

Did 'third force' run S. Africa massacre?

by Jeffrey Steinberg

On Sunday, Feb. 10, two busloads of supporters of Inkatha leader Mangosuthu Buthelezi were ambushed as they returned from a prayer service in central Natal province in the Republic of South Africa. By the time the automatic weapons fire stopped, 17 people were killed and 29 others injured. The unidentified gunmen fled. The site of the ambush, a desolate area known as Taylors Halt in the heart of Inkatha territory, had been the site in 1987 of another massacre in which 13 children were killed. The earlier incident triggered some of the most violent fighting ever between the country's two major black political movements, Inkatha and the African National Congress (ANC).

The ambush occurred just two weeks after an historic meeting between Chief Buthelezi and ANC leader Nelson Mandela, in which the two men pledged to work together to end the fighting between Inkatha and the ANC, and to forge a peaceful transition in South Africa. The Jan. 29 meeting, which had been repeatedly blocked at the last minute by outbreaks of violence targeting one or another of their groups, was the first encounter between the two political leaders in 30 years.

Three days after the Mandela-Buthelezi meeting, Republic of South Africa President Friedrich DeKlerk went before Parliament to announce the repeal of a series of acts that have been at the core of the apartheid system.

DeKlerk told the parliamentarians: "The elimination of racial discrimination goes hand-in-hand with the constitutional process. The government has expressed its intention repeatedly to remove discriminatory laws and practices. Many of them have been abolished already. Those remaining could not be repealed out of hand because their complex nature required in-depth investigation. These investigations have now been completed. To the extent that I am able to make certain announcements today, legislation is to be tabled shortly for the repeal of the Land Acts of 1913 and 1936, the Group Areas Act of 1966, and the Development of Black Communities Act of 1984, as well as all other stipulations that determine the rights concerning land according to membership of population groups."

Taken as a totality, these laws had restricted South African blacks from owning land in 87% of the country, had forced them to live solely in townships and homelands, and had provided for racial classifications of all South Africans,

a key to the complete disenfranchisement of blacks from the national electoral process.

While many issues continue to divide the various political factions in South Africa, including the ANC and Inkatha, the Mandela-Buthelezi meeting and the DeKlerk announcement were widely applauded as signs of progress toward a peaceful political transition in South Africa. Now, the Sunday massacre at Taylors Halt could be the trigger for a renewed outbreak of black versus black bloodshed, which could set the republic back on the track to civil war.

Within a day of the massacre, on Feb. 11, Mandela and Inkatha chairman Frank Mdlalose, in an effort to preempt renewed fighting, issued a joint statement expressing "shock and horror" at the attack. Typifying the inflammatory media coverage, the *Washington Post* predicted renewed ANC-Inkatha fighting due to the "limited influence national leaders are able to exert on their followers."

The 'third force'

The timing of the massacre and the sophistication of the assassins have revived speculation that a shadowy "third force" is afoot once again, trying to instigate ANC-Inkatha warfare as a means of sabotaging the reform process. Last autumn, a series of armed assaults on commuter trains in ANC-controlled townships near Johannesburg, in which dozens of people died or were injured, prompted some prominent South African figures to charge that a "third force"—neither the ANC nor Inkatha—was behind the brutality, and that the goal of the effort was to trigger such widespread black versus black and black versus white bloodletting that the DeKlerk government would fall and martial law or an outright military government would be imposed to "restore order."

EIR has warned for years that the biggest obstacle to an enduring peace in southern Africa is British imperialism, specifically British Foreign Office dirty operator Tiny Rowland, whose Lonrho conglomerate runs an army of mercenaries in every country in the region, and who has pulled off dozens of political assassinations over past decades. Abetting BFO and CIA-linked operator Rowland is the Israeli Mossad, which has been contracted for years to train the South African Security Force's elite counter-terror units.

It is this crowd of British racists and raw material looters who played an instrumental role in triggering the current Mideast War, and who are fully committed to an unending string of North versus South "little wars"—especially in Africa. If the combined forces of Buthelezi, Mandela, and DeKlerk genuinely wish to see peace and prosperity return to their country, they are going to have to put their intelligence capabilities to work developing the name, rank, and serial numbers of the assassins spreading violence and chaos in the name of the "third force." And then, they are going to have to come out publicly naming those names, starting with Tiny Rowland.