

2020

Inkatha, Propaganda, and Violence in KwaZulu-Natal in the 1980s and 90s

Michael MacInnes
Chapman University

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.chapman.edu/vocesnovae>



Part of the [African History Commons](#), [Other History Commons](#), [Political History Commons](#), and the [Social History Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

MacInnes, Michael (2020) "Inkatha, Propaganda, and Violence in KwaZulu-Natal in the 1980s and 90s," *Voces Novae*: Vol. 12 , Article 4.

Available at: <https://digitalcommons.chapman.edu/vocesnovae/vol12/iss1/4>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by Chapman University Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in *Voces Novae* by an authorized editor of Chapman University Digital Commons. For more information, please contact laughtin@chapman.edu.

Inkatha, Propaganda, and Violence in KwaZulu-Natal in the 1980s and 90s

Cover Page Footnote

I would like to thank my family and friends for all of their support as well as a special thanks to Dr. Shira Klein, Dr. Jeff Koerber, Dr. Ashley Parcels, Dr. Jill Kelly, Dr. Mxolisi Mchunu, The staff and both the Alan Paton Centre and Struggle Archives and Killie Campbell Africana Library, and last but certainly not least a huge thanks to Dr. Erin Mosely.

Inkatha, Propaganda, and Violence in KwaZulu-Natal in the 1980s and 90s

Michael MacInnes

HIST 598

5/20/2020

Introduction

On March 25, 1990, in the twilight years of South African Apartheid, the low-density civil war that had been raging in the eastern region of KwaZulu-Natal between the African National Congress/United Democratic Front (ANC/UDF) and their political rival Inkatha entered a new, bloody phase. After an Inkatha rally, hundreds of armed Inkatha men, aided by white and black police, engaged in organized raids on regional villages and townships which Inkatha viewed as supporting the UDF. In the township of Kwamnyandu that afternoon, three Inkatha members armed with pistols shot twelve unarmed men in a store. A few hours later, several others in that same township had their homes burned and belongings taken.¹ By March 28, the violence had only escalated. Somewhere between 800 and 1000 Inkatha members entered the township of Gezibuso both by truck and on foot. Inkatha began targeting specific houses to be burned and moved through the township to find more targets. In response, nearly 150 comrades (term for UDF fighters) moved to a hill nearby in preparation for a fight. However, those men were then forced down the hillside to confront the Inkatha men who were burning Gezibuso homes. The UDF comrades were out-flanked and out-gunned by the superior Inkatha force and had to retreat. Fighting resumed later that day, however it is unclear how many were killed and wounded.² This intense violence lasted a total of seven days and took the lives of approximately 100 people, with tens of thousands more left homeless, robbed, or both. Soberingly, it was only one of many bloody episodes of the extreme political violence that characterized KwaZulu-Natal in the early 1990s, which itself was but a chapter in an almost three-decade long violent struggle between Inkatha and the ANC/UDF. The raids and attacks were undoubtedly organized by

¹ John Aitchison, *The Seven Days War: 25-31 March 1990 The victim's narrative*, Centre for Adult Education, May 9, 1991, KZN Political Violence, Alan Paton Centre and Struggle Archive, PC126/8/5, 3-5.

² Aitchison, *The Seven Days War*, 10-14.

leaders within the Inkatha establishment and the objective was political: to eliminate, or at the very least intimidate, the opposition. A question still remains, however: Why did the men actually doing the fighting— the Inkatha supporters— get involved? What drove these men to engage in such extreme violence within their own communities?

Today many remember the first free and democratic elections in South Africa in 1994, which signaled the end of Apartheid, to be a miracle of non-violence. But this could not be further from the truth. While it is true that South Africa managed to avoid a race war, as many feared would happen, political violence was still a factor of everyday life. The style of political violence as seen in Kwamnyandu and Gezibuso was particularly prevalent during the 1980s and early 1990s in what is today KwaZulu-Natal. There, a virtual state of civil war once existed, not between the government and democratic opposition, but between liberation movements. The movement that was most heavily involved in much of the violence and the focus of this thesis is the cultural liberation movement and Zulu nationalist organization called Inkatha.

Historical Background

The political violence in the 1980s and 90s in KwaZulu-Natal can best be understood in the context of the wider history of the struggle against Apartheid in South Africa. In 1948, South Africa entered a new phase of white minority rule with the ascension of the National Party and their implementation of Apartheid that would only end with the election of Nelson Mandela in 1994. Apartheid was not only a system of enforced segregation on the basis of race but also entailed the forced removal of black Africans from their homes.³ Under Apartheid, Africans could only legally own land in designated zones called homelands or Bantustans, each one was

³ For the remainder of this thesis, whenever the term “African” is used it should be read as black or black African.

designed to house a separate native ethnic group.⁴ Additionally the homelands only made up around 11% of all land in South Africa.⁵ These homelands were often on the worst land and could not sustain the large populations that were forced to live on them. This was intentional, as it gave South Africa's white-owned businesses (primarily mining and agriculture) access to large amounts of cheap, migrant labor. Homelands were often ruled by traditional leaders, such as chiefs. Some of those chiefs supported Apartheid, while others were bitterly opposed.⁶ This thesis will focus on the homeland of KwaZulu, which was predominantly Zulu (as the name would suggest), as well as Natal, the area that surrounded KwaZulu. Today these are joined together as KwaZulu-Natal and the region will be referred to as such throughout this thesis. In understanding the political situation in KwaZulu-Natal it is also important to understand the deep history of the people that lived there- the Zulu. The Zulu are the largest ethnic group in South Africa and have a history of being a dominant group in the region before and during the arrival of the first Europeans into the area. Zulus continued to draw on this history as did Inkatha, who used Zulu culture, imagery, and history heavily in its politics. It was common to draw on the powerful kingdom formed under the famous King Shaka in the early 1800s, for example.

Inkatha has a complex history of simultaneously being a Zulu cultural movement, a black liberation movement, and eventually a political party. It was formed in the 1970s as a result of several liberation movements being banned by the Apartheid regime and forced into exile in the 1960s. In South Africa, Inkatha is referred to today as the Inkatha Freedom Party after blacks

⁴ Note that the Apartheid government's ideas of ethnic groups is complex and often incorrect and did not include all ethnic groups, gave land to some ethnic groups while others had none, etc.

⁵ Nancy L. Clark and William H. Worger, *South Africa: The Rise and Fall of Apartheid* (Edinburgh: Pearson Education Limited, 2011), 22-23.

⁶ Indirect rule through chiefs is in fact a system that predates Apartheid with its own complex history. For more information and theory on indirect rule, Mahmood Mamdani is an excellent starting point. Mahmood Mamdani, "Indirect Rule, Civil Society, and Ethnicity: The African Dilemma," *Social Justice* 23, no. 1/2 (63-64) (1996), 145-50.

were legally allowed to form political parties starting in 1990. For the sake of simplicity, the organization and party will be referred to here as Inkatha. Inkatha was originally founded by Chief Mangosuthu Buthelezi in 1975 to organize the Zulu people and create a platform for liberation. Buthelezi is often described by various titles: Gatsha, Doctor, or Chief Minister. He will be referred to here as Chief Buthelezi. It is important to note that Chief Buthelezi also led the KwaZulu homeland government, which was predominantly made up of Inkatha members. Inkatha and Chief Buthelezi started with strong links to the ANC, as shown by Chief Buthelezi's past as an ANC youth league member before he founded Inkatha. The group initially held fast to its nonviolent ideals and worked in tandem with the ANC after its exile in 1960 in opposition to the Apartheid State. However, animosity arose between the two organizations due to a falling out at a London conference in 1979-1980.⁷ This animosity grew into a state of violent conflict with assassinations and violent attacks being carried out on both sides. This violence continued but subsided when ANC activity inside South Africa decreased in the 1980s.

The primary opponent of Inkatha was then the United Democratic Front (UDF), a broad coalition of liberation movements, labor movements, and everyday people formed in 1983. The wide make-up of the UDF also meant that its political platform could not be specifically cemented beyond the universal belief in the end of Apartheid and the implementation of a truly non-racial democracy. Since the UDF continued to mobilize support and operate in South Africa while the ANC was in exile, many South Africans viewed this group as the successor to, or at least tied to, the ANC, which had been banned and in exile since 1960. In 1990, once the ban on political organizations was lifted and the ANC was allowed to resume its operations in South Africa, it was able to support the UDF more directly, which of course also brought the ANC back

⁷ KwaZulu Ministry of Communications, "Pietermaritzburg Peace Plan And now will the agony end?" *Clarion Call*, Special Edition, 1988, Killie Campbell Africana Library, KCJ2937, 3.

into more direct conflict with Inkatha. The UDF clashed with Inkatha often due to the younger, more radical nature of their members as compared to the more conservative, traditionalist focus of Inkatha. UDF members frequently accused Inkatha of collaborating with the Apartheid State and instigating violence. Inkatha, on the other hand accused comrades (the name for the UDF's members) of being little more than criminals, and blamed the UDF for instigating the violence.

While Inkatha claimed to be a nonviolent liberation movement, it was the leading perpetrator of violence in KwaZulu-Natal during these decades of late Apartheid, more so than any other organization. The growing influence and differing agenda of the UDF in the mid-1980s clashed with that of Inkatha, leading to what has been described as a low density civil war in KwaZulu-Natal. It is also important to note that during this same period, Inkatha cultivated a close relationship with its professed enemy, the Apartheid State, such that by the late 1980s, Inkatha was acting as a surrogate for Apartheid State violence. Why Inkatha worked with the Apartheid regime has been the subject of considerable scholarly debate over the years, but it is generally agreed that Inkatha felt it needed the government's support to survive and continue its war against the UDF and ANC.⁸ A symbiotic relationship was thus achieved between Inkatha and the Apartheid government through the former's desire for political control over KwaZulu and the latter's desire for the continued weakening of black opposition (UDF and ANC) in the region. The Apartheid government was more than willing to give Inkatha greater control over the KwaZulu homeland in exchange for Inkatha continuing its virtual civil war against the UDF and ANC. Giving greater control to Inkatha in KwaZulu furthered the Apartheid government's policy by creating the model "loyal" homeland, whose leaders were traditional, ethno-nationalist, and deferential to the white-minority regime. In exchange South African security forces secretly but

⁸ Stephen Ellis, "The Historical Significance of South Africa's Third Force," *Journal of Southern African Studies* 24, no. 2 (1998), 261-299.

directly backed Inkatha, giving the group equipment and training. Inkatha's decision to work with the Apartheid State can best be described as being motivated by its perception of the UDF/ANC as the bigger threat, with the underlying logic of "the enemy of my enemy is my friend." After the fall of Apartheid, Inkatha discontinued its program of political violence, and the group continues on as a legitimate political party, though with considerably less widespread support than it once enjoyed in the KwaZulu-Natal region.

Inkatha's direct violence toward other liberation movements despite its professed non-violent platform reflects an obvious contradiction, one that continues to engage scholars to the present day. One question that has not received as much attention, however, is why the *supporters* of Inkatha engaged in this violence, particularly when on the surface they appear to have had nothing to gain directly. This thesis will explore how and why Inkatha supporters engaged in violence in KwaZulu-Natal from the 1980s to the 1990s by analyzing the individual factors that motivated them. These motivating factors can be placed into three categories: political propaganda, coercion, and opportunism. Inkatha utilized political propaganda to highlight the violence of their political opponents—the UDF/ANC— thus providing a rationale for why people should support Inkatha's "defensive" violent acts. Coercion was also used as a tactic to compel those who did not want to engage in political violence to do so. Finally, opportunism motivated some Inkatha supporters to carry out violence when it had the potential to benefit them directly, usually financially, given the dire economic situation in South Africa in the 1980s and 90s.

Historiography

Previous scholarship on Inkatha has tended to focus on three main factors: Inkatha as a “Third Force,” the ethno-nationalism utilized by Inkatha, and Inkatha’s political motivations. The “Third Force” generally refers to an outside organization, or “force” which manipulates a violent situation to their advantage. Here the Third Force argument refers to the belief that a clandestine force was responsible for the surge in violence in KwaZulu-Natal. This argument was largely proved true, as Inkatha’s secret relationship with the Apartheid State was uncovered and the Apartheid State in tandem with Inkatha fit the roll of the Third Force. The amount of attention paid by historians to Inkatha’s relationship with the Apartheid State by historians has been touted as an explanation for the violence perpetrated by Inkatha. By now, this relationship has been well documented by historians, such as Stephen Ellis, and confirmed by multiple sources.⁹ This, however, does not provide the full picture of political violence and Inkatha’s involvement.

Similarly, some historians, such as S. Nombuso Dlamini, have turned to the “Zulu-ness” of Inkatha to explain its role as an ethno-nationalist group and this being the motivation for the violence.¹⁰ While ethnicity played a role in Inkatha’s popularity and part of the organizations violent actions, it was not the sole reason for the violence of the 1980s and 90s, particularly not in KwaZulu-Natal. The ethno-nationalist nature of Inkatha was not absolute, as many Zulus participated in the ANC and UDF. Inkatha’s focus on ethnicity is better attributed to urban violence. Large groups of ethnic Zulu migratory workers housed in hostels in non-Zulu majority areas created tensions along ethnic lines. For example, Gary Kynoch’s focus on the violence on

⁹ Stephen Ellis, “The Historical Significance of South Africa's Third Force,” *Journal of Southern African Studies* 24, no. 2 (1998), 261-299.

¹⁰ S. Nombuso Dlamini, “The construction, meaning and negotiation of ethnic identities in KwaZulu-Natal,” *Social Identities*, October 1998, Vol. 4.

the Reef (areas around Johannesburg) aptly covers the motivators of ethnicity and belonging in this setting.¹¹ This thesis will similarly look at individual cases and factors as Kynoch does, but in the region of KwaZulu-Natal. In this region, most Africans belong to the Zulu ethnic group, so ethnicity is not as much of a factor and as such different conclusions are drawn as to the cause of violence.

Other historians, such as Gerhard Maré, Georgina Hamilton, and Chris Lowe, have looked at the motives of Inkatha's leadership, namely Chief Buthelezi, as an explanation for the violence.¹² Chief Buthelezi and Inkatha are inseparable, and Chief Buthelezi was undeniably a driving force in Inkatha policy and had a certain cult of personality that cannot be ignored to have any serious discussion about Inkatha.¹³ Others, such as Laurence Piper, explored Inkatha through the lens of political science and described how violence evolved from political motives and became a viable strategy to achieve the organization's political goals.¹⁴ However, these political factors did not always motivate (or even occur to) those that directly participated in the violence. Furthermore, most of this previous scholarship takes a top-down approach that often does not consider the individuals needed to operationalize violence. This study joins a growing number of scholars seeking to understand the nature of political violence through previously unconsidered factors, such as Jill Kelly, who has focused on land and intrapersonal relationships.¹⁵ Similar to these new approaches to Inkatha and the complex narratives in South

¹¹ Gary Kynoch, *Township Violence and the End of Apartheid: War on the Reef* (Johannesburg: Wits University Press, 2018).

¹² Gerhard Maré and Georgina Hamilton, *An Appetite for Power: Buthelezi's Inkatha and South Africa* (Johannesburg, Ravan Press, 1988).

¹³ Chris Lowe, "Buthelezi, Inkatha, and the Problem of Ethnic Nationalism in South Africa," *Radical History Review*, Vol. 1990, issue 46-47.

¹⁴ Laurence Piper, "Nationalism without a Nation: The rise and fall of Zulu nationalism in South Africa's transition to democracy, 1975-1999," *Nations and Nationalism*, January 2002, Vol.8.

¹⁵ Jill E. Kelly, *To Swim with Crocodiles: Land, Violence, and Belonging in South Africa, 1800-1996* (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 2018).

Africa during this period, this thesis will adopt a view “from below,” paying close attention to individual rationales while maintaining how these relate to the broader organization of Inkatha.

Political Propaganda and Indoctrination

This thesis will begin by looking at how Inkatha used propaganda to motivate its supporters and justify the use of violence to them. This was primarily achieved by pushing the cause of violence onto their political opponents and defending any actions by Inkatha fighters as justified self-defense. The utilization of propaganda saw widespread use by Inkatha as conflict escalated and continued to rage between Inkatha and the ANC/UDF in the 1980s. The organization moved quickly to present its side of the story and construct an oft-repeated narrative that sought to explain the violence and push the blame away from themselves.

For example, the Inkatha Institute was appointed to investigate the problem of violence in the region and its causes in the late 1980s. This organization claimed to be independent and non-partisan, but was clearly politically aligned with Inkatha, as noted by its contemporary detractors.¹⁶ The Inkatha Institute characterized the violence as being perpetrated by unemployed and rebellious youth. In describing these youths, the Inkatha Institute stated, “They kill political persons indiscriminately but also indulge in murdering ordinary people in the townships.”¹⁷ Furthermore, the youth were described as an “onslaught,” against the general public and communities were simply fighting back against an unwanted invasion by these youths. Here, Inkatha did two things which were subtle but effective. Firstly, Inkatha stated the target of the comrades was the community. This made the comrades seem motivated by personal gain, rather than political goals. Secondly, it gave Inkatha an opportunity to expand its support. Inkatha

¹⁶ Carmel Rickard, “John Aitcheson on KwaZulu-Natal Violence Statistics,” May 3, 1990, Carmel Rickard Cassette Donation, Killie Campbell Africana Library.

¹⁷ KwaZulu Ministry of Communications, “Pietermaritzburg Peace Plan And now will the agony end?” *Clarion Call*, Special Edition, 1988, Killie Campbell Africana Library, KCJ2937, 10

characterized itself and the community as equally affected, and as such presented the idea that a joint effort to fight against the UDF was a logical progression to stop the violence. This assertion was aided by the fact that ANC/UDF membership and supporters were largely radical youth who wished to rebel against the Apartheid State. Through this claim, Inkatha additionally suggested that either the violence was being directly perpetrated by the ANC/UDF or that these youths were motivated by them and could not be controlled by the leadership of these organizations. In fact, a spokesperson for the Inkatha Institute said as much when he described the violence being committed by comrades,¹⁸ and Inkatha continued to directly attack various leaders of the UDF for sponsoring or encouraging violence.¹⁹ In effect, Inkatha sought to again tarnish the motives of the UDF and its members. This explanation and characterization of the violence became part of the Inkatha party line and was repeated frequently in speeches, press interviews, and in party periodicals and sympathetic news outlets.

By placing the blame for the initiation of violence on the ANC and UDF, Inkatha was better able to explain their involvement as reactive, and therefore justified. This was especially important as Inkatha officials and members were increasingly implicated in violence during the mid-1980s.²⁰ Inkatha could not overtly claim responsibility for these members and support their actions publicly because it ran counter to Inkatha's platform as an ostensibly non-violent organization. The organization skirted this issue by stating that violence committed by its members was justified when it was in self-defense. They had already begun using this argument in tandem with the Inkatha Institute report, which claimed that communities were acting in self-defense against the violent youth.²¹ Chief Buthelezi's position as both a traditional and political

¹⁸ Rickard, "John Aitcheson on KwaZulu-Natal Violence Statistics."

¹⁹ KwaZulu Ministry of Communications, "Pietermaritzburg Peace Plan And now will the agony end?" 13

²⁰ Legal Resources Centre, *Names of Inkatha Functionaries and Police Officers Involved in Violence*, May 1986, KZ/Inkatha Politics, PC16/3/19.

²¹ Rickard, "John Aitcheson on KwaZulu-Natal Violence Statistics."

leader meant his words had power and as such defended Inkatha's position by stating, "We reserve the right to defend our persons and our property against the onslaughts which are now being mounted against us."²² This allowed Inkatha to maintain its platform of non-violence (of a sort) while also providing a way to legitimize the violence its supporters committed. This became a cemented part of Inkatha policy as both its leadership and supporters started to use the phrase, "A political eye for an eye and a political tooth for a tooth," which became increasingly popular in the late 1980s and continued into the 1990s (in effect, the word political was only used for propaganda, and the phrase was largely shortened to just "an eye for an eye").²³

The mantra of an "eye for an eye" and its line of thinking provided an avenue for Inkatha leadership to indirectly encourage the commission of violent acts and for Inkatha supporters to justify their violent actions. While the phrase was probably initially intended to relate to political rhetoric and policy actions, it quickly became related to political violence as well. An example of this line of thinking can be seen when Inkatha Youth Brigade members were pressured by journalists in 1988 to describe their ideas of self-defense. The Youth Brigade members had a much looser idea than, for example, the legal definition. "An eye for an eye," in the way that these Inkatha Youth Brigade members described it, meant that the defense of honor and status was of extreme importance.²⁴ For example, a verbal sleight by a political opponent against Chief Buthelezi could be grounds for physical violence to some Inkatha members (and this exact scenario would play out more than once). The idea of "an eye for an eye" also meant to supporters that they were justified if they wanted to get even. For example, if an Inkatha member

²² KwaZulu Ministry of Communications, "South Africa: World Spotlight," Clarion Call, Vol. 4, 1985, Killie Campbell Africana Library, KCJ2938.

²³ KwaZulu Ministry of Communications, "Inkatha and Violence," 1983, Inkatha Pamphlet Collection, Hoover Institution, JQ2099 K9I5.

²⁴ Carmel Rickard, "Interview with Inkatha (IFP) Youth Brigade- Carmel with Mary de Haas," 1988, Carmel Rickard Cassette Donation, Killie Campbell Africana Library, KCAV42481.

was killed by a UDF supporter, Inkatha could feel justified in wanting to kill this man, or any other UDF supporter, and define it as a form of defense.²⁵ This only contributed to the cycle of violence that plagued KwaZulu-Natal.

After black school children led the Soweto Uprising in 1976, it became clear to all groups and organizations involved in South Africa that the youth would have an extensive role to play.²⁶ Inkatha was no exception to this and moved quickly to integrate young people into the cultural liberation movement and later the party (as seen in the Youth Brigade mentioned above). Additionally, Inkatha used its wide powers inside KwaZulu to educate children according to their principles and indoctrinate them along Inkatha's party line. Inkatha developed its own syllabus in early 1978 and began to be implemented later that year. Besides its obvious slant towards Zulu nationalism and its pro-Inkatha nature, the outline for the syllabus rather innocently included classes on community, health, history, and religious studies.²⁷ A closer look at the exact contents of the syllabus and how it was to be implemented in the troubled times of the 1980s reveals a much different story. In information produced about the Inkatha syllabus, the KwaZulu Department of Education and Culture stated that the "syllabus is not static" and that it must conform to "the aims and objectives of the National Cultural Liberation Movement" (meaning Inkatha).²⁸ This point is doubly stressed as the document states, "many adults seem to hold divergent beliefs about Inkatha.... These are passed on to the young and cloud the youth's minds. This syllabus...will clear many doubts and thus create unified ideas to match with the goals of

²⁵ Rickard, "Interview with Inkatha (IFP) Youth Brigade- Carmel with Mary de Haas."

²⁶ The Soweto Uprising was a mass protest the Apartheid regime's "Bantu education" The incident directly leading to the protest was the regime's attempt to implement Afrikaans as the official language in education for Blacks which was flatly rejected. Beyond this however Black students were protesting segregated and sub-standard education and facilities for Black students as well as the entire system of Apartheid.

²⁷ SA Institute of Race Relations- Natal Region, *The Inkatha Syllabus, 1978*, Education and Inkatha syllabus, APCS, PC126/20/7.

²⁸ KwaZulu Dept of Education and Culture, *Syllabus for Primary and Secondary/High Schools, 1978*, Education and Inkatha syllabus, APCS, PC126/20/7, 1.

Inkatha.”²⁹ Inkatha clearly intended to use this syllabus to combat opposing views on the organization and targeted children specifically for political education and indoctrination.

Furthermore, the content of the syllabus demonstrates the true motives of Inkatha with its politically charged history and community classes. The history sections of the syllabus focused on the importance of ethnic Zulus in South African history and placed Inkatha center stage in the struggle against Apartheid. Little mention is given to other liberation movements, unless they are portrayed through a pro-Inkatha lens. The syllabus also placed Chief Buthelezi in the same context as that of King Shaka and other influential Zulu leaders, even though he was already seen as a controversial figure during this period.³⁰ Students were also taught war cries and Inkatha songs, which became increasingly politically charged as the organization used them at rallies and other events, often leading to violence.³¹ All students had to learn and perform these songs regardless of whether or not they agreed with their content. Similarly, teachers were required to teach the syllabus regardless of their personal beliefs.³² The syllabus also increased its focus on political education for students as they aged, focusing on the greatness of Inkatha and installing “Inkatha discipline.”³³ Similarly, students were encouraged to join the Inkatha Youth Brigade and participate in their events. Students were also taught self-defense, a term with a debated definition as explained above.³⁴

Tensions arose from both students and teachers who did not agree with the syllabus, in whole or in part. Particularly in the 1980s, the syllabus became a point of conflict due to the political nature of its contents, adding more fuel to the fire of unrest already present in schools in

²⁹ KwaZulu Dept of Education, Syllabus, 2.

³⁰ KwaZulu Dept of Education, Syllabus, 3.

³¹ KwaZulu Dept of Education, Syllabus, 3-5.

³² KwaZulu Dept of Education, Syllabus, 17-19.

³³ KwaZulu Dept of Education, Syllabus, 13.

³⁴ KwaZulu Dept of Education, Syllabus, 10-17.

South Africa during this period. Schools became battlegrounds as Inkatha Youth Brigade members fought their fellow classmates, who were often organized in youth and student organizations aligned with the UDF. Inkatha officials denied that acts of violence were committed by Inkatha Youth Brigade members, and instead often described these events as the Youth Brigade “maintaining the peace”.³⁵ Inkatha and the KwaZulu Assembly (KwaZulu homeland government) briefly considered giving teachers guns to enforce the peace in schools, but the idea was ultimately shut down.³⁶ A pamphlet, possibly authored by an Inkatha Youth Brigade member or supporter, was produced and spread in KwaMashu concerning the violence in schools and was directed largely towards parents.³⁷ The pamphlet claims that a separate group of unruly students were the cause of the violence in the area, and they acted in accordance with groups like the UDF and ANC. The pamphlet blames these students for theft, looting, and killing, and charges that these students are an affront to “the Nation” and family values. The pamphlet pleads with parents to maintain their traditional authority and closes with a call for the community to arm themselves and “beat up” these students and their allies. This call to action was followed by a list of names and addresses directly calling out those they deem to be “provokers of violence”.³⁸

Children were also indoctrinated outside of schools through the organization’s use of youth camps. These camps were open to both Youth Brigade members as well as the general Zulu youth population in KwaZulu (the camps were later opened to all blacks). The youth camps

³⁵ Rand Daily Mail Reporters, “Teachers are told to join Inkatha,” *Rand Daily Mail*, 6/11/78, Education and Inkatha syllabus, APCS, PC126/20/7.

³⁶ Rand Daily Mail Reporters, “Anti-Inkatha teachers distress Buthelezi,” *Rand Daily Mail*, 6/11/78, Education and Inkatha syllabus, APCS, PC126/20/7.

³⁷ Weekly Mail Reporter, “Eight township violence cases pending in Natal,” *The Weekly Mail*, 06/05/1986, KZN Political Violence, APCS, PC126/8/5.

³⁸ Unknown author, *Students Who Want to Learn: Parents Who Want Their Students to Learn*, transcribed pamphlet, KZN Political Violence, APCS, PC126/8/5.

date back to the late 1970s but their role changed over the course of the 1980s.³⁹ Like many of Inkatha's policies and organizations, the youth camps started innocently enough, described as a way to uplift the local population and encourage them to support the goals of Inkatha as a cultural liberation movement. To this end, the youth camps taught and promoted skills in agriculture, trades, construction, etc.⁴⁰ Chief Buthelezi and Inkatha promoted these camps as an answer for unemployment and a way for the youth to be productive even if they had left school, were forced to abandon their education, or were otherwise unable to learn. This description and justification for the camps remained from the camps' inception through the 1980s, and worked well with Inkatha's arguments that economic woes were the cause of violence. Additionally, by characterizing its youth as disciplined and forward thinking, Inkatha had another useful tool to attack the "unruly" youth of the UDF.⁴¹

Despite talks of ending unemployment and raising the youth, Inkatha's youth camps, as well as the Youth Brigade itself, started to organize itself on paramilitary lines. One reporter quoted that, "members of the movement addressed each other as comrade, that subcommittees of the central committee looked into things like defense and security, [and] that military-type uniforms were worn."⁴² The article also notes the worry of an Apartheid State official at this militant development and how Inkatha should maintain its professed policy of non-violence.⁴³ Despite these claims, the future would prove the article to be wrong on both accounts. Firstly, Inkatha's main enemy was not the Apartheid State, but instead the UDF. Secondly, Inkatha youth

³⁹ Suzanne Vos, "Gatsha's Zulu Juegbond," *Sunday Times*, 02/19/78, Inkatha Youth and Women's Brigade, APCS PC126/3/9, 15.

⁴⁰ Daily News Reporter, "Inkatha Youth Reaffirms Policy of Non-Violence," *The Daily News*, 08/17/81, Inkatha Youth and Women's Brigade, APCS PC126/3/9.

⁴¹ Post Reporter, "Buthelezi's answer to unemployment," *The Post*, 01/15/80, Inkatha Youth and Women's Brigade, APCS PC126/3/9, 10.

⁴² Post Reporter, "Inkatha's Youth on the move," *The Post*, 01/15/80, Inkatha Youth and Women's Brigade, APCS PC126/3/9.

⁴³ Post Reporter, "Inkatha's Youth on the move."

supporters were not a force for peace, but directly engaged in violence against the UDF increasingly throughout the 1980s. The organization of the youth into a paramilitary force was a direct response to school boycotts and student riots from 1978 to 1980. Fearful of radical youth not aligned with the organization, Inkatha created these camps and put greater focus on the Youth Brigade. These youths were trained as “warriors” and Chief Buthelezi stated that, “[they] were to be trained to maintain the peace and eradicate bad elements in the black community”.⁴⁴ As with talks of “self-defense” and “eye for an eye,” “maintaining the peace” and “eradicat[ing] bad elements” should be read as euphemisms for violence and justifications for the actions of the Inkatha Youth Brigade and members of these youth camps.

Political propaganda was a useful tool for Inkatha to justify its position on violence to fence-sitters and particularly to its supporters. By giving a pretext or rationale for the use of violence, Inkatha believed it could avoid scrutiny and circumvent any potential backlash from its supporters. Furthermore, this allowed Inkatha supporters to be more comfortable engaging in violence, and perhaps even encouraged other supporters who had not previously taken part in violence on Inkatha’s behalf to do so. Inkatha found propaganda to be a particularly useful tool for youth, who they could indoctrinate. Through the Inkatha Youth Brigade, Inkatha syllabus, and Inkatha youth camps, the organization was able to create a cadre of dedicated supporters and fighters. However, Inkatha could not always convince everyone through propaganda, and in those cases they relied on coercion.

⁴⁴ Daily News Reporter, “Inkatha Camp Call for More Youths,” *The Daily News*, 12/17/81, Inkatha Youth and Women's Brigade, APCS, PC126/3/9.

Coercion

Inkatha's use of coercion can often be seen at the local leader level, wherein a local chief, headman, or other influential leader used his power over those under him to not only join Inkatha, but also to engage in violence on Inkatha's behalf. An example of this can be seen in the 1987 indictment brought against Christopher Zuma, an Inkatha official and local leader near Pietermaritzburg, by the Mkhize family. Zuma abused his position of power to harass and threaten local families into joining Inkatha. Those that did not join faced beatings or murder, not only of themselves, but also their relatives. Zuma also used the theft of property, particularly the stealing of cattle, to coerce those under him. These same tactics were used by Zuma to force these unwitting supporters to engage in violence. One witness and victim, Mxolisi Hadebe testifies, "I was told that they were recruiting members for Inkatha and that those who did not join would be assaulted. I was also told if I did not join my house would be burnt. As a result of these threats, I said that I was willing to join Inkatha even though this was untrue."⁴⁵ Other witnesses of the indictment testified that they or others they knew were forced to join "raiding parties" which targeted supporters or sympathizers of Inkatha's main political rival, the UDF. One of the applicants explained that he was a previous supporter of Inkatha, but the recent acts of violence led to his desire to revoke his membership. He was worried, however, that his lack of support for these violent acts and wish to leave Inkatha would make him a target, and he feared for his family's safety.⁴⁶

Another common method Inkatha used to coerce its supporters into violence was by forcing them to take part in rallies. Particularly in the mid to late 1980s, Inkatha based its

⁴⁵ Supreme Court of South Africa, *Hebron Bhekokwakhe Mkhize, et al vs Christopher Sichizo Zuma*, 11/02/1987, KZN Political Violence, Legal Papers, APCSA, PC126/8/9, 30.

⁴⁶ Supreme Court of South Africa, *Hebron Bhekokwakhe Mkhize, et al vs Christopher Sichizo Zuma*, 30-40.

supporters into areas largely controlled by its political opponents and provoked conflict. These bused-in supporters were forced into a hostile environment and encouraged to fight on Inkatha's behalf. In an interview with reporter Carmel Rickard, two young Inkatha supporters recalled such a situation immediately after it happened to them. The two young men, one 18 and the other 19, explained they had no intention of engaging in violence and did not even suspect that they would be forced to fight. They were told that they were bused to Lamontville for the memorial service of someone who had died there. They were not given any further information and were widely unprepared for the violent situation they were unwittingly placed into. The young men noted that others around them were armed with spears and shields. Initially, they didn't think much of this, as it is part of the Zulu custom. However, looking back on the situation, they noted it was clear these men were prepared for conflict. After the service, the two young men related that they were told to march through Lamontville, but they were met with resistance not long after entering the township. Several of the residents (likely UDF supporters) threw stones at the Inkatha supporters as they began their march, and things quickly turned into a violent street brawl. The two young men stated that they were frightened and ran. After running and hiding for most of the night they met an Inkatha official who stopped them from walking home. He ordered them to go back and fight. He told them to pick up stones and the scared young men initially agreed until they found a moment to run from him too.⁴⁷

What these young men described is an episode in a wider event that would be known as the Lamontville Crisis, which began in 1984. Inkatha wanted to exert greater control over

⁴⁷ Carmel Rickard, "Lamontville Interview, IFP Supporters," 1984, Carmel Rickard Cassette Donation, Killie Campbell Africana Library, KCAV42498.

Note: This information was taken from cassettes that have not yet been digitized or transcribed. I could not record the playback, so I only have my notes. Due to this and the fact that this interview (and others) was done through a Zulu to English translator with paraphrase no direct quotes are available. This will apply for all references from the Carmel Rickard Cassette Donation in this thesis.

Lamontville by incorporating it into KwaZulu, but the residents resisted, creating violent clashes. These young men, as stated in the interview, obviously had no idea of the wider implications of why they were in Lamontville until it was too late. By obfuscating the purpose of their presence in Lamontville and forcing their supporters into a situation of violence, Inkatha's actions demonstrate a clear example of coercion. Additionally, the unnamed Inkatha official exerted a more direct form of coercion when he used his status to order the young men to go back and fight. This stated example, however, was not a unique occurrence.

An Institute for Black Research report on violence in Natal in 1985 contains a case which also took place during a rally in the midst of the Lamontville Crisis. In an interview with a resident of Umlazi, an Inkatha stronghold, the resident described how he was forced to go to Lamontville and engage in violence. The resident reported that around 100 armed Inkatha supporters came and forced him from a friend's home. He and others were forced to take up sticks or whatever weapons were available and go to the Umlazi stadium. Once at the stadium, he reports that, "We were then ordered to drink as much sorghum beer as our stomachs could take."⁴⁸ Afterwards a local Inkatha official, Winngington Sabelo, arrived and gave a speech calling on them to march on Lamontville and "kill everything including cats and rats. He said he was going to point out the houses which should be destroyed."⁴⁹ The interviewed man says he then managed to leave the group, as they were very drunk, but he subsequently witnessed the group robbing houses and stealing property. Anyone who resisted was severely beaten, some sustaining seemingly mortal wounds from spears. In some cases, even those that had their things stolen from them were forced to join the marauding group spreading violence further throughout the township. Inkatha leaders, such as Sabelo, made it a practice to force supporters to engage in

⁴⁸ Fatima Meer, ed. "Special Report: Unrest in Natal August 1985," Institute for Black Research, 1985, Killie Campbell Africana Library, 322.4 MEE/KC24176, 23.

⁴⁹ Meer, "Special Report," 23

violence, threatening their person or property if they did not comply. Additionally, everyone was ordered to drink beer until drunk, indicating that Inkatha used alcohol to induce the support and obedience of the men while also facilitating them towards violence.⁵⁰

Incidents similar to those above continued throughout the 1980s and 1990s, and were in no way limited to the Lamontville Crisis. A man named Mshyeni Ndovu gives a statement of how he was forced to participate in an Inkatha rally. Like the Umlazi resident above, Ndovu recounts how he was told to grab a stick and follow other armed Inkatha men led by Mandla Shabalala. Ndovu describes how he was threatened with a beating if he did not comply. Ndovu stated that, “anyone who refused to come along was beaten with sticks by certain people who appeared to be in charge.”⁵¹ He was then forced onto a bus with several others armed with sticks and various traditional weapons. Ndovu and the bus eventually ended up in Congella. Ndovu makes it clear that once he got off the bus, he was going to be expected to fight, which worried him greatly. Once the bus started to arrive in Congella, people (presumably UDF supporters) started to stone the bus. Someone shot at the bus and Ndovu was struck in the arm and stomach.⁵²

Besides these examples of rallies that were engineered to cause violence, people were coerced into violence in “everyday” settings, often close to the homes of the victims and perpetrators. A collection of statements from various people affected by Inkatha’s violence from the township of Newcastle describes some of this “everyday” violence and the coercive tactics used to achieve it. By simply refusing to participate, the Dlamini family had unknowingly made themselves targets and an example to others who might think of retracting their support. Dudu-Zile Dlamini recounts how his family was targeted by a local leader and Inkatha official, resulting in the death of the father of the family and one of the brothers. Dudu-Zile testified that:

⁵⁰ Meer, “Special Report,”24

⁵¹ Mshyeni Ndovu, *Mshyeni Ndlovu Affidavit*, March 1986, KZ/Inkatha Politics, APCSA, PC16/3/19, 4.

⁵² Ndovu, *Mshyeni Ndlovu Affidavit*, 1-3.

I think there were a number of reasons why we were attacked. First of all, my mother was an Inkatha member for a while but then decided to leave. She said she was not satisfied with the organization. Secondly, at a certain time there were a number of vigilantes moving around the township looking for men who would join their mob. They wanted my father to join but he decided not to participate.⁵³

Even those who were supporters of Inkatha were often forced to engage in potentially violent situations. One such supporter was a civil servant for KwaZulu, who was forced to participate in a march from the capital of KwaZulu, Ulundi. Inkatha youths and KwaZulu police working for Inkatha forced several groups of people to join the march. The civil servant was not told where they were going or how long the march would be. The nature of the march was clearly hostile, as members were armed and held signs with slogans attacking political enemies of Inkatha. At one point, someone attempted to leave the marching column but was immediately attacked and stoned by youths (possibly Inkatha Youth Brigade members). Another person was injured, but was forced to keep marching. The civil servant broke her ankle and was allowed to leave before seeing the conclusion of the march.⁵⁴

Inkatha vigilantes also took advantage of dire situations among those living in the urban and semi-urban areas of what is today KwaZulu-Natal. Vigilantes was the name often given to Inkatha supporters who attacked comrades, usually in semi-urban and urban settings. The term vigilantes came from the belief that they were merely attacking criminals, as Inkatha had labeled comrades as such. Reports show that these vigilantes often ran protection rackets for those without permanent housing (often referred to as squatters). Furthermore, the squatters complained that the vigilantes forcefully recruited members and instead of offering protection,

⁵³Prof. Sibankulu et al, *Newcastle Statements*, 1985-1987, KZ/Inkatha Politics, Alan Paton Centre and Struggle Archives, PC16/3/19.

⁵⁴ Prof. Sibankulu, *Newcastle Statements*.

they often forced these recruited members to join in on attacks on Inkatha's political opponents in other parts of the township.⁵⁵

Opportunistic Violence

Through these well documented examples and cases, it is clear that coercion was a major factor in Inkatha sponsored or directed violence in KwaZulu-Natal. Many Inkatha supporters did not have to be coerced, however, and chose to engage in violence out of their own volition. Some of those that chose to engage in violence did so for personal gain, whether it be economic or social.

Inkatha supporters had used violence for personal gain since the beginning of the 1980s and often looted and stole when they engaged in various kinds of violence and killings on Inkatha's behalf. By the mid to late 1980s, not only did the violence grow, but so did the number of lootings and thefts. In part, this was caused by the economic downturn experienced in South Africa in the mid-1980s. Slowed economic growth, in addition to sanctions and divestment from major countries and corporations in the West lead to large unemployment and economic instability that South Africa has never truly recovered from.⁵⁶ Subsequently, engaging in violence for personal economic gain became more appealing and more prevalent among Inkatha supporters. This situation was most apparent in the direct theft and looting that occurred wherever Inkatha leadership organized acts of violence, most commonly called raids.

Raids were an effective tool for Inkatha to deal with their opponents, but also proved to be opportunities for Inkatha supporters to personally benefit. Looting was a common occurrence

⁵⁵ Meer, "Unrest in Natal" 53-55.

⁵⁶ The international disinvestment campaign was a global protest against Apartheid which started with the boycott of South African products and grew into calls for large international businesses to pull out from South Africa. Many regard the international disinvestment campaign as a success with some even advocating it as the real reason for the end of Apartheid. For discussion on disinvestment as well as Inkatha's reaction to it Gerhard Mare's work on Buthelezi is a good starting point. Maré, Gerhard and Hamilton, Georgina, *An Appetite for Power: Buthelezi's Inkatha and South Africa* (Johannesburg, Ravan Press, 1988).

in Inkatha fighting, as seen in the above example of the Umlazi man forced to participate in a raid where looting had a prevalent role. Looting, in this case, could be interpreted as a form of payment for participation and a potential tool for attracting more supporters to the Inkatha cause. The interviewed Umlazi resident noted that groceries were a prime target for looting. He stated, “I also observed that members of Sabelo’s group were moving from house to house robbing people of their property and especially groceries. Any resistance was mercilessly crushed.”⁵⁷ The perceived value of such everyday items indicates the severe impact the economic downturn had at the time, and gives further credence to the idea of looting as a necessary- or at least deeply motivating- action for these participants. Furthermore, the Umlazi resident noted that, “even the people from whom the groceries had been taken...were not taken to the police station. Instead they were ordered to join the group, so that they moved around in the townships terrorizing the residents.”⁵⁸ Evidently, even those that did not want to be there or were even directly affected by the violence still participated in the looting.

The Seven Days War, which was described in the introduction of this thesis, encompasses the most accounts of looting occurring during a single event. These seven days of intense violence saw organized Inkatha supporters attack their UDF opponents in the rural and semi-urban areas around Pietermaritzburg from approximately March 24/25 to March 31, 1990 (however, fighting continued in some areas for over a month). Sibongile Mkhize was interviewed in 1996 about her involvement and experiences during the Seven Days War, and she commented on the widespread looting. First, she made special mention of the theft of cattle during the chaos (cattle were particularly important to the economic lifeblood of many rural areas). Mkhize noted that most of the cattle were consolidated at chiefs’ houses, who most often were Inkatha

⁵⁷ Meer, “Unrest in Natal” 23.

⁵⁸ Meer, “Unrest in Natal” 23.

supporters, and the rest were sold off. She went on to say that those who attempted to retrieve their cattle were attacked. Mkhize noted that upwardly mobile homes were particularly targeted because they were viewed to have things of value inside. She continued by stating, “If you go to these Inkatha homes today, you will see about 5 televisions, 4 fridges, and 3 lounge suites with leopard skins or lion skins. Even if you had money, why would you buy 3 lounge suites or 5 televisions? In the whole thing the Inkatha people gained and we lost.”⁵⁹ In all, these raids and violent attacks were directly beneficial to those who participated and certainly motivated some Inkatha supporters to be involved.

Another report on the violence of the Seven Days War includes a chronological time frame and several first-hand accounts,⁶⁰ where looting is mentioned several times. For example, a resident of the township of Taylor’s Halt stated that he was told he should go to Inkatha meetings and he refused. Later, his home was completely looted and destroyed.⁶¹ A woman resident was intimidated into giving up some food but was otherwise unhurt.⁶² Another entry in the report notes that a resident of Gezubuso, “had her television set, radio cassette, and husband’s clothes stolen.”⁶³ Several other entries in the report make note of stolen and looted items of varying value, indicating that looters took what they could in the midst of violence. Similar to Mkhize’s account of the violence, special attention is paid to cattle theft (or “rustling”) in the report. Cattle rustling is an old practice in KwaZulu due to the symbolic importance and prestige of a large cattle herd. Cattle is also perceived as materially valuable because cattle are a mainstay of the rural economy to this day.

⁵⁹ Lou Levine, “Faith in Turmoil: The Seven Days War,” *Msunduzi Journal*, Vol. 3, 2012, KCJ4294, 14-16.

⁶⁰ John Aitchison, *The Seven Days War: 25-31 March 1990 The victim's narrative*, Centre for Adult Education, May 9, 1991, KZN Political Violence, APCSA, PC126/8/5.

⁶¹ Aitchison, *The Seven Days War*, 6.

⁶² Aitchison, *The Seven Days War*, 12.

⁶³ Aitchison, *The Seven Days War*, 15.

Beyond the everyday fighters, full members with special status in Inkatha and low- and mid-level Inkatha leaders could benefit directly through fees and goods paid for engaging in violence. Similarly, local chiefs allied with Inkatha benefited not just through salaries and perks paid out by the KwaZulu government and Inkatha, but also through violence. Christopher Zuma (mentioned above), in the midst of seeking out and attacking UDF supporters, also used his status as a local chief to extort membership fees out of those under him and was also accused of theft of both household goods and cattle. Zuma essentially used his position to become a racketeer. One young man described that he was forced by men loyal to Zuma to join Inkatha and pay a membership fee against his will.⁶⁴ In another instance, a former male Inkatha member, who was targeted for wanting to leave the organization, stated, “During the course of that night, [Zuma], together with his followers, broke into our house, looted its contents and stole and butchered our cow.”⁶⁵

Almost identical types of racketeering and motives played out in another township near Pietermaritzburg. Several local Inkatha officials and a chief used their status to extort fines and fees and threatened those that refused with violence. Some members of the community attempted to organize in response to what they described as the oppressive nature of Inkatha. In retaliation, the local leaders and Inkatha officials killed members of one of the families attempting to lead this new organization. Those affected claimed that they were hit with unfair fines and forced “donations” to Inkatha, all of which were backed by the threat of violence.⁶⁶

In some cases, the violence itself became a paying job for some Inkatha members. KwaZulu government MP, Inkatha official, and professed *impi* (a Zulu term for army) leader

⁶⁴ The Supreme Court of South Africa, *Hebron Bhekokwakhe Mkhize, et al vs Christopher Sichizo Zuma*, 27-30.

⁶⁵ The Supreme Court of South Africa, *Hebron Bhekokwakhe Mkhize, et al vs Christopher Sichizo Zuma*, 24.

⁶⁶ Supreme Court of South Africa, *Mandla W. Mkhize and Mangethe Mkhize vs David Ntombela and others*, Nov 1st, 1987, KZN Political Violence, Legal Papers, APCSA, PC126/8/9, 20-25.

Thomas Shabalala was no stranger to violence and extortion. Shabalala claimed that, “With this [pistol] I will leave hundreds of UDF supporters dead on the battlefield.” Shabalala used his status and position to extort a monthly fee from the Lindelani township. This fee was used to pay Shabalala’s monthly “salary” as well as an “army of 208 ‘cops’ under his control.”⁶⁷ Payments towards the police likely not only contributed to Shabalala’s free reign, but also served as payment for the police to directly engage in the violence on Inkatha’s behalf. This kind of arrangement was not unusual, since police often sided with Inkatha and reports of police helping Inkatha were common.⁶⁸ Men around Shabalala also stated that they were awaiting payment for a raid they carried out against a student meeting (likely a youth or student organization with links to the UDF). Fees for living in “Inkatha areas” allowed local leaders aligned with Inkatha to personally enrich themselves and also pay men to carry out raids and political hits against anyone or any organization that would challenge their rule.

To further their own goals and to gain an upper hand in the continuing violence of the 1980s and early 1990s, Inkatha in league with the Apartheid government started to train paramilitary fighters who often operated as professional hitmen (for lack of a better term). These fighters were trained at the Caprivi Strip in what is today neighboring Namibia, and as such these men would later be known as the Caprivi Operatives. Trained by members of the South African Defense Force, these operatives received military and technical training and were intended to become the core of an armed wing for Inkatha. After their training, these operatives were deployed against the internal political enemies of the Apartheid State and Inkatha, namely the UDF and ANC, and carried out political hits and assassinations. One of these operatives, Dalaquulo Luthuli (sometimes written Dalaxulo), described his job as a military leader for Inkatha

⁶⁷ Sibusiso Mngadi, “War cries of an angry Amabutho,” *The City Press*, 06/01/86, KZN Political Violence, APCSA, PC126/8/5.

⁶⁸ Aitchison, *The Seven Days War*, 1.

and a military commissar to the Caprivi Operatives. As part of this position, he received a regular salary from Inkatha. Luthuli also remarks that he may have even received gifts or particular payment after carrying out assassinations on behalf of Inkatha leaders. Luthuli was not alone in this, however, as around 200 men were trained at the Caprivi strip and received regular pay for carrying out various acts of violence.⁶⁹

Opportunistic violence also arose over issues of access to limited resources. In the atmosphere of the 1980s and 90s in KwaZulu-Natal, violence of any kind was often backed by political organizations such as Inkatha. Examples of this can most commonly be seen in urban township violence. In one township, tensions between squatters and permanent residents created a state of conflict. The large influx of squatters in self-constructed dwellings wanted access to various necessities. A man from the squatter side described that they simply wanted access to “water, roads, bus stops,” etc. in the permanent housing section but were denied and attacked. Those living in the permanent housing sections countered, claiming that the squatters were using up already scarce resources and were trying to monopolize them for themselves using the threat of force. Conflict over housing and necessities like water became political as organizations picked sides to bolster their ranks. Inkatha exerted influence over the squatters and promised them better conditions if they attacked the permanent housing section. Similarly, the permanent housing section was offered protection from the squatters and Inkatha by the UDF and ANC. Instead of using their influence to solve the problem, Inkatha backed a side to bolster their ranks, and the violence continued to escalate. The desires of the squatters were mobilized for continuing the goals of Inkatha and to create a situation where they could continually recruit. The permanent housing side remarked that Inkatha brought in outside help to continue the fight. One individual

⁶⁹ Truth and Reconciliation Commission, “Dalaqolo W. Luthuli,” *TRC Amnesty Hearings*, April 7, 1998, Durban, <http://sabctrc.saha.org.za/documents/amntrans/durban/54690.htm>.

from the squatter side mentions that he supported Inkatha because, “Inkatha owns my house,” and the only way to stop the violence would be if everyone had permanent housing.⁷⁰

Disputes over resources also played out in cases such as the conflict over the Inanda-Phoenix Relief Fund. The Inanda-Phoenix Relief Fund was created to help those affected by violence, initially for residents of the Inanda and Phoenix townships outside Durban, but the fund eventually grew to help those throughout KwaZulu-Natal. One member of the executive committee of the relief fund was a man mentioned earlier, Winnington Sabelo. He was also a member of the KwaZulu Legislative Assembly and an Inkatha official. Sabelo was charged with bias in how aid was distributed by some of those who applied for it. Those most affected by the violence, especially those who had their homes destroyed and burned, were supposed to receive aid from an impartial board. Sabelo instead used his position to selectively give aid to Inkatha supporters and denied it to UDF supporters. Sabelo went even further by targeting UDF supporters who had applied for aid, making others fearful to even apply.⁷¹ Those affected by violence were then presented with a tough decision. Either they could join Inkatha, likely the organization that caused them to need aid or receive no aid at all.

Given the economic woes and expanding war in South Africa in the 1980s, it is not surprising that so many turned to violence for personal gain. Inkatha was more than willing to capitalize on this situation, providing opportunities to loot and in some cases even full-time jobs predicated on the use of violence. However, it was most often the need or desire for wealth and goods that motivated these Inkatha supporters to participate in these raids.

⁷⁰ Carmel Rickard, “Interview with resident of poor Inkatha area and issue of IFP-ANC violence,” Thurs March 1989, Carmel Rickard Cassette Donation, Killie Campbell Africana Library, KCAV42495.

⁷¹ Linda Vergnani, “Refugees fear relief fund officer’s ‘bias,’” *The Sunday Tribune*, 12/08/85, KZN Political Violence, APCS, PC126/8/5.

Conclusion

This thesis seeks to explain why Inkatha members and supporters engaged in violence on behalf of a self-proclaimed non-violent organization. While it is not possible to answer this question completely, as it is individual to each member, the three categories described above demonstrate the wide range of motivating factors. For example, Inkatha's use of propaganda to blame its political rivals for violence and to justify its own violent actions as "defensive" signaled to its supporters that violence was acceptable and even necessary. While the aim of this propaganda was definitely political, the justification of violence was sophisticated and aware enough to go beyond mere aggrandizement of the organization, and instead engage in complex manipulation. These justifications and Inkatha's embracement of "an eye for an eye" certainly played a role in the vicious cycle of violence that characterized the low density civil war in KwaZulu-Natal. For those who were not swayed by the violent messages in Inkatha's propaganda, they could be forced to participate in the violence against their will. Both those that supported Inkatha and those who were whole-heartedly opposed were told to pick up a weapon and fight. Dire consequences directed at their person, their family, or their property befell those that refused. Inkatha's base, as illustrated throughout this paper, was clearly not a monolith of Zulu nationals all fighting for the same end, and as such, modern scholarship has largely begun to move beyond this notion. Reaching beyond this characterization of Inkatha supporters, the extensive use of coercion puts into question how many supporters truly had agency in the face of violence. At the very least, the question now arises as to how much the Inkatha supporter base willingly agreed with or supported the organization's unofficial policy of violence. Finally, there are those who were allured by what they might gain through violence. Working directly for Inkatha as a high status member or professional hitman was a road to money and power for

some, while others joined in on Inkatha's lucrative raids which stole everything from groceries to television sets from those deemed to be the enemy of Inkatha. Violence in KwaZulu-Natal was rapid and brutal as is often expected in situations of political violence that spin out into low density civil wars. This prevailing atmosphere of violence coupled with the economic downturn of South Africa in the 1980s and 90s makes it seem almost unavoidable that fighting for money or even groceries would motivate so many. The proverbial barrier of entry was lowered, and more fuel was added to the fire.

Discussing and understanding the motivations of Inkatha's supporters and why they choose or were forced to engage in violence are crucial because it paints a different picture than that of a purely political or top-down history of Inkatha. In many cases, it could be argued that politics didn't factor at all into the motivations of violence for some Inkatha supporters. To the man who stole to survive as part of an Inkatha raid, the political 'why?' may hardly seem relevant. This sentiment is glaringly apparent in the testimonies of those forced to fight against their will. Furthermore, the ability of Inkatha to rally support is woefully under-appreciated by those that describe them as a purely Zulu nationalist organization. Inkatha's use of propaganda demonstrated their understanding of what motivated their supporters. For example, Inkatha manipulated their supporters' desires for personal and economic safety to recruit and encourage violence on the organization's behalf. Only by understanding the motivations of those who actually committed the violence is it truly possible to understand the nature of the violence in KwaZulu-Natal in the 1980s and 90s and Inkatha's dominating role in it.

Epilogue

Although this thesis's discussion of violence in KwaZulu-Natal ends just before the 1994 election, the violence did not. Particularly in KwaZulu-Natal, tensions and violence remained high due to Inkatha's attempts to influence the local election in 1996, in order to continue exert control over the local government. Inkatha had a strong enough showing in the 1994 general election to be part of the coalition government with their professed enemy, the ANC, yet Inkatha support continued to dwindle. Today, Inkatha remains a political player as the Inkatha Freedom Party, but has limited seats in the national government and currently heads the opposition in the KwaZulu-Natal provincial legislature.

Violence continues to be a problem in KwaZulu-Natal, as within the rest of South Africa; however, most of the violence today is primarily due to criminal activity. Continued economic woes and corruption mean that South Africa still has a long road ahead of her.

Bibliography

Secondary Sources

Clark, Nancy L. and Worger, William H., *South Africa: The Rise and Fall of Apartheid* (Edinburgh: Pearson Education Limited, 2011).

Dlamini, S. Nombuso, "The construction, meaning and negotiation of ethnic identities in KwaZulu-Natal", *Social Identities*, October 1998, Vol. 4.

Ellis, Stephen, "The Historical Significance of South Africa's Third Force" *Journal of Southern African Studies* 24, no. 2 (1998).

Kelly, Jill E. *To Swim with Crocodiles: Land, Violence, and Belonging in South Africa, 1800-1996* (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 2018).

Kynoch, Gary *Township Violence and the End of Apartheid: War on the Reef* (Johannesburg: Wits University Press, 2018).

Lowe, Chris, "Buthelezi, Inkatha, and the Problem of Ethnic Nationalism in South Africa", *Radical History Review*, Vol. 1990, issue 46-47.

Maré, Gerhard and Hamilton, Georgina, *An Appetite for Power: Buthelezi's Inkatha and South Africa* (Johannesburg, Ravan Press, 1988).

Piper, Laurence, "Nationalism without a Nation: The rise and fall of Zulu nationalism in South Africa's transition to democracy, 1975-1999", *Nations and Nationalism*, January 2002, Vol.8.

Primary Sources

Aitchison, John, *The Seven Days War: 25-31 March 1990 The victim's narrative*, Centre for Adult Education, May 9th, 1991, KZN Political Violence, Alan Paton Centre and Struggle Archive, PC126/8/5.

Daily News Reporter, “Inkatha Camp Call for More Youths”, *The Daily News*, 12/17/81, Inkatha Youth and Women's Brigade, APCSА, PC126/3/9.

Daily News Reporter, “Inkatha Youth Reaffirms Policy of Non-Violence”, *The Daily News*, 08/17/81, Inkatha Youth and Women's Brigade, APCSА, PC126/3/9.

Rickard, Carmel, “Interview with Inkatha (IFP) Youth Brigade- Carmel with Mary de Haas”, 1988, Carmel Rickard Cassette Donation, Killie Campbell Africana Library, KCAV42481.

Rickard, Carmel, “Interview with resident of poor Inkatha area and issue of IFP-ANC violence”, Thurs March 1989, Carmel Rickard Cassette Donation, Killie Campbell Africana Library, KCAV42495.

Rickard, Carmel, “Lamontville Interview, IFP Supporters”, 1984, Carmel Rickard Cassette Donation, Killie Campbell Africana Library, KCAV42498.

Rickard, Carmel, “John Aitcheson on KwaZulu-Natal Violence Statistics”, May 3, 1990, Carmel Rickard Cassette Donation, Killie Campbell Africana Library.

KwaZulu Ministry of Communications, “Pietermaritzburg Peace Plan And now will the agony end?”, *Clarion Call*, Special Edition, 1988, Killie Campbell Africana Library, KCJ2937.

KwaZulu Ministry of Communications, “South Africa: World Spotlight”, *Clarion Call*, Vol. 4, 1985, Killie Campbell Africana Library, KCJ2938.

KwaZulu Ministry of Communications, “Inkatha and Violence”, 1983, Inkatha Pamphlet Collection, Hoover Institution, JQ2099 K9I5.

KwaZulu Dept of Education and Culture, Syllabus for Primary and Secondary/High Schools, 1978, Education and Inkatha syllabus, APCSА, PC126/20/7.

Legal Resources Centre, *Names of Inkatha Functionaries and Police Officers Involved in Violence*, May 1986, KZ/Inkatha Politics, PC16/3/19.

Levine, Lou “Faith in Turmoil: The Seven Days War”, *Msunduzi Journal*, Vol. 3, 2012, Killie Campbell Africana Library, KCJ4294.

Meer, Fatima, ed. “Special Report: Unrest in Natal August 1985,” Institute for Black Research, 1985, Killie Campbell Africana Library, 322.4 MEE/KC24176.

Mngadi, Sibusiso “War cries of an angry Amabutho”, *The City Press*, 06/01/86, KZN Political Violence, APCS, PC126/8/5.

Ndovu, Mshyeni, Mshyeni Ndlovu Affidavit, March 1986, KZ/Inkatha Politics, APCS, PC16/3/19.

Prof. Sibankulu et al, *Newcastle Statements*, 1985-1987, KZ/Inkatha Politics, Alan Paton Centre and Struggle Archives, PC16/3/19.

Post Reporter, “Buthelezi’s answer to unemployment”, *The Post*, 01/15/80, Inkatha Youth and Women's Brigade, APCS, PC126/3/9.

Post Reporter, “Inkatha’s Youth on the move”, *The Post*, 01/15/80, Inkatha Youth and Women's Brigade, APCS, PC126/3/9.

Unknown author, *Students Who Want to Learn: Parents Who Want Their Students to Learn*, transcribed pamphlet, KZN Political Violence, APCS, PC126/8/5.

Rand Daily Mail Reporters, “Anti-Inkatha teachers distress Buthelezi”, *Rand Daily Mail*, 6/11/78, Education and Inkatha syllabus, APCS, PC126/20/7.

Rand Daily Mail Reporters, “Teachers are told to join Inkatha”, *Rand Daily Mail*, 6/11/1978, Education and Inkatha syllabus, APCS, PC126/20/7.

South Africa Institute of Race Relations- Natal Region, "The Inkatha Syllabus", 1978, Education and Inkatha syllabus, APCSA, PC126/20/7.

Supreme Court of South Africa, *Hebron Bhekokwakhe Mkhize, et al vs Christopher Sichizo Zuma*, 11/02/1987, KZN Political Violence, Legal Papers, APCSA, PC126/8/9.

Supreme Court of South Africa, *Mandla W. Mkhize and Mangethe Mkhize vs David Ntombela and others*, Nov 1st, 1987, KZN Political Violence, Legal Papers, APCSA, PC126/8/9.

Truth and Reconciliation Commission, "Dalaqolo W. Luthuli", *TRC Amnesty Hearings*, April 7, 1998, Durban, <http://sabctrc.saha.org.za/documents/amntrans/durban/54690.htm>.

Vergnani, Linda, "Refugees fear relief fund officer's 'bias'", *The Sunday Tribune*, 12/08/85, KZN Political Violence, APCSA, PC126/8/5.

Vos, Suzanne, "Gatsha's Zulu Juegbond", *Sunday Times*, 02/19/78, Inkatha Youth and Women's Brigade, APCSA PC126/3/9.

Weekly Mail Reporter, "Eight township violence cases pending in Natal", *The Weekly Mail*, 06/05/1986, KZN Political Violence, APCSA, PC126/8/5.