets in the world.

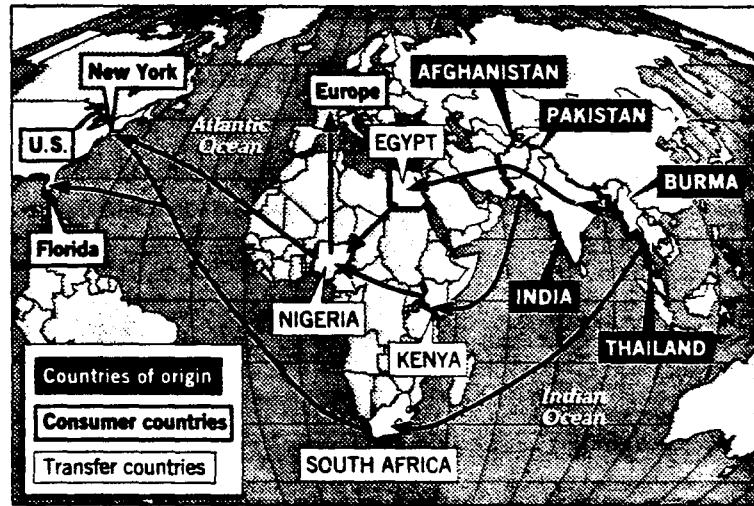
In a nation beset by local and international gun running, vehicle theft, fraud and extortion rings, the drug trade is causing organized crime here to spread like a cancer. South Africa's emergence as the southern anchor for international traffickers is prompting such concern that the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration has said it will open an office here, perhaps by year's end, and the FBI may follow suit. South Africa is stepping up enforcement by sending narcotics

MAJOR COCAINE SHIPMENT ROUTES



BY BRAD WYE—THE WASHINGTON POST

MAJOR HEROIN TRAFFIC ROUTES



BY BRAD WYE—THE WASHINGTON POST

agents as far afield as Brazil, Thailand, India and Pakistan.

When it ushered in democracy after its first all-races elections 28 months ago, South Africa invited the world to invest and help develop the new nation. As global investors have come, so too have criminals, preying on a democracy whose police force is struggling with corruption and whose laws only now are being revised to deal with the trafficking onslaught. Traffickers also are attracted by South Africa's relatively sophisticated physical and financial infrastructure, including a banking sector that has had few controls on money laundering.

"It's very attractive to people who want to engage in worldwide narcotics smuggling," said Thomas Con-

stantine, head of the DEA, who has advised South African narcotics officials on the task ahead in their new fight against traffickers.

And, as Kobus van Aarde, South Africa's national police superintendent for narcotics, pointed out: "South Africa is no longer just a transit point for the cocaine courier. We're becoming a bigger and bigger consumer market, especially for crack." The price of cocaine here has plummeted in recent months, from a high of about \$55 per gram to about \$33.

In addition to the Chinese, Japanese, Israeli and Russian syndicates that law enforcement sources say are operating here in a variety of criminal enterprises, the drug trade

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is fueled by cocaine from the Cali cartel of Colombia. Nigerian syndicates move the Colombian cocaine through Argentina or Brazil, then across the Atlantic to Angola or Namibia or directly into South Africa for local distribution or transshipment to distributors in Europe or North America, the world's biggest markets, avoiding the more heavily policed direct routes. Last month, police in Bogota, Colombia, arrested a group of Nigerian, Liberian and Namibian traffickers preparing to fly over with 44 pounds of cocaine.

Heroin moves similarly, although from the east, with Nigerians, Indians and others moving the drug from Burma, Thailand, Pakistan and Afghanistan. Although South Africa is the largest and most convenient transshipment point in southern Africa, other countries also have been targeted.

Authorities here in South Africa, like their counterparts in the United States, believe they seize 10 percent, at most, of the drugs that are available. Nationwide, narcotics agents seized 411 pounds of cocaine in 1995, up from only a little more than 24 pounds in 1992. And so far this year, 249 pounds have been seized at Jan Smuts airport, up from slightly less than nine pounds back in 1992.

Officials seized almost 59 pounds of heroin throughout South Africa in 1994, up from a little more than two pounds in each of the two previous years. In 1995, only 11 pounds were seized.

Locally, the drugs are marketed through a network of street gangs that have grown more sophisticated with the volume of cash that the cocaine trade has brought. They include gangs such as the Hard Livings of Cape Town, whose violent drug enterprises sparked such community outrage that one of the gang leaders, Rashaad Staggie, was shot and burned to death earlier this month by outraged residents.

South Africa has for several years been a source of marijuana, a local cash crop that is smuggled as far north as Europe, and even to Australia. It also has hosted a brisk trade in the sedative Mandrax, which drug officials said is similar to Quaalude. The tablets are manufactured in factories in the region or imported from India via East African ports such as Durban in South Africa or Maputo in Mozambique.

Cocaine's surge here is changing drug use patterns. During the years of white-minority rule, most cocaine use was confined to affluent whites—the only people who could afford it. For poorer people within the nation's black majority, the drug of choice was a smokable mixture of marijuana and Mandrax, called "white pipe." Although statistics are hard to come by, law enforcement and drug abuse experts say cocaine and crack use is replacing "white pipe" as the drug of choice in some areas.

The presence of new drugs also is challenging the nation's law enforcement apparatus, in which police are poorly trained, poorly paid and spread thin.

The nation's legal system has proven ineffective at combating drug syndicates. Money laundering is unchecked. There is no currency reporting requirement for large cash transactions at banks or other financial institutions. The money trail that is a mainstay of narcotics investigations in the United States cannot be traced.

As for Kinsombi, the courier arrested with 92 packets of pure cocaine in his stomach, he excreted all but one packet while in custody. The last one got stuck and required surgical removal. While in the hospital awaiting the procedure, Kinsombi escaped with the cocaine still in his body, no doubt risking poisoning as his stomach acids slowly dissolve the cocaine's packaging. He has not been apprehended.

"Hopefully," said airport narcotics inspector J.W. Verrall, "he's pushing up daisies somewhere at the moment."

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Commission to probe arms smuggling allegations

Cameron Commission of Inquiry officials said this week they may press for a special police unit to investigate alleged arms control contravention, after reports that South African arms are being smuggled to Hutu groups in Rwanda and Burundi.

There have also been allegations that the former Angolan rebel group Unita is involved (*SouthScan v11/28 p223*).

A confidential UN Arms Commission report on SA arms smuggling to Rwanda and Burundi was sent to the Foreign Affairs Department early this year.

The government has apparently not responded to the UN report, nor supplied the commission with relevant information. The government was also supposed to launch an investigation into these illegal arms deals with Rwanda and Burundi, but until the present furore had given no response, according to local reports on Wednesday.

Cameron Commissioner Laurie Nathan said it was believed the arms - light weapons, explosives and communications equipment - were being sent by air from airports in fairly remote rural areas.

According to newspaper reports Wonderboom airport near Pretoria and the Lanseria airport near Johannesburg have been used. This was the same route allegedly used to ship arms to Unita in Angola in the period after the re-start of the war there in 1992.

Unita radio itself added some detail this week while claiming that the Luanda government was involved. It said that aircraft are flown by Russian soldiers and normally stop over at Saurimo, in Lunda Sul Province, where it said there are South African mercenaries.

Armscor has already admitted that in the past it did sell a substantial quantity of small arms to the government of Rwanda, but had ceased such sales prior to the commencement of the genocide. Nathan said that South Africa had continued to supply weapons to the Hutu forces in Rwanda in 1995 until in September 1995 the government ordered Armscor to halt its exports.

According to local reports tonnes of small arms, explosives and communications equipment worth millions of dollars were being flown to the central African war zone.

Burundian officers have also voiced their suspicions that arms are coming via Unita, acting as a proxy for the Zaire government (*SouthScan v11/28 p223*).

According to the Johannesburg *Sunday Independent*, shipments were either mislabelled or added to other loads destined for airports in Angola, Zambia and Zaire, without reflecting the additional weight. In one cargo only 17 tonnes of a 32-tonne shipment was accounted for in papers accepted by customs officials.

This operation is reported to be directly connected to the trafficking of diamonds in Angola and Zaire. A former South African agent, a number of South African secret service officials, other people close to former President PW Botha and Unita officials are said to be implicated, the Portuguese news agency Luso reported.

ANC reopens debate on the death penalty

Ann Eveleth

CAUGHT between the rock of its abolitionist principles and the hard place of a constituency ravaged by crime and clamouring for revenge, the African National Congress seized control of the death penalty debate this week.

A recommendation from the ANC's crime summit last weekend asked its leadership to "consider reconsidering" its long-standing opposition to the death penalty. Senior ANC MP Carl Niehaus moved quickly this week to "clarify" the resolution as little more than a recommendation to the ANC's National Executive Committee to "consider whether we need to re-examine our position", but added that a "positive outcome of the debate could be a move to restate the ANC's arguments against the death penalty".

Niehaus noted that "once the initial hype settled down, there has subsequently begun to be a serious debate on the issue".

In sharp contrast to the recent focus on opposition campaigns for the reopening of the gallows, most major newspapers this week rallied behind the hard-won campaign which closed the door on executions last year. Human rights groups rallied behind their sacred principle, and the ANC's most vocal abolitionists dusted off their ammunition to launch a counter-offensive against "knee-jerk responses to crime".

Lawyers for Human Rights regis-

tered its "disappointment" at the ANC's call to reconsider: "It is difficult to imagine how the reintroduction of the death penalty will in any way assist the police, the justice system or the penal system in dealing with crime," said LHR national director Jody Kollapen.

Amnesty International expressed dismay at the possible *volte face*: "South African society cannot be further brutalised by institutionalising state-sanctioned murder. The death penalty is the gravest form of human rights abuse, and the ANC should not be deterred from its course of human rights."

A recent Amnesty report on the death penalty suggested South Africa would be bucking the global trend away from capital punishment if it reversed the current status quo: 100 countries worldwide have either outlawed the death penalty or have not used it since 1985. Only four countries have reintroduced the death penalty in the past decade — of these four, Nepal has since reabolished it and The Gambia, Papua New Guinea and the Philippines have not used it.

The ANC's most celebrated death row survivor, Magoo's bar bomber and Deputy Director of Foreign Affairs Robert McBride, rallied behind the party's abolitionist stance, saying pro-hanging arguments represented a "jump in logic" for communities reeling from the crime wave.

"I've never come across a death row prisoner who thought at the time he

'If we were to hold a referendum on every contentious issue, this country would be nowhere'



Gaping question: The ANC's abolitionists argue against a 'knee-jerk reaction to crime' PHOTO: HENNER FRANKENFELD

committed the crime that he'd be hanged. Even in the heyday of apartheid, when they were hanging 167 people a year, crime skyrocketed. The real problem is that criminals know they won't be caught," McBride said.

Other ANC leaders argued that the death penalty provided no solution to the crime wave. "There's no proof that it acts as a deterrent — even in developing countries — unless you're talking about an authoritarian society," said ANC MP Blade Nzimande.

ANC Justice committee chair Johnny de Lange said the debate had diverted attention from the "real issue of the transformation of the justice system" which the party had begun to tackle at the summit.

Despite the summit's decision to "acknowledge" the public outcry in favour of hanging — including public opinion polls placing support for hanging at about 70% and indicating substantial ANC grassroots support for the death penalty — ANC leaders this week swiftly countered opposition calls for a referendum on the issue.

The National Party, Inkatha Freedom Party, Freedom Front and some Democratic Party leaders said they were in favour of a test of the electorate, but ANC leaders stood firm in their belief that "some issues cannot be subjected to the vagaries of public opinion".

Nzimande said: "If we were to hold a referendum on every contentious issue, this country would be nowhere. If we had subjected the Government of National Unity to a referendum, it would never have been accepted."

McBride argued there were other equally contentious issues, like land reform, over which nobody demanded referendums: "If we called a vote on land reform, most people would demand the immediate return of land that was taken from them under apartheid."

Provincial and Constitutional Affairs Minister spokesman Mpho Mosimane warned that any attempt to chip away at the human rights culture enshrined in the Constitution's Bill of Rights could have a "ripple effect" on other rights. A return to the death penalty would require the removal or amendment of the right to life clause in the Bill of Rights, but "other rights, such as abortion, may also be affected".

This is the story of happiness that has emerged from tragedy and trauma. Nelson Mandela has endured the public humiliation of a failed marriage. Graca Machel has suffered much worse. Now they are together. By Mary Braid

The rumours have persisted for a year, rising every so often to tickle a nation in love with its 78-year-old terrorist-turned-legend and president. But now the spray painters and tree carvers can get to work, for Nelson loves Graca, OK – and that's official.

This weekend, President Mandela and Graca Machel, widow of Mozambique's former president Samora Machel, at last decided to make public their romance. The couple, the South African Sunday Independent reported, have become intimate and plan to spend more time together, but do not intend to marry.

It has been a coy process: for 12 months there have been rumours, beginning during the president's divorce from his second wife, Winnie. Even as he faced the indignity of an open court statement about the emptiness and lack of intimacy in his marriage, it was reported that Mandela was already in love with someone else and had plans to remarry.

Mandela, or Madiba as he is affectionately known in South Africa, was characteristically tight-lipped about the speculation, being old fashioned and stiff about matters of the heart. The formidable Graca, 28 years his junior and described by her many admirers as possessing enough charm to warm any man's heart, was rather more straightforward. She denied the rumours outright. Widowed for a decade, she had no plans to marry Nelson, she said.

While the president apparently teased close friends about the veracity of the stories, Graca, as much of a heroine in Mozambique as Mandela is a hero in South Africa, was clearly irritated by the persistent speculation. A tireless advocate for the hundreds of thousands of children who have died and suffered Africa's wars, she would hold a UNICEF press conference to highlight a new report, only to find that all the journalists wanted to talk about was love and the president.

The rumours persisted. Mandela was reported to have made several clandestine visits to Mrs Machel's home overlooking the sea in the Mozambican capital of Maputo. Then five weeks ago South African press speculation reached frenzy point after Mandela finished his pop-star-like visit to Britain and headed for France. "Mandela's Paris Romance" screamed the headline in the Sunday Times with a strapline which claimed that the President and Mrs Machel had "held hands and embraced in the City of Love".

In what were described as their "first tentative steps into the public eye" they kept their joint appearance confined to a close circle of aides and diplomats. It was a highly significant development.

Although private visits had been reported, this was the first time Machel had been with Mandela on official business. It was all very breathless, but the official "just good friends" line persisted as recently as a fortnight ago when the couple were reported to have attended together Africa's "mother of all weddings", the marriage of Zimbabwean President Robert Mugabe and Grace Marufu, his former secretary, 40 years his junior and the mother of his two "secret" children, watched by 20,000 close friends. The official line was that Graca was not the president's official partner at the wedding although they sat just one person apart. That did not stop the Zimbabwean papers speculating that the couple "harboured nuptial sentiments of their own".

The confirmation, while some time in coming, is rather sweet; love in later life for two monumental African figures, revolutionaries in separate but similar struggles for whom the white minority South African government became a common enemy.

Although they never actually met until 1991, their lives have been intertwined since Mandela's release from prison. During the president's years of confinement, Graca's husband Samora Machel made liberated Mozambique a haven for ANC guerrillas. That made the country and its capital Maputo, where many ANC supporters lived in exile, a target for covert operations and even authorised invasions from the South African security forces.

When Samora Machel died in 1986 in a plane crash Winnie and Nelson Mandela wrote jointly to his widow expressing their grief. Graca replied with a moving letter: "From within your vast prison you brought a ray of light in my hour of darkness." To Winnie she wrote: "Those who have locked up your husband are the same as those who have killed mine. They think that by cutting down the tallest trees they can destroy the forest."

As a mark of respect for Samora Machel's contribution to the South African struggle, Oliver Tambo, former president of the ANC, became godfather to the children Samora left behind. When Tambo died the responsibility fell to Mandela. Graca's daughter Jozina has been staying with Mandela in Cape Town for some months while studying at the city's university.

In South Africa few will frown upon the union. There was widespread sympathy for the president after his divorce. And while he is feted on the international stage, his personal life is said to be empty. A recent interview with the young housekeeper at his official Cape Town residence portrayed an essentially lonely man. Their relationship had been formal at first but latterly president and employee have become as close as father and daughter. Now she tucks him in bed every night before giving him his eye drops, for a condition caused by dust during his years of hard labour in the prison quarry.

Walter Sisulu, his old friend and Robben Island cellmate for more than 20 years, said recently that Mandela was essentially a family man and it had to be assumed that he was a lonely man since his divorce. Now that he has said that he will not stand as president again, and the grooming of deputy president Thabo Mbeki as his successor is well advanced, most South Africans would like to see an old man, who has made such a monumental personal sacrifice for his country, retire happy.

Apart from clearing the matter with his daughters, who are said to have had doubts about the new romance, Nelson's difficulties about making a public declaration were probably nothing compared to Graca's. Graca Machel has been described as Mozambique's Jackie Onassis. Like the former Mrs John F Kennedy, she was left with two children when her husband died and like her she came to represent

a particular era in her country's history and the loss of political idealism and hope.

Just as with Kennedy, conspiracy theories still abound concerning the death of President Machel. On 19 October 1986, a jet carrying Machel and several cabinet members crashed into a hillside in Eastern Transvaal near the Mozambique-South African border, killing all 35 on board. An inquiry concluded that the Russian crew was tired and the aircraft low on fuel and that the jet took a wrong navigational reading. But there are allegations that Machel's aircraft was lured into the mountains by a false navigation beacon set up by South African security forces, which financed Renamo, Mozambique's rebel guerrillas, as part of the general policy to destabilise the country and Machel's Marxist government. Just a month ago, Graca said she intended to have the inquiry reopened and that she hoped the new democratic South African government would establish the truth.

Times have moved on. Frelimo is a different party now and Renamo's guerrillas have turned into politicians. But Graca's symbolic significance to her country remains much the same. "She just can't marry him," said one of her friends recently. "She belongs to Samora and to Mozambique."

When Archbishop Desmond Tutu heard news of the official confirmation this weekend he was as delighted as only he can be. And despite the statement from Mandela's office that the couple planned to spend two weeks of every month together in South Africa but not to marry, Tutu encouraged them to tie the knot. A year ago, when Mandela and Winnie divorced, Tutu was criticised for saying that the president needed a shoulder to cry on and someone to bring him his slippers.

Graca Machel is unlikely to be such a companion. And the man who chose - whatever her later short-

comings - the fiery, free-spirited Winnie, as his second wife, is unlikely to want one anyway. Despite his age - the joke is that two weeks in every four should be enough for a man of his advanced years - Mandela in his colourful, trademark Madiba shirts, still cuts a dash. In his youth he was a bit of a dandy and a ladies' man. That has not changed. He still loves women, showing particular concern for the comfort of female journalists.

His enduring and obvious liking for women is the cause of some amusement. Last week he opened his home to Peggy Sue Khumalo, the new Miss South Africa. The caption under the picture of the president kissing the beauty queen stated that the president had said he always liked to congratulate achievers personally.

In Graca Machel he has found a woman who has been exceptional all her life. In her 20s, she studied at Lisbon University, a remarkable achievement for a Mozambican woman of her day. She had conviction and revolutionary spirit, and eventually fled Portugal after threats from Salazar's secret police. She headed to Tanzania to be trained as a guerrilla against the Portuguese and was fighting for Frelimo when she met Machel.

Winnie Mandela is probably among the few South Africans unhappy with the union. When Graca's daughter Jozina moved in with Mandela, Winnie was said to be distraught, certain it meant that Mandela and Machel were involved. She told close friends she was worried that a new union would upset her daughters. But friends assume the upset is closer to home. "What right does she have to be so upset?" said a close friend. "She treated him with so little respect when he got out of prison. She could have had it all - travelled the world with him and basked in the glory - if only she had been a little more discreet."

Africa's new enforcers

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What is a mercenary? The staff of Executive Outcomes shy away from the label. But beyond doubt is their reputation as one of the most efficient private armies in the world. Michael Ashworth reports

The offices of Sandline International are much like those of any other successful, London-based firm with international interests. They occupy part of a glass-fronted block on the King's Road, Chelsea: inside, the floors are wooden, expensive paintings decorate the black walls, and well-dressed employees enter and leave watched by security cameras. All that this tells the visitor is that Sandline is rich: what is not so clear is the fact that these offices are a first port of call for governments wishing to hire one of the most effective private armies in the world.

Sandline International provides expertise in military and security matters. As such, it works closely with – and contracts work to – Executive Outcomes, which, with the possible exception of the South African Army, is the most deadly and efficient army operating in sub-Saharan Africa today. But Executive Outcomes is the army of no state, no government: it is a private security force.

Executive Outcomes offers a wide range of security services and is capable of mounting sophisticated operations involving armour, artillery and air-power. Its soldiers have uniforms, badges of rank, and are paid well. If those men in the field fall under the definition of mercenaries – and, according to Executive Outcomes, they do not – they are a new breed, qualitatively and quantitatively different from anything that Africa or the world has seen before. They have already fought in Sierra Leone and Angola, intervening on the side of the government on both occasions against rebel groups, and with devastating results.

The popular image of mercenaries has been shaped by the pirates who operated throughout Africa in the Sixties and Seventies. Mercenaries are outlawed in the Geneva Convention. Article 47 defines the mercenary as "any person who is a) specially recruited locally or abroad in order to fight in an armed conflict; b) does in fact take direct part in the hostilities; c) is motivated ... essentially by the desire for private gain and in fact is promised by or on behalf of a party to the conflict material compensation substantially in excess of that promised or paid to combatants ... in the armed forces of that party". In the Sixties and Seventies, colourful (if murderous) characters such as "Mad" Mike Hoare, "Black" Jacques Schramme and Bob Denard took advantage of the crisis that followed African decolonisation in the Congo, Angola, Biafra, Uganda, Gabon, Benin, Rhodesia, Mozambique, the Seychelles and the Comoros Islands. They were the leftovers of empire, small-time figures with a handful of colleagues recruited from the back streets of Glasgow, Hamburg, Marseille. Sometimes, they made it big: Denard lived as a sort of local dictator in the Comoros Islands between 1978 and 1989. Most often, they were grubby, violent and dangerous characters, often dying violent and sordid deaths.

That is not Executive Outcomes. This is a well-drilled, disciplined force that can field aircraft, give training in naval tactics, and has used helicopter gunships. It is staffed by former members of élite units of the South African forces, and top-line British regiments. Its glossy brochure explains that it "provides a highly professional and confidential military advisory service to legitimate governments". It promises "sound strategic and tactical advice" and "the most

professional training packages available to armed forces". And then there is the name: smooth, deadly, but with a hint of professionalism and even value for money. "The corporation has experienced an above-average growth, and has been able to assist clients in ensuring that their outcomes are met," the brochure reads.

There is more to this company than war. Executive Outcomes is one element in a unique fusion of muscle and money. Sandline International is located in the same offices as Heritage Oil and Gas and Branch Energy, two companies that have employed the services of Executive Outcomes in the past. There is no evidence of a corporate connection between these companies. Nonetheless, Executive Outcomes's close ties to capitalism have earned it the name "the diamond dogs of war".

Executive Outcomes' links to mining and oil companies are no secret, though their extent and nature are hard to detail. Heritage's use of Executive Outcomes has been questioned in the light of the influential personalities on Heritage's board of directors. These include Sir David Steel, the former Liberal Party leader, and Andrew Gifford of GJW Government Relations, the influential London-based parliamentary lobbyist.

Anthony Buckingham, a director of Heritage Oil and Gas and Branch Energy, admits that there are business links because Executive Outcomes looks after the security of Branch Mining concessions in Sierra Leone, but "there is no corporate link between Executive Outcomes and the Branch-Heritage group". Whatever the relationship between the companies, it is not the first time a security company has been contracted to secure a multinational's corporate assets. BP, for instance, has recently hired over 500 personnel to protect an oil pipeline in Columbia.

Executive Outcomes has its roots in South Africa, and in the apartheid years. It employs ex-members of notorious apartheid military units such as 32 Battalion and Koevoet, an anti-insurgency unit in Namibia. Its directors include Eeben Barlow and Lafras Luittingh, ex-members of the apartheid era government's misleadingly-named Civil Co-operation

Bureau, which carried out a campaign across southern Africa and in Western Europe.

Although Executive Outcomes has existed since 1989, it first emerged as an apolitical security force during the Angolan Civil War. Ranger and Heritage Oil contracted the group to protect their commercial interests. The initial success of the force in recapturing the oil town of Soyo in 1993 prompted the Angolan government to offer them a contract reportedly worth over \$40m. This involved the training of commandos and involvement in military operations. They were instrumental in the capture of important objectives such as Uige and the headquarters of the rebel leader Jonas Savimbi at Huambo. Although the government forces would probably have worn Unitas down in the end anyway, the presence of Executive Outcomes made the process much quicker and more sure. Men who had fought in Angola on the side of the rebels were now being employed to fight against their former allies, on the side of the Marxist government they had tried to unseat.

The end of the war in Angola prompted Executive Outcomes to look for other opportunities. Sierra Leone, a former British colony in West Africa, was a prime candidate. Its government was under desperate pressure from the rebel Revolutionary United Front which had reduced much of the country to anarchy and chaos. More importantly, Sierra Leone had extensive concessions of titanium oxide, oil and some of the best diamond deposits in the world.

The first indications that Executive Outcomes was interested in Sierra Leone were some tentative approaches in November 1994 to Sierra Rutile, a US/Australia-owned titanium dioxide mine in the south-west of the country. In the event, the National Provisional Ruling Council hired a Gurkha mercenary force to provide the security advice, leadership and training. Little further was heard about Executive Outcomes involvement until May 1995.

On 10 May 1995, the vice-chairman of the National Provisional Ruling Council announced to British, Nigerian and Ghanaian diplomats that a South African company had been contracted to provide training services to the Republic of Sierra Leone military. Subsequently, a man called Rupert Bowen gave details of how the operation would run. Branch Energy was to co-ordinate the operation. The security aspects would be run by Executive Outcomes while the commercial elements would be headed by Alan Paterson, a South African who had formerly headed a de Beers subsidiary in Sierra Leone. Bowen indicated that the project was expected to run for 35-40 years. Rupert Bowen was the Deputy High Commissioner in Namibia. By 1995, he worked for Branch Energy; he also knew Andrew Gifford, the Westminster lobbyist.

Executive Outcomes operations in Sierra Leone turned the tables on the rebels almost overnight. Rebel forces were driven from the capital, Freetown, and important economic and strategic assets were seized for the government, including the all-important diamond region of Kono and the ore-producing southern coastal region.

The intervention of outside forces, their rapid success and their uncertain political allegiances have made enemies for Executive Outcomes. The managing director of Executive Outcomes, Eeben Barlow, will have none of this. "Executive Outcomes

will only work for legitimate governments. We are not mercenaries."

Nick van der Berg, a representative and director of Executive Outcomes in South Africa, says of the company's involvement in Angola: "Unita was an anti-democratic force and Savimbi was motivated by greed and power. When we arrived they controlled 80 per cent of the country; a year later the situation was reversed."

Equally, the fact that Executive Outcomes concentrates its efforts on the areas of economic interest has aroused some concern. In Sierra Leone, the Freetown newspaper *For Di People* claimed that "Executive Outcomes is made up of killers who are very dangerous, because their presence can quickly lead to political unrest. Let's be honest, they're not here for the security of Sierra Leoneans, they're here for diamonds."

Executive Outcomes would say that the securing of strategic economic assets is the first step in winning any conflict; and it does not argue with the fact that it is not in Sierra Leone for anything other than commercial gain. At the same time, it argues that behaving in an undisciplined and underhand manner is bad for business. It has been as ruthless to the government units that have been involved in looting and banditry as it has been to the rebels. To date Executive Outcomes has conducted itself well in Sierra Leone, according to all available reports. It is rumoured that it threatened to withdraw support for Valentine Strasser, the ex-president, when he expressed a desire to postpone the elections. Strasser has since been deposed in a bloodless coup.

Like any modern army, Executive Outcomes has a "hearts and minds" policy. It has worked in close association with aid agencies and government officials in returning child soldiers to civilian life. It assists incivilian re-settlement for displaced persons and provides security, logistics and intelligence to humanitarian organisations. Terence Taylor, the managing director of the International Institute of Strategic Studies, says: "Despite their dark begin-

nings in the ashes of apartheid, there is a general move towards respectability."

Despite this, some feel that a dangerous precedent is being set. A recent report from the parliamentary Human Rights Group states: "Even if Executive Outcomes' role in Sierra Leone proves to be beneficial, it may lead to a situation where any government in a difficult position can hire mercenaries to stay in power." In the case of Sierra Leone and Angola this is an oversimplification. In both countries Executive Outcomes assisted in the process of democratisation: it brought stability to Sierra Leone, which would have almost certainly followed Liberia into uncontrolled anarchy without assistance, and, in the eyes of many, – including senior representatives of the Angolan Government – Executive Outcomes played a part in returning Angola to a semblance of stability.

The links to commercial organisations, to the pursuit of resources and profits, leads some to see Executive Outcomes as neo-colonialists, Cecil Rhodes returning in a Toyota Landcruiser with a satellite phone. But it has brought relative peace and prosperity in a way that no other organisation has dared to do in the past. It is there for profit, of course; but then this is just a particular illustration of a generality, that out of chaos can come cash. Private security is a large and flourishing business in Africa, in the plush suburbs of Johannesburg and Cape Town, but also across the continent. Executive Outcomes – or companies linked to them – can provide that, too. This is more akin to the Condottiere, the private armies that fought for the Italian city states, than the grubby toughs of the Seventies.

The existence of Executive Outcomes is symptomatic of the failure of the international community and African political leaders to prevent the economic, social and political breakdown of many states in Africa. If the United Nations or the Organisation of African Unity were able to field a viable peace keeping force then perhaps Executive Outcomes would not exist.

Pretoria to put troops into 'crime jungle'

MARY BRAID
Johannesburg

respond quickly to incidents, particularly car hijacks.

The police spokeswoman said joint operations had produced good results in Kwa-Zulu-Natal and it was hoped that could be repeated. "Being much more visible should affect the level of crime."

The announcement of the initiative follows the death this week of Eliakim "Pro" Khumalo, a 1970s soccer star and father of the South African international "Doctor" Khumalo, during a car hijack outside his home in Soweto.

Earlier, a German businessman, Erich Ellmer, was shot dead in his driveway by car hijackers. Such high-profile cases have increased pressure on politicians to curb the crime wave, in which Johannesburg is among the worst-hit areas.

The involvement of the military will please some of the critics who say politicians are doing too little to tackle crime.

For them, the police are part of the problem. The National Police Commissioner, George Fivaz, has admitted that corruption is widespread.

This week a policeman was shot while allegedly robbing a shopping centre and the head of a car-theft unit was held in connection with stolen vehicles. They are the latest in a long list of cases in which those charged with upholding the law have been caught breaking it.

It is widely acknowledged that some officers are in the pay of crime syndicates operating throughout the country.

Units from the South African Army and Air Force, under the command of two veterans of the war in Angola, and 1,000 extra police have been called into Johannesburg to spearhead an anti-crime drive that will adopt "the principles of warfare".

One of the men leading Operation Anvil will be Colonel Buks Pieterse, formerly second in command of the notorious and now disbanded 32 Battalion, which earned a vicious reputation as part of South Africa's military force in the Angolan civil war. The other, Colonel Theunis du Toit, was head of the South African air operation in Angola.

Bush-warfare methods would be employed against criminals "in the Johannesburg jungle", said Col Pieterse, now a senior staff officer.

Johannesburg has the highest murder rate in the world and it is rising. A Police Service spokeswoman said the level of car hijackings and murders, including the killing of police officers, demanded "drastic measures". The Defence Force and the police have already joined forces to tackle political violence in the run-up to elections in KwaZulu-Natal. The new joint operation is already in evidence in Johannesburg and the surrounding Gauteng province, with a rash of spot roadblocks and searches. Helicopters are being deployed to allow small crack police units to