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CENSORSHIP OF THE PRESS IN SOUTH AFRICA DURING THE ANGOLAN WAR:

A Case Study of News Manipulation and Suppression

Thesis

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NOTE

For the convenience of the reader a table showing the chronology of Angolan War news is to be found in Appendix A.

Appendix B is *The Star*'s public opinion poll on war news censorship.

Appendix C is the text of Section 118 of the Defence Amendment Act of 1967.

Appendix D is the text of the Agreement between the Minister of Defence and the press.

Footnotes for all sections will be found together at the end, along with the bibliography.

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I dedicate this work to MY FATHER
in gratitude for the fact that he
has never quite given me up.

ABSTRACT

During the Angolan War of 1975-6, whilst South African troops were actively engaged on the side of the Unita/ FNLA alliance, news media in South Africa were prohibited from disclosing information about the country's role in the war. Under Section 118 of the Defence Amendment Act of 1967, no information about SA troop movements or plans could be published without the permission of the Minister of Defence or his nominees. This case study shows how the Government used the Defence Act to censor certain news while releasing other news which suited its political outlook and objectives. The study documents the history of the Defence Act and of the military-press liaison machinery which grew out of it. The Introduction defines propaganda as a technique of ideological control designed to supplement the control of society by means of repression. The study sets in context the Government's propaganda strategy before, during and after the Angolan War, arguing that the structures of white domination, including the newspaper industry, are being drawn into the Government's scheme of total co-ordination to fight a total war.

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INTRODUCTION

WAR, PROPAGANDA, AND THE CONSENSUS

0.1 Scope and Context of the Case Study

0.2 Indoctrination and the "National Will"

0.3 The Functional Approach to Propaganda

0.4 Structural Approaches to Propaganda

0.5 Conclusion

0.1 Scope and Context of the Case Study

In the latter half of 1975 South African troops secretly entered the Angolan civil war. In March 1976, after the Western news media had exposed South Africa's role in the war, causing an international furore, the troops withdrew. During the war and long after it the bulk of information concerning the strengths, movements and objectives of the South African forces in Angola was suppressed in the Republic, on instructions from the Minister of Defence. Meanwhile these facts became freely available to the rest of the world. In February 1977 - roughly 18 months after the date of the original incursion - the South African public were at last told the details of the Angolan campaign.

This is a case study of that episode of news suppression. Although the Angolan War has receded in time, the issues it raised concerning relationships between Government and the press have, if anything, become more pressing to those involved. Military censorship of the kind that occurred during the Angolan War may be seen in retrospect as the archetype of news control which is now being applied on a more general scale. Such control forms part of the "total strategy" being devised by the Government to combat its enemies at home and abroad; a total strategy of defence that implies total propaganda on behalf of the system of white domination.

News of the war was not just censored; it was also deliberately manipulated. It will emerge in this study that censorship - conceived of as the total suppression of certain information and opinions - went hand-in-hand with news manipulation - that is, the selective release of other material approved by the authorities. Once there is censorship it is not possible to regard the officially-permitted material as anything but deliberate propaganda, no matter how accurate specific items of published information may be.

Military censorship in contemporary South Africa seldom if ever takes the form of direct blue-pencilling of reporter's copy by men in uniform. It is subtle enough for defenders of the Angolan case to deny that censorship took place. In 1967 the newspaper industry entered into a voluntary agreement with the Minister of Defence to approach his department for pre-publication advice and guidance on military news reports. This service was meant to facilitate the flow of news rather than restrict it. It was introduced by the Minister to defuse press criticism over the Defence

Amendment Act of 1967 which prescribed that no information about South African troop movements, armaments, and military plans and alliances could be published without the permission of the Minister or someone delegated by him. Editors could ignore the service and take their chances under the Defence Act if they wished but the maximum penalty on conviction was a fine of R1 000 or five years imprisonment or both. It was clearly in their own interests to check material with the authorities before rushing into print.

Using the liaison machinery, the Government has succeeded very largely in putting across a one-sided definition of the military situation which suits its objectives in foreign and domestic policy. This study is not concerned with the international dimensions of Government information policy except where these impinge on the media at home. Interest focuses on the links between domestic politics and propaganda in time of war. A theme that is stressed is that in most situations where Western commercial news media have been subjected to military censorship, the hunger of these media for saleable news makes them accessible to official propagandists, those who issue the communiques and hold the briefings from which the press takes its view of the war. Morsels of fact (and a little fiction) judiciously fed to the voracious newspaper animal may never satisfy it but will keep it tame enough to be led along the path of public indoctrination.

Censorship and propaganda are such "normal" accompaniments of modern warfare that people seldom ask why they seem so inevitable. The moment the first shots are fired it is customary to toss off a wry remark about truth being "the first casualty"(1) in war and leave it at that. Yet is there a systematic relationship between the use of physical force and of propaganda? The Introduction will explore this question. In terms of the concept of propaganda to be presented here, the visible and overt acts of those who deliberately set out to propagandise the public are just the tip of an iceberg. Propaganda cannot be narrowly defined, as many have tried to define it, as simply the attempt by specific social agencies such as government departments, political parties or business corporations, to persuade or "brainwash" people into accepting certain attitudes and acting in certain ways. Certainly, the conscious and often cynical use of techniques of indoctrination is a feature of modern society associated with the growth of big government, political campaigning, and mass

advertising. It is usual to confine the study of propaganda to these relatively easily identifiable agencies and their methods. The present study does just this; but at the outset it should be made clear that there is more to the subject than meets the eye.

It would be convenient, but mistaken, to restrict this discussion to the official uses of propaganda. In the broadest sense, propaganda is the reproduction of ideologies for purposes of social control. A fairly extensive and complex argument will be given below to support this definition. What it means, in effect, is that propaganda is an integrative force in human society, operating on all levels of communication from the most obvious management of information and opinion to the most seemingly disinterested processes of education. Propaganda is the continuous and all-pervasive process of inculcating the norms and values implicit in a certain social structure. Its forms are as varied as the features of the structure itself, because, on the ideological plane, it _is_ the structure expressed in ideas, attitudes and beliefs. As the economic and political elements of the social order evolve through time so too do the ideological forms that accompany them, for society is a complex whole whose parts interlock to mutually determine each other. If there is a single underlying factor which determines how structures are organised and how they are transformed in history it is probably the economic basis of social relations; the political and ideological levels are secondary. Still, this does not mean that the analysis of politics and ideology is a waste of effort; on the contrary, their intricate relationships with the economic base and with each other need to be explored in detail in order to develop a theoretical understanding of the whole. This is a vastly difficult task and obviously cannot be undertaken here except to indicate where propaganda might be fitted into the overall pattern of theory.

The analysis of official propaganda techniques and objectives in South Africa, as elsewhere, needs to be related to the broader concept of propaganda. But a necessary distinction must be drawn between "surface" and "deep" propaganda. Propaganda on the surface is obviously controversial and involves agencies which are consciously devoted to winning support for themselves and their doctrines. The propaganda of the South African Government and military establishment during the Angolan War was largely of this type. The fierce reaction of sections of the press to war

censorship showed that they did not accept the methods or doctrines of the propagandists. On a deeper level, however, there was greater unity of purpose between the Government and its opponents in the white political establishment and the opposition press. Both were concerned to secure the country against its enemies, external and internal, and their joint concern was manifested in appeals to the legitimating values of the system.

Press attacks on censorship were based on the premise that the Government was using the wrong information strategy, that it was in fact subverting public morale, and with it the nation's security, by placing a blanket of secrecy over news of the country's role in Angola. It was argued that the national interest would better have been served by allowing much more information into the public arena and permitting debate on the issues involved. This was a consensual argument - a term to be discussed at more length below - which implicitly assumed that the social system was based on fundamental agreement and commitment to common goals.

In time of war, governments usually receive the benefit of the doubt when they invoke the national interest to justify censorship. The Angolan War was fairly unusual in this respect, for the Government found itself sharply criticised by many in the "loyal" opposition. The fact that the war was not sanctioned by Parliament and was being fought without the knowledge of the "nation" - meaning the white voters - resulted in suspicion of the Government's motives in the minds of opposition politicians and editors. On the level of surface propaganda the Government used the resources of the state propaganda machine to engineer support, or the appearance of support, for its policy. The Government's failure to win consent even from its potential allies in wartime indicated the presence of a deep malaise in the exercise of power. This point will be taken up at the end of the Introduction after it has been shown that to obtain effective ideological hegemony a dominant alliance needs to establish a unified sense of moral purpose and intellectual direction by which to "lead" society.

0.2 Indoctrination and the "National Will"

In discussing the link between war and domestic propaganda, a suitable point of departure is Clausewitz's concept of the "national will" imposed on a people from above in the interests of a ruling group wishing to make war. Baron Carl von Clausewitz, the 19th-Century Prussian philosopher of war, developed a political theory of the role of war in human affairs. Unlike

most earlier writers on the subject (excepting Machiavelli) Clausewitz did not see war chiefly in technical and tactical terms: he observed that it was "a continuation of policy by other means"[2]. Nations went to war for political objects and not just to test their strengths or provide gentlemen officers with opportunities to demonstrate their courage. The value of a political object was never absolute; it could only be assessed in terms of its potential to engender a warlike spirit in the nation. Consequently, if the leaders of a state proposed to make war, they must consider how the masses would react:

> One and the same political object may produce totally different effects upon different people, or even upon the same people at different times; we can, therefore, only admit the political object as the measure, by considering it in its effects upon those masses which it is to move, and consequently the nature of those masses also comes into consideration. It is easy to see that the result may be very different according as these masses are animated with a spirit that will infuse vigor into the action or otherwise.[3]

Clausewitz was not suggesting that the masses themselves should determine the object of war; but he was fully persuaded of the fact that their psychology was an integral element of the nation's fighting abilities. A nation's effort in war was a product of two factors which could not be separated, namely the sum of available means and the strength of the will.

It was a lapse in Clausewitz's theory that he offered no means of understanding how the mood of the people came to correspond to the Will of the state. The latter phrase, he was at pains to point out, could not be thought of loosely as a mere sentiment but was manifested in terms of state policy. State policy was the intelligence of the personified state [4] embodied in its statesmen, who took all important decisions. The authoritarian tenor of Clausewitz's political philosophy caused him to regard nation-states as unitary entities governed by undemocratic elites. It was in their interest to ensure that there should be public enthusiasm for the political object of a war, but where this was not forthcoming the least they should hope for would be no actual domestic

resistance to policy. How were they to ensure this? Clausewitz did not say. He did not, in fact, have a theory of social control.

The theory and practice of modern totalitarianism represents a more thorough approach to the issue of social control through direct government propaganda. Several studies of propaganda techniques in Nazi Germany and Soviet Russia have noted definite similarities of approach despite the obvious differences in ideological substance and cultural contexts. Mass mobilisation is conceived of as a process of "voluntary compulsion" activating people to lend their consent and willing support to the regime. The ruling groups in both societies have evidently believed that it takes time to create the conditions for effective propaganda, as persuasion has a cumulative effect. The Nazis' methods of Menshenfuehrung, or public indoctrination, closely resembled the Soviet programme of "work with people". In both cases the regimes used the full range of social institutions, including the home and school, the mass media, and economic and political organisations, to spread an all-pervasive ideology. Mental regimentation by state and party agencies took the form of a monopoly of intellectual and cultural activities, reducing or entirely eliminating the citizen's access to alternative ideologies.(5)

0.3 The Functional Approach to Propaganda

The studies referred to above suggest that in the long run, propaganda seeks to shape the "predispositions" of the audience, making people suggestible after the fashion desired by the propagandist. To be effective, the propagandist aims to command as many of the media of communication as possible and to persist in their use; hopefully the accumulated impact will extend the limits of audience compliance. Daniel Lerner has identified four essential conditions for the success of propaganda:

1) The attention of the audience must be held
2) Its credence and trust must be won and kept
3) The goals sought by the propagandist must seem plausible
4) The environment must permit the course of action prescribed.(6)

This attempt to draw up a set of generally applicable "laws" of propaganda introduces certain major theoretical difficulties. How, for example, does "propaganda" differ from "education" - which after all also depends for its effect on the conditions listed by Lerner? This question challenges the normative assumption that in democracies education is a disinterested process of imparting a neutral body of knowledge. It may not be possible to make axiomatic distinctions between "totalitarianism" and "democracy" if both are, at root, systems of control incorporating ideological control through the home, school, mass media, and so on. The only difference would be a superficial one between the methods employed in each system, totalitarian societies using formal official programmes of indoctrination while in democracies a fundamental consensus draws the boundaries of "freedom".

According to libertarian social and political theorists, social integration in democracies is achieved through a largely voluntary group acceptance of norms, values and goals. The sociologist Louis Wirth has put this view as follows:

> Consensus is the sign that such partial or complete understanding has been reached on a number of issues confronting the members of a group sufficiently for it to be called a society. It implies that a measure of agreement has been reached. The agreement, however, is neither imposed by coercion nor fixed by custom so as no longer to be subject to discussion. It is always partial and developing and has constantly to be won. It results from the interpenetration of views based upon mutual consent and upon feeling as well as thinking together.(7)

This consensual view, appealing as it seems, provides little basis for the explanation of how communication functions to perpetuate the power-structures of a society. Rather than putting forward a notion of mutually-agreed consensus, it will be argued that the integrative role of communication is performed in the interests of dominant groups who rule both through physical coercion and ideological controls. The essence of successful propaganda lies in its credibility. The more it accords with the ruling ideas or dominant values of a society, the more it is

likely to appear not as propaganda but as "truth" to those who accept those ideas or values. To people who don't it will seem to be a deliberate distortion of what they take to be the truth.

The idea that some knowledge is intrinsically objective, neutral, impartial, and scientific, while other knowledge is biased, misleading, self-interested, partial and unscientific, rests on a view of society as a consensual entity where people agree about fundamentals and only disagree about incidentals. According to this view, propaganda is simply what we don't agree with. This unsatisfactory proposition is the basis of a "functional" analysis of propaganda.[8] A brief survey of functionalist theory will demonstrate the difficulties that arise over this point. Their attempts to give the word "propaganda" an intrinsic meaning as a label for the "bias" or unacceptable content of messages failed because it was realised that there was no way to measure bias except in terms of some presumed social consensus. Latterly the school has been driven to concentrate exclusively on the techniques of propaganda, discounting content. In reality, both technique and content have to be considered, but this cannot be done without a theory of ideology that relates the social structure to particular forms of propaganda.

From this point it is necessary to become somewhat technical, first to critique the weaknesses of functional propaganda theory and then to examine the "structural" alternative. The overall aim remains to answer the question posed at the outset: Is wartime domestic propaganda in some way systematically related to the needs of a social system?

Functional communication theory has been largely the province of American writers, amongst whom H.D. Lasswell was a seminal influence. Much of his work concerned the nature and effects of propaganda. Writing between the two World Wars and later in the Cold War period, Lasswell expressed the general anxiety of Western liberal academics over the dangers to plural democracy posed by totalitarian methods of propaganda. This concern was translated in theoretical terms into the assumption that communication was most "efficient" where expression was "free" rather than controlled by the state.

In an essay on the structure and function of communication in society, published in 1948, Lasswell argued that "efficient" communication was that which facilitated public enlightenment and therefore rational judgement.[9] Rationality was against any form of censorship or state-enforced dogma because this would undermine the efficiency of the system. By employing an "organic" model of society - equating it with an organism whose separate parts functioned to sustain the whole - Lasswell implied that every part was integrated in a form of partnership with every other part. The harmony of the parts was in the best interests of the healthy functioning of the system. This organic model, unfortunately, contained within it seeds of confusion because it assumed that the parts of the system would always act in concert, if only they were given their freedom. But would this necessarily happen? What if some parts abused their freedom and threatened the efficiency or survival of the system as a whole? Lasswell perceived that societies could move away from rationality and enlightenment in cases where "ruling elites" used their power against others. This would happen where the elites were afraid of the internal or external environment. In such cases:

> Precautions are taken to impose "security" on as many matters as possible. At the same time, the ideology of the elite is reaffirmed, and counter ideologies are suppressed.[10]

This observation contradicted the assumption of the natural harmony and interdependence of the system's parts. It introduced a recognition that power relationships could distort the communication process.

Functional analysts are reluctant to consider the possibility that ideological domination could be a feature of liberal society. Instead there is a tendency to reduce "ideology" to a narrowly doctrinal meaning - as, for instance, the policy of a party or the creed of a particular group. But there is uncertainty here. In the passage just quoted, Lasswell saw ideologies as forms of doctrine propagated by competing groups. In the same essay, to account for social cohesion, he invoked the concept of social "values", which he believed effectively welded social institutions together. Referring to ideology in this sense he noted that it was "communicated to the rising generation through such specialised agencies as the home and the school."[11]

It was in the narrow sense of doctrinal control that Lasswell thought of domination through propaganda. In writings dealing specifically with propaganda, he defined its goal in the domestic sphere as "to maximise the power at home by subordinating groups and individuals, while reducing the material cost of power."(12) In international relations propaganda was a also a means of preserving and extending power, and it reduced the physical toll of war. These observations contained the important insight that political ruling groups used ideological persuasion as a supplement to coercive force. But Lasswell's limited notion of ideology prevented him from making the connection between the maintenance of power structures and the dissemination of orthodox value-systems through various social agencies.

Social control by means of ideology (in the broad sense) was a subject largely ignored by functional theorists because they could find no place for it in their consensual paradigm. The supposition that the social order was firmly based on agreement between people made any constraints applied to communication appear artificial. On the other hand, it was implicitly recognised that the consensus itself was a form of control - a necessary form. How could these propositions be reconciled? Some avoided the question altogether by clinging to a narrow definition of control (and thus of propaganda) while continuing to assume that the consensus was simply "there". One theorist who did not take the consensus for granted was Leonard Doob. The analysis he put forward, in an essay on propaganda and education makes interesting reading, for he was led inevitably to the conclusion that common social values were arbitrarily determined yet enforced by the state for the sake of its survival.

Looking at the Soviet Union and the United States, Doob noted that in each society the process of socialisation was carried out in terms of the dominant ideology which united disparate individuals and groups into a functioning order. In each case a central value-system was essential to the maintenance of the system. Doob admitted that on the basis of this reasoning "to discriminate between education and propaganda...is not always easy", but he sought to do so all the same. His formula was to call the substance of education "scientific" while the substance of propaganda was "unscientific or of doubtful value in a society at a particular time." Scientific knowledge had a "survival value" for a society, meaning that it consisted of a set of responses which were best

adapted to the problems faced by that society. These definitions were "deliberately relativistic" and removed any absolute certainty concerning the intrinsic properties of either education or propaganda. Doob put it this way:

> ...(The) prejudice against "propaganda" must mean that people are hostile toward the activity they associate with propaganda... Propaganda is revealed when the propagandees are aware of the fact that propaganda is affecting them.(13)

Concerning education, meanwhile:

> Pick your science or the values you consider important in your society, and then you can decide what education is.(14)

On these doubtful grounds Doob decided to retain the words "education" and "propaganda" with "some misgivings".

Doob's was an ambitious attempt to salvage an affective definition of propaganda from the confusion of functional consensus theory. If propaganda had no intrinsic properties embodied in message content, perhaps it could be described in terms of the way people reacted to it and in this way the notion of common agreement could be retained. There were bound to be more than a few "misgivings" about this position. For one thing, on a simple descriptive level, it was obviously inaccurate to say that people would see propaganda as having doubtful survival value to a society. Indeed, it was chiefly in cases where survival was at stake - in time of war or internal instability - that propaganda was employed. On a theoretical level Doob's analysis culminated in a highly unsatisfactory relativism respecting the dominance of different ideologies in different societies. As central societal values were apparently a matter of random choice, their only genuine value lay in the fact that they bound society together. In this manner ideology itself was reduced to a "function".

The real content of ideologies - the political, legal, religious, aesthetic and broadly cultural substance of man's ideological forms -

had become excluded in the drastic bid save consensus as a conceptual tool. Functional theory firmly bypassed the question as to what gave significance to ideologies and what this implied about power relationships. Rather than engage in a complete rethink of the model, the tendency was for researchers to pursue empirical investigations into communication processes and show concern for the technical aspects of propaganda. In 1965 T.H. Qualter surveyed all the relevant literature within the functional framework and decided that confusion still reigned. Qualter held to the distinction between democracy and totalitarianism but dispensed with the education-propaganda dichotomy. The definition he offered was entirely technical and designed to override the distinction between "scientific" and "doubtful" knowledge proposed by Doob. Qualter noted that

> the existence of propaganda has nothing to do with either the objective truth of the material taught or the belief in its truth, but is entirely dependent upon the intention of the propagandist to use the material to affect in some desired manner the attitudes of his audience toward specific situations.[15]

It might be supposed that the stress on <u>intentions</u> would focus interest on the factors that gave rise to ideologies - i.e. their psychological, social, and political context. This would certainly have made Qualter's approach a substantive one but he was at pains to avoid the contextual dimension. "Intentions", for him, entered the picture only when they took manifest form in the agencies of propaganda. Accordingly he defined propaganda as

> the deliberate attempt by some individual or group to form, control or alter the attitudes of other groups by the use of instruments of communication, with the intention that in any given situation the reaction of those so influenced will be desired by the propagandist... In the phrase "deliberate attempt" lies the key to the idea of propaganda. This is the one thing that marks propaganda from non-propaganda... (It) has been proved beyond doubt that anything may be used as propaganda and that nothing belongs exclusively to propaganda. It seems clear, therefore, that any act of promotion can be

> propaganda only if and when it becomes part of a deliberate campaign to induce action through the control of attitudes.(16)

On the surface this was very plausible and persuasive. It had not been possible to define propaganda by its affects or ideological significance but it did seem possible to point out cases of deliberate manipulation of information and ideas by agencies specialising in the field. As examples of such functionaries we might include government information departments, party politicians, corporate public relations officers, advertising firms, evangelists, editorial writers, pickets, demonstrators, subversive pamphleteers and agitators, and, in wartime, enemy broadcasters. This list leaves out of the reckoning the perplexing problem of what propaganda essentially _is_ and merely shows where it occurs. It assumes _a priori_ that the agencies of education, science, news reporting, art and culture are not generally occupied in spreading propaganda, though they may do so at times.

The problem with the strictly technical definition of propaganda is that it does nothing to elucidate the concept or relate it to other concepts like education. Its tendency is rather to produce an anecdotal survey of propaganda forms, based on the vast experience of 20th Century man in the field of brainwashing and psychological warfare. Typologies of propaganda derived from such surveys are then used to classify more empirical data collected by more surveys. Nothing can be expected from this procedure except a further enumeration of functions, with all the mindless culling of data that this involves. What is it that makes the "deliberate attempt" of the propagandist so different from those of the educator, scientist, priest, parent, or friend who seeks to influence one's behaviour or feelings in a certain way? The inquiry has arrived at the point where it began, seeking to know what set propaganda apart from other kinds of communication. The attempt to define propaganda in terms which make it intrinsically different from education is bound to fail because ideological integration and control are implied in both. The question is whether propaganda is a more conspiratorial _form_ of communication than education. This would seem to be the case. The norms and values propagated by a liberal education system are implicit, taken for granted, and largely unconsciously perpetuated by the educators who believe that they are exposing young minds to a wide variety of choices. The content of propaganda is more obviously "controversial", manifestly

expressing the goals of particular groups. Functional theory cannot explain what "propaganda" is, nor can it explain what it is not (i.e. "education"). It can only take for granted that we already know what these words mean, and from that point it descends directly to data-collection.(17)

0.4 Structural Approaches to Propaganda

Some new approach is required to invest "propaganda" with a conceptual meaning. The connections between overt forms of propaganda and the system-reinforcing propaganda implicit in all communication need to be explored and analysed if we are to understand the nature of propaganda. The total effort to achieve social integration in terms of a dominant ideology is propaganda in the "deep" sense, and it can be viewed as the product of structural imperatives. The propaganda of structures is not narrowly doctrinal and is only partly the product of deliberate and conscious manipulation by the state and other bodies. It is built into the communication processes of a society and is broadly "cultural", if that term is taken to apply to the systems of value and modes of behaviour which constitute social conformity.

A form of this argument is put by the French writer on propaganda, Jacques Ellul. Ellul asserts that the individual in Western industrial society is subject to the crowd and is "more credulous, more suggestible and more excitable" than were people living in traditional society. The individual is isolated, undirected, prey to fleeting emotions and impulses, a slave to prejudice, and lacking in "organic" cultural values. Groups like political parties and labour unions do not have the "solidity" of the institutions which men knew in the past. The new groups are fragile and ever-changing, and as they have been created by the very forces that brought industrial society into being they offer the individual little or no shelter from the all-pervasive propaganda of the system.

> These groups develop inside a society propagandised to the extreme; they are themselves loci of propaganda; they are the instruments of propaganda and are integrated into its techniques... (The) new primary groups (such as political parties and unions) are important relay stations in the flow of total propaganda; they are mobilised and used as instruments and thus offer no fulcrum for individual resistance.(18)

Particular groups might resist the particular propaganda of other groups - for instance labour unions could reject the appeals of employers - but no-one could resist "the general phenomenon of propaganda". In order to survive at all, people had to work and become involved in various social associations, and consequently they were subordinated to psychological and behavioural controls.

Ellul considered that the mass media were absolutely crucial to the transmission and organisation of total propaganda; without the media there could be no modern propaganda, but two special conditions were needed for the media really to become instruments of propaganda. One was that they should be increasingly concentrated in monopolies, effecting centralised control of content. At the same time, there should be diversity with regard to their forms - as press, film, radio and television - so that audiences had apparent freedom of choice and could be propagandised by alternative forms. The individual was "caught in the wide net of media" whose effect was greatest where they were drawn into the hands of few owners and controllers.

Ellul and other structural theorists are not great believers in the rationality of man but even if they were it would not make much difference to their models of how human societies work. Following Marx, structural analysis assumes that the social relations men enter into are "indispensible and independent of their will"[(19)] and that man's consciousness has to be understood in terms of these social relations. Communication, as a manifestation of consciousness, is also a product or expression of the underlying structural features of society, and the meaning of communication can be discovered only on the level of structures; even the overtly goal-directed messages of propagandists must be traceable in some fashion to structural dynamics.

The exponents of this approach cannot be grouped as a single "school" as there are markedly divergent themes in their work ranging from "cultural criticism" through genetic structuralism (linguistic and anthropological analysis) to "scientific" neo-Marxism. Some remain strongly influenced by the functional school, though as a rule the organic, consensual assumptions of this school have been challenged. The single unifying trend in structural analysis is towards inclusive study of the economic, political and ideological forms which together give social systems their

coherence. These forms are not treated as static but as evolving historically, and there is thus no assumption that social coherence or integration at any historical moment represents an enduring equilibrium. On the contrary, systems may be in perpetual disequilibrium reflecting conditions of structural conflict, and their apparent stability is produced by the temporary domination of classes or groups.[20]

The pre-eminent conflict theorist was, of course, Marx, who asserted that in the process of transforming nature and his own self through productive labour, man became subordinated to various group structures. Under the capitalist system, which had developed out of earlier systems, the labour of the many was appropriated by the few for their own profit and comfort. The economically dominant class was also the politically ruling class, and in addition its ideas were the ruling ideas of the epoch. Strictly speaking, therefore, ideas were merely the <u>expression</u> of social relations and did not themselves constitute a "motor" of social change in history. This principle, if true, must have momentous consequences for a "theory of ideology" and hence of propaganda. It reverses the libertarian argument that "free choices" between different ideas motivate social change and probably lead to "progress". Instead of focusing on the supposed "effects" of communication on society (as functional theory and research has done) it considers the effect of society on communication. This implies more than just a proposition that people will respond to communication in terms of their pre-existing attitudes and needs. It means that communication is "structured in dominance"[21] because society is. Both the ideological <u>content</u> and the <u>technical forms</u> of messages are expressions of structural relationships and follow the pathways of control and domination.

To support his contention that the ideas of the ruling class were always the ruling ideas, Marx had to show that all communication was manipulated. He sketched the following approach:

> The class which has the means of material production at its disposal, has control at the same time over the means of mental production, so that thereby, generally speaking, the ideas of those who lack the

> means of mental production are subject to it. The ruling ideas are nothing more than the ideal expression of the dominant material relationships, the dominant relationships grasped as ideas; hence of the relationships which make one class the ruling one, therefore the ideas of its dominance. The individuals composing the ruling class possess among other things consciousness, and therefore think. In so far, therefore, as they rule as a class and determine the extent and compass of an epoch, it is self-evident that they do this in their whole range, hence among other things also rule as thinkers, as producers of ideas, and regulate the production and distribution of the ideas of their age: thus their ideas are the ruling ideas of the epoch.(22)

To make some sense of this complex statement one has to bear in mind that Marx gave primacy to the productive processes of capitalist society. Ideas were like other "products" in that there had to be "means of production" to turn them out. In the purely material sphere these means took the form of accumulated capital whose owners were the ruling class. By analogy, there had to be "mental means of production", owned by the same class, possession of which accounted for the domination of this class in the sphere of ideas. Marx nowhere listed or comprehensively described the "mental means of production" - a task that has been taken up by his disciples - but clearly these, like other capital, would take material forms and their products would be ideas materialised in objects. In this sense Marx could write of the ruling class regulating the "production and distribution" of the ideas of its age. Here he was being very much a philosophical materialist in a rather crude way, treating ideas as if they were so many commodities; but at least this was consistent with the premise that ideas arose on material foundations.

The subsequent development of the Marxist theory of ideology may be viewed as a series of attempts to come to terms with or overcome the crude materialism inherent in the above formulation. Marx himself took a more subtle position in his later writings when he held that, while the economic "base" determined the ideological forms of the "superstructure",

men did become conscious of their conflicts and fought these out also on the level of ideology.[23] As a propagandist for political communism Marx demonstrated that the class struggle was also a struggle of ideas.[24] Lenin took this principle one step further when he charged his Bolshevik cadres with the job of bringing the Russian proletariat and peasantry to full revolutionary consciousness. There was a strongly manipulative element in Leninism which in the wake of the October revolution became the basis for official Soviet programmes of indoctrination through the Ministry of Agitation and Propaganda - Agitprop.[25] The emergence of a sophisticated modern Marxist theory of ideology, upon which to base an understanding of propaganda, began with the work of the Italian communist, Antonio Gramsci, who was active shortly before Mussolini's rise to power.

Gramsci's central contribution was the concept of "hegemony", meaning the moral and intellectual leadership exercised by an alliance of classes over the rest of society. Gramsci contrasted ruling class hegemony with the fragmentary and ill-formed consciousness of the dominated classes. Concerned as he was with the organisation and propagation of ideology as an aspect of the class struggle, Gramsci proceeded to analyse both how the ruling class ruled through ideas and how the oppressed could respond through ideas. It seemed to him that political life entailed the coming-into-view of structural forces, for it was in politics that class relations were realised and contested. Correspondingly there was room for propaganda on both sides; indeed structural relationships had constantly to be translated into ideas and modes of action which gave the classes their "lived relation" to each other.

Intellectuals were vital to the struggle because theirs was the business of voicing the ideas, building up the skills, and organising the groups which collectively expressed the consciousness of a class. Intellectuals who played this role were "organic" to their class and were clearly propagandists for it. The organic intellectuals of the capitalist class included the entrepreneur, industrial technician, political economist, and various cultural and legal figures, as well as those journalists and teachers who served this class. But there were also intellectuals whose "traditional" values and skills had been handed down from previous social formations and who were therefore as a group less closely affiliated to specific contemporary classes. Ecclesiastics were a good example, as

were some scholars, literary men, philosophers and artists. It was tempting for journalists to consider themselves "true" intellectuals resembling these traditional types, but Gramsci did not concede them the point. Intellectual work did not consist of the mouthing of empty sentiments but meant being actively involved in practical life as a builder, an organiser - one who was "permanently persuasive".

Gramsci emphasised that intellectual specialisation did not take place on an "abstract democratic basis" but according to the needs of classes. The more rapidly and effectively a given social class put forward its own intellectuals, the more its development towards power would be speeded by assimilating and conquering, ideologically, the traditional intellectuals. Thus capitalism had assimilated large groups of these intellectuals and it would be up to revolutionary movements to do the same. The object of ruling-class hegemony was to obtain the "consent" of other classes to its leadership; so the object of a revolutionary counter-hegemony must be to win a position of leadership by wooing potential class allies.[26]

Gramsci's view of the energising, "permanently persuasive" role of the intellectual implies that ideology is not mechanically and deterministically produced by the structure. Commenting on Gramsci's perceptions, a group of neo-Marxists has written:

> The category of "intellectual" in Gramsci enables him to analyse the organisation and production of ideology as a specific practice that is not reducible to the classes to which the intellectuals are linked. Hence ideas are not expressions of classes but comprise a field in which class conflict takes place in particular forms. Through organisations like the Church, the press and political parties (organs of civil society) and through the State (for the ruling bloc) the intellectuals play a leading role in the battle to gain spontaneous support for one of the fundamental classes.[27]

The "relative autonomy" of ideological forms in the social formation has become one of the principal themes of current European and British structural theory, and is increasingly being applied to media studies.

In Britain, Raymond Williams, Stuart Hall and others have explored the terrain of the ideological and cultural "effects" of underlying structures.[28] In France, Louis Althusser and Nicos Poulantzas have each devised schematic models of the relative autonomy of ideology and politics from the economic level or instance in the capitalist state.[29] The French theorists dominate the debate today, and, usefully from the perspective of the present study, Althusser has devoted an important essay to the reproduction of ideologies - propaganda, as it is called here.

Entitled "Ideology and the Ideological State Apparatuses",[30] the essay rigorously develops the insight that ideology and physical coercion work together to ensure domination by a group or groups. The consensual model used by Lasswell could not effectively accommodate this insight but Marxism does. Althusser distinguished two forms in which the ruling class applied state fpower to maintain class domination: the Repressive State Apparatuses (RSAs) and the Ideological State Apparatuses (ISAs). The former included military and police power, and was "massively and predominantly" coercive, whilst the latter encompassed a whole range of private sector institutions. Althusser listed these as: churches, schools, the family, legal institutions, political parties, trade unions, communication media, and cultural and sporting associations. Both the RSAs and the ISAs functioned to reproduce the economic, political and ideological conditions in which labour power was brought into being to serve the exploiter class. While these ISAs were massively and predominantly ideological they also functioned secondarily "by repression". Althusser claimed that a "reasonably thorough analysis of any one of the ISAs" proved that they helped to keep the ruling class in power. He himself did not descend from abstraction to describe quite how the ISAs did this, but he asserted:

> Given the fact that the "ruling class" in principle holds State power (openly or more often by means of alliances between classes or class fractions), and therefore has at its disposal the (Repressive) State Apparatus, we can accept the fact that this same ruling class is active in the Ideological State Apparatuses, *precisely in its contradictions*. (My italics).[31]

The last phrase is crucial, but obscure. Althusser said in the same essay that he accepted the fact that the ISAs represented a plurality of private interests as distinct from the state's unified RSAs. But he gave no credence to the pluralist argument that differences of opinion expressed by various groups in a democracy signalled the essential freedom of the system. He insisted that the ISAs, like the RSAs, functioned to reproduce the conditions for the domination of the ruling class; but at the same time he had to allow that the home, the school, the newspaper, the church etc. sometimes conveyed opinions in conflict with those of the ruling class and its allies. These "contradictions", like the exception that proved the rule, were supportive of domination.

On what basis can this paradox be affirmed? One answer is given by Stuart Hall in a survey of recent neo-Marxian texts where he notes the indebtedness of these writers to Gramsci's theory of hegemony. If a class can colonise, so to speak, the forms of social knowledge which threaten it, then a mystical consensus is created that wins broad favour for that class. The device of capitalism that gains the system consent even from some class enemies is the toleration of different points of view in an apparent plurality of social life. This plurality is reflected, for instance, in the mass media which endlessly chart the doings of interest-groups and parties, the events of neighbourhoods and communities, the activities of leaders, the fads of fashionable people, the grievances of minorities, the claims of trade unions, and the lifestyles of subcultures. But all of these superficial features are united by the largely invisible structural controls whose presence is masked by the fact that the various parts of the social order are seemingly fragmented and separated.(32) To understand this is to grasp the function of "consensus" in a system of domination. The phenomenon of domination through consensus may be summed up in another paradox which has gained currency: "repressive tolerance".

So much is in line with the distinction between superficial and deep structural propaganda. By drawing the boundaries of the permissible, the ruling class or class alliance legitimates its own values. But the difficulty is to show how - by what mechanisms - these boundaries are drawn. Althusser's theory crudely equates public and private "apparatuses" as the coercive and propaganda arms respectively of the dominant alliance.

While control and legitimation are doubtless both latently and manifestly present in the functioning of private and public institutions, it seems a gross oversimplification of reality to view all of these institutions together as a fully cohesive whole. The lip-service paid to "contradictions" does not overcome this deficiency. Gramsci better appreciated the subtleties of the situation. His theory of hegemony implied that agencies of social knowledge and belief were an arena of political struggle in the "lived relation" between contending classes. Newspapers, for example, could lend themselves to propaganda for counter-hegemony, as could the school, if the intellectuals of a dominated group had access to these agencies or could influence those who had. In general, of course, all such agencies were supportive of the dominant consensus.

0.5 Conclusion

This inquiry began many pages ago with the assertion that there was a necessary connection between domestic propaganda and the survival needs of a system exposed to threat. Why did it seem "natural" that censorship and propaganda should occur in time of war? The argument has now reached the point where various threads can be drawn together in a coherent explanation. A broad conflict model of social relations has been invoked to account for the role of ideology in social integration. It was argued that in the absence of a concept of group domination the definition of propaganda must be restricted, illogically and in the face of the evidence, to the purely technical features of the arts of persuasion. It has been shown that "ideology" means more than "political doctrine" - it is a set of values and practices rather than a codified creed. To spread ideology techniques of persuasion are found at all levels of society's communication processes. Ideologies are not a matter of arbitrary choice but are the upshot of structural group relations which take conscious form in the political domain and are fought out there. In general, the "total propaganda" of a system reproduces the ideology of dominant groups. Their power is not enduringly stable but can be secured, to some extent, by winning the consent of all to sets of beliefs and practices which obscure structural conflicts of interest. In normal times a democratic society condones superficial differences of opinion between individuals and groups whose pluralities are more apparent than real. Differences are expressed in the form of surface propaganda which is free-ranging only to the extent that is permitted by the consensus. The

latter colonises or incorporates pluralities in a "marketplace of ideas" bounded by the tolerance of dominant groups for forms of dissent which do not directly endanger their state system.

In time of war this picture changes. Now the system is directly threatened by those defined as enemies - which may include internal subversive groups as happens in guerilla warfare - and there will be a crisis of instability, of potential collapse and destruction, facing the dominant groups. It is at such moments that power relationships emerge more clearly into view. The dominant alliance must consolidate its power, and it does so in a variety of ways including the fuller co-ordination of productive forces and the imposition of direct controls on information and opinion. Cohesion is the aim, and the appeal is directed towards collective loyalty and combined effort. The system throws up the central ideological principles of the dominant groups, presenting these as the "national interest". War is a political act, but the use of consensualese to mobilise the people signifies the attempt to depoliticise the act of war within the domestic sphere.

"Survival" in this analysis means the retention of the social structures favouring the dominant groups. This is not to say that other groups would necessarily benefit from defeat of the system by its enemies; perhaps few would benefit. It is axiomatic, at any rate, that the prime beneficiaries will be the enemies who, through victory, accomplish the political object they set themselves. Victorious enemies may either reinstate the old system under modified leadership or revolutionise it; they may remain as an occupying force or depart, melt away, become absorbed into the system, or be overthrown in their turn.

The theory presented here is not one of international relations but of internal social control in wartime, specifically control by means of propaganda. The conclusions are by no means original but the aim has been to work out a definition of propaganda in terms of ideological reproduction and to relate this to the survival needs of a system. In general, "surface" propaganda by the state in time of war will correspond fairly closely with the "deep" propaganda of the system as a whole, since the aim of the state is to evoke consensual values. This is in fact what has happened in most modern wars where governments have generally dispensed with narrowly political doctrines in order to mount more broad-

based appeals to their nations. If this did not happen in South Africa during the Angolan War it was because the Government refused to admit it was fighting a war and did not take the nation into its confidence. Its conspiracy of silence (a conspiracy involving international allies who knew of South Africa's role) undermined its credibility in the eyes of the white opposition and the press, making consensus on the national interest that much more difficult to attain. Indeed, much of the Government's surface propaganda was directed against its potential allies in the opposition establishment, and in the course of the war dominant group relations deteriorated rather than improved.

As consent is the goal of hegemony, an ideology of "national interest" must represent more than the self-interest of the governing few. It should encompass the interests of the broad spectrum of dominant groups whose alliance, in effect, is what makes the system one of all-pervasive control. The deeper the crisis of survival, the more insistent is the need to provide the moral and intellectual leadership that will give the dominant groups as a promising and respectable political direction. Afrikaner nationalism has not succeeded in doing this, and the crisis has worsened. The leading characteristic of nationalist rule since 1948 has been its overtly repressive nature both in terms of physical coercion and in the form of thought-control through deliberate, doctrinal censorship... These methods may have served to sustain the political rule of the nationalists but they have not represented a consensual approach to the task of domination by all elements of the dominant alliance.

The Angolan case forcibly demonstrated that the Government's habits of control were those of a dictatorial rather than a hegemonic ruling group. It used repressive means - censorship and threats of prosecution - against the press despite the fact that newspapers could well have been very useful allies in the war situation. As was said earlier, press criticism of the censorship was founded on a belief that the Government's information strategy was wrong and would contribute to the instability of the system. But the Government did not heed its critics and pushed on - blindly, it would seem, jettisoning potential support. From the Government's viewpoint, one of the chief lessons of the Angolan War was that the press, if coerced, becomes unco-operative and constitutes an embarrassment; it is far better to woo the press and co-opt it to serve the national

interest where possible. This has been the tendency of Government-press relations since the war and it clearly represents a movement towards a more effective hegemony.

This is the meaning of the "total strategy" which the Government of Mr P.W. Botha is proceeding to implement in economic and political life. The development of this strategy from a mere slogan to a grand plan - a development in which the Angolan War appears to have played an important role - is discussed in Section One. It is by no means certain that the strategy will succeed either with big business or with the press, two of its main targets for co-option. The Government wants support on its own exclusive terms and it presents its potential allies with a Hobson's choice - co-operate or suffer the consequences. The Government has continued to legislate heavily against press freedom but is also attempting to gain the help and support of newspapers. As a rule, it legislates against the journalists and negotiates with their publishers. Talks between the Government and the newspaper industry have seldom involved editors directly but have been conducted with owners and managements represented by the Newspaper Press Union. This powerful cartel of four great holding companies has struck a number of bargains with the ruling party in the interests of "national security". The Defence-Press Agreement of 1967 was a major milepost on the way to Government control of security news. The history of this agreement is given in Section Two. Section Three describes how the machinery was used for purposes of censorship and news manipulation during the Angolan War. The Postscript discusses how the press has in effect been forced to accept the Government's definition of the national interest, forsaking its own commitment to the "public interest" in many cases. In general the study shows that the press has regarded direct censorship and control of news as an intrusion on its terrain; it has been more ambivalent and sectionally divided about Government attempts to co-opt it.

Much of the ensuing study is concerned in a very detailed way with the pure mechanics of ideological transmission and reproduction. It should be kept in mind that the tendency to treat propaganda as a surface phenomenon only is misleading; there has to be reference to the wider context of domination and control in which propagandas function. Perhaps all case

studies should be prefaced with a disavowal that they prove anything but that certain events took place. Yet implicit in the order of presentation of the facts and in the interpretation applied to these facts are the theoretical constructs of the researcher - even where he may be unconscious of these himself. The aim of this Introduction has been to derive a concept and definition of propaganda from a structural conflict approach to social theory. The choice of approach does not reflect deep-seated cynicism towards the values that people hold dear and is not intended as a polemical assault on a social system. It is first and foremost an attempt to understand the systemic reasons for particular phenomena in communication, namely censorship and news manipulation.

SECTION ONE

"TOTAL STRATEGY" AND NEWS OF THE ANGOLAN WAR

1.1 War psychosis

1.2 The Propaganda War

1.3 The Angolan Debacle

1.4 The Domestic Debate on Censorship

1.5 The Elaboration of Strategy

1.1 War Psychosis

> If a country faces a total onslaught then it is not only the politicians that must be disciplined. The same applies to other institutions, including the press.[1]

With these words - spoken at the Natal Congress of the National Party in August 1979 - the Prime Minister, Mr P.W. Botha, gave notice to South African newspapers that they would be obliged to play their part in what he called the "national strategy". In a speech sketching the broad policy goals of his administration, Mr Botha said the country faced a total war situation and would use a co-ordinated strategy to counter it. He reiterated his party's commitment to separate development for South Africa's racially segregated "ethnic" groups and said the country would have to stand united against foreign enemies. Amongst the aims of the national strategy were: national unity, the maintenance of law and order, safeguarding the integrity and freedom of the country, coexisting with neighbours, and increasing the quality of life of everyone in South Africa.[2] Mr Botha was presiding at his first party congress since becoming Prime Minister a year previously in the wake of the Information Department scandal. The tone of his speech was generally moderate and reasonable, couched in the form of an appeal across party lines to the private sector to help the Government unfold its strategy. Dealing with the role of the press, however, his tone became more threatening. Mr Botha said he was not opposed to criticism based on facts as this was the basis of democracy, but when it came to matters of national security the Government carried final responsibility. He attacked newspapers for highlighting "exceptional cases" of malpractices in the Defence Force and police while not giving enough prominence to the thousands of soldiers and policemen who did their duty well each day. Reports of malpractices could only cause the country "intense embarrassment" and could "jeopardise the security situation". The press, said Mr Botha, had an indispensible role to play in upholding the country's security.[3]

To threaten press freedom in the name of national security was nothing new for Nationalist Prime Ministers, but Mr Botha was going further than his predecessors. The press was to be subsumed under a grand national plan. As Minister of Defence, Mr Botha had painstakingly devised ways of co-opting

the press to serve the ends of the military. He had made it clear in a number of pronouncements over the years that he expected the country's newspapers to contribute to what he called the "total strategy" of defence against South Africa's enemies. This entailed using the techniques of mass persuasion to gain support and credence for a Government embattled against external and internal foes. To a very large extent, in the military field at least, Mr Botha's arrangements for the dissemination of news and opinion had succeeded in warping the standards of a press otherwise jealous of its right to choose its own news and hold its own opinions. The total strategy represented more than just another piecemeal legislative assault on the freedom of press people in their own domain. It implied centralised control by Government of the agencies of public opinion, and was an attack on the autonomy of private enterprise. The authorities would dictate the criteria of news selection and would draw the boundaries of permissible criticism. This was bound to draw fire from Opposition newspapers at least.

The development of the total military strategy into a national strategy for all of South Africa's institutions needs to be understood in terms of Mr Botha's prior experience and achievements as Minister of Defence. The outstanding event in that personal political history was the Angolan war. This was an episode which could have cost Mr Botha his career and was certainly a setback for him and his Department of Defence as well as for the Nationalist Government as a whole. That the individual and the party were able to surmount the setback speaks for their tremendous entrenched power within the South African body politic. South Africa became involved in Angola in July or August of 1975 as a secret partner in a black civil war, hoping thereby to extend the Republic's sphere of influence into a northern buffer zone. As it turned out, the fact of South Africa's collaboration could not be hidden from the world for long and once exposed it spelt disaster for her Angolan allies as well as for Pretoria's own detente efforts with black Africa. South Africa's loss of face over Angola came about through a succession of defeats - not in the field of military action but on the propaganda front where African and Marxist countries capitalised on the intrusion of the white supremacist state into a war between black liberation movements. The Defence Force, the Government and Mr Botha came away from the war appreciating that the press and public opinion at home and abroad needed careful and sophisticated handling.

The Angolan war marked a watershed in press-Government relations in South Africa. This in itself would be sufficient to justify a case study of the treatment of news during the war. The Government's attempt to suppress all news of the country's involvement in Angola backfired seriously not only on its own credibility but on that of the press and broadcast services. Inevitably, news of South Africa's role leaked out in the form of damaging rumours which like all rumours grew more exaggerated as the facts continued to be concealed; and, when the world at large learnt from newspapers and television of the South African presence in Angola, the suppression of this information at home seemed not only ludicrous but counterproductive in terms of the interests of the white minority. The responses of news media to the official ban varied according to party affiliation, but it was clear to most journalists - certainly those interviewed for this study - that only facts could fight unsettling rumours.

The accession of Mr Botha to the Premiership adds a new dimension to the subject of this study. The mistakes of news censorship appear to have been carefully analysed by the SADF, and clearly the military press officers have become more expert at their job of selling a "positive" image of the Defence Force. Mr Botha, having become Prime Minister (while retaining his portfolio of Defence), has set out to apply his experience in fields outside of military affairs. This was scarcely recognised in the immediate reactions of political commentators to the Natal Congress speech in August 1979. Newspaper editorials - especially those in the Opposition English-language press - concentrated on the hopeful signs of liberalisation in National Party race policy.[4] Some were sceptical of the party's ability to change.[5] A few saw Mr Botha's national strategy as a form of "enlightened dictatorship" in which individual and group liberties would be curtailed for the common good.[6] There were few voices raised against the totalitarian tendencies of the strategy.

It is worth examining the links between the total strategy and the national strategy in order to set the case study in its historical context. In this section, the strategy will be related to the crucial formative period of the Angolan war. The next section will describe the origins of South Africa's Defence Act and related security laws which have had a marked effect on press coverage of the worsening security situation in the

subcontinent since the mid-1960's. The total strategy did not spring fully grown from the mind of South Africa's Defence Minister but developed over many years in response to the threats posed to white domination. Given the fact of this domination and the unwillingness of successive governments to relinquish control without a fight, it was inevitable that military men would produce plans for the pooling of national resources and the thorough co-ordination of society behind the armed forces. While the strategy embodies the conscious intentions of figures in authority, it is undeniably true that many whites - including many journalists - see it as a necessary policy for the defence of the country and all its peoples. The interests of the dominant white minority as a whole are protected by the ring of fortifications around the country, and the various interlocking institutions of South African society - including Government and the news media - mutually maintain support for such defence. The increasing coverage of military affairs in the press and over the air is accompanying the increasing militarisation of society. A war psychosis has gained force, with the media being swept up and engaged in its propagation.

1.2 The propaganda war

At the time of Mr Botha's Natal Congress speech, the Sunday Times published an analysis by the American academic, John Seiler, noting that the origins of Mr Botha's programme lay in SADF analyses of South Africa's strategic situation.[7] Seiler saw a crucial connection between the propaganda efforts of the now-defunct Department of Information and the national strategy. Seiler's article, aimed at policy-makers in the United States, emphasised that the Botha Government was no ad-hocracy like its predecessor but was making plans on the basis of "calculated national interest rather than sentiment":

> Within the South African Government, for the first time, overall co-ordination of policy-making and implementation is now a central concern. The South African Defence Force deserves credit for the practical origins of this commitment, growing partly out of its "civic action" programmes in the South West African operational zone and partly from its involvement in systems analysis and planning.

> The SADF must also be given credit for the thematic underpinnings of this venture in co-ordination: "Winning the hearts and minds" of South African blacks; and waging a "total response to a total threat".[8]

Seiler stated that these themes had predated the intervention of South Africa in Angola but only since then had they become central to SADF operations. The Defence Force demonstrated its ideas in the South West African military zone, but at the same time an "extended intellectualisation" was taking place at the Defence College near Pretoria. There, courses offered to the general staff and equivalent officials from civilian agencies focused on the implementation of policy in foreign and domestic spheres. Lecturers from business, the universities, newspapers and other civilian occupations added their knowledge to that of men from the police, Departments of National Security, Co-operation and Development (black affairs), Finance, and the SADF. Partly because of SADF enthusiasm, and partly because of Mr P.W. Botha's own interest, co-ordination had begun at both the Cabinet and inter-departmental levels of Government.[9]

Seiler's analysis was supported by other outside observers. Writing in The Listener on 18 October 1979, the London-based South African journalist Roger Omond asked "just why (Mr Botha) has trimmed apartheid's sails". When he became Prime Minister he had been regarded as both a machine politician and a military hawk. But the military were known to be more verlig (enlightened) than their political masters and for years had argued that the Government must win over the black majority in order to fight a successful war against insurgency. While making magnanimous gestures, Mr Botha's national strategy aimed to mobilise as many South Africans as possible to face an uncertain future.

The Government decided to retain 60 of the 140 secret projects launched in the period of intensive Information Department activities which began in 1972 with the appointment of Dr Eschel Rhoodie as Secretary of

Information. The corruption of the Rhoodie era was at an end, though not the policy of manipulation:

> (The Information Department's activities) served as a foretaste of the current South African Government effort to more precisely analyse the impact of international pressures, to take advantage of marginal differences among international critics and opponents, and generally to avoid an erratic pattern of ad hoc reaction to external pressures.[10]

Press revelations during South Africa's Information scandal in 1978 and 1979 showed that for some years millions of rands allocated for Defence purposes had been channelled into secret media projects in South Africa and other countries. These included efforts to buy British and American newspapers through right-wing front-men, bribe foreign journalists, and purchase the favourable opinion of political leaders and trade unionists in foreign capitals. Millions were poured into the creation of an international news magazine, To the Point, after 1970; the magazine had an office and distribution centre in Europe. At home the Government invested taxpayer's money in a National Party-supporting newspaper, The Citizen, and embarked on a variety of other projects designed to gain adherence to its policies amongst blacks and whites.[11] Commenting on these disclosures, the British newspaper, The Guardian, said most white South Africans would probably feel that the money which had come from Defence funds had, in the broader sense, been spent on Defence - and though the covert campaign largely failed of its objectives "it was worth the try".[12]

The attempt to influence and control public media of information had a history as old as that of the Nationalist Government itself. Following their electoral victory in 1948 the Nationalists set about combatting the anti-Afrikaner prejudices of English-speaking South Africans and promoting Government policies through the South African Broadcasting Corporation, a state monopoly.[13] The later introduction of ethnic radio services for blacks, the creation of international "Voice of South Africa" services, and the setting up of a television service in 1976 enabled the Nationalists to propagate their doctrines to an ever-widening audience. The notion that the country needed an English-language newspaper to put across Nationalist

policies was implicit in much Nationalist criticism of the press long before The Citizen was actually founded in 1975. A Press Commission of Inquiry, appointed in 1949, sat for 14 years and ultimately produced a voluminous report which accused foreign journalists, international news agencies, and members of the Opposition press of distorting the news about South Africa.[14] The Commission's findings were symptomatic of Nationalist attitudes to the local and foreign press, then as now. On the international front, the first Nationalist administrations under Dr Malan and Mr Strijdom used the State Information Office to sell the image of South Africa abroad. The change of status of the Information Office into a full Government department in 1961 is dealt with in Section Two.

The Government's obsession with the media stemmed from a deep conviction that South Africa's enemies had succeeded in poisoning the world's press against the country. South Africa was engaged in a propaganda war and would have to use every available means to wage counter-propaganda. Mr Botha first used the phrase "total strategy" as an expression of policy in 1973 in the preface to a White Paper on Defence. Two years later, in the preface to a White Paper on Defence and Armaments Production, he invoked the phrase again, and went on, in words emphasising the importance of mass communications:

> It is an irrefutable reality that no country - and this certainly holds true for the RSA - can escape events elsewhere in the world. We are all inevitably involved by mass media and rapid communications, and are intimately affected by interwoven economic patterns, diminishing resources and militant ideologies. A strategic policy must provide for this, and ours does indeed. Even the most recent drastic developments in Southern Africa required no radical readjustments on our part... (as) our military appreciation and orientation made provision for such contingencies.[15]

At the time he made this statement the term total strategy was little more than a slogan embodying intentions which had yet to be realised in practice. He said that no country could rely on military power alone to guarantee its survival but needed to muster all its activities - political, economic, diplomatic and military in a united fashion. The implications for the private sector would emerge in the next five years.

Mr Botha's confidence in the country's preparedness for conflict would be sapped somewhat by the Angolan war which, as has been suggested, culminated in a propaganda defeat. On the military side he had every reason to be confident. Since taking office as Minister of Defence in 1966 he had supervised the intensive development of the SADF into one of the most formidable fighting forces in the southern hemisphere. The share of the Defence Force in the national budget had seldom fallen below 15 per cent, and between 1966 and 1975 grew from about R260 million to about R1 020 million.[16] This tremendous expansion was of course spurred by South Africa's increasing isolation and the growth of violence along the country's borders. To this situation Mr Botha brought his talent for management-style administration - a talent he had already demonstrated as a highly efficient organiser and then as leader of the National Party in the Cape Province. With Mr Botha in charge, the SADF became the effective guarantor of apartheid policy in an increasingly unstable subcontinent.

As far as the public image of the Defence Force was concerned, Mr Botha made sure that he and his top staff would control what the South African media said about Defence matters. In 1967 the Defence Act of 1957 was amended to include Section 118 which stated that no information about troop movements, armaments, displacements, or pacts with allies could be published without the consent of the Minister or someone authorised by him.[17] This amounted to a blanket ban on military news except for items deemed to be in the interests of the country. The era of news by permission had begun. Before this law was passed, the Newspaper Press Union - representing the owners and managements of the main press groups - entered into an Agreement with the Minister designed to make it easier for the media to obtain and publish military news.[18] As it turned out, the Agreement also made it easier for the authorities to control the content and presentation of the news. In terms of the Agreement the SADF set up a Directorate of Public Relations to facilitate news clearance. This became an instrument of news manipulation whose usefulness was explored though not fully exploited during the Angolan war; subsequently it was more shrewdly used. The Directorate comprised a number of public relations officers who liaised with the media, dealt with queries, released certain news items, held briefings for journalists, and organised tours to military areas. The Agreement also provided for PRO's to

tender their "advice" on news items submitted to them by the media. Effectively what this meant was that the PRO's would approve or suppress, in whole or in part, news originated by the media from agencies abroad or local contacts. Only the statements of foreign statesmen or senior Defence Force personnel did not need vetting in this way. The Agreement also stipulated that the Minister of Defence could "request" that certain items not appear, and these requests had to be honoured by the media: they were effectively directives to the media telling them what they could not publish.

The Agreement meant that newspapers were now doubly obligated - firstly under the law and then by the NPU's undertaking - to respect the Minister's wishes. The combination of advice from the PRO's and requests from the Minister constituted a powerful means of interfering with the discretion of defence correspondents and their editors. In the Angolan case the Government was heavy-handed on the side of censorship but gradually learnt, to its advantage, that it could use the media to good effect by selectively releasing approved items of news which favoured its definition of the situation. Because of the dependence of the press on the Defence Force as a monopoly source of military news, newspapers frequently became the conduit for Government propaganda. Information, suitably cut and tailored for public consumption, was used by the military and political authorities to build up support for their policies.

As was explained in the Introduction, this study documents the methods and outcome of this news manipulation. Evidence will be given for the view that news is a product of a kind of bargaining process between reporters and their sources, each trying to maximise their returns in terms of demands made upon them by their respective institutions. It is obvious, for instance, that the demands both of editors for newsworthy copy and of military leaders for "positive" coverage may be met by certain kinds of reports - for example news of successful counter-insurgency or the development of new weapons. By negotiating over stories, defence correspondents and military public relations personnel can seek to establish some common ground where their operational definitions of "news" coincide. In this way overlapping interests are discovered and become the basis for further demands and returns, so building up standards of practice which are later routinely observed. Routines of interaction

typify relationships between reporters and official sources in South Africa as elsewhere. What is special about the military news system in South Africa is that most of the bargaining power lies with the authorities. Their bargaining position is sanctioned by the law which makes them delegated representatives of the Minister, in whose absolute discretion it lies whether to permit or suppress publication of an item. The outcome, it will be seen, is that the press have to take what they are given. Most reconcile themselves to this situation and come to regard one-sided news as better than no news at all.

1.3 The Angolan debacle

The "drastic developments" to which Mr Botha had referred in his 1975 White Paper included the rapid decolonisation of Mocambique and Angola following the fall of the Caetano Government in Portugal during 1974. A clash between South Africa and the new Frelimo Government in Mocambique was avoided, but on the Angola-Namibia border South Africa's long standing war against guerillas of the South West Africa People's Organisation (Swapo) escalated with the collapse of order in Southern Angola. The situation deteriorated until finally in July or August 1975 South African forces crossed the border to become involved in the Angolan civil war.

It has never been revealed who in the South African Cabinet backed the decision to intervene. From early August 1975 until February 1977 the details of South Africa's involvement in Angola were concealed from the South African public by the simple device of applying a blanket of secrecy under the Defence Act and Official Secrets Act.[19] During this period, snippets of information about the Republic's participation were officially released in order, it seemed, to counter enemy propaganda or defuse criticism at home, but the Government refused to put the full story on record until nearly a year after the war ended. Even then crucial details remained in doubt, as will be shown. The suppression of information meant that the national news media could not discuss the conflict in all its ramifications and indicate to the public how serious and consequential for the country the war really was.

The diplomatic and military aims of South Africa in Angola were not clearly apparent at the time but emerged in retrospect.[20] In the first place,

South Africa wanted to protect its stake in the Calueque dam and Ruacana hydroelectric scheme, projects undertaken jointly with the Portuguese some years previously and necessary for the development of Owambo. Secondly, the Government evidently thought that a demonstration of solidarity with the moderate black independence movements in Angola would impress other moderates in Africa and further the Republic's policy of detente with black states, already well under way through contacts with Zambia and the Ivory Coast. Thirdly, the Republic sought to stabilise her strategic perimeter, if possible by creating a friendly black state to the north. A Unita/FNLA regime under military obligation to South Africa may have proved helpful in denying bases to Swapo guerillas in Southern Angola. The Minister of Defence was to be adamant that South Africa made "no territorial demands" but merely aimed to prevent "murder, chaos and disorder" spilling over into Namibia.[21] Lastly, it seems that the Government believed it had received assurances that the United States, together with other Western Powers, would support intervention. Such assurances may have been given by the CIA[22] but it was a sad miscalculation on Pretoria's part to imagine that in the wake of Vietnam the White House would back military involvement in another foreign war.

In any case, acting on the assumption that intervention in Angola would be to her credit, Pretoria sent troops into the territory some time in July or August 1975.[23] The troop commitment increased to in the region of 2 000 in subsequent months as the SA/Unita/FNLA thrust, spearheaded by South Africa's "Zulu", "Foxbat", "X-ray" and "Orange" armoured columns, penetrated deep into Angola to a position within striking distance of Luanda.[24] Here, around Independence Day on 11 November, the campaign halted while the warring black movements canvassed support for themselves in foreign capitals, seeking recognition and negotiating for further aid. Chief among the interventionists were South Africa and Cuba - the latter fighting side by side with the MPLA. Reports of Russian arms shipments arriving daily in Luanda harbour for the use of the Cuban/MPLA forces were matched by other reports of American heavy aircraft flying supplies and weapons to points in the north and south of the country.

The war was extensively reported by the world's news media, but there was very little front-line coverage.[25] The external powers who became involved tried to conceal the extent and nature of their support for the warring

black movements. The result was that the war became a field for investigative journalism whose object was to expose those involved. Only a handful of journalists were able to get into Angola to identify the foreign interlopers, but their reports were a crucial determinant of subsequent developments on the international diplomatic stage. The story of how the news of South Africa's involvement came out adds a fascinating and important dimension to the history of the war. The main points of contention are still the precise dates on which Cuban and South African soldiers respectively entered the war. In the absence of reliable reports from the fighting fronts which could have established precisely who was there, when they arrived, and what they were doing the question cannot be settled with certainty.

Between August and November 1975, newsmen on the spot tried to uncover factual evidence of foreign intervention. They faced concerted efforts by each side to hide the extent of intervention by foreign allies - however, each side had an interest in exposing the other, and this, combined with the individual enterprise of certain journalists, unmasked the interventionists sufficiently to make their roles an open secret in the world at large by the end of November. Yet even as late as January 1976 the interventionists continued palying a shadow game with the press. The effect was summed up in a dispatch from Francois Campredon, an Agence France Presse correspondent, reporting from Huambo in Southern Angola on 21 January:

> Seldom has a war been kept so secret and journalists kept so far away from the front as in the present Angolan civil war. After 10 days in the zone occupied by Unita, the Western-backed faction allied with the FNLA, it has nevertheless been possible to find some proof and evidence on the extent of foreign involvement in the fighting.

Campredon described seeing half a dozen soldiers in South African deep-brown combat uniform inspecting a rail bridge over the Cuanza River more than 500 km north of the Namibian border. Elsewhere he spotted road convoys, helicopters, and American-built C-130 transport aircraft whose registration numbers and identifying marks had been removed. The

dispatch recalled that Unita had recently confiscated film shot by two American television teams of a convoy carrying white soldiers, and that two months previously a pair of French photographers had been arrested by Unita and accused of spying.

The interest of Campredon's report is not so much what it says about South Africa's presence - which at that stage was well known - but the fact that it was necessary to write such reports at all. For journalists the war bore little resemblance to the Vietnam war and the Yom Kippur War in which many had previously seen action. By the time Campredon wrote his dispatch the war was nearly over, yet no correspondent had got close enough to the front to witness and describe a battle in a dramatic, newsy fashion, much less tour the country and give an overall picture of the situation after months of war. Unita's arrest of "spies" was one incident among many illustrating the extreme sensitivity of the Angolan movements to unwanted publicity.

The fact that there was secrecy on all sides has sometimes been minimised or overlooked by critics of the South African Government's policy of war censorship. The editors of newspapers and news agencies, however, were well aware of the difficulties of obtaining information from any quarter. In a letter to the author, Mr Harvey Tyson, editor of the Johannesburg daily, The Star, noted that the Argus Africa News Service had struggled to keep South African papers abreast of developments, as had others:

> Our own reporters, and all other western journalists, were confined to an area around Luanda. Reuter reported that only Eastern bloc journalists, (bent apparently on propaganda) were allowed near the "front lines". Soon all Western journalists were moved out of Luanda as well, and finally Reuters was ordered out on November 17... It is important to remember that it was not only the South African press who were in the dark (although we were enforced into staying there). The entire world's press was operating on few facts and many denied rumours. Moscow denied, early on, that Russian arms were pouring in (later the arms importations and Cuban

> involvement were openly conducted). Washington kept an extraordinarily low profile - and managed to be very vague about the US role - surprisingly so for an "open society". Unita and Pretoria denied official South African involvement.
>
> Truth was not merely the first casualty, but possibly the major casualty of the brief Angolan campaign.

Neither Cuba nor South Africa could keep their roles secret from the world for very long. As news seeped out it became apparent that the exposure would do more damage to South Africa and her allies than to the Cubans and the MPLA. Of all the covert involvements, South Africa's was the least acceptable to black African states because they found the Republic's racial ideology repugnant. During December South Africa tried to gain Western support. Writing in The Observer, Africa watcher Colin Legum deplored the build-up of Russian arms and Cuban troops, but went on to say that the pro-MPLA powers were capitalising on South Africa's blunder in entering the war:

> The urgent appeal from Pretoria...for the Western powers to join with South Africa in defeating the Russian strategy was highly embarrassing to Western governments, and in addition has played directly into the hands of the Russians. It has enabled them to develop their diplomatic campaign to rally support for the MPLA behind the cry that its rivals are tied to South Africa and "other imperialists".[25]

South Africa's presence in Angola undoubtedly caused grave embarrassment to her Western and African allies. In December 1975 the Observer said the best service South Africa could perform would be to withdraw from Angola immediately.[26] Meanwhile the Russian news agency Tass capitalised on South African "aggression", advancing this as the reason why Angola needed Cuban and Russian support.[27] Unita's leader, Jonas Savimbi, denied as late as December that he was receiving South African aid.[28] Against this background it is perhaps understandable that the South African Government would go on as long as possible refusing to

admit complicity in the civil war. It was a forlorn hope that the world would believe her, and Pretoria must have realised this - the evidence on the other side was too strong and too widely credited. The Government let slide the opportunity to put its case frankly and cite the nature of the encouragement it had received.

Throughout August, September and November 1975 the South African Government had flatly denied that its troops were engaged in the civil war. In London on 18 November, South Africa's Minister of Foreign Affairs, Dr Hilgard Muller, categorically stated: "South African Forces are not operating in this war".[29] His denial came within hours of a scathing attack on South Africa by the Tanzanian President, Dr Julius Nyerere, who in the course of a state visit to Britain had accused South Africa of using Namibia as a base for its "troop incursions into Angola and as the staging post for mercenary activity in that country."[30] Dr Muller conceded to aggressive press questioning that there were "small numbers" of South African troops guarding the Cunene water project and the Ruacana dam in the extreme south of Angola, but he said there was "nothing sinister" in this -- they were there to protect the workers and equipment at the project. Dr Muller denied that South Africa was supplying arms or money to Unita. Questioned about the censorship being applied in South Africa, Dr Muller said there had been a lot of "speculation and confusion" about what was happening in Angola, and it had been thought best not to let the South African press participate in the speculation - it could have served no purpose and might have caused worry.[31] Commenting the Rand Daily Mail observed tartly:

> It is reported that this reply raised a laugh. But it cannot be a laughing matter back home. As we have constantly pointed out, it is the denial of information, rather than information itself, which leads to the proliferation of rumour and anxiety.[32]

By now it was clear to the press - and to those of its readers who could pick up broad hints - that South Africa was far more deeply implicated in Angola than Dr Muller had conceded. The first big breaks in the international news story about Angola had occurred in the week before Dr Muller's London press conference. On British Independent Television

News, reporter Mike Nicholson gave an eye-witness description of South African troops and showed photographs of their armoured cars travelling through Southern Angola.[33] When South African newspapers asked the SADF for permission to publish details of Nicholson's report, they were refused - but some then published news of the refusal.[34] On 16 November, the London Sunday Times and The Observer had published independent accounts of the presence of fair-skinned Afrikaans-speaking troops in Panhard armoured cars taking part in a lightning column attack from the south. They reported that these troops had reached the coastal cities of Benguela and Lobito. The next day, South African newspapers which had again been refused permission to publish details, again carried reports of the ban.[35]

South African troop losses were still officially ascribed to contacts with "terrorists" in the "operational area", although this explanation was wearing thin. On 19 November the Rand Daily Mail reported that it had put certain questions to Brigadier Cyrus Smith, head of SADF publicity, "on the method of release of information on the latest border skirmish" (author's italics). In this "border skirmish" three South African soldiers had been killed in action. On 26 November, Bob Hitchcock of the Rand Daily Mail reported that military sources had told him "terrorist suicide squads based in Zambia and Angola are responsible for a sudden escalation of skirmishes in South Africa's northern operational area" (author's italics). These reports bore no relation to the fact that South Africans had been dying far to the north of the Namibian border.

The action to the north was reported to involve "mercenaries" or a "mystery flying column" moving swiftly up the southern coast towards Luanda. The Star of 21 November 1975 indicated the position of the "Unita/FNLA alliance" (i.e. South African-supported columns) with large arrows. In the Rand Daily Mail on 12 November a map had shown the progress of the "mercenary" column from the south. Afrikaans newspapers adopted the term huursoldate (mercenaries) as well. Journalists had their suspicions about who the "mercenaries" were, although they were not sure. In the letter previously quoted from the editor of The Star to the author, the usage of "mercenary" was explained as follows:

> As soon as we had news of the armoured column (whose armour and numbers were fairly accurately assessed in agency copy, overseas newspapers and our own reports) we referred to it as the "mystery column of white mercenaries and others, including South Africans" or combinations of this description, such as "a column led from the south - South Africans among them". We were able to do this for two reasons: 1. White mercenaries were not covered by Defence Regulations. 2. We KNEW there were many South Africans operating in Angola, but our best investigations showed that they were volunteers being paid danger money and not operating under any SA identification whatsoever.

The Star and other Opposition newspapers criticised the censorship in editorials and news reports quoting Opposition politicians,[36] but the wall of official silence held up. Until November 1975 the Government stuck to the story that its troops were merely guarding vital installations and protecting civilians in the Angola-Namibia border area. In fact engagements had been taking place deep in Angola against MPLA and Cuban soldiers.

The first official admission of involvement in the war itself came on 27 November 1975 when Defence Headquarters briefed the foreign press to the effect that South Africa was providing "advice and logistic support" for the Unita/FNLA alliance.[37] The local media were permitted to report sections of the briefing a day later. South Africa did not lose this opportunity to make a broadside appeal to the West to come to her aid. The Minister of Defence told the briefing that South Africa would be prepared to join the Western world if those countries were prepared to drive Russia out of Southern Africa.[38] The Star quoted an "anonymous source" in Pretoria saying that the South African presence in Angola had the support of Dr Jonas Savimbi, the leader of Unita, and that South Africa was "in good company because we find ourselves in the company of the big free nations of the world." The newspaper commented that this was apparently a reference to France, Britain, the United States and possibly Belgium. The source added that there was no doubt that the free nations

of the world were "operating in Angola" - although they did not want to admit it - but South Africa would like to see "more active American participation". The source went on:

> "We will only operate and support people who welcome our support and who would allow us to help them. But we are not going to act against anyone's wishes in Southern Africa except when they attack us. South Africa, as part of the free world, will surely take part in any efforts of the free world...so far as we are capable of doing so...to help the free world in retaining Southern Africa as a free base against communism militarism (sic).[39]

The story which blew wide open South Africa's complicity in the fighting was that of the capture of four South African servicemen by the MPLA some 900 km from the Namibian border. Newspaper headlines in South Africa screamed that the four had been publicly interrogated at an MPLA press conference in Luanda. Yet Defence authorities refused permission to publish a transcript of the interrogation.[40] Mr Botha had said in a press statement that the four were doing "logistical duties" in the Technical Services Corps and had gone missing when they were sent out to fetch an unserviceable vehicle. Mr Botha's statement conceded nothing new in South Africa's official line on the war. He said it was generally known that South Africa had taken security precautions in Angola to protect the northern border of South West Africa, the pumping station at Calueque and the power station on the Kunene River. South Africa was protecting the area at the invitation of the governments of Owambo and Kavango "with the approval of the Portuguese".[41] This statement remained the official version for several months.

Meanwhile the appeal for Western help failed. At the height of the international furore over Angola, just before Christmas 1975, the US Congress voted to stop further American arms and assistance reaching the war zone. This put paid to South Africa's hopes and opened the way for a successful Cuban-MPLA counterattack. South Africa's plea that it was seeking to represent the free nations of the West against the encroachment

of Soviet imperialism failed to gain for it the moral and material backing it needed to sustain its Angolan campaign.

Early in 1976 the Organisation of African Unity drove the last nails into the Unita/FNLA alliance supported by South Africa. In January an emergency meeting of the OAU - called to discuss the Angolan issue - deadlocked over rival proposals for the solution of the war. At the conference 22 OAU countries recognised the MPLA as the only legitimate government of Angola while 22 others supported a resolution calling for a ceasefire and negotiations leading to a "government of national unity". Although the result of this meeting was for the moment inconclusive, "the MPLA gained diplomatically as a result of South African intervention, since this prompted two influential African states (Nigeria and Tanzania) to abandon their previously neutralist stance and to recognise the MPLA before the conference opened."[42] The deadlock was broken on 11 February when two more OAU states recognised the MPLA government.[43] By March the war was over with the last South African troops withdrawing across the Cunene River into Namibia, leaving the vacuum to be filled by Cuban and MPLA troops.

In Parliament in 1976 the Minister of Defence was to concede that during a pursuit of certain "gangs" into Angola engagements had been fought with others. What appears to have been the first official admission of a South African role in the fighting was made by the Minister when he said: "On various occasions the SA Defence Force had to pursue such [unnamed] gangs and clear away their camps... On occasion we were also involved in other engagements...and most of these engagements went off in our favour."[44] The pursuit theme was taken up by the Prime Minister, Mr Vorster who named the quarry as "the MPLA and the Cubans". He said the South Africans had chased them "a very long way" from the Calueque dam.[45] But he did not admit complicity in the war.

During 1976 the news media carried sketchy reports - sanctioned by Pretoria - about engagements fought between South Africans and Cubans. An outstanding example was the screening of a television documentary reconstruction of the Battle of Bridge 14, a clash in which a small South African armoured car group reportedly fought off a large enemy

force with heavy losses for the latter at a strategic bridge somewhere in the Angolan heartland. The film - shot on a location in Namibia with South African troops playing all the roles - was shown in April 1976 although the battle had taken place in the middle of the previous December.[46] Nevertheless its portrayal of South African heroism seized the imagination of the press, which gave it sensational treatment. The film was shown in the week before the Parliamentary vote on the portfolio of the Minister of Defence and may well have been calculated to restore public and press support for the Minister and his department, whose image had been tarnished by the Angolan secrecy.

Ultimately, in February 1977, Defence Force headquarters released a campaign history of the war dealing with the lightning penetration of the South African armoured columns to points hundreds of kilometres into Angola.[47] To coincide with this news release the Defence Force had assisted a foreign journalist, Robert Moss of the London Sunday Telegraph, to write a popularised version of the campaign. The Moss account stressed that South Africa had gone to the assistance of Unita and the FNLA only after repeated appeals from them and after it became apparent that Cuban soldiers were entering the territory.[48] This version was designed to rebut a rival Cuban account which had been published abroad a few weeks earlier purporting to show that Cuban intervention occurred in response to the presence of South Africa and other Western interventionists.[49]

The Cuban-authorised war history appeared nearly 12 months after the victory of the MPLA in Angola. Written by an old friend of Dr Fidel Castro, the Columbian novelist Gabriel Garcia-Marquez, the 8 000-word article was first published in the Mexican weekly magazine Proceso and republished in the New Left Review (101-102). Marques claimed that the Cuban decision to send troops to Angola was taken only on 5 November 1975 at a meeting of the Cuban Communist Party. This account made it appear as if the Cuban intervention came as a response to prior South African intervention which had prompted Dr Agostinho Neto, leader of the MPLA, to appeal for aid. The Cuban "Operation Carlotta", according to Marquez, involved slightly over 15 000 troops who arrived in force from 27 November onwards. The recruitment of these volunteers for

Angola was a closely guarded secret in Cuba for two months, as families who saw off the soldiers were under strict orders to say nothing to journalists. In some cases families were not even told of the departure overseas of relatives. Dr Castro was seldom out of touch with events in Angola and directed operations for 14 hours at a stretch from army headquarters in Havana.[50]

The crucial date of Cuban intervention was challenged in South Africa's own war history and has been debated by historians. The SADF account mentions the "presence of Cubans supporting the MPLA" at the time of the mass refugee migration across the Angolan border in August-September 1975. After 6 October "it became obvious that the struggle, with strong Cuban support, began to take on a conventional colour" which led the SADF to send a squadron of armoured cars with troops to join South African-trained Unita forces at Silva Porto. Thus, in this version, the Cuban intervention predated the intrusion of South African troops.[51] Historian Robin Hallett notes that the Cuban Deputy Foreign Minister admitted during January 1976 that some 230 Cuban advisers had been despatched in the "late spring" (i.e. September or October 1975) to set up training camps in Angola - a fact of which Marquez made no mention.[52] Press reports at the time indicated a Cuban presence in Angola. On 24 September 1975 the Rand Daily Mail had reported in a brief news item that sources in Zambia said more than 1 000 Cubans were fighting beside the MPLA. The Zambian sources said ships had been seen offloading troops at the Congo-Brazzaville port of Point Noire, and that the Cubans were said to have the backing of Russia.[53] Hallett quotes a report in Le Monde of 21 October in which the Unita leader, Dr Jonas Savimbi, was reported as saying that three ships bringing 750 Cuban troops and 10 000 tons of war material to support the MPLA had landed "in the last week" on the south coast of Angola. Another Le Monde report a few days later quoted sources in Lusaka to the effect that the MPLA had the support of 1 500 Cubans.[54] The London Sunday Telegraph writer, Robert Moss, whose account of the war was widely published in South Africa with the approval of the SADF during February 1977, claimed that the first Cuban troops "went into Angola two months in advance of the South Africans" - on 16 August 1975. The first 200 instructors, he said, were soon joined

by fighting troops, and as Castro's men continued to arrive they received quantities of Soviet war materials.[55] A British war correspondent, Fred Bridgand, wrote after the war that he had interviewed Cuban prisoners of war, one of whom said he had been flown to Angola in August 1975. This made "nonsense of the official Havana account that Fidel Castro decided to send troops to Angola only as late as November 5."[56]

Whatever the true facts, in South Africa the Government lost no opportunity to portray the Cuban and Russian intervention as an example of communist "imperialism". In November, the Minister of Defence said in reply to an accusation by Pravda:

> The Republic of South Africa is not bringing in Cubans to fight against the rights of two movements like the FNLA and Unita in their own country. Russia itself has started, in conflict with the principle of peaceful coexistence, to employ militaristic imperialism towards Angola.[57]

This statement deftly avoided an actual admission of South Africa's role in Angola, while frankly backing Unita/FNLA.

In summary, it can be said of news coverage during and after the war that it bore out the South African Government's perception of mass communications as a crucial element in strategy. The international news media had played their part in the ideological war primarily by exposing the interventionists. Angola was a war in which the abstractions of politics superceded the immediate situation. The media had been forced to channel much of their newsgathering activity into more accessible forms of news than the traditional front-line dispatch. They had examined developments behind the front lines and in distant capitals, coming to depend heavily, as a result, on the statements, actions and opinions of the rival Angolan leaders and their foreign backers in Washington, Moscow, Havana, Pretoria and elsewhere in Africa. The dependence of the media on these political sources characterised

much news of the war and helps to account for the overtly ideological content of coverage.

Nowhere was this more so than in South Africa. Press and public ignorance of the factual situation was compounded by the official blackout on news of the country's direct involvement in the fighting. Meanwhile news reports and editorial comment featured the spectre of Russian imperialism looming over the Republic and Africa. News from agencies abroad and from correspondents who had been sent to Angola was replete with references to the Russian and Cuban menace. This type of news did not require clearance from the military authorities in South Africa. Indeed, the resulting picture of communist aggression accorded precisely with the military and Government view. To many South Africans, starved of information about their country's role in the war, it must have seemed that the much-publicised presence of communists constituted a one-sided intervention in Angola. Pretoria fostered this impression both at home and in the outside world. When finally it admitted limited involvement in Angola, it sought to present this as a justifiable reaction to communist intervention. South Africa's plea for overt Western backing overlooked the evident fact that her racial policies made her an unlikely champion of Western-style concepts of freedom or of black nationalism.

Discrimination for and against particular media was a feature of the wartime and post-war release of news. In essence this involved giving preference to pro-Government media over anti-Government ones. The SABC's television and radio services benefited most - "Brug 14" being the outstanding example - while at times the newspapers of the Nasionale Pers group appeared to have inside information denied to all others. It seems to have been a practice of the military establishment to hand on news to more friendly media, but also to use specific media for special tactical and political reasons. Into the latter category fell the foreign press which several times received SADF newsbreaks before any local media. Ample evidence to support these conclusions will be presented in Section Three. Discrimination formed part of a scheme of rewards and punishments inducing the media to co-operate with, rather than confront, the authorities.

1.4 The domestic debate on censorship

Yet confrontation could and did occur. Some papers had run blank spaces to protest against censorship - details appear later in this study - and there had been sharply critical editorials which annoyed the military and Mr Botha. When the South African Society of Journalists met for its annual congress in May 1976 it produced a bellicose statement charging the Government with having "subverted" press "honesty and integrity". Emphasising professional goals, the SASJ demanded to know:

> Who went into Angola? What happened in the war? When did South Africa go to war? Why did South Africa go to war? How did she fare in the war? The who, where, when why and how are the five keys to our craft as journalists.[59]

Opposition criticism of the Government's handling of the Angolan war concentrated on the secrecy which kept South Africans in the dark about their own stake in the war. Angola was the main theme of the no-confidence motion presented by the official Opposition when Parliament reconvened at the end of January 1976. The Opposition contended that, within the bounds of the secrecy necessary to protect military operations, the Government should have been candid about South Africa's role in Angola. Honesty, they maintained, was the policy best calculated to win the full support of the nation for its Defence Force, while the failure to "inform and motivate"[60] the people must result in confusion. The Leader of the Opposition, Sir de Villiers Graaff, said public attitudes formed part of the national security picture. He explained:

> Few things could be more destructive of the morale and firm resolution of the public than to conceal from them the nature and purpose of any military action beyond our borders and then have them discover from other sources that things are in fact not as they were led to believe. At present there are sharp contradictions between information locally released and that which is freely available in and from many other countries, from their Press, their radio and their television. Rumour is rife and confusion is growing, particularly amongst parents,

> wives, girl friends and relatives of servicemen, simply because statements made by or on behalf of the Minister of Defence and others cannot be reconciled with facts which appear to be obvious.[61]

Mr Vause Raw, Opposition spokesman on Defence, insisted that the Government was answerable to Parliament and the electorate on the issue of armed conflict with outsiders. On this issue, he said, there was no "blank cheque" signed by the people of South Africa.[62] The Minister of Defence and the Prime Minister both rejected this view. The Minister said:

> (A) question is: Have the Republic of South Africa and its people been told enough by us?... My answer is: "Yes". Recently we have been hearing in certain circles, especially in certain circles of the Press, of the "right to know"; they want to know everything. But this Government has been elected to carry responsibilities, and who has placed some of those who talk about the "right to know" in the positions which they hold? To whom are they responsible? Sir, in the first place I say that the "right to know" may be recognised as long as the safety of the security forces is not threatened by it. In the second place the "right to know" can be recognised as long as diplomatic responsibilities are not divulged.[63]

Speaking some weeks later in the vote on the Minister's portfolio, the Prime Minister, Mr B J Vorster, supported Mr Botha's argument. He said some information had been given to the press but "one does not fight a war in order to supply news to newspapers."[64] Full information about South Africa's involvement had not been given "because the matter was delicate and we are not alone in our involvement in this."[65] He continued:

> Whilst I am on this point let me say something in respect of which I am sure all honourable members who take it seriously will agree with me: America lost the war in Vietnam because inter alia the Press was too much involved with that war. ...War is a serious matter. War is a

> matter of life and death and very often the wrong word at the wrong time in a newspaper can cause the death of people. It can also upset your strategy. It can make all your plans go wrong. It can undermine the morale inside and outside your country. We did not snub the newspapers. Why should we want to snub the newspapers? We want their co-operation and that is why we went out of our way to explain it to them.[66]

There was some truth in the charge that the Vietnam war had been fought and lost in the United States media - particularly on the television screens in Americans' living rooms. There was of course more to it than that: America simply could not win the war of attrition against the hidden enemy and this caused a political backlash in Washington. Television news coverage of front-line actions was especially effective in bringing home the waste and the frustration experienced by the average soldier.

In their replies to Opposition critics, both Mr Vorster and Mr Botha invoked the notion that the national will was embodied in the Government and need not be tested for support in the country at large, since South Africa was engaged in meeting the "total strategy of the communists".[67, 68] At the same time, Mr Vorster's strictures on the role of the American press during the Vietnam war suggests that the Government felt it could not afford to test public opinion.

There may have been several reasons for its fear of doing so. For one thing, there had been rumours of military disasters at the front owing to the blunders of the SADF top brass. These rumours had risen to a crescendo during November 1975 when the figures of men killed supposedly in "border" clashes climbed steeply. Mr Vause Raw animadverted on this topic during the no-confidence debate:

> The danger in war and conflict is the danger of rumours... rumours that grow into some huge story because people do not know truth ... Such as stories of the "Bloody Triangle", of our men being subjected to inhuman suffering and so on. ... I believe those stories are totally untrue.

> I refer also for instance to stories of our men having been placed under strain and of their coming home with shell-shock. There are also stories concerning the hospitals ...[69]

The Government may have felt at the time that detailed day-to-day reports on the situation would expose certain weaknesses in the SADF and so damage both fighting morale and the morale of the nation. But this was hardly a reason to persist in blanket censorship.

Was the censorship designed to cover up atrocities? Although this question was not broached in Parliament or the press, atrocity stories were heard on the rumour network. There was one published account of atrocities alleged to have been committed in the Namibian border area. In August 1976 a former South African soldier named Bill Anderson, who sought political asylum in Britain, said he had witnessed torture and indiscriminate killing of civilians during an operation codenamed "Cobra" in Namibia during July 1975.[70] The Defence Force denied these allegations as "preposterous" adding that all complaints of misconduct were investigated and offenders punished.[71] Anderson's charges made front page news in South Africa. The fact that they could be printed locally suggests that the Government was not afraid of the damage they might do, although atrocity cover-ups remain a possible motive for specific acts of censorship.

Against the risks of damaging disclosures the Government had to weigh the possible gains of honesty. Amongst a number of its own supporters the Government's secrecy over Angola was incomprehensible and it struck a blow at their confidence. A Nationalist journalist put it this way:

> I was upset when friends of mine in the Western Transvaal, where I was spending my leave, came to ask me what was going on and I couldn't tell them. They asked me about all these reports and I couldn't give them any answers ...

> As far as censorship is concerned, I took the point of view that the public should have been informed, and I am speaking as an Afrikaner ... There was a lot of fear, rumour and despondency in the country simply because people were not told what was happening ... Now Afrikaans people, as you know, don't like to criticise the government (but) ... it's a very emotional subject, and you can't expect your kids to go and fight in a foreign war, a war which wasn't declared, while the government won't say what we are there for or what we stand to gain ... I was upset, and I was by no means the only one.[72]

The mutterings of rank-and-file Nationalists were never loud enough to disrupt party solidarity on the censorship issue. The party newspapers continued to editorialise, with varying degrees of conviction, that national security was at stake. Yet the Government must have been strongly tempted at times to tell all.

Press responses to public pressure for disclosure varied according to their party affiliations, concepts of national security and the public interest, and spirit of journalistic enterprise. Opposition newspapers in particular looked for loopholes in the law and drew attention to censorship by means of blank spaces or footnotes. Nationalist newspapers were less daring. In their view it was contrary to the national interest to embarrass the Government in time of strife. But there were differences between Nationalist newspaper groups in their degree of support for the Minister of Defence personally and for his policy of secret intervention. The Minister, who sat on the board of the Nasionale Pers newspapers, could count on their support; not so that of Perskor newspapers. Die Vaderland (Perskor) was notably vocal in its opposition to intervention. On 20 December 1975 the paper warned: "The Republic cannot - because of its size, its position in the Western world, and its ties with Africa - afford involvement in the Angolan civil war." In contrast, Beeld (Nasionale Pers) of 19 December had pleaded with America to aid the allied cause by providing the necessary aid.

The credibility of the media suffered both from the independent transmission of news via rumour chains and from the long delay in the emergence of the full Angolan story. When the ban on news was total, before December 1975, wild and disquieting rumours of South African losses and disasters circulated everywhere. An editorial in The Star condemned the "outrageous" disregard of the authorities for the public's right to know, and drew attention to the resulting loss of confidence in the press:

> For weeks now South African newspapers have been forbidden, in terms of the Defence Act, to tell South Africans facts about the Angolan situation which were freely available anywhere else in the world.
>
> It has reached the farcical situation where Mr John Wiley, MP, in his ignorance, demanded at a Durban public meeting to know if the South African press was conspiring to keep the facts from the public! Mothers were phoning The Star, asking if their boys were in Angola. One phoned to say her son was in Angola, and asked why The Star was not saying anything about it.[73]

It was suggested when Parliament reconvened early in 1976 that the Government's silence had worked to its disadvantage in the country at large. Mr Vause Raw said that the Government had been right to act and act quickly in Angola, though it was unfortunate it had not reported back to the people. He said that if the Minister of Defence had told Parliament what the Government had done "he would have had Parliament and with it all the people of South Africa solidly and fully behind the action". Doubts and questioning would have been eliminated, and some of the "unfortunate attitudes" which had been adopted in some quarters would have been avoided.[74]

To count on the potential support of the whole population - blacks and whites - was certainly unrealistic. Certainly many white voters

would have given their approval. An opinion poll conducted amongst white South Africans for The Star in 1976 revealed that a majority thought the Government had been right to send troops into Angola but were unhappy that this was done without Parliament being consulted. The majority also felt that South Africans were not kept properly informed on the Angolan adventure, and that the Government should not have stopped newspapers from printing information on Angola that had already been published or broadcast abroad.[75] As for black opinion, no such poll was conducted by newspapers or anyone else. In Parliament the Opposition pointed out that so long as racial injustice characterised life in South Africa it would be difficult to "progress towards a system that would unite South Africans of all races in a common loyalty."[76] Unquestionably there was a substantial body of black opinion in South Africa that was either neutral or supported the "enemy".[77] The Government could rely to some extent on expressions of support from its black appointees within the structures of separate development.

One motive for internal censorship may have been the resolve to prevent people of differing persuasions from debating the issue of intervention and dissenting openly from Government action. A fear of likely disturbances in Namibia was certainly present in Government thinking. At his press conference in London in November 1975, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Dr Muller, had said that it had been thought advisable to prevent the South African press from taking part in "speculation" about the war because it could have a seriously unsettling effect on the Owambo homeland and neighbouring territories.[78]

The Government may have perceived a danger that its Angolan action could provoke outbursts among blacks who looked to the north for their liberation. A precedent for such outbursts had occurred in the very recent past. Following Portugal's declaration of her intention to grant independence to Mocambique, members of the black consciousness movement in South Africa held pro-Frelimo rallies which threatened to develop into

a show of mass solidarity throughout the country. The Government scotched the demonstrations with bans, tough police action, and a spate of arrests.[79]

A question that arises is why the Government chose to persist in censorship while permitting foreign newspapers to enter the country with news of South Africa's role. The anomaly - maddening to newspapers - appeared inexplicable. One line of reasoning behind this behaviour was explained to the author by a military source:

> You see, South Africa has the freest press in Africa but many African states don't understand what a free press is. Their newspapers are controlled and they act as the mouthpieces of their governments. Therefore any news published in South Africa dealing with our involvement would be seen as an endorsement of reports appearing abroad. It didn't matter that these reports appeared abroad, so long as they weren't published by our newspapers.[80]

This implied that the South African press, though nominally free, was as much a controlled mouthpiece of the Government as any press in Africa. The apparent intention was to use it as a tool of diplomacy.

Both the Minister of Defence and the Prime Minister suggested after the war that some kind of agreement had been reached with other parties - specifically mentioning the United States - to the effect that South Africa's intervention would remain secret. Speaking in the 1976 no-confidence debate Mr Vorster said Angola was "an exceptionally delicate matter. Even on this occasion there are things which I simply dare not say. South Africa's involvement was not an isolated involvement; others were also involved, I am not going to mention their names ... those people should come forward themselves."[81] Two years later, in April 1978, the Minister of Defence told Parliament that South Africa had entered Angola "with the approval and knowledge of the Americans... they encouraged us to act and, when we had nearly reached the climax, we were ruthlessly left in the lurch by an undertaking that was broken."[82]

It seems that the "undertaking" entailed covert action by the parties involved. This would tally with the hush-hush nature of the Republic's diplomatic contacts with black states which reputedly backed intervention.

A combination of all the factors suggested above may have been responsible for the censorship in South Africa. In addition, the Government's habitual mistrust of the Opposition press probably contributed to its secrecy over Angola. It can be seen, though, that there were strong inducements for the Government to disclose the facts - specifically to keep its supporters happy but also to repel exaggerated and damning propaganda from the outside world. Any advantages flowing from censorship seem in retrospect to have been more than offset by the loss of face suffered by the Government in denying palpable and notorious truths.

Whatever the reasons, the war news blackout was unprecedented in the country's history. While in other wars there had been censorship regarding specific actions, here there was no admission that South Africa was in fact at war on foreign soil. Coupled with this, the nation was fed with an official version of events which grossly distorted the truth. The official news releases, warped as they were, became a means of promoting the Government's political outlook on developments. The news blackout on the one hand, and the manipulation of the news on the other, together constituted an enormous assault on the public's right to know. X

1.5 The elaboration of strategy

The Angolan war was not yet over when, in February 1976, the Minister of Defence summoned representatives of the NPU for discussions on the Defence Agreement. At this meeting Mr Botha expressed his displeasure at the way certain newspapers had leaked news of South Africa's involvement or had run blank spaces as a mark of protest against official news policy.[83] The outcome of this meeting was not - as Mr Botha had warned it could be - the scrapping of the Agreement with the press,[84] but on the contrary, a further growth of the SADF's public relations arm. Someone in Pretoria had realised that the way to curb the media was to win them over to full co-operation with the SADF. Accordingly the regulatory framework that had functioned during the war was extended to make it more comprehensive and sophisticated. At

Defence Headquarters the military-press liaison section was strengthened by the recruitment of a number of journalists who donned uniforms and took rank as military PRO's. Under Colonel Kobus Bosman, himself a former radio broadcaster, the press officers presented a far more amenable face to their opposite numbers, the military correspondents of newspapers and the SABC radio and television.[85] A Defence Committee came into being to oversee the broad policy of news publication. This Committee consisted of representatives of the NPU and the military, meeting under the chairmanship of a senior general, and according to a source on this Committee its decisions were arrived at by consensus.[86] The existence of the Defence Committee meant that the NPU had at last become fully co-opted into the official system of authorising news on the basis of security considerations. The SADF, in collaboration with the editors of print and broadcast news media, drew up a list of accredited defence correspondents who had the sole right to approach military PRO's and other top personnel for news releases.[87] All these changes made for more harmonious press-military relations.

In general the Defence Force became far more forthright about its engagements in the border war zones and saw to it that details of fatalities - an issue that had caused friction with newspapers during the Angolan War - were now timeously and fairly given to the media. A booklet offering guidelines for the PR officer, drawn up by the Directorate of Public Relations for its liaison personnel, set out some basic principles which, according to a reviewer, "should lead to improved Public Relations and an enhanced image of the SA Defence Force."[88] But apparently the Directorate still had things to learn. The review in the military magazine Paratus said the booklet was wrong in stating that Sunday newspapers carried little news ("the opposite is true") and also wrong in believing only people made news - "the Mirage F1 and Rate 1 have been red-hot news".[89]

The elaboration of the total strategy in the realm of military news to a very large extent realised its objective of saturation "positive" coverage for the SADF. The sheer volume of news and feature material about the army, navy and air force attested to this. In May 1978 when South Africa's troops raided two camps codenamed "Moscow" and "Vietnam"

in Southern Angola - the camps were said to be bases for Swapo guerillas - the strike force was accompanied by an SABC-TV cameraman and a reporter from Sapa. The next day audiences in the Republic were able to watch the troops in action on their television screens and read all about the blitz in their newspapers.[90] Military news coverage had come a long way since the Angolan war. Yet, while the media were undoubtedly obtaining military news more easily, it was clear that their dependence on official sources had not changed - it had, if anything, become more complete.

In February 1977 the chief of the Defence Force, General Magnus Malan, said that every activity of the State must be "seen and understood as a function of total war".[91] The following year the Minister of National Education, Dr Piet Koornhof, said that the SABC had undertaken to portray a certain amount of violence on television - in an aesthetically acceptable form - in order to stiffen resistance to Marxism. South Africa, he said, could do without a "sissy" television service.[92]

Mr Botha himself gave a carefully worded exposition of the theme in a White Paper issued in March 1977, in the preface of which he reiterated his belief in the need for a concerted national policy on Defence. In the years that had elapsed since the term total strategy was first applied as a statement of policy, the Government's perception of South Africa's dangerously isolated position had made it both less self-confident and more determined than ever to develop the means to fight its enemies effectively. Mr Botha warned of "Marxist militarism...casting a shadow over Africa" while the Western countries still took part in a "senseless" arms embargo against the Republic.[93]

The White Paper outlined in considerable detail the steps the Government was taking to strengthen its military arm. The overall aims were to ensure "the defence and security of the RSA and its body politic against any form of external aggression or internal revolution, irrespective of its source of origin, with all the forces at our command", and to bring about "the involvement of the entire nation in the maintenance of law and order and in the defence of the RSA". The total national strategy was to be devised by the Government and handed down to the nation. Having

been "formulated at the highest level" it would become the combined responsibility of "all government departments" and of "the entire population". The main elements which influenced the strategy were political, economic, psychological, technological and military, all of them "dynamic and interacting". The White Paper emphasised that because of the dynamic nature of strategy it had to be constantly adapted to changing situations brought about by fluctuations in manpower potential, the financial climate, and domestic and foreign politics. Even "religious-cultural action" was included in the list of national security areas which required attention.[94]

The total strategy was taking shape as a totalitarian programme implying the complete co-ordination of society and the economy in the interests of white nationalism.

The White Paper made specific - though muted - reference to "co-operation" with the South African news media. This co-operation it said was based on the Agreement between the Newspaper Press Union and the Minister in terms of the Defence Act. The existence of this Agreement, and the delicate nature of the understanding reached with the press, accounted for the brevity and tactful wording of the sub-section dealing with the news media's place in "general support" for the Defence Force. "As far as military reporting and commentary are concerned", it said, the "news media remain an essential link in the total national strategy, because of the great influencing role they can play in proper co-operation."[95]

The concept of "co-operation" implied that the media would freely report what was freely given, appearing not to be the controlled mouthpieces of the SADF and the Government. The fullest exposition of the new creed was given in a speech by Lieutenant-General J R Dutton to the annual congress of the NPU in October 1977. The General conceded the press's right to act as a watchdog on administrative malpractices, but warned that press coverage of military affairs should not degenerate into a "peanut gallery affair".

> To continue with this line of thought: it has surely occurred to all of you at times that it would be worth the risk to endanger the security of our country with some or other exclusive scoop? You are however aware that it is the SADF's active intention to let the media publish as much as possible about operational matters, and not as little as possible.
>
> It is in this sphere that the ago-old value of mutual trust comes urgently under our review. This principle is firmly recognised in the agreement between the Press Union and our Minister of Defence, and has been realised in the practical implementation of the agreement. I believe the results till now have been overwhelmingly positive, in spite of little problems of a passing nature which give us difficulty now and then but which have been cleared up by means of two-way communcation between us.[96]

One of the "little problems" had been the treatment of the media during the Angolan War. General Dutton's careful understatement of the tensions between the press and the military was a gesture of conciliation. He emphasised that the SADF fully appreciated the contribution of the press to the military effort, for "when we come to moral support and motivation we knock at your door". However, the prerogative rested with the authorities to determine what was or was not in the national interest.

> It is perhaps no exaggeration to describe the SADF as the RSA's prime insurance policy against the destruction of all we hold dear... And, if (a) premium should be the withholding of certain information from the media, then so let that be...[97]

Few editors would wish for a confrontation with the military if it could be avoided. General Dutton's speech offered them the comforting assurance that the military understood the problems the media faced in

terms of deadline pressures and intense competition for hot news. The temptation to slide into a cosy relationship with the military must have been strong. In spite of this the military did not have things all their own way. In mid-1976 The Star and other Argus newspapers risked the disfavour of the authorities by reporting that South African troops had allegedly carried out a raid on the Zambian village of Sialola. The event blew up into an international incident, involving bitter recriminations against South Africa by Zambia in the forum of the United Nations. When South Africa's UN Ambassador, Mr Pik Botha, said his country had "no knowledge" of the raid this was understood to mean that the raid had not been authorised by Pretoria. The Star demanded that the persons responsible for this unauthorised raid by South African forces should be punished.[98] Similarly in May 1978 when the raid on "Moscow" and "Vietnam" took place, some South African newspapers did not shirk the danger of publishing allegations by Swapo and its supporters that the victims of the raid were women and children, not guerillas as the SADF had claimed.[99] In an editorial headed "The Propaganda War", the East London Daily Dispatch said it was "urgently necessary" for South Africa to prove to the world that the raid was a "justifiable military operation". It added:

> Anti-South African propagandists are having a field day... (They) have even succeeded in sowing doubts in Western leaders' minds that this country's armed forces may not have withdrawn from Angola.[100]

Whether or not South Africa was still involved in Angola, memories of the war were fuelled by constant references to it in the press. The Government was careful to avoid the subject in its run-up to the 1977 general election but the extreme right-wing Herstigte Nasionale Party (HNP) made an issue of nine South African prisoners-of-war still being held in Angola. The HNP newspaper, Die Afrikaner, attacked the Government for its "dishonesty" during the war and its subsequent "betrayal" and alleged abandonment of the POWs in the hands of their black captors.[101] When, in September 1979, eight of the POWs were finally flown back to Namibia in exchange for three Cubans held by the Republic, there was jubilation in most sections of the press.[102] With the

exception of Die Afrikaner (not a member of the NPU) every newspaper in the country had dutifully refrained from mentioning the prisoners for over a year in response to a request not to do so by the Minister of Defence. His reason was that protracted and delicate negotiations for their release could be upset by premature publicity.[103] However, after their release some newspapers reported that there had been heated arguments between Mr Botha and certain parents of POWs over his alleged failure to keep the families properly informed.[104]

As a rule, the press co-operated with the military for reasons of patriotism - or at the least out of enlightened self-interest. The press felt they were better catered for and, through the Defence Committee, had some say in the shaping of military news policy. In interviews conducted for this study with 20 senior journalists and defence correspondents there was a general consensus that press-military contacts had improved thanks to the lessons of the war. These interviews are analysed in Section Three. It suffices to say at this point that a close examination of the working procedures of defence correspondents and military PRO's shows that they operate to service each other within the context of given institutional demands. PRO's seek publicity for their organisation, reporters seek news - and by and large most of the information supplied or cleared by the SADF fits both categories. The total strategy is promoted by the underlying supportive relationships between government and the media. In the graphic phrase of one self-critical defence correspondent: "One hand washes the other".[105]

It is a comparatively simple matter for the authorities to generalise from the experience of the SADF and build similar news manipulation procedures into other departments of state. The principle is that the department should have monopoly control over information in its realm. The Defence Act established such a monopoly under Section 118, giving the Minister absolute discretion to allow or disallow publication. In 1979 this principle was extended to police matters as well with the passage of an amendment to the Police Act. In terms of a new clause of the Act newspapers would have to prove in court that any report dealing with police matters was true. Failure to do this could result in a R10 000 fine, imprisonment up to five years, or both. The amendment also

provided for a 24-hour police-press liaison unit to operate in the same way as that of the Department of Defence. All reporting on police matters would have to be cleared by the police through this channel.[106]

Similar provisions placing the onus of proof on publishers already existed under the Prisons Act and the Mental Health Act, with the Commissioners of the respective departments effectively given the power to pass or veto news submitted to them for clearance. These curbs on the press predated Mr Botha's premiership but he was the first Prime Minister to fully articulate the logic of incorporating the press into a national strategy. By the time he spoke at the Natal Congress in August 1979 the outlines of this strategy were clear to students of his policies. At a conference on the "Survival of the Press" some weeks later, the editor of the Rand Daily Mail, Mr Allister Sparks, warned his colleagues against the "insidious and seductive" attempts by the Government to draw the press into the system and "make us part of it":

> We hear talk of a "total strategy" to meet the threat of revolution, and I believe we are going to see pressures to include the Press in that "total strategy". Pressures to secure our co-operation in the national interest, to highlight this or that news event, to play down or even suppress altogether other aspects of news. This already happens in defence matters. The purchase of armaments. The supply of fuel and other strategic materials. Even in sport, or the integration of schools: appeals to play down sensitive matters so as not to arouse opposition and so allow a desirable change to be made.
>
> An insidious and seductive approach - to draw us into the system, make us part of it. To give us the comprehensive, confidential background briefing, and then suggest those aspects which should be publicised. We already see a proliferation of Press Liaison committees between the Press and various Government departments; and I see these becoming the instruments of news manipulation.

> We may see new approaches to the Press. Approaches that may ostensibly be part of the process of open government, extending the frontiers of freedom of the Press, co-opting proprietors, editors and journalists into the mystique of decision-making and secret-sharing - and by such means achieve a more complete control and manipulation of the Press than ever before. We are in danger of simply being swallowed up - without a sound or even a squeak of protest.[107]

Sparks was serving notice on the Government that the Opposition press establishment would not lend itself willingly to supporting the National Party's apartheid programme and would resist official overtures to help implement it. This was the "system" he and other editors rejected. In a larger sense, as was argued in the Introduction, the press is already part of the system of interlocking institutions which express and reproduce the dominance of the ruling groups and their allies. If the only aim of the Government were to suppress news and enforce its own will, direct legislative controls would do the job well enough. But the national strategy implies more than that. It is a bid to create a working alliance on the level of ideology as well as in co-ordinated economic effort. It demands a spirited contribution by the media to the programme of national indoctrination.

SECTION TWO

THE LAW AND THE AGREEMENT

2.1 Military and Official Secrets: the British Experience

2.2 South Africa: 1912-1948

2.3 Information Policy and Official Secrets: 1948-1969

2.4 The Defence Act: 1957-1967

2.5 The Defence Agreement: 1967-1975

2.6 The case of the Advertiser and the Zeitung

2.7 The Act and the Agreement: 1976-1979

2.8 Conclusion

2.1 Military and Official Secrets: The British Experience

Since Westminster's laws on official secrets were amongst the antecedents of the South African Defence Act of 1912, they deserve attention here. The purpose of this section is to trace the development of the Republic's system of controls on military news from its origins to the time of the Angolan war and beyond. The British background is especially pertinent as it relates to information suppression in time of peace or undeclared war. The history of the British Official Secrets Act throws much light on the uses and abuses of this type of blanket censorship, entailing as it does the need for some kind of working agreement with the news media to clarify for them the scope and application of the law in specific circumstances. In Britain controversy has surrounded the issuing of so-called "D" (for Defence) notices to the media "advising" them on what it would be impermissible to publish. In several well documented cases these directives were designed to protect political or bureaucratic interests and to stifle awkward revelations. The British example shows how negative constraints on press freedom can be combined with positive incentives to induce press co-operation with the military. Newspapers exist to publish news, and wars or rumours of war constitute big news - which can also mean big profits from increases in newspaper circulation. The individual defence or war correspondent stands to gain most for himself and his newspaper if he brings back exclusive scoops. These principles favour the manipulation of the press by the military. The release of officially approved news items to dependable journalists fulfils important needs of the military and of the publications concerned. The process of co-operative interaction leading to the manufacture of propaganda news is a central theme of this study.

Interestingly enough, an early precedent for the British "D" notice system can be found in the Boer War of 1899-1902. When Edgar Wallace - who was to become founding editor of the Rand Daily Mail - was a correspondent for the London Daily Mail during the Boer War he wrote such ugly stories of Boer atrocities that the British Government told him to moderate the tone of his reports.[1] Extravagant jingoism was nothing out of the ordinary amongst the swarms of war correspondents who descended on South Africa between 1899 and 1902. Despite this, censorship was extremely strict, for the War Office had known since the Crimean War that it took only one or two adverse reports of conditions at the front to create a storm at home.

In 1855 there had been a national outcry and the government fell as a direct result of the publication in The Times of dispatches from William Howard Russell and Thomas Chenery exposing the incompetence of the British army command in the Crimea and the consequent sufferings of the men.[2] The army's administration was streamlined and humanised but henceforth the military looked with jaundiced eye on the breed of war correspondent. The Boer War saw the first fullscale application of blue-pencil censorship of written and telegraphic dispatches carried out by British military authorities on the spot. This was a prelude to the blundering censorship of the First World War and to the vastly more sophisticated controls of the Second.

Until 1939, wartime censorship occurred under specific regulations whose sanction was the law of treason. Under British common law there was, however, no such offence as espionage in peacetime. To plug this gap the first Official Secrets Act of 1899 was passed making it a crime to communicate any information or pictorial matter concerning the country's defences which might be useful to an enemy in a manner prejudicial to the safety of the state. In 1911 and 1920 came new Official Secrets Acts which, as the Encyclopaedia Britannica (1958) put it, diverted the original Act from its purpose "into a statute for the better protection of the bureaucracy against well-informed criticism".[3] In a similar vein, Conrad Aitken, author of the book, Officially Secret, wrote:

> What had begun in the 1880s as a simple legislative move to combat espionage had by the 1960s developed into complex power frequently operated for the suppression of non-secret information whose disclosure might prove merely embarrassing to Ministers and civil servants.[4]

In 1970 Aitken was one of four accused who were all acquitted of charges under the British Official Secrets Act in a celebrated case arising from the publication of extracts from a British diplomat's report on the Nigerian Civil War.

The apparent intention of the Acts was to prevent the disclosure of sensitive military, diplomatic, intelligence, scientific and budgetary state secrets. But the wording was so wide as to make it an offence

punishable by two years' hard labour for anyone who had ever served the Crown to communicate any official information to an unauthorised person. It was also an offence for someone to receive official information, knowing or reasonably supposing it to be an official secret. All officials of the Crown from Cabinet level downwards were affected by the Official Secrets Acts, although at times various Cabinet Ministers chose to ignore the law in composing their letters and memoirs. For lesser officials, the press, and many ordinary citizens too, the law posed frightening difficulties of interpretation which could be resolved, if at all, only in courts of law. The law was so all-encompassing, wrote former Fleet Street editor Charles Wintour, "that it must breached a hundred times a day".[5] The fact that decisions to prosecute lay with the Attorney-General, a political appointee, meant that the law could be wielded against government opponents or overcurious journalists. Wintour reviews the more notorious cases in his book, Pressures on the Press, concluding with a selection ranging from the sinister to the ridiculous:

> The location of possibly infected cans of corned beef? An Official Secret. The Membership of a Winter Emergency Committee? An Official Secret. The use of Air Ministry land at Kidbrooke? An Official Secret. The Services' Manual for Survival? An Official Secret. The number of trees blown down in a park during a gale? An Official Secret.[6]

Faced with the confusion and possibility of victimisation inherent in the law, British editors were glad to receive some guidance from an official body specially constituted for this role. Originally called the D-Notice Committee when it was set up in 1912, and later renamed the Services, Press and Broadcasting Committee,[7] this body survived for more than 50 years as a means both of information suppression and of news management. By couching its directives in the form of advice and by permitting the media a say in its deliberations the committee came to be thought of - if only by officials and politicians - as an agency of media self-control. The ambivalent attitude of journalists to the system was revealed in a speech by the well-known defence correspondent of the Daily Express, Chapman Pincher, in 1967:

> Only the British could call the D-Notice system voluntary. It is in fact an extension of the Official Secrets Acts which are already far too wide. Nevertheless, I considered it to be a sensible apparatus so long as the press could be convinced that it was operated in a fair and impartial way.[8]

Pincher was no longer satisfied with the impartiality of the system. He made these remarks after Prime Minister Harold Wilson had invoked D-Notices to suppress a Daily Express report on cable-vetting. The D-Notice was a pretext, it transpired, for Wilson to demand the resignation of a certain Colonel Lohan who had supplied Pincher with the information for the story.[9] In his speech, Pincher inveighed against the use of the term "national security...a wonderfully flexible phrase" which could be equated with even more plastic phrases like the national interest and the public interest to disguise "the politicians' interest". Only occasionally, he said, was the term used in its proper context to mean the safeguarding of secret information, secret equipments and secret affairs of real importance to the nation's defences against aggression and subversion. Far too often the Government used its prerogative in the field of national security to put obstacles in the way of journalists and newspapers it did not like. Editors, Pincher insisted, were entitled to exploit leakages of official information and could be relied upon to do so in a responsible manner, for "no editor I have known ever wants a scoop at the expense of national security." Instead of endorsing this principle, successive governments had threatened prosecution and used D-notices to tame the press, often withholding news until it suited their advantage to release it.[10]

During the sixties and early seventies, agitation against the Official Secrets Act drew assurances from successive British governments that the law would be reformed. It was not until the Queen's speech in November 1978 that the firm intention to do so was at last announced.[11]

Pincher was wrong in saying that only Britain could call the D-notice system a voluntary one. As the present study shows, a similar attitude has been adopted by the authorities in South Africa. The response of journalists has been of the same ambivalent kind as in Britain. On the one hand the

media have been obliged to accept official guidance because without it the hazards of publication are too great; on the other it is claimed that the system of military-media liaison in South Africa produces a freer flow of news in the public interest. Mention has been made in Section One of South Africa's Defence Committee, the creation of which represented a major step towards voluntary control of the press. It is instructive to compare the Defence Committee with the examples of top-level liaison represented by Britain's Services, Press and Broadcasting Committee (mentioned above) and a short-lived committee of an earlier era, the Joint Standing Committee (Admiralty, War Office and Press Committee).

The Joint Standing Committee came into being in 1912 after negotiations between the War Office and the leading proprietors of the Newspaper Proprietors Association (NPA). The committee, on which the press was represented, was constituted to decide what information about defence should be withheld from publication. The NPA for its part agreed that newspapers would accept and act upon every such decision. The proprietors stipulated that the rulings should not be used to stifle criticism of policy or restrict news except where national interests were at stake, and that the press "should not be used as a medium for the dissemination of false information".[12] The establishment of the Joint Standing Committee meant that the Government had satisfied military demands for control of the press in wartime and during national emergencies without requiring an Act of Parliament, whose introduction would certainly have provoked a clash with powerful press interests. In any event, the Official Secrets Act of 1911 provided sufficient back-up to stiffen the rulings of the Joint Standing Committee.

Before the outbreak of war in 1914 the committee suppressed numerous items of news, including the whereabouts of the British Expeditionary Force until it had reached its destination in France.[13] With the outbreak of war the committee was superceded by an official Press Bureau which, acting under proclamation, proceeded to cut and ban reports wholesale. The Bureau relaxed its grip and improved the flow of information as the war progressed but its image never recovered. It was much hated by the press, argues Colin Lovelace, because they "regarded the censorship as an unnecessary impediment to their patriotic efforts to win the war".[14] According to Lovelace there was widespread dislike and distrust of the wartime

censorship primarily because the Press Bureau was highhandedly imposed on the editors and proprietors of the press, instead of being - like the Joint Standing Committee - an agency of government-press co-operation. Censorship thus entailed bureaucratic interference in "one of the most independent and entrepreneurial activities of a laissez-faire state."[15]

By the outbreak of the Second World War the Government was comparatively better placed to handle the media. The Ministry of Information, envisaged since 1936, came into existence as the war began and in the course of six years cultivated an increasingly effective propaganda policy at home and abroad. The formation of the BBC since the First World War had altered the composition of the media and weakened the power of private press interests. Under the Emergency Powers (Defence) Act the Churchill Government was able to conduct the war without reference to Parliament. It could censor any messages leaving Britain, and prohibit the press and anyone else from publishing information which might be useful to the enemy.[16] Knightley describes how this last prohibition led to the "charade whereby officially there was no compulsory censorship of British newspapers - censors were merely 'consulted' by editors for 'advice' on what information might be 'useful to the enemy'."[17] Although editors could make such decisions for themselves after scanning the appropriate D-notices, they could be prosecuted for making wrong judgements. The resemblance between this procedure and the procedure in force in South Africa today under the Defence Act and Agreement is obvious. The British press protested against censorship in the early part of the war but quickly settled down to a productive working relationship with officials and the military, since the feeling was widely shared that "we're all in this together".[18]

The imperatives of news production in a commercial system are such that the media must be able to depend on regular and reliable sources of their raw material, information. Where official constraints have made information scarce or unusable the media managers - owners and/or editors - both in Britain and South Africa have sought to overcome the problem by entering into working arrangements with officialdom in the hope that hindrances will be removed and supply facilitated. Military and other sensitive official news is too important, and too marketable, for the

media to exclude it completely at the official behest. Even practising reporters like Chapman Pincher - who see clearly that information is often distorted to serve the authorities - will accept the necessity for a "sensible apparatus" of liaison between these authorities and themselves. Considering the pressures on such journalists to keep up a constant output of articles to justify their beat it is not surprising that they, like the media managers, should see the benefits of co-operation. The basis of "voluntary" censorship may be challenged only if the authorities exploit it too blatantly to advance their own interests. Discrimination - like that suffered by Pincher at the hands of Harold Wilson - affects the interests of competing media, and when this happens the system of liaison loses its appeal for the victims. What hurts most in the process is not so much the fact that the media are obliged to co-operate in suppressing information on terms dictated by the authorities; it is that independent enterprise is penalised and undercut by censorship directives.

The same applies in time of war although then the incursion of official decision-making into traditional areas of press freedom is more difficult to resist. In most major conflicts this century the British and South African press have accepted the principle of information suppression in the interests of military security. But they have resented clumsy censorship, contending that their professional expertise and sense of journalistic responsibility should be involved in determining the information policy to be pursued by the authorities.

The professional pride of journalists and the principles of entrepreneurship observed by their publishers stand in the way of slavish submission to the will of the authorities. But the imperatives of survival and profitability can induce the press to offer its co-operation, provided there is something to be gained. In the British context it can be seen that Government incentives interacted on many levels with the financial, organisational, and professional factors affecting the press from within. Newspapers co-operated with the state to obtain censored - but printable - news of sensitive - but often sensational - military and official matters. The editors and proprietors of newspapers adjusted their operations as far as they were practically or ethically able to in order to fit the requirements of the authorities on one hand and satisfy the demands of the consumers of news on the other. Patriotic sentiments eased their consciences, while friendly liaison minimised the hurt of censorship.

2.2 South Africa 1912 - 1948

Long before the modern Defence Act came into being in South Africa, procedures of military news coverage had been devised in collaboration between the state and newspapers. This occurred during the Second World War when the Government, realising it could not do without a pro-war press at home,took steps to bring about the "voluntary" conformity of newspapers with strategic policy. This sub-section will explore the origins of military censorship in South Africa since 1912 and describe the similarities and differences between the Voluntary Agreement of World War II and the Agreement in force for defence news today.

In South Africa there has been an inexorable movement towards complete official control of information, and although this process is far from complete there is little reason to think it will be reversed. Nowhere in South Africa's history of security legislation do we find a judgement comparable with that expressed by Mr Justice Caulfield at the Old Bailey in 1971, when he said that the Official Secrets Act of 1911 had reached "retirement age".[19] South African courts have not played a role in reviewing the security laws which, virtually every year, are strengthened by further Acts of Parliament. In a comparative study of access to information in three societies - South Africa, the United States, and Britain - Professor Anthony Mathews suggests that denial of access to information logically forms part of the underpinnings of white power in South Africa, reflecting "an underlying tendency towards the comprehensive authoritarian control of politics".[20] A retrospective look at the development of the Defence Act since 1912 would seem to bear this out, for under United Party as well as Nationalist governments military secrecy has been augmented to remove the military from political debate. Military censorship has grown in proportion to the dangers perceived to be facing the country's ruling group.

The wide-ranging terms of the British Official Secrets Act of 1911 were made applicable in the Union of South Africa under the Defence Act of 1912.[21] This law, incorporating sections of earlier Cape, Natal and Transvaal statutes on Defence, made specific provision for censorship of the press in times of peace and war. Section 91, concerned with the publication of military and official information, included a number of

clauses which were to serve as the basis for refinements to military and state security censorship legislation in the future, leading to the Official Secrets Act of 1956, the Defence Act of 1957 and the Defence Amendment Act of 1967, all of which provided for various forms of blanket censorship.

The Defence Act of 1912 incorporated a clause saying that any civil servant or member of the Defence Force who communicated official information without authorisation could be charged under the Act itself as well as under the British Official Secrets Act. The law covered the publication of defence information in time of peace. Section 91 (2) said that no information or sketch concerning "strategic plans" or fortifications could be published without the consent of the Minister or someone authorised by him. Here was the direct lineal ancestor of Section 118 of the Defence Amendment Act of 1967. Its wording was definite enough to allow the press to report freely on matters they considered beyond the ambit of purely military strategy and equipment. However, in theory at least, the meaning of the term "strategic plans" could have been extended to accord with the government of the day's wider security outlook. The fact that this interpretation and application were never made suggests that threats to the country were less immediate than in later times, while the broadest understanding of the law had to await its reformulation in terms of the doctrine of total strategy.

Censorship in time of war - a provision soon to be used - was covered by Section 91 (1) which prohibited the publication in any newspaper, magazine, book, pamphlet or other medium information that might reveal the movements or plans of the Defence Force. In addition it forbade the publication of any accusation, observation or proposal which might directly or indirectly reveal such information.[22]

To have maintained these absolute prohibitions would in effect have eliminated military news with the exception of the most parochial or innocuous items. For reasons of credibility and to engineer national support in wartime, it was essential to supply some news of how the country's forces were faring abroad, including details of their movements, battles and overall strategic aims. Realising this, the respective governments of the Union in both World Wars allowed journalists access to fighting zones and also established agencies for the supply and clearance

of information along the lines of the British models.[23] Information policy in the Second World War best illustrates the system in operation, revealing the routine interdependence of official and press functionaries in the production of approved news. It also exhibits political authoritarianism at work under the guise of "voluntary" press censorship. In both wars the South African government was troubled by militant Afrikaner reaction against the country's alliance with Britain,[24] while in the Second World War the demands of black nationalists for a democratic society threatened to undermine South Africa's standing as an ally in the fight against Nazi racialism and oppression.[25] These internal challenges prompted the adoption of measures designed to curb the expression of dissent.

On 25 June 1940 the Information Bureau, a division of the Department of the Interior, sealed an agreement with the press, the terms of which had been adopted unanimously by a conference of editors meeting in Pretoria.[26] The Voluntary Agreement, as it was called, set in motion a "charade" very similar to that described by Knightley earlier, in that there was no direct censorship but editors undertook to refer to the Information Bureau for guidance. This was a precursor of the system introduced in South Africa after 1967. The Voluntary Agreement noted that the Union government had wished to avoid any form of compulsory censorship, and it claimed that the existence of the agreement showed the willingness of the newspapers to work together with the Government in accordance with this premise.[27] This, at best, reflected a consensus amongst editors that if they had to have censorship it might as well be on the basis of arrangements formulated in consultation with them.

Newspapers supporting the United Party Government of General Smuts had little or no difficulty reconciling censorship, the national interest, and the public interest. In entering into the agreement they were concerned chiefly to facilitate the flow of news within a framework of war aims they regarded as binding on the press, the Government, and the nation. But for those supporting the opposition National Party's stance of neutrality or the views of the pro-Nazi Ossewabrandwag, this reconciliation was difficult, even impossible. Afrikaans editors during the war included a future Nationalist Prime Minister, Dr H F Verwoerd, while the leader of the National Party, Dr D F Malan, was a former editor who was

little disposed to discipline his outspoken disciples. As editor-in-chief of Die Transvaler, Verwoerd achieved notoriety by taking a blatantly anti-British line, fostering pro-Hitler views along with anti-Semitism when the opportunity presented itself. When The Star attacked his editorial policy, Verwoerd sued for libel and lost, the judge pronouncing that he had no grounds for objection because "he had allowed his paper to be made a tool of the Nazis in South Africa and he knew it."[28] Unlike many other Afrikaner intellectuals and organisers Verwoerd was not interned by the Smuts Government and continued his assaults with diminishing fervour as the tide turned against Germany. His survival in public life till the end of the war signified that the terms of the Voluntary Agreement could be broken without necessarily incurring prosecution.

The author has not been able to establish whether any black newspapers were represented at the 1940 Pretoria conference of editors. If any were, they like their Afrikaans counterparts must have accepted the principle spelled out in the preamble that newspapers would " do all in their power to maintain internal peace and order."[29] The attitude of African leaders to the Government's war effort was one of guarded hopefulness. In 1943 the African Natinal Congress drew up a Bill of Rights making explicit reference to the Atlantic Charter adopted by the Allies as their democratic credo, but the next year Prime Minister Smuts rejected the ANC's application of the Charter to blacks at home.[30] Blacks learnt again, as they had after the First World War, that their support for the British Commonwealth and service in the SA Defence Force would not be recognised in the form of extensions to political or other rights. Early in the war, commenting on a proposal to set up a broadcasting service for "natives", The Star had pontificated as follows:

> As has often been pointed out, the loyal natives - which means the overwhelming majority of those in the urban as in the rural areas - have, for a long time, been subjected to subversive propaganda from those seeking to disturb their confidence in the authority over them: and it speaks well for the good sense of the Bantu peoples that they have, in the main, been proof against these agencies. It is a characteristic of the native people that they attach great importance to what is said to them by official or other

> persons responsible for their welfare: and a daily broadcast session arranged exclusively for their benefit will, we are certain, do a very great deal of good and quickly neutralise any mischief that bazaar talk may have done up to now. Few things are more praiseworthy in these days of disquiet than the loyal, quiet and confident way in which the great majority of the native people of town and country carry on their work, while cherishing an undisturbed confidence that victory will ultimately rest with the Allied arms.[31]

The denial of political aspirations went hand in hand with a complacent belief in the Government's right to expect the support of blacks in the war against a common foe. The Government needed no better apologist than The Star, but words were not always enough to gain black acquiescence. Towards the end of 1942 a series of African strikes on the Witwatersrand and on the Natal coalfields led to the proclamation of War Measure No. 145 which made striking by Africans a criminal offence.[32] This signified that loyalty would be enforced where it was not voluntarily forthcoming. The black press was moderate in commenting on the glaring contradictions of Government policy abroad and at home. This section of the press had lost much of its independence through the takeover of black-owned newspapers by white interests, a trend which had begun and quickly gathered force in the early 1930's.[33] The black press could not afford, financially or politically, the risks run by Afrikaans newspapers in opposing the Government. Anyway most of them backed the war against Hitler on principle.[34]

This background explains the political scope of the Voluntary Agreement of 1940 with its stipulation that newspapers must aim to preserve peace and order at home. The guarantee given in the agreement that newspapers would not lose the right to criticise the Government had to be balanced against the claims of national security.

The Voluntary Agreement was an efficient and well-thought out practical formula for censorship. A lengthy document of more than 8 000 words, it comprised a thorough outline of the principles and procedures to be observed by the wartime press in South Africa and by its correspondents

in the war theatres. Its detailed nature meant, for one thing, that the press knew exactly what restrictions applied to the news and how they could go about getting these lifted; but it also meant that the system was more rigid than that to be instituted after the 1976 Agreement between the Minister of Defence and the NPU. Special sections of the Voluntary Agreement were devoted to listing the general restrictions, and to explaining how sensitive matters like the handling of death notices and the granting of correspondents' accreditations would be dealt with. It was matters like these which during the Angolan War provoked some of the most intense resentment amongst journalists who felt that they were at the mercy of an arbitrary bureaucracy not governed by clear rules.

The general restrictions on news, advertisements, commentary and photographs included bans on any mention of the mobilisation, weaponry, organisation, strengths, location, movements inside or outside the Union, demobilisation or overhauling of any land, sea or air units. Also banned were reports of the whereabouts of the Commander-in-Chief, the Head of the General Staff, and several more senior military personnel. Newspapers could not describe the duties of any person entrusted with special tasks in connection with the defence of the Union. It was even impermissible to publish weather forecasts except those issued for publication, while newspapers were warned not to accept advertisements for pen friends as it was known that the enemy used pen friends to obtain useful information.[35]

All items of news or commentary falling under the general restrictions had to be cleared before publication with representatives of the Bureau of Information. They were to be found in Pretoria, Cape Town and Durban during working hours. Newspapers in other centres were enjoined to use the telexes to Pretoria except where the information related to Navy matters: this could be cleared with naval officials in the different ports. After hours, queries could be directed to the SA Press Association (Sapa) in Johannesburg which was empowered to contact Bureau spokesmen for prompt decisions. Disputes between the Bureau and the press could in the first instance be discussed with the Director of Information, while more important cases could be referred to the Minister of Defence. Where news stemmed from the Bureau itself or from other official bodies specified in the agreement, including the Cabinet, there was no need to clear it before publication. There was also no need to clear news coming into the country from abroad because it could be assumed that censorship had

already been carried out in the country of origin. Every effort would be made by the authorities to explain the reason for bans on particular reports although reasons could not always be given.[36]

Concerning deaths and casualties, the next-of-kin of servicemen would be informed by official telegram before Reuters in London received the details. Combined death lists would be telexed to South Africa by Reuters for publication in the local press. Death notices, both in editorial columns and in classified advertisements, could not carry any military information.[37]

The Bureau of Information had a military officer on its staff whose job was to liaise between the Defence Force and the press. This was a special service for the press in South Africa, distinct from the arrangements made for war correspondents in the field. The regulations for war correspondents put them into uniform and under the command of the Director of Military Information or any officer delegated by him, although their salaries were paid by their newspapers. They carried passes issued after an accreditation process involving security screening and the signing of an undertaking that they would refrain from any action which imperilled the safety or morale of the Allies. Accreditation could be refused without reasons being given.[38]

In spite of these restrictions the war correspondents had relative freedom of movement behind Allied lines and were to prove their value to morale by sending back a steady stream of dramatic dispatches from many different outposts. Nothing could more graphically illustrate the contrast between news coverage of World War II and the Angolan War by the South African media than the roles accorded to correspondents in these two conflicts. In the former a correspondent could move about in the company of a single escort whose task was to keep an eye on the correspondent from a security viewpoint and help, if necessary, establish contacts with the officers and men of the units they met in the field. War correspondents, of course, frequently met, were billeted together, and moved in groups to places where some action was afoot, but in principle they were free to go about their business each in his own way, subject to any orders issued by the military authorities in the area.[39] The outcome was that their dispatches were often highly individual accounts of particular engagements or events, full

of human interest and down-to-earth observations on the conditions facing the average soldier and his officers. These correspondents had the opportunity to write under fire, an important romantic dimension of the job and one which attracts the most adventurous journalists. The 1940 agreement showed a more than rudimentary grasp of the realities of newsgathering and publishing, especially as pertains to story exclusives and deadlines. Since each journalist in the field could choose - or at least request - his own itinerary, reports could be individualised. Censorship was carried out by officers in the field and immediately a story was cleared it could be sent off.[40]

The Angolan War presents quite another picture. Few journalists on either side got anywhere near the action, and in South Africa in particular the defence correspondents were denied access to the operational area except when the Directorate of Public Relations arranged joint tours for all of them. It was difficult to extract scoops under these conditions, and anyway the job lacked the stimulating whiff of battle-smoke. Correspondents came to depend for their newsbreaks on personal contacts and influence within the bureaucracy, giving the Defence authorities the opportunity to exploit the media through a system of favouritism.

Second World War reporters with South Africa's forces were not necessarily any more independent of military authority than their modern counterparts. Indeed, they may have been less so. Because they wore army uniforms they were more closely identified with the officers and men amongst whom they moved, and they were clearly subject to military discipline while in the field. One of South Africa's most experienced war correspondents, Carel Birkby, compared for the author the status of journalists during the Second World War and the Angolan War. Remarking on the campaigns in East Africa, North Africa, and Italy, he said:

> The army co-operated very well with us. The arrangement was that we were attached to the military for transport and rations but not for pay. We were subject to the military disciplinary code as we always would be. Originally there was a great error about rank. We were given ranks - at least I was - as a captain, and the government people reporting for the Bureau of

> Information were lieutenants. This was quite unworkable because it meant that any silly little major could make things awkward for you by pulling rank, and of course he might have no sense about anything at all. It was very stupid if you were in a position to write critically about a general that you would have a major make you salute and the rest of it, affecting what one wrote of course. On the first Christmas (1939) we flew down to Pretoria and saw General Wakefield who cleared up that situation. We became like the few British correspondents everywhere else, being demilitarised: we then wore green tabs on our uniforms with "War Correspondent" on our shoulders and we took our ranks from the people we spoke to. In other words when we spoke to privates we were privates and with generals we were generals. Mind you, if we wanted information from a general we probably wouldn't get it unless we called him Sir. We were on Christian name terms with some of them. That's the only way the thing becomes workable, as the British, Americans and everyone else knows. I don't see any other way in which it could work in any war in which we find ourselves these days.[41]

South Africa's defence correspondents today are civilians. Birkby commented wryly on some of his younger modern colleagues:

> The situation with the accredited military correspondents today is that they don't carry any rank and they don't wear uniforms either. Some of them look rather like popsingers and anything you want to imagine. When they get up into the operational area I really think they ought to wear something more restrained such as khaki bush jackets or whatever. But I suppose if they want to wear gay shirts there is no reason why they shouldn't.[42]

Birkby's notion of the garb befitting a defence correspondent suggests a very close identification of the journalist with the military figures he writes about. There will be further discussion of the psychology of military writers in Section Three. It is worth mentioning in passing that Birkby considered himself remarkably independent of the military and capable of delivering sharp criticism as and when he felt this to be necessary. A watchdog element in Birkby's concept of his job emerges here:

> The kind of news I like to report is the eye-witness stuff, primarily because I'm a hard news writer, along with the strategic and tactical stuff too, naturally. You must remember the value of a good deal of human interest stuff in just keeping the people back home happy. They want to know what's happening to the young men, they want to know if the boys are having a reasonably good time. And certainly any news about valid complaints from troops, about their rations or any other reasonable complaints, should never be stopped. One knows of course that a lot of their grumbles are minor or ill-founded or stupid. But valid complaints should be aired. During the Second World War we wrote stories like that all the time. But in (the Angolan War) our chaps weren't in sight, so how could we write about them? Of course you could also write when they came back but by then they didn't have many complaints...[43]

Clearly this type of watchdog journalism does not conflict in any fundamental way with the objectives of the military - it is basically supportive. It seeks to ameliorate conditions for the troops and help turn them into better fighting men. In its own way this is a kind of "hurrah" journalism. It nicely combines patriotism with journalistic principle. For this reason it was probably a good circulation-getter - and a fairly safe one.

Originally Birkby had been sent north as the Sapa man to represent the entire South African press. He was soon joined by Sergeant Con Norton

who was an observer for the growing Bureau of Information.[44] When newspapers realised that the war would not end soon they posted their own correspondents to the front and engaged in intense competition for stories. Many pro-Government newspapers did so, at any rate. Their greatest misfortune was the cutback on newsprint supplies from Canada which led to a quota system for newspapers under which, ironically, the anti-war Afrikaans press benefited at the expense of their English competitors.[45] Though newspapers could take advantage of the agreement to appoint their own correspondents, some did not or could not afford to do this. They fell back on agency copy or that supplied by the Bureau of Information whose correspondents gave special attention to the needs of small country newspapers.[46] The expansion of the Bureau during the war from a one-man operation into a nascent government department, foreshadowing the Department of Information, aroused press fears of a state takeover of information dissemination in South Africa. The Bureau published a weekly newspaper for South African troops abroad, prepared radio talks, provided films and newspaper pictures, and promoted South Africa in other parts of Africa and in the world. Fears of its future role took shape towards the end of the war when allegations mounted that it had acted as a "snarling pursuer of newspapers" and had on occasion banned news that did not infringe on the general restrictions of the Voluntary Agreement.[47] Reporters reflecting on their contacts with the Bureau warned that "South Africa is drifting towards a closed press" - a system in which government officials would hide behind the Bureau instead of answering directly to the press and the public. The Bureau had begun to co-ordinate and release news from various state sources, a trend that journalists realised could culminate in news becoming an official handout and prevent them from bringing exclusive stories to their newspapers.[48]

2.3 Information policy and Official Secrets 1948 - 1969

The Bureau of Information's powers were not extended in peacetime to dominate South Africa's privately owned newspapers. Massive intrusion by the state into the press would occur only a quarter of a century later with state funding of To the Point and The Citizen. After the war, the direct successor to the Information Bureau was the State Information Office which fell under the Department of External Affairs and assumed many of the publicity functions abroad initially mounted by the Bureau

as wartime propaganda.[49] After 1948 the State Information Office promoted the image of Nationalist-ruled South Africa in an increasingly hostile world. In 1961, its functions, in turn, were taken over by the new Department of Information which was created with the dual purpose of improving the Republic's image internationally and of putting across Government policy to the people of South Africa.[50]

Information had been limited during the Second World War by measures designed to curb the expression of opinions which conflicted with the goals of state policy. With the victory of the National Party in the 1948 election, control of information and opinion became a fundamental aim of Government policy during peacetime. The two decades following the accession of the Nationalists to power saw the enactment of a huge array of laws which hid an ever widening sphere of South African political activity and Government administration from the public eye. This period also encompassed the greatest expansion and centralisation of media organisations under white ownership and control. While independent black, liberal, socialist and communist newspapers were banned or disappeared under harassment by the Government, the white-owned corporate press grew tremendously as did the state-owned broadcasting services for whites and blacks. These media, English and Afrikaans, adapted themselves to the overt legislative restrictions on news and comment. It was easiest for the SABC to do so as increasingly it became an agency of Nationalist indoctrination. The Afrikaans press, though remaining loyal to the party, matured in its professionalism and began to find its incipient watchdog functions and role as internal critic of the party hampered. For the opposition English-language press these were difficult and dangerous times and the future looked no better; survival depended on caution, good legal advice, and high circulation to provide the financial resources required to fight expensive actions if necessary.[51]

Security became the watchword justifying Government encroachments on press freedom. After the Sharpeville crisis of 1960, South Africa became a state under siege from within and without and the psychology of its rulers developed accordingly. The line between peace and war became blurred. The way was prepared for the birth of the total strategy with the idea that information policy should constitute an aspect of the national defence effort.

It is not the intention here to discuss the vast array of press laws assembled by the Nationalist Government since 1948. Several scholars have written detailed and extensive studies of these laws and the reader is referred to these.[52] So numerous are these laws that Mathews, comparing South Africa to Britain and the United States, concludes that denial of access to information "is carried to its logical extreme" in this country.[53] The concern here is with military and security information. The present sub-section discusses the background to the Official Secrets Act - the law that dominates security legislation. Following sub-sections deal with the Defence Act, showing how this produced the Defence Agreement between the Minister of Defence and the newspaper industry.

The Official Secrets Act can be set in the context of Nationalist thinking by means of a brief digression on the Department of Information. In 1962 a Nationalist speaker in the first Parliamentary debate on the newly-created department summed up his party's information policy as follows:

> The political struggle in our country is a fairly bitter one, but nevertheless we have succeeded to a great extent to keep [sic] certain matters outside the party political arena. I have in mind matters such as Defence, to a large extent External Affairs...things (that) have to do with the security of this country...(The) Department of Information...has as much to do with the security of South Africa as the Department of Defence.[54]

This plea was made in spite of the highly contentious nature of the information disseminated by the Government. The attempt to de-politicise the Information Department formed part of the overall drive to identify Government policy with the national interest of all South Africans. But the Opposition spokesman on Information pointed out that so long as the Government refused to "change the racial policies of the country so that they would conform with modern conceptions of human dignity" the Information Department would wrestle with insurmountable hostility in the world at large.[55] The Opposition accepted, however, that South Africa was often a victim of "slanted and false statements...overseas...

in the so-called gutter Press."[56] What worried the Opposition spokesman most was the branching out of the Information services into domestic propaganda. With remarkable prescience he questioned the proposed expenditure of large amounts of state money on various secret items:

> We deserve to know more from the Minister of Information on items such as "Publicity lists" and "Expansion of Department" running into tens of thousands of rand. And that is not all. There is a little item of R500 for "Secret Service". Now, Sir, what will that R500 be used for? We should like to know. Will it be a secret service as part of the Bantu section of his Department? Is the position to be that not only will information be given to the Bantu but that information will be obtained secretly from the Bantu? I want to know whether the policy of creating a Department where all the stress is laid on internal propaganda and on the dissemination of information within the Union [sic] is not a disastrous policy...? Is it to become a cloak for a vast secret subversive propaganda machine, bound up with the South African Broadcasting Corporation and the new Press empire of the Prime Minister?[57]

The Minister of Information, Mr Frank Waring, assured Parliament that the money was being well spent - but did not reply to these specific queries. Summarising the history of the Information Service since its inception in 1937, he said that during the war it had functioned as a "propaganda machine...and I find no fault with it."[58] The expansion of the domestic side of the new Department's work did not mean that the Government was concentrating on internal propaganda - "that is quite wrong".[59] It was necessary to have a big domestic staff because "you must have...people in your country finding out the information and feeding it to [the] people outside".[60]

Later events would confirm the misgivings of the Opposition and show that the "secret subversive propaganda machine" operated both inside and outside the country - using Defence funds. In Section One it was noted that the collapse of the Information Department in 1978 did not imply

that secret Information projects had all come to an end - many were retained. The career of the Department from 1961 to its demise reflects one tactical approach within the broad strategy of information manipulation.

After 1948 the mounting tide of white nationalism swept away South Africa's legal links with Britain in a fervour of Republicanism. One outcome was the scrapping of the British Official Secrets Act in South Africa. In 1956 the Government introduced a South African form of the Official Secrets Act, taking over many of the provisions of the imperial Act of 1911 and adding a number of new ones. The Minister of Justice, Mr C R Swart, said the Union would now have its own law in Afrikaans as well as English, a law that had been brought into line with the country's institutions and conditions.[61]

In reality the new law was more sweeping than its forerunner, and with the amendments made in connection with the "BOSS" law of 1969,[62] it became the most comprehensive piece of security legislation on the statute books. The ban on possessing or issuing information without authorisation in a manner prejudicial to the interests of the state was extended beyond information relating to "munitions of war" to cover "any military, police or security matter."[63] The definition of these matters was so vague that, in the view of Mathews, they had the effect of "broadening the generality and heightening the obscurity of the terms to which they refer".[64] No provision was made for the issuing of "D" notices or for the classification, in a register open to public inspection or available on request, of subjects deemed to be security secrets; classification itself was a secret and remained "a matter of deep mystery."[65] The penalties prescribed under the Act were a fine not exceeding R1 500 or imprisonment for up to seven years or both. The interpretation courts gave to the Act in a number of test cases tended to bring into play the presumption that an accused was guilty of espionage if he obtained unauthorised information which was prejudicial to the safety of the state.[66] In one case in 1962 the interests of the state were equated with those of the Government.[67] As court hearings could be held in camera, even judgements were liable to become state secrets.[68]

When the Bureau for State Security (dubbed BOSS by the press) was set up under an Act of 1969, a new clause was introduced in the Official Secrets Act defining "security" as any matter dealt with by or relating to the

Bureau.[69] The Bureau's function was stated as being to investigate all matters affecting the security of the state, to correlate and evaluate this information, and where necessary to inform and advise the Cabinet, government departments or other bodies on the findings, as well as to perform other (unspecified) functions as determined from time to time.[70]

Protests by journalists against the BOSS law were ineffective, while a deputation from the NPU to the Deputy Minister of Justice merely won the assurance - which had no legal force - that the innocent disclosure of security matters would not be punished. The Deputy Minister offered to let the press consult officials in the Department of Justice in cases of difficulty,[71] raising the possibility of extensive pre-publication censorship, but no formalised procedure was agreed upon.

A case involving the BOSS law and the Official Secrets Act arose in 1970 when a breakaway Nationalist MP, Mr Jaap Marais, sent a letter to the major newspapers revealing that a special unit of the security police had been tapping the telephones of opposition politicians, including himself. Police ordered editors not to publish the letter as it contravened the Official Secrets Act, and nothing appeared.[72] Marais himself was convicted under the Act but was acquitted on appeal. The Appellate Division did not pronounce on his contention that he had acted in the public interest, but found him not guilty for the sole reason that the information was already general public knowledge.[73] There was scant reassurance here that journalists could be protected from conviction by citing the public interest.

2.4 The Defence Act (1957 - 1967)

A year after the enactment of the Official Secrets Act the Government introduced a revised and consolidated Defence Act to replace the old Act of 1912.[74] The new law considerably extended the censorship provisions in force in the past. The old law and its amendments had allowed for direct censorship in time of war of newspapers, magazines, books and other such material. Provision was now made for censorship of all types of postal telegraphic, telephonic, photographic and radio communications, and recorded material in time of war.[75] Moreover, emergency regulations

could be promulgated, making it possible for the authorities to suppress a newspaper or periodical for a specified period.[76] The new Act once again made it an offence for any member of the Defence Force or of the civil service to reveal information in connection with the defence of the country unless authorised to do so by the Minister of Defence or under his authority. It forbade the taking of photographs or sketching of any classified military area. However, it did not prohibit the publication of news items about the Defence Force in peacetime. The activities of SADF personnel, their weaponry and their movements could be reported so long as this did not contravene other sections of the Act or other security legislation. Naturally, in wartime this would not be the case and the Government could invoke its powers to institute censorship of the press.

In 1967 the principle of pre-publication censorship of military news in time of peace (or undeclared war) was written into the law of South Africa. A new section, Section 118, (see Appendix C for full text), now stipulated that information about the country's armed forces, their equipment and installations could be published only with the permission of the Minister or someone delegated by him. The prohibited information included not only the composition, movements and dispositions of the SADF and its auxiliary services (including nursing auxiliaries) but also those of "any force of a country which is allied to the Republic." The implications were far-reaching for a country entering an era of regional strife in which alliances would be concealed and military campaigns waged in secret. Section 118 also prohibited the publication of "any statement, comment or rumour" about South African troops "or any force of a foreign country" calculated to prejudice or embarrass the Government in its foreign relations or to alarm or depress members of the public. Speculation, as well as hard fact, could disappear from the public arena. The penalty for contravening the Act could be a fine of up to R1 000 imprisonment for 5 years or both.[77]

The Minister who steered the Bill through Parliament was Mr P W Botha, who had held the post since the previous year. His Bill was designed to rationalise South Africa's military system as a whole, and the censorship provisions formed only a part of this rationalisation. The military training system in force at the time had been introduced soon

after Sharpeville with the object of building up the country's small Defence Force quickly to the minimum strength considered essential.[78] The new law instituted compulsory call-ups for all white adult males reaching the age of sixteen, replacing a ballot system. Turning to the question of censorship, Mr Botha explained that there was no longer a clear dividing line between war and peace. Fullscale conventional warfare was often preceded by terrorist and guerilla campaigns. He said he was disappointed that under these circumstances some people would not accept that the Government was acting with the "best intentions" to control military information. He had gone out of his way to enlighten the Newspaper Press Union over the proposed legislation and he was satisfied that they appreciated his views "although perhaps they do not agree with everything." Mr Botha went on:

> As a matter of fact, after this Bill has been passed we intend making available to the Press as soon as possible a list of matters on which they may freely publish reports. We also intend to create the necessary means for the Press to consult me and my Department from time to time and to obtain permission to publish reports on matters which are not clear. I know it is an interesting and sometimes sensational game to publish reports on matters concerning defence. I do not deny the fact that it appeals to people. But if speculations on alleged movements of troops and on riots appear in the Press at a time when the World Court is about to give judgment on South-West Africa, it is no longer a game. If reports are published informing the world in detail where South Africa's storage tanks are being built, while the newspaper itself indicates that the information is secret, one wonders what the object of that is. If reports are published to the effect that a recruit sustained serious head injuries at Walvis Bay, reports which upset his parents and involve the Defence Force, and such reports subsequently appear to be quite untrue, must the game be allowed to be continued?[79]

He added that Parliament would remain the guarantee that a Minister would not abuse such a Section "in order to maintain unnecessary secrecy." It would be wise to use the press in every possible way in order to derive the best advantage for the Defence Force. The people and the Defence Force had to be brought closer together - "They have to become one". Mr Botha admitted that Section 118 was controversial - although a Select Committee had discussed the provision it had not been able to reach agreement - but he said it would remain to prevent irresponsible and uninformed reports from doing harm.[80]

Opposition spokesmen expressed support for the Government over the issue of national security but strongly disagreed with the very wide terms of the censorship clause. Mr Vause Raw, the chief spokesman on defence, said confidential information had to be protected in time of peace as well as war.

> We accept that the dividing line is often very thin and therefore we are prepared to support any measure which gives protection for necessary, essential security information. But...this measure...places an iron curtain of secrecy around every aspect of our forces. The proposal is to prohibit any report whatsoever on any member of our Defence Force. Taken literally it means that if any soldier is knocked down and killed by a motor car in Adderley Street it could not be reported, the reason being that it would be a report on a member of the Defence Force and it would tend to alarm and cause despondency amongst his family... But if we want to protect the Defence Force from any report whatsoever then we create a suspicion that there is something to be hidden. That can do far more harm than any report can do. A false report can always be dealt with but secrecy of this nature will create the impression and suspicion that there is something radically wrong.[81]

When Mr Raw suggested that "abuses" might be hidden by the press gag[82] it would appear that he was thinking of internal SADF matters. He gave the example of how Durban had seethed with rumours that men were dying by the score in a military camp. This was officially denied at first, but a full investigation later had shown that some of the allegations were true. The case proved that "we must have a degree of freedom in the Press which gives the public confidence."[83] Thus the official Opposition was not prepared to grant the press more than a degree of freedom in the military sphere. The possibility that South Africa might engage in a secret war under cover of the Defence Act was apparently not one of the abuses uppermost in the Opposition's thinking. An Opposition motion seeking to limit censorship to matters affecting foreign affairs and foreign forces or to any matter concerning national security was defeated. Obviously there was a large degree of consensus with the Government over the issue of national security.

Mr Botha's reply was intended to be reassuring. He said he did not want to be a "small dictator over the Press" although he appreciated that he was accepting tremendous responsibility in passing this "drastic measure". The authorities would not try to create "absurdities" of censorship.

> The mother who wants to complain about her son's food will still be able to complain as much as she likes. That is not what this clause is about.[84]

This reassurance unfortunately had no legal standing.

Amongst the press critics of the new measure was the Nationalist Sunday newspaper, Dagbreek. The paper commented that there were already

> numerous regulations on the army, police, sabotage, communism, the law of criminal procedure and many other subjects which continually have to be taken into account. The objection is not to the existence of restrictions. It is readily conceded that the embargos for security reasons today have become absolutely necessary...But all the regulations place a tremendous power in the hands of the authorities. Unsympathetic or overzealous

> application can only lead to greater bureaucracy - a phenomenon which has to be constantly guarded against especially in a country which has been so long under the same Government. The press is also experiencing an increasing haughtiness and even hostility on the part of a section of the public service. A vigilant press is a proven ally against maladministration, bureaucracy, corruption and nepotism.[85]

This editorial signalled the growing independence of the Afrikaans press from the Nationalist establishment. It is noteworthy that these words appeared in a Transvaal Nationalist mouthpiece, for in the Cape, where the party was led by Mr Botha, Die Burger was solidly in favour of Section 118.[86] During the Angolan war the Transvaal-based Perskor newspapers were to question Government secrecy.

The Star summed up the attitude of the Opposition press when it said that the new law would almost certainly have an "intimidatory effect which may be very much against the public interest." Security measures should be applied with careful regard for the public's right to know. The Minister had undertaken to prescribe to newspapers what they could write about and remain immune from his displeasure. But

> when "borderline" cases arise, it will be up to the papers to decide whether they dare risk publication without submission to censorship. Experience, especially of dealing with the Defence Department under this Government, fills us with foreboding about the practical difficulties the Press will be confronted with. And it is a reasonably safe bet that even after Mr Botha has issued his list of approved subjects, the new "borderline" will be forbiddingly wide.[87]

Editors, it soon appeared, would seldom take chances under the law. Hachten reports that after a golfer saw a pair of trousers and a tie flutter down from a military aircraft the press thought it necessary to refer the story to the SADF for clearance.[88]

Before the Angolan War there was no legal test of Section 118 or of the Agreement. One prosecution was launched and dropped. In August 1972 the editor of The Star, Mr John Jordi, with the Argus Company as co-accused, was taken to court for revealing information about possible arms purchases. The relevant report had been published nearly a year earlier, on 18 November 1971. This had speculated that during a visit to Lisbon Mr P W Botha and a party of defence experts had held talks about the purchase of warships for the SA Navy. A spokesman for Mr Botha at the time refused to comment when questioned about the overseas mission. Less than a month later Mr Botha had announced that South Africa was in fact going to buy six corvettes from Portugal. Nevertheless, a prosecution was launched against Jordi and his company as the newspaper had allegedly not obtained permission to publish its speculation.

The case came to court nine months after the report had appeared but it lasted only a few minutes. The Star had gone to considerable pains and much expense to prepare its case, bringing its Lisbon correspondent to South Africa to testify and also issuing a subpoena against the Minister himself. At Jordi's first appearance the case was remanded till the following day and on his second appearance it was abruptly withdrawn, without explanation, and the charges dropped. Journalists and newspaper executives flocked to congratulate Jordi after the withdrawal but the moment was soured by the knowledge that legal costs amounting to thousands of rands would not be recovered.[89] Nor was the legal issue ever resolved.

In Parliament the following year the Minister of Defence said in reply to Opposition questions that "it was considered not to be in the interests of South Africa to proceed with the case". Mr Botha added that the Johannesburg Public Prosecutor had dropped the charges "on the recommendation of the Public Relations Officer of the Department of Defence."[90] Jordi, it transpired, had been asked to apologise to the Minister "in the spirit of the agreement which exists between the Minister and the Newspaper Press Union"[91] but The Star disclosed that no apology had been forthcoming as none was warranted.[92] The Rand Daily Mail speculated that Jordi's subpoena to the Minister may have had something to do with the withdrawal.[93] In any event, there was no test case involving the legal status of the Agreement, and the next time Section 118 came to court was in the Allgemeine Zeitung case during June 1976. (See sub-section 2.6 below)

2.5 The Defence Agreement (1967 - 75)

The Defence Act as amended in 1967 laid the groundwork for a system of official news manipulation which developed over the next decade. The development will be traced in this Section by looking at the Agreement reached between the Minister of Defence and the NPU ostensibly to ease the restrictions of the Act. Certain news events which showed how the Agreement worked will be discussed in detail in Section Three. Techniques of selectively releasing military news came into being and were elaborated by means of trial and error in hundreds of everyday cases involving military liaison personnel on the one hand and journalists on the other. It was argued at the beginning of this chapter that co-operative interaction between journalists and the military could result from a combination of negative constraints and positive incentives affecting the media. These conditions were present in South Africa after 1967. The Defence Act restricted military news coverage to what the authorities deemed permissible. At the same time the authorities found they could exploit the media's hunger for military news. They learnt from setbacks and successes how to handle the captive press to obtain favourable coverage for their military and political policies. Their techniques were far from perfect, however, when in 1975 the Government decided to send troops into Angola.

The monopolistic structure of South Africa's press facilitated contact at the highest level between newspaper managements and the state. Since the early sixties the NPU had adopted a policy of appeasement towards the Government. To forestall the threat of direct censorship of the press under the Publications and Entertainments Control Act of 1963, the NPU had instituted self-censorship governed by a Press Code and enforced by a non-statutory Press Council. Initially the Press Council had few real powers and in many of its adjudications came down on the side of newspapers against official and non-official complainants. In response to further threats of legislative censorship the NPU increased the powers of the Council and broadened the scope of the Press Code.[89] This process was dubbed "surrender by instalment" by the Rand Daily Mail - expressing the view that the press should not do the Government's censorship for it.[94] Other English-language papers, as well as the bulk of the Afrikaans press, regarded the NPU's actions as necessary to

ward off the real dangers of official pre-publication censorship.[95] Whether newspapers adapted willingly or unwillingly to Government demands, they adapted all the same and so continued to survive and prosper.

Concentration of newspaper ownership has been a recurrent theme of critics of the newspaper industry in South Africa, as in the United States and Britain. There is no need to dwell on the subject here. Lindsay Smith's book, Behind the Press in South Africa, written soon after the Second World War, charged that the mining industry held control of the press through the principal newspaper group, the Argus Company, and used its power to safeguard mining interests and those of the government. Both demanded a favourable press for themselves and South Africa in order to keep the capital that was so essential for development flowing into the country.[96] By the mid-sixties it was obvious that the Lindsay Smith thesis was no longer tenable if it ever had been - for by then industrial and even agricultural capital had entered the picture. Four huge newspaper groups held sway - two of them backed by Afrikaner finance - and the kinds of news to be found in their competing newspapers could not be ascribed to a conspiracy amongst mining financiers. It was rather a product of monopolisation throughout the industry. The press groups often behaved as a cartel, acting to keep independent newspapers out of the industry. The Argus group, SA Associated Newspapers, Nasionale Pers, and the Afrikaanse Pers (later to become Perskor) between them controlled 13 of the 18 daily newspapers and all five of the Sunday papers appearing in 1968. The background of their collusion is discussed in some depth by Potter in The Press as Opposition.[97] The existence of this collusion in the commercial sphere suggests that the press groups appreciated their common interests. Combined action to deal with Government threats and demands was much easier to achieve than it would have been in a more fragmented press system.[98]

The desire of corporate newspaper managements to protect their business enterprises against costly legal proceedings and banning constituted the chief dynamic of press compliance with Government demands. A secondary dynamic was the desire of journalists and their editors to print whatever they could of dramatic events and sensitive issues in the security sphere. Together these dynamics impelled the press inexorably into the arms of

official propagandists. The news values of the media - their sense of what made a story and what was significant - became warped in the process. In the 1960's and 1970's the press surrendered parts of its freedom in order not to lose the whole. Meanwhile the state broadcasting services took an ever more blatantly pro-Government line in news and comment. In all media the attention devoted to security matters, mainly involving the police and military, increased steadily and at times sharply while control of this news became centralised in the hands of the authorities.

The first mention of an agreement between the Minister of Defence and the NPU in connection with defence reporting was made by the Minister himself in a speech in Parliament on 9 March 1967.[99] He said:

> Recently I had consultations witht the South African Press Union. The consultations took place in a spirit of goodwill, and an agreement was reached. I am grateful for that. In terms of this clause [Section 118 of the Defence Amendment Act] the agreement with the Press Union will still be practicable, and for my part the relations which have been established will be maintained.[100]

In January 1967 the Minister had summoned representatives of the NPU and had explained to them the need for control of security information. In a circular to all its members in April the NPU gave a summary of what had been agreed. The Minister said the SADF would be appointing a full-time public relations officer who would answer "factual questions" on behalf of the army, navy and air force but would not be able to make statements or answer questions on policy. Newspapers could take up with the Minister personally any rulings by the PRO. As a special concession, newspapers were to be allowed to publish any items originating abroad without clearance - provided that "the impression is not created that the contents of the news item be accepted as factual." However, the Minister could ask newspapers to play down certain overseas news items. The Minister also

> intimated that when he should be approached he may either comment, say that he has no comment or request that the

> fact that he had been approached should not be mentioned. In this regard the Minister explained that in certain circumstances a "no comment" in a report may be an embarrassment to him and his Department.[101]

This aspect of the Agreement - as worded in the circular - became fixed in the later written Agreement and proved to be a stumbling block to the press during the Angolan War. The circular appealed to newspaper managements to ensure that there was "no misunderstanding" in editorial departments concerning defence reporting.

One of Mr Botha's reasons for calling this meeting was that he was finding press queries irksome: he needed a PRO as a go-between. The Defence Act of 1957 and the Official Secrets Act had evidently caused editors some headaches and they or their staffs rang up the Minister whenever they felt uncertain about whether to publish an item. Speaking in Parliament during June 1967 Mr Botha complained:

> ...I cannot tell the whole story to every newspaperman who calls me at half-past eleven on Saturday night - and they call me as late as that, and I have no objections to it - and give him all the facts of the matter while delicate negotiations on the matter are perhaps in progress. And if I show the slightest hesitation, a whole sensational report is published on it, as has happened in the past...[102]

The man appointed PRO was Colonel Cyrus Smith, whose voice on the telephone and presence at briefings were to become well known to reporters covering the military beat.

In April 1969 a second meeting between the Minister and an NPU delegation was held to clarify certain problems under the Defence Act. The outcome was a written Agreement, approved by the Minister and circulated to all NPU members, many of whom posted it for their editorial staffs to read. According to the general secretary of the NPU, Mr G G A Uys, interviewed

by the author, the verbal Agreement had been "rather wishy-washy" and editors were unhappy about the fact that the threat of legal action was always present in the form of the Defence Act. Although no prosecutions had been carried through the press felt inhibited. The delegation pointed out that newspapers had deadline problems and were often tempted to print something if it came from a reliable source, even when the Minister or his PRO had not been reached for approval.[103]

The written Agreement of 1969 was a relatively brief two-page document[104] - bearing in mind the 8 000-word Voluntary Agreement of World War Two. It said that the Minister had assured the delegation that the Agreement with the press still existed. While the "whole matter" was covered by Section 118, it was specifically agreed that the SADF would have a public relations service "available to the press at all times". This would now be "expanded and improved". As far as internal military matters were concerned, the PRO or the Service Chiefs of the army, navy and air force, as well as the Chiefs of Staff could be approached for information and clearance. Reporters could contact the Minister after speaking to the PRO. Statements of policy could come only from the Minister or the Chief of the Defence Force. The "no comment" rule remained with the added proviso: "The Press must abide by this", and a further clause was added to drive the point home:

> Reporters should understand that there should not be any arguments with the Minister or the above mentioned officers on matters that leaked out somewhere and the publication thereof. If it be requested that a report or comment should not appear it must be accepted as such.

This is why "requests" came to be treated as directives. The section on reports originating from abroad was narrowed to exclude from blanket permission all reports from unknown or unnamed sources, even those cited as "reliable" - these would now have to be submitted for approval. On defence issues affecting South Africa only the statements of "official and responsible" persons such as foreign Prime Ministers or leaders of the opposition could be published without approval. This would hamstring the press during the Angolan war, when much of the news of foreign

involvement in Angola came - not from Governments who were reluctant to admit their role - but from other sources such as news agencies' correspondents in Angola.

In 1973 another deputation from the NPU met the Chief of the Defence Force, Admiral H H Biermann, and Colonel Cyrus Smith to discuss further problems. The Directorate of Public Relations had its office at Defence Headquarters in Pretoria and its staff of only three were often not accessible to newspapers all over the country. This staff - consisting of Col. Smith, Commandant J J Keyter, and Major P E Fairbanks - was hard pressed to cope with the flood of daily inquiries about defence matters of all kinds. Accordingly, Admiral Biermann undertook to send the NPU a list of names and telephone numbers of important contacts in the Defence Force, on the understanding that if the PROs were not available any of the other contacts could be approached.[105] The wording of the Agreement itself remained the same. Any member of the news staff could approach the Directorate or the SADF contacts for news, although in most cases newspapers had appointed defence correspondents. The list of some 30 SADF names (beginning with that of Mr Botha himself) was pinned up in most newspaper offices. It signalled a minor breakthrough for the press. Newspapers could go directly to top SADF officers who were often more forthcoming and less cautious than the PROs. (The reasons are outlined in Section Three.)

The 1969 Agreement remained in force throughout the Angolan War. But the behaviour of certain newspapers during the war provoked the Minister's ire and at one point he threatened to scrap the Agreement altogether after blank spaces had appeared in newspapers.[106] The blank space furore is dealt with in Section Three. The extraordinary length to which the Government was prepared to go to protect its Angolan secrets was demonstrated when Mr Botha accused the Johannesburg afternoon daily, Die Vaderland, of breaking the Defence Act with a report which was "furthermore untrue". The newspaper had reported that South African citizens had been killed in Angola - which was true. Such a report had come from communist sources and was calculated to cause confusion, Mr Botha told Die Vaderland, which published his remarks as a page one lead. The newspaper explained that it had received the report through United Press International, which had monitored a Luanda radio broadcast. Mr Botha issued a statement through

Sapa criticising "certain news media" for publishing "panic" reports, and said that during a recent visit to the "border" he had found the morale of South African troops to be very high - and there was reason to be proud of them.[107]

On 20 November 1975 the Minister met a delegation from the NPU to resolve differences over press reporting of defence matters. The meeting was called at the request of Mr Botha and ended with Mr D P de Villiers, president of the NPU, telling the press that both sides had reaffirmed their willingness to co-operate in the national interest on defence matters. He said understanding had been reached on some practical matters of communication which required ironing out.[108] The upshot of this meeting was a further tightening up of access to defence news. The Minister and the SADF now insisted that only accredited defence correspondents or their news editors and editors should have the right to approach the Defence Force for information. A list of 64 defence correspondents was drawn up and their names submitted to Military Intelligence for security clearance. Early in 1976 this list was ratified by the SADF and the accreditation system went into effect. Most daily and weekly papers put forward at least two defence correspondents, while the SABC radio service had three and Sapa five. In all, some 32 media organisations in South Africa and South West Africa were given accreditations. Among them was a minor commercial magazine, Armed Forces, and a freelance group called "Feature Writers". South Africa's black press was not directly represented (they would have to depend on the Argus, SAAN, and Sapa correspondents), while no attempt was made to involve the foreign press: their local correspondents would deal with the military amongst their many beats. On the Directorate's side, Cyrus Smith, now promoted to Brigadier, headed a larger staff consisting of Col. Keyter and four others over the rank of Captain. In addition, the army, air force and navy each had public relations officers.[109]

In the view of the NPU the Agreement lifted the burden of the Defence Act - sufficiently, at any rate, to allow for the publication of important, timeous information instead of no information at all.[110] This view is shared by the press law authority, Kelsey Stuart, who has written that the restrictions imposed upon newspapers by the Defence Act are wide but in terms of the Agreement "certain concessions have been granted and certain arrangements have been made to facilitate the work of newspapermen and the

work of the Department of Defence."[111] It is indisputably true that the Agreement expedites publication of otherwise banned material and that the Directorate of Public Relations has been of great practical value to editors. The experience of editorial personnel working under the Agreement will be analysed in Section Three. It will emerge that the attitudes of many towards the Agreement are ambivalent, compounded of appreciation for the information supplied and frustration at the fact that discretion lay with the PROs, not with newsmen.

Effectively, the Agreement gave an interpretation to the Defence Act suiting the needs of the military and political authorities. In some ways it even added to the Act's scope. The Act did not provide specifically for the appointment of military PRO's or the creation of the Directorate of Public Relations nor did it suggest that the Minister of his representative could tender "advice" to the media. The stipulation that Ministerial requests be treated as directives is nowhere in the statute. The fact that defence-related statements originating from unnamed or non-govermmental sources abroad had to be cleared by the SADF meant that even foreign news fell under censorship. The Agreement cast a wide penumbra beyond strictly military matters. Matters of foreign policy - those "delicate negotiations" referred to by Mr Botha in Parliament - could and did motivate Ministerial requests to play down certain issues.

The mere fact that the Agreement existed gave the Minister ready access to the NPU - with predictable consequences. Mr Uys, general secretary of the NPU, told the author[112] that when the Minister became "angry" with certain newspapers he would "get at them through us" - but the Minister's relations with the NPU itself were good. Negotiations had always been conducted in a "spirit of goodwill". Mr Botha used the NPU to discipline newspapers. For its part, the NPU sometimes acted in defence of newspapers which were accused of breaking the Agreement or contravening the Defence Act. It would investigate all cases on their own merits and make the appropriate representations. At times it had been necessary for the NPU to warn certain newspapers that they had overstepped the mark and to apologise on their behalf to the Minister. In the view of Mr Uys, while the Agreement had no statutory standing it could probably be invoked in defence of any news medium accused of contravening the Act - provided, of course, that

the medium had gone through the prescribed liaison routines before publishing the offending item. This seems to imply that the Agreement did not guarantee newspapers against prosecution. The Agreement had not been tested in court up to the time of writing.

2.6 The case of the Advertiser and the Zeitung

An extraordinary case during mid-1976 illustrates how newspapers fared without the "protection" of the Agreement. The Minister of Defence expelled the Windhoek Advertiser and its sister newspaper, the Allgemeine Zeitung, from the Agreement. The editor of the Advertiser, Mr Hannes Smith, was jubilant - "We had a heyday" he told the author - while his colleague, Mr Kurt Dahlman, editor of the Zeitung, felt it was better to be out of the Agreement than in it - "the Windhoek Command was no longer in a position to tell us what or what not to publish - we were now able to decide this for ourselves under the law".[113] Meanwhile the pro-Nationalist newspaper, Die Suidwester, felt that it had been placed in an "invidious position" because the expelled newspapers used their position "to their maximum advantage".[114] Although this case occurred after the Angolan War it throws much light on the way the Agreement was enforced by a combination of official blandishments and collective pressure on editors by the newspaper industry.

The incident blew up over a police matter. The fact that the Defence Agreement was brought into play demonstrated the tendency of the authorities to lump together all "security" matters under one head and use the Agreement accordingly. On 21 June 1976 a senior police spokesman had been quoted in an SABC radio report saying that counter-insurgency measures would be used against armed infiltrators in a white area in northern Namibia. Next morning, seeing that the information had been broadcast already, Dahlmann of the Zeitung had no inhibitions about giving his German-speaking readers the facts. Before the newspaper appeared, however, he had a telephone call from the military authorities in Windhoek reminding him of a Ministerial request (issued under the Agreement) to play down reports on terrorism. No mention was made of this particular item. Dahlmann decided to publish - "I was sure, as an editor, that I had done the right thing."[115] Meanwhile Smith of the Advertiser had set up in type a very similar report drawn from the same source. As he was to explain in an editorial later

in the week, the report "would have put people's minds at ease." Soon after noon, just as the Advertiser was about to start printing, Smith was telephoned by a "highly-placed official in Government service" who told him that a report which had been sent to the Pretoria News had not been cleared for publication. Smith explained that his newspaper was not part of the Pretoria News pool, adding that he too had a report on the matter. He read a few relevant passages to the official who thereupon instructed him "in the name of Pretoria" not to release the newspaper with the report. After consultation with Mr Jurgen Meinert, owner of the Advertiser (and of the Zeitung) it was decided to remove the report and tell the public that the paper had been censored.[116] The Advertiser appeared later in the day with a blank front page lead emblazoned with the word "censored" in large capitals. By this time the Zeitung was already on the streets with its full uncensored report.

Reaction from the military authorities was swift and fierce. The Defence Force sought to bring an urgent interdict against the Zeitung to prevent further distribution of the offending edition. After an emergency hearing, the Judge President of South West Africa, Mr Justice F H Badenhorst, rejected the application with costs. The application was brought by the Minister of Defence. The Judge ruled at the beginning of the hearing that certain documents, certain evidence, and the original report from the Zeitung be not reported or repeated by newsmen present in the courtroom. The State argued that the Zeitung's report about the infiltration of armed insurgents could result in dejection among the general public. It was claimed that one of the sentences of the report fell within Section 118 of the Defence Act and should not have been published without the Minister's approval. The Judge remarked that the presence of terrorists was something of which the general public knew - newspapers had reported some 59 acts of terror in 1976 alone. He added that there should be better liaison between newspaper editors on the one hand and the Police and Defence Force on the other. After a night sitting the Judge found against the Minister and the SADF.[117]

The saga was far from over. Before the court had pronounced its ruling, the Minister of Defence informed the NPU that he was unilaterally cancelling his side of the Agreement with the two papers concerned. Smith was the very opposite of penitent. While recognising that the blank space had

"infuriated" the Minister, he declared that the Advertiser "remains a friend of the South African Defence Force but an even stronger opponent of those who clumsily handle the political direction of our fighting forces.[118] In an editorial headed "Botha did us a favour", the Advertiser denied that it had intended publishing information about troop movements in Namibia. It went on aggressively:

> Our newspaper was censored because of a report which, as we have stated earlier in the week, would have put the people's minds at ease. We tried to do the job of the Defence Force liaison officer, a man who failed in his duty to keep South West Africa's press, and consequently its inhabitants, abreast of events. And South West Africa can rest assured that neither Brigadier Cyrus Smith, nor Colonel Bosman, a reporter until a few months ago, would bother to furnish South West Africa with the proper liaison, something - as we have repeatedly stated, in fact so many times that it is becoming ad nauseum - that is pushing our country over the abyss. Neither Brigadier Smith nor Colonel Bosman can bring themselves so far as to substitute gossip and rumour-mongering with correct, crisp and positive facts. And in view of the fact that Mr Pieter W Botha, who has amply illustrated in the past how hamhanded he is in his political handling of our fighting men, has cancelled the privileges which we enjoyed, we are in a position to say we are happy. It has finally relieved us from burdensome, bureaucratic nonsense. From now on, the Windhoek Advertiser, aided by its own legal advisers, will keep South West Africa informed, better even that in the past, about these matters. And we will do it in such a way that will provide our fighting forces with the correct image - the image of discipline, of alertness and of doing their duty..[119]

This somewhat intemperate phraseology should have been enough to put paid to any hopes of returning to the Agreement - but time was to prove otherwise.

This editorial has been reproduced at some length because it is the clearest statement the author has been able to find of a professional stance diametrically opposed to SADF news management and yet wholly supportive of the military. It suggests that an alternative information policy could still be compatible with fighting the border war to win it. While the Advertiser and the Zeitung were out of the Agreement they obtained less inside information about SADF activities but felt freer in publishing information about the war situation as a whole. The pro-South African tone of news and comment did not alter.

Dahlmann was circumspect in his response to the crisis but in the long run proved to be stubbornly independent. During the Angolan War he had despaired of ever getting reports cleared by the SADF and had finally put all stories dealing with the South African presence into abeyance. With other items he used his own discretion and did not approach the SADF very often for clearance. This remained his practice after the war.

> When we left the Agreement things changed. We felt free to publish anything within the framework of the law. That meant that we were allowed to and did in fact publish reports on terrorist activities in the country...and nothing happened to us. We are bound by the law and we wouldn't dare do anything against the law although one can criticise the law. We couldn't publish anything about the movements of our forces and naturally we didn't do that. Actually I didn't want to go back into the Agreement again. It was largely a question of solidarity with the other newspapers that induced me to accept it again... I didn't want to create trouble - I'm not a trouble-seeker.[120]

In an interview with the Head of the SADF in Namibia, General Jannie Geldenhuys, late in 1977 after the Zeitung was back in the Agreement, Dahlmann told the General that he would accept "friendly advice" but not complete censorship. He said in his view there had been times when the SADF had forbidden the publication of material which had not contravened the law.

Smith, like Dahlmann, took the law seriously and realised that one wrong step could land him in court. But he could not resist a duel with his major competitor, Die Suidwester. The latter sought to exploit the expulsion of the two papers from the Agreement by advertising that it was the only one with the facts of the border situation. Smith countered with front-page reports offering the full unvarnished truth and later told the author: "People quickly realised who had the real truth".[121] Chagrined Suidwester staff conceded privately that Smith had a point. Interviewed by the author, Mr Des Erasmus, political correspondent and assistant editor of Die Suidwester, said his paper had "suffered" because the others "simply printed everything they could get their hands on".

> Much of the material they used was one-sided and full of hearsay but people read it because they were curious - they were curious and they were worried about what was happening. Well, we had to do something. We published an advertisement which covered about an eighth of a page and was used many times whenever there was space for it or an advert was dropped. It said we were the only ones with access to the facts. That, I think, had some effect and people believed our reports when they read them. Later I personally made representations to the local Defence Force authorities who took it up with the Minister, showing how we were at a disadvantage while these others printed everything with no questions asked.[122]

If the advertisement had really worked there would have been no need to take the matter further, for then the expulsions would have had the effect of damaging the Advertiser's and Zeitung's credibility and competitive position. As it turned out, both papers could still obtain SADF news releases through Sapa though they could not attend confidential briefings.

The two papers had the support of their colleagues in the Opposition press in South Africa. A letter from Mr Jon Hobday, President of the SA Society of Journalists, congratulated Dahlmann on his commitment to report "vital matters of public interest". The letter said restrictions and "friendly requests" had resulted in the public being kept in the dark about the

security of the country's borders. It went on:

> We believe that such disclosures will ensure that the general populace is fully aware of the dangers, is committed to the defence of the country and is prepared to meet any contingency. We believe also that the Press in South Africa is responsible enough in its reporting to be trusted not to undermine the security of the State. And we believe that, far from continuing the restrictions and introducing new difficulties and administrative obstacles, the government should smooth the way for more rapid and more complete dissemination of such information through the Press.[123]

Once again the alternative information policy was expressed by professional journalists in contact with the daily reality of defence news manipulation. Freedom of information was an ideal for which journalists would continue to strive, although officialdom was not likely to make meaningful concessions.

Dahlmann and Smith were encouraged by the NPU to apply for readmission to the Agreement because it was believed that a "new deal" for the press was in the offing. In July 1976 Mr L H Walton, a vice-president of the NPU, visited Windhoek to conduct personal interviews with the editors and publishers of all the newspapers concerned. There was some bad feeling at the ensuing round-table discussion in Windhoek when the NPU brought Smith and Dahlmann face-to-face with Erasmus - the latter told the author that he was "very annoyed" when someone put words into his mouth - but ultimately it was decided that the papers should try to get back into the Agreement. Walton submitted in a report to the Minister that there had been a degree of misunderstanding and confusion which had resulted in the unpleasant clash.[124] All offensive words and deeds were forgiven and within a few months of their expulsion the papers were taken back into secure and blinkered comradeship with the rest of the South African press. The NPU, as much as the SADF, could not afford to have maverick newspapers running out of official control - it gave them an unfair competitive advantage.

2.7 The Act and the Agreement: 1976 - 79

After the Angolan War the Government moved quickly to ensure that it was

shielded from legal repercussions for sending its troops over the border. Coincidentally, the step it took to amend the Defence Act also prevented information about South Africa's role in the war from being disclosed as privileged evidence in court. Under the Defence Act as it existed before 1976, South African troops could not be sent into action outside the country without the sanction of Parliament. To skirt this requirement in the case of Angola, the Defence Force had been obliged to ask its men to "volunteer" for the mission on foreign territory, which many had done by signing a form. When Parliament met in 1976 the law was changed retrospectively to permit the deployment of troops elsewhere in Africa in order to combat any probable threat to the security of the Republic. The amendment indemnified the authorities against any claims arising from the action in Angola, allowing instead for out-of-court settlements to be determined by the Minister of Defence.[125]

Mr Botha was still upset with the behaviour of the press during the war when he met a delegation from the NPU in February 1976 to discuss his threats to the press. Although the NPU had received no specific complaints from the SADF or the Minister during the war, they were aware from press reports that he was dissatisfied with the way the Agreement had worked. He stated that he did not want to name offending newspapers or cite particular reports which he had objected to, although he could easily do so. He said he would if necessary introduce amendments to make Section 118 tougher. NPU members wondered silently if it were possible to make it tougher.[126] The result of this meeting was that the NPU framed proposals which were put to the Minister and largely accepted as the basis of a revised Agreement.

In a memorandum to the Minister in March 1976 the NPU said it believed steps should be taken "to improve the existing means of contact and liaison between the Department and the Press". It was in the national interest to release as much information as could be released "within the security framework" and do so "with the least possible delay". There should be "frequent and regular contact" between the Department of Defence and the press at which press representatives could be briefed by the Department and discuss problems with them. The NPU mooted a Joint NPU/Department of Defence Committee which would meet on a regular basis "as frequently as necessary but at least once a month" to consider matters of policy and

principle including amendments to the Agreement. The NPU would nominate two managerial personnel and two editors (along with alternates) for this Committee while the Department would put forward its own men. It was hoped that one of the Defence representatives could be the Chief of the SADF so that the Committee could give "immediate decisions" on issues. For its part the NPU would appoint and pay for a senior editorial person "who is acceptable and has in advance been approved by the Department" to assist and advise the Directorate of Public Relations on the release of military news. Editors would refer their queries on policy to the Committee although specific items of detail would continue to be raised with the Directorate's PRO's. The memorandum made two further special requests. It asked the SADF to hold weekly press conferences for defence correspondents timed, alternately, for mornings and afternoons. It also asked for all news items and directives to be issued, as in the past, through Sapa, while, as a new measure, copies would go to the NPU. Where wider dissemination might be required - "as, for instance, to provincial newspapers" - the NPU would "gladly assist the Department."[127]

The memorandum embodied the idea that the press establishment should become part of the SADF's policy-making structure insofar as public information was concerned. This could be justified as an attempt to wrest the prerogatives of censorship away from the official bureaucracy - or at least to exert greater influence on their decisions. This rationale could not hide the fact that the NPU was now ready, more than at any time in the past, to help the authorities control military news. The organisation was offering to give its own professional advice on strategy. Despite the lip service paid to the principle of freedom of information in the opening paragraphs of the memorandum, there was every sign that the Defence Committee would become the prime agency of collaboration in a system of propaganda.

If the NPU thought they could manipulate information policy they were wrong. Not surprisingly, the Minister welcomed the application for full co-option of the NPU to the strategic purposes of the Defence Force. But in a letter of reply which followed swiftly on the submission of the memorandum, Mr Botha said that while he had "no objections" to most of the proposals, two were not acceptable. Firstly, it would not be possible for the Chief of the Defence Force to be present at all meetings because "he has too many other

tasks and priorities to tie him down in this fashion". He could attend when the Committee had important matters to warrant his presence. While a representative of the Chief of the SADF could attend the meetings it was not possible to guarantee that he could be authorised under all circumstances to give decisions immediately. "Certain decisions remain the prerogative of myself and the Chief of the S.A. Defence Force." Decisions would be given "as soon as possible." Secondly, the proposed NPU adviser to the SADF was cut down to size by the Minister's counter-proposal that the description of his job be amended. Instead of saying "to assist and advise the Department's Directorate of Public Relations" it would be preferable to say "to liaise with the Department's Directorate."[128] "Liaison", therefore, was to be as far as the NPU's adviser would be permitted to go. Without control or even advisory rights in the formulation of policy, the NPU found itself caught in toils of its own devising, the unequal partner of an authoritarian bureaucracy. Nevertheless, when the NPU held its annual congress in September 1976, the President, Advocate D P de Villiers, expressed the Union's satisfaction with arrangements. He said the Defence Committee had met twice already "with fruitful results for the development of mutual understanding and the removal of obstacles and misunderstandings".[129] A member of the Committee told the author in 1978 that it was succeeding so well that the press was jointly responsible for all policy decisions on military news. Among other things, the Defence Committee had endorsed a Ministerial request not to publish any information about South Africa's prisoners of war in Angola.[130]

In June 1976 a courteous note from Defence Headquarters informed the press that the all-hours service to defence correspondents with urgent enquiries would be extended with the addition of an emergency radio-telephone channel to the Media Relations Officer, Colonel Kobus Bosman.[131]

A new-look Directorate had come into being and henceforth the press was assured of a much smoother service. The Directorate had increasingly found its work divided between dealing with journalists and arranging public activities and publicity for the SADF. The separation of functions was formalised with the creation of two sections of the Directorate: Media Liaison and Public Relations. The former was headed by Col. Kobus Bosman, a former radio broadcaster, the latter by Col. Keyter, while Brig. Smith

retained overall control as Director. A letter from the new Chief of the Defence Force, General Magnus Malan, to the President of the NPU said Media Liaison would be the "central source of official/unofficial information" to all news media. The press was told explicitly what the functions of Media Liaison entailed. There were five avenues of communication with the media: (1) communiques, (2) news conferences conducted by senior officers, (3) press enquiries, which would be dealt with "speedily and effectively", (4) press visits to SADF installations, and (5) interviews "by SADF personnel with the Press (and vice versa)". In addition, the Liaison section operated a Media Information Centre containing fact-files of comprehensive unclassified information, including pictures, biographies and background on high-ranking officers. The section would arrange the accrediting of defence correspondents, design and conduct orientation courses for defence correspondents, maintain a 24-hour service at DHQ during emergencies, and guard against "the danger of issuing false or misleading information, even though it may be supplied by an apparently reliable source." Public Relations, meanwhile, would busy itself keeping the public informed on general SADF matters through the printed, spoken and visual media. An important aspect of its work was arranging for the recording of programmes on the SADF by SABC and overseas radio, television and newsreel crews. It would also help newspaper and magazine feature writers. One of its functions was identical to that of the Second World War Bureau of Information: to provide "the provincial press with features articles on the SADF including 'local boy' stories." 132

After Mr Botha's election as Prime Minister in 1978 he retained the portfolio of Defence but handed over much day-to-day administration and policy-making to a trusted party colleague, Mr Kobie Coetzee, who became Deputy Minister. In April 1979 the NPU negotiated a change to the Agreement at a meeting with Mr Coetzee. The change marked a significant relaxation of the long-standing prohibition on the publication of reports from abroad originating with unnamed or non-governmental figures. It said such reports could be published locally provided (a) that the source of the report was clearly indicated, (b) that the Minister of Defence or his representatives had been given the opportunity to comment, and (c) that the report did not deal with South African weaponry or the supply of arms to the Republic. The amendment would prevent a repetition of the Angolan War situation in which

newspaper readers abroad knew more about South African involvement than South Africans. Although the Agreement still stipulated that reports from abroad had to be cleared unless the material came from a "responsible" person, it added that "any other reports from abroad may be published" subject to the given conditions.[133] A Defence spokesman said that after "friendly and constructive" talks with the NPU Mr Coetzee had thanked the media for their "good understanding and a positive approach" to purely military matters, which had allowed the Minister of Defence to agree to the change.[134]

Clearly, liaison was paying off in some limited ways. The NPU had done all in its power to persuade the Government of the press's unswerving loyalty on matters of national security, and it was as a mark of good behaviour that it won this relaxation. But the pressure was not off the press - far from it. Towards the end of 1979 the Sunday Times and other newspapers published allegations that senior SADF officers had used military helicopters on an elephant hunt and had supervised the cutting-up of carcases by troops using chain saws. An immediate investigation was ordered by the Defence Force. However, members of the NPU emerged grim and tight-lipped from a meeting with the SADF top brass at which the allegations were reportedly discussed.[135]

Shortly afterwards Mr Botha announced the appointment of a six-man Commission of Inquiry to investigate newspaper reporting on defence matters. Headed by Mr Justice M T Steyn, the former Administrator-General of South West Africa (who had a close acquaintance with the border war situation) the key function of the Commission was to determine whether the security of the state was adequately protected by the Defence Act. It was instructed to examine and make recommendations on the line of division between the right of the media to inform the public and the right of the public to be informed, on the one hand, and the interests of the state and the Defence Force as guardians of national security, on the other. In announcing the Commission's appointment, Mr Botha returned to a familiar theme: he spoke of the media's role in "building up or breaking down the nation's morale" as South Africa entered a new phase in the "total onslaught" against it. He went on:

> The high standard of reporting by the majority of news organisations in South Africa is noted with appreciation and their integrity and freedom must be protected. (But) the Government is also aware of indications that the gradual and systematic denigration of the SA Defence has become a priority objective of our enemies and their agents. This is manifested by malevolent efforts to question the very essence of military service, the right of self-defence, the procurement of armaments, and the development of our own armaments industry and capability.[136]

2.8 Conclusion

Given the history of the Defence Act and the Agreement, the Opposition press was understandably guarded in its response to the announcement of a Commission of Inquiry. The Rand Daily Mail remarked that it was worried because Mr Botha had hinted that there should be tighter controls - "and in our opinion the controls are already too tight."[137] The editor of the Rand Daily Mail was quoted saying that as all military and strategic information was already protected by the Defence Act it was clear that there were further areas, not applying to strategy, implied in the announcement.[138] The editor of The Star said the announcement "takes us into the area of propaganda and into civil law issues. The atmosphere is ominous."[139] Die Burger meanwhile commented that the Agreement had worked "very satisfactorily" so far but that new circumstances had made an investigation necessary.[140]

The appointment of the Commission opens a new chapter in the story of South Africa's military news legislation. It is not possible to anticipate the Commission's findings, but one can speculate that the Government will not be persuaded to relinquish control of defence information or policy formulation. The logic of Mr Botha's "total strategy" is against such an outcome. A more likely outcome is that the detailed implementation of the Defence Act and the Agreement will be examined and perhaps made more efficient in terms of overall strategy. Statutory recognition of the Agreement and/or a fuller exposition of the regulations governing defence reporting - along the lines of the Voluntary Agreement of World War Two - can be anticipated.

So long as South African society remains radically divided amongst the franchised and the unenfranchised, the haves and the have-nots, any attempt to portray military policy as an extension of the national interest is bound to fall far short of national consensus. While this situation persists, the steady incorporation of the press - including an Opposition press which has prided itself on its independence of Government - into military strategy means simply that the press establishment is identifying with the structures of domination. On the evidence presented in this Section it is difficult to see how things could be otherwise. Profit-making enterprises, depending for their survival on marketable news and the sanction of government to publish it, will when threatened seek to appease the authorities. Journalists employed by these enterprises have little option - whatever their outlook - except to go along with the alliance of capital and state power. The vestiges of press independence survive in the press's limited role as a watchdog. But watchdog journalism designed to correct abuses and inefficiency in the armed forces is basically supportive of the military and presents no direct challenge to the political aims of military action.

During the Second World War, and again during the Angolan War, some newspapers questioned the political aspect. But whereas the Smuts Government had permitted Verwoerd to publish pro-Nazi material, no establishment newspaper in 1975 and 1976 would have dared to publicise the case for South African black revolutionary movements who identified with the regime's enemies. The boundaries of political debate in the press lay well within the dominant white consensus. It was accepted that black Marxist revolutionary movements in Southern Africa and Angola endangered the Republic's interests and had to be repelled. How this was to be done was a question of strategy on which there were deep differences of opinion. To members of the Opposition press it seemed that the Government's dictatorial attitude only weakened the national fibre because it would fail to rally popular support in times of crisis. The alternative was to inform the public fully (with due regard for security considerations) on the situation facing the country and thus to gain their rational backing for military and other action. The reader may judge how realistic this alternative strategy is. It holds out the prospect of a more open society where opinions compete in the public domain to influence state policy. On the other hand, South Africa since

Sharpeville has witnessed the emergence of a radical dissensus between state authority and revolutionary elements. It is difficult to envisage how an open information policy could bridge this gap. In any case it is unlikely that the Government will permit very much greater freedom of information, much as it desires to retain the appearance of a free and independent press as a symbol of "democracy". The history of the Defence Act shows how the appearance of truth can all too easily be combined with careful excisions and distortions - covert censorship in which the press plays the role of accomplice.

SECTION THREE

HOW THE SYSTEM WORKED

3.1 Methodology

3.2 The Military as External Primary Gatekeepers

3.3 Communication Objectives and Attitudes of the Military

3.4 Journalists' Reactions to Manipulation and Control

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3.8 Conclusion

3.1 Methodology

This Section will show how censorship and news manipulation occurred in practice during the Angolan war. The method of collecting information for the study is first described and is followed by a survey of the theoretical literature dealing with relations between official sources and the media. The goals of South Africa's military public relations apparatus and the responses of journalists to control and manipulation are then fitted into the theoretical context. The final part examines a number of central news events whose treatment by the press was significantly affected by liaison with the SADF. The intention is to document methods of newsgathering under the difficult and restrictive conditions imposed by the Defence Act and the Official Secrets Act. Another aim is to show how media criteria of news and routines of obtaining it are influenced by the political and organisational goals of the defence bureaucracy. No complete theory on these complexly interrelated subjects as yet exists, although official news management has been by no means neglected as a subject in the field of mass communication studies. This contribution emphasises the close reciprocal relationships between reporters and PRO's within the framework created by the Government and the newspaper industry and outlined in the last Section. The perceptions of journalists on the way the liaison machinery worked help to explain how much official news takes shape.

The information about military reporting in South Africa was obtained in a three-stage procedure. The first step was a form letter to editors of print and broadcast media asking them for details of their staffing and news coverage during the war. This was followed by a series of interviews with senior editorial staff and defence correspondents to establish how they saw their roles as journalists and how they functioned within the limits of legislation and liaison. Lastly, important cases of news manipulation and control were looked up in newspaper files and analysed in the light of what journalists had said about them. The methodology included no direct observation of defence correspondents at work. This would scarcely have been possible, considering the classified and confidential nature of the material they often handle.

Next to the defence correspondents themselves, the group most intimately concerned with the day-to-day treatment of the news were the PRO's of the Defence Force. Unfortunately the SADF refused to allow these personnel to be interviewed by the author, and it answered a series of questions in only the most general terms. In reply to the author's queries a letter from Colonel Kobus Bosman, Senior Staff Officer, Media Liaison, said inter alia:

> After close and serious consideration of the questions submitted by you it has been decided that due to their political nature the SADF cannot reply to them individually... (The) aim of the Directorate is to promote good relations between the SA Defence Force and its various publics and to keep the public informed of SADF activities by the release of factual information. The Directorate naturally avoids involvement with any internal party political issue.[1]

The letter followed a visit by the author to Defence Headquarters in Pretoria at the invitation of Colonel Bosman who had said the study could obviously not be completed without military assistance. The questions submitted dealt primarily not with matters of policy but with the mechanics of news clearance and the staffing of the Public Relations Directorate. The SADF's refusal is symptomatic of one form of bureaucratic pathology - secrecy[2] - which is in conflict with the operational need of the same bureaucracy to appear as open-handed and co-operative as possible in order to cultivate credibility. It has deprived this study of perspectives on war news from the military angle, except for those culled from peripheral sources quoted below. It has also meant that conclusions drawn about the reciprocal role relationships of journalists and PRO's necessarily reflect only the former group's views and are to some extent speculative.

Not all of the media proved helpful either. The form letter, accompanied by a two-page questionnaire, was designed to do two things: (1) obtain information about staff who covered the war including editors, news editors, military correspondents, reporters, and photographers; and (2) to gain some indication of the degree of co-operation that could be expected from the media. Eleven of the twelve questions were simply factual, having to do with staff, their beats and their periods of service.

Information about the staff who handled Angolan war news brought no surprises. The majority of defence correspondents had held their positions for a year or more and on larger papers the chief defence correspondent was usually assisted by an accredited junior or even two. A number of photographers were listed as having accompanied defence correspondents on official tours. The Argus Africa News and the "Mail" Africa Bureau said photographers had gone into Angola with their correspondents. The information was useful in identifying individuals for interviewing.

The final question was: "What, in your opinion, should a study of the South African news media and the Angolan War seek to establish?" Of the 51 questionnaires sent out to all major media, 27 replies were received though not all of these were completed in full. The pattern of responses was significant.

TABLE 1

Media	Sent	Returned
"White" English-language publications	22	16
Afrikaans publications	13	3
"Black" publications	7	2
SABC radio and television	1	0
SA news agencies	3	2
German (SWA) publication	1	0
Rhodesian media	4	4
	51	27

Predictably, the English-language Opposition newspapers were most amenable to inquiries since most of them had carried as much war news as they could and had attacked censorship. Several editors wrote detailed replies to the final question. There was agreement that restrictions had been placed on the South African news media as a whole, keeping the local public in the dark about facts widely publicised in the outside world. One asked "WHY did the Government act as it did?" It was suggested that the study should seek to uncover restrictions on the media as compared to other parts of the world, and that the past, present and future relationships between the press and the Defence Force be analysed. Various editors expressed the belief that the credibility of the press had been undermined, a few adding that this had an

adverse effect on public morale. Some said the study should attempt to establish whether the news had been timeous and truthful. Only one, the editor of the Natal Witness, introduced the idea that news had been deliberately managed for propaganda purposes. The Star said the "battle" against military censorship was continuing although it was apparent that some SADF service chiefs had a better understanding of the need for full and accurate reporting. These responses reveal the concern of the Opposition press to fulfil its role as an independent channel of information free of Government restraint. It is interesting that while this section of the press, like other media, fell prey to news manipulation the subject did not occur to most respondents. To the author this suggests further confirmation of the thesis outlined in Sections One and Two: the commercial press regards some news as better than no news at all.

Of the six English-language papers which did not return the questionnaire, two - The Citizen and The Financial Gazette - were pro-Government. Another pro-Government publication, To the Point, did return the questionnaire while its defence correspondent, Carel Birkby, proved helpful in other ways. Replies were not received from The Argus, the Eastern Province Herald, the Pretoria News, and the Sunday Express. Later, staff of all of these newspapers made themselves readily available for interviews.

The bulk of pro-Government newspapers did not return the questionnaire in spite of follow-up letters and telephone calls. The few who did gave sketchy replies. Beeld sent back the form unanswered with a note of apology saying that information about media-military relations was confidential. Die Vaderland promised a reply but never sent it. Rapport filled in the staffing details but not the final question soliciting ideas for the study. The only Afrikaans newspaper to complete the form in full was Die Suidwester, whose situation in Windhoek makes it marginal to the South African press. In reply to the final question it said it wanted "More details and clearness" (sic). Senior personnel on some Afrikaans papers later gave illuminating interviews. Mr Ebbe Dommisse, assistant editor of the Nasionale Pers Transvaal morning paper, Beeld, said the subject of Angola was "tricky". He went on:

> You think I'm evading the question about what we did about censorship. I don't think we had much trouble. There were cases when they asked us not to publish something. We would try to convince them. This was like bargaining in a bazaar. In the end, well, some decision was taken.

Details of the "bargaining" process - at which Afrikaans newsmen seem to have succeeded better than others - are given later.

Black South African publications including Post, Drum, World and Weekend World (before their banning) and Ilanga did not reply either. Only the Argus-owned Cape Herald and the Perskor-owned Imvo filled in the questionnaires and in doing so provided an interesting contrast. The Herald's (white) editor wrote in reply to the final question that the study should seek to establish "the degree to which the public, especially (but not exclusively) the voting public, received accurate, comprehensive...and contemporaneous information about the activities of the SADF outside South Africa's borders." The (white) editor of Imvo cut short his replies to the questionnaire with the statement: "Imvo is (or was during the Angolan conflict) too much of a local newspaper (local in the sense of news concerning Xhosa speakers in the Transkei, Eastern and Western Cape) to have carried news in detail (coming from a war correspondent on the spot) on the war." It would appear that contrasting white liberal and nationalist concepts of editorial responsibilities towards black audiences shaped the approach of the Cape Herald and Imvo editors. It is a fact that no black newspaper had an accredited defence correspondent at the time of the war, nor have any been accredited up to the time of writing. The black press reported the war but depended on agency copy and material supplied by sister newspapers in the white establishment press.

The SABC radio and television services did not reply to correspondence. Tight centralised control of the corporation's news operations proved to be a severe obstacle to this study and it was decided to exclude broadcast news except where material had appeared in print.

Of the three news agencies contacted, the "Mail" Africa Bureau (serving morning group English-language newspapers) did not return the questionnaire but intimated that individual newspapers could answer the questions better. The Argus Africa News Service editor, Mr Wilf Nussey, wrote that his agency's objective was to

cover the Angolan war from the territory "as comprehensively as possible from all sides, giving both the hard day-to-day facts and impartial assessments." The agency had indeed been hampered -

> at first chiefly by the logistic problems of sheer distance, chaotic communications and the risks of moving through a population in a state of hysterical anarchy. Later, as the three sides began to draw battle lines, it became difficult or impossible to cross them.

He added: "As to censorship in South Africa...I prefer to leave comment on that to the editors of the newspapers we serve." Sapa's editor, Mr Ed Linington, likewise emphasised his agency's non-partisanship in a reply stating that "the role of a news agency in any situation is to report as fully and factually as possible." He said neither side in the Angolan conflict had made it possible for correspondents to be at the scene of the fighting, while in South Africa official permission to publish details of South Africa's role was not forthcoming. "One can think of a dozen reasons why it was not, and I prefer not to guess which were the overriding reasons," wrote Linington. Agency copy did throw light on aspects of South Africa's role and has been used below.

The German Allgemeine Zeitung in Windhoek failed to reply to the questionnaire but the editor - a staunch critic of military censorship - later gave a long and frank interview.

Rhodesian newspapers and the state broadcasting service all said they had not specifically placed correspondents in Angola or South Africa to cover the war and were thus unable to help with the study. The war was closely watched by Rhodesia as there was an obvious danger that the violence, accompanied by foreign intervention, could spill over and worsen the insurgency situation in Rhodesia itself. It was finally decided to exclude the Rhodesian media (along with those of Swaziland, Lesotho and Botswana) from the study because this would extend its scope too far and anyway copies of publications were not readily available to the author. It should be noted that these media depended fairly heavily on Sapa and other South African correspondents for their accounts of the war. It appears that Rhodesian papers largely ignored

the controversy over South Africa's role and accepted the censored copy originating from South Africa as an adequate picture of what was happening.[3] Censorship was nothing out of the ordinary for the Rhodesian press. As former Rhodesian journalist Penny Thornycroft commented in September 1978:

> Although the whites know about the military situation and its grim reality because their fathers, husbands, and sons are out there for more than half the year, they are ignorant about a lot. For example, most people I have spoken to had no idea the Executive Council had banned news about the Patriotic Front, and they had little chance of finding out because the Press is not even allowed to tell them they are not allowed to know.[4]

In January 1978 the Rhodesian Government gazetted emergency regulations which banned local and foreign reporters from writing anything but the official version of events in the five-year-old guerilla war.[5] A study deserves to be done on the consonance - officially engineered or otherwise - of Rhodesian and South African treatment of military news.

The questionnaire was not sent to foreign media, nor were any foreign correspondents in South Africa interviewed for the case study, owing to a shortage of time and resources. Foreign press reports were compared with those appearing locally to get some indication of the extent of censorship in South Africa. Regarding the foreign press corps in South Africa, these journalists - some 40 in all at the height of the Angolan war[6] - dealt with the Department of Defence through the Department of Foreign Affairs. This was for reasons of protocol. Neither the journalists nor the Defence Force were very happy with the arrangement. The overlapping departmental bureaucracies made things cumbersome and slow, particularly as there were long-standing rivalries between Defence and Foreign Affairs. Foreign correspondents could and did attempt to exploit the differences by playing the official sources off against each other, but the author has no detailed documentation on this topic. The NPU argued that the foreign press should be placed on the same footing as local newsmen and invited to join the Agreement.[7] This had not occurred up to the time of writing and for obvious reasons seems unlikely ever to eventuate. The position of foreign correspondents vis-v-vis Government agencies in South Africa has not been examined and written up in detail since the Van Zyl Commission of Inquiry into the Press did so between 1950 and 1963. The subject was too complex to handle successfully here.

Largely for practical reasons, then, the study was confined to major daily and weekly newspapers and magazines in South Africa. Evidently an effort had to be made to overcome the lack of co-operation from the Afrikaans press. In the second stage of research the author went personally to newspapers in Johannesburg, Pretoria, Cape Town, Port Elizabeth and Windhoek to speak to defence correspondents, editors and others who had handled Angolan war news. According to the official SADF accreditation list of January 1976[8] there were 64 defence correspondents at that time representing 32 news organisations; in addition their editors and news editors could deal directly with the SADF. The author carried out 19 tape-recorded interviews averaging 45 minutes and informally discussed news of the war with at least 20 more. The tape-recorded interviews comprised the following:

TABLE 2

Name of Interviewee	Position	Publication	Daily or Weekly
Transvaal:			
John Patten	Political Correspondent	The Star	D
Bob Hitchcock	Defence Correspondent	Rand Daily Mail	D
Raymond Louw	Editor	Rand Daily Mail	D
Gordon Winter	Defence Correspondent	Sunday Express	W
Allister Sparks	Editor	Sunday Express	W
Neil Hooper	Defence Correspondent	Sunday Times	W
Tertius Myburgh	Editor	Sunday Times	W
Andrew Drysdale	Editor	Pretoria News	D
Carel Birkby	Defence Correspondent	To the Point	W
Ebbe Dommisse	Assistant Editor	Beeld	D
Confidential source	Senior editorial	Die Vaderland	D
Johan Snyman	Defence Correspondent	Die Transvaler	D
Cape:			
Gideon Joubert	Defence Correspondent	Die Burger	D
Willem Steenkamp	Defence Correspondent	The Cape Times	D
Henri Geyser	Defence Correspondent	The Argus	D
Johan Swanepoel	Defence Correspondent	Eastern Province Herald	D
Namibia:			
Hannes Smith	Editor	Windhoek Advertiser	D
Des Erasmus	Assistant Editor	Die Suidwester	D
Kurt Dahlmann	Editor	Allgemeine Zeitung	D

The defence correspondent of Rapport expressed a willingness to be interviewed but several appointments fell through. This means that the sole Afrikaans weekly newspaper is not represented although its deadline problems were the same as those of the English Sunday papers. In addition to the interviews, long letters in response to queries were received from:

Harvey Tyson	Editor	The Star	D
Al J Venter	Defence Correspondent	Scope	W

In all, the list covers 9 Opposition dailies (including the Advertiser and the Zeitung) and 2 weeklies (including Scope), along with 5 Afrikaans pro-Government dailies and the weekly To the Point. (The English pro-Government daily, The Citizen, did not exist when the war began.) The sample clearly favours newspapers in the main media centre, Johannesburg. Journalists in the Transvaal generally had the most contact with the military and served newspapers in other centres with their reports. It was found that the defence correspondents in other centres, specifically in the Cape, felt at a disadvantage owing to their distance from DHQ in Pretoria.

In the nature of the case study it seemed desirable to let the journalists guide discussion and suggest issues and events requiring close study. A detailed interview schedule was out of the question because many of the journalists - especially those in the Afrikaans press - were reluctant to be questioned about specifics. Most were wary of breaking the Defence Act and Official Secrets Act. The author explained that he was investigating matters of public record and was interested to know how the news had been obtained and processed. A free-ranging interviewing technique with a limited number of scheduled questions was used to allow the journalists to bring forward their own insights supported by personal experience. The scheduled questions were:

1. Give details of your experience as a defence correspondent prior to the Angolan war.
2. What, in general, was your feeling about the way the authorities handled the media during the war?
3. Can you give examples from your own experience which illustrate the general points?
4. How did you go about obtaining news from and clearing news with the authorities?

5. Did you notice any anomalies in the way news was released or cleared?

6. Did colleagues in your newspaper understand your problems? ("Colleagues" refers to the editor/news editor/defence correspondent or others closely concerned with war news).

7. What was your impression of the way journalists on other newspapers obtained news?

8. Did you notice any signs of discrimination by the authorities towards different media?

These questions were asked at different times in different wording during different interviews - as and when they seemed appropriate - but were always asked in some form. Question 1 established the extent of the journalist's specialisation in the defence field, allowing the author to give due weight to the words of the more and less experienced. Questions 2 - 5 were designed to elicit views on, and facts about, defence news policy and its practical implementation. Question 6 dealt with internal newspaper relationships affecting the newsgathering operation. Questions 7 and 8 offered journalists the chance to comment on their relationships with competitors in the media and to unburden themselves of their suspicions of favouritism, if any.

The interviews were carried out over a two-year period following the war. In all cases,in spite of the time lapse, recall was fluent and usually proved to be accurate when checked against press clippings. Later sub-sections summarise the main findings in the interview sample. The typed transcripts fill more than 200 pages. Fascinating as this material is - it throws light on common attitudes and activities characterising the press in South Africa today - the procedures followed here do not provide the basis for scientific generalisations about the groups concerned with military news. The interview material does, however, give an interior view of the journalist's norms, goals and perceptions of news production. It also supplements the history of war news coverage.

3.2 The military as external primary gatekeepers

Studies of this kind constitute a form of "gatekeeper" research, tracing the influences at work on people who control the news flow through media organisations.[9] An early gatekeeper study by White in 1950 emphasised the

subjective and social biases of a wire editor on a metropolitan newspaper.[10] It was soon recognised that there were many "gates" within media organisations through which information passed in order to reach the public - reporters, news editors, copy-tasters, sub-editors, editors, and even printers - and each of these could select, arrange, cut or disregard certain items, playing them up or down according to their preferences. As Dimmick notes, "the final story is shaped by many influences."[11]

In surveying the state of gatekeeper research, McQuail suggests that there are a number of "highly interesting questions to be asked about the informal structures which develop, the mechanisms of control which operate in the absence of formal censorship, about the nature of communcation roles and the means by which they are defined."[12] Amongst the influences he lists as determining the activities of the gatekeeper are:

> the authority and sanctions of the employer; the norms and ethics of the profession; the personal values and background of the individual "gate-keeper"; the informal influence of colleagues; the demands and responses of the audience; pressures from the outside community and social structure; other reference groups, which may include the sources of news.[13]

Subjectivity, it had been argued, was limited by bureaucratic pressures and by the reporter's orientation to the in-group of fellow newspapermen, his newspaper's policy, and the influence of news sources. According to Gieber, "the news story is controlled by the bureaucratic structure of which the communicator is a member".[14]

The present study focuses on two bureaucratic structures, the press and the military, at whose contact points stand the defence correspondents on the one hand and the military public relations officers on the other. It is proposed that the latter be labelled "external primary gatekeepers" since, as will be shown, they frequently usurped the functions of reporters in compiling news from raw data. The theoretical basis for treating them as gatekeepers - rather than as influences on gatekeeping - needs to be explained. The law established the PRO's as arbiters of news. In this situation the prerogatives of the media gatekeepers diminished while the PRO's gained ascendancy over

the content and emphasis of messages. The press was still at liberty to accept or reject these messages but could not publish information from other sources. It was thus impossible to assemble news stories in the conventional journalistic manner, balancing source against source in terms of the newspaper's own evaluation of significance. Officialdom had invaded decision-making in the newsroom.

The external primary gatekeeper, then, is a monopoly source who uses his unique access to information as a means of inducing co-operation from journalists. In the symbiotic relationship between reporters and source, the latter gives or withholds information to reward or punish compliance or non-compliance with his demands. The source needs the media to carry his messages to a broader public but demands that his communication goals be given paramountcy over those of the media. What these goals are and how they are projected in the South African defence context is discussed below. If and when the source succeeds in blackmailing the media to carry his messages the way he wants them carried, the putative independence of news organisations masks the real official control of the media. The fact that the source stands outside the media organisations in question should not obscure his fundamental gatekeeping role.

There are numerous studies in current literature of journalists' relationships with official sources. A seminal work in this field was Rosten's The Washington Correspondents (1937) which examined the exchanges of members of the press corps with politicians and bureaucrats on Capitol Hill.[15] A 1973 book by Sigal, Reporters and Officials, explored the links between the Washington Post, the New York Times, and big government. These works demonstrate that modern state administration is too complex for either officialdom or the media to understand and interpret in all its facets. Officials need the press to simplify and define policy issues for them, while the press frequently resorts to the conventional wisdom of officials to reduce uncertainty about what news is and what it is for.[16] A measure of standardisation of the news results. However accurate or inaccurate the resulting picture of the state and its functions may be, it is taken to be "authoritative" - and hence legitimised - owing to the nature of the sources. Tunstall observed in his 1970 study entitled The Westminister Lobby Correspondents that the authoritative (i.e. informed) position of Westminister politicians gave them the power to exploit journalists. He found that while the lobby

correspondents were wary of news management, their jobs depended on obtaining news from sources at Westminister and hence they were prone to manipulation. Fortunately for these journalists it was possible to tap several sources - chiefly rival politicians and civil servants in Whitehall - for more complete information. The use of alternative sources was a journalistic response to manipulation and was a means of "penetrating" the secretive official establishment.[17]

Where media are in competition for information, the power of such primary gatekeepers increases. Two divergent goals of news coverage - the need for exclusive scoops and the need for stories matching those carried by the opposition - both add to the manipulative power of the source. As Tunstall asserted in Journalists at Work (1971), a study of specialist writers in Britain, the pressures of competition are

> so deeply embedded in the ideology and occupational language of (British) journalism that "news" comes to be seen as (a) What the competition is saying, and (b) What the competition is not saying, but would if it could.... Whereas journalists discuss the unusual occasions when some major (and reliable) story is carried exclusively by one news organisation, what they spend much more time and energy on each day is covering (Tunstall's emphasis) the main news - which their competitors are likely to have in similar form. Trying to get news that other specialists do not, or will not, have is a largely optional extra.[18]

With the one and only source of major defence news in Pretoria, editors felt it was obligatory to cover whatever briefings were given or tours arranged for their correspondents. This naturally aided centralisation and standardisation of the news around official definitions of the situation. At the same time, by feeding titbits of news to favoured media the authorities let it be known that a co-operative attitude amongst the press would pay off. Journalists - and the press as a whole - maintained the appearance of automony by seeking originality in details where the basic information was the same for all media. Distinct news "angles", interpretations, breadth of treatment, and follow-ups on stories would individualise the routine coverage.

The strength of the competitive element is attested in Braestrup's important study of American press coverage of the 1968 Tet offensive by the Viet Cong. In spite of the presence of at least 60 United States journalists in South Vietnam, war news coverage was "narrow" because

> for competitive reasons, much of each bureau's scarce manpower in Vietnam was typically devoted to "matching" coverage, for the most part, of the same subject matter. ...The pattern - in terms of page one and evening TV news subject matter - was heavily duplicative, not complementary, for each bureau strove not to be "left behind" by its competitor. The chronic rebuke of media management to subordinates is: "Why didn't we have that story?"[19]

The fact that the journalists did not work "collectively" in any systematic sense meant that they did not divide up the story, disperse to cover all its aspects, and later pool information. Like journalists everywhere they informally exchanged stories, impressions and rumours - a habit which generates consensus over what to cover. The phenomenon of media consensus or consonance - occurring when media definitions of the situation converge and identify very closely - was observable during the Angolan war. An instance was the device of referring to "mercenaries" to explain the lightning strike from the south which in fact involved South African troops. While the media were uncertain about the exact identity of the column, the "mercenary" tag covered a host of doubts and conveyed some kind of explanation to the public. As the saying goes, journalists are lied to so often that ultimately they trust only each other - a little. Cohen and Young suggest that consonance in the news happens when events fit into a pattern of "expectedness" and can be interpreted as conforming with the "'taken for granted' world view" of the journalist.[20]

In the Angolan case, the press corps as a whole shied away from deliberate attempts to bring about solidarity. At one stage there was an attempt to form a committee representing all the defence correspondents in order to give them collective bargaining power with the authorities. According to Carel Birkby - a prime mover of the scheme - the committee would have sought to uphold professional standards in terms of a code of conduct for defence correspondents, and would have negotiated on behalf of the press corps to gain

better facilities and greater access to news.[21] The attempt fizzled out for obvious reasons. Many journalists felt they were already saddled with enough controlling bodies and that a new agency of liaison would only complicate their lives. Furthermore, the uncomfortable blend of mutual support and aggressive rivalry characterising the competitor-colleague relationships of newsmen militated against formal collective action at the liaison level. It was left to the Newspaper Press Union to bargain for the press as a whole while journalists scrambled for news. This played into the hands of the bureaucracy, for, as was explained above, the pressure towards matching coverage and exclusives facilitated news manipulation. With or without formal structures the journalists were in a no-win situation.

3.3 Communication objectives and attitudes of the military

If it is accepted that the communication goals of the military assume ascendancy over those of the media owing to the former's primary gatekeeping role, then these goals must be recognised and the approach of military officers to their work understood. During the Angolan war there was little doubt in the official mind what news policy amounted to - the Minister's rulings had made it absolutely clear that there was to be no news of South African involvement and there was to be a loyal press. At intervals during the Angolan war the Minister issued confidential directives to the media via Sapa banning reports or speculation concerning South African troop movements and activities. Editors were warned that unauthorised publication would result in the Defence Act being invoked. These directives were issued on August 11, August 16, October 30, December 30, January 6, and January 15. Other directives concerned bans on reporting Citizen Force call-ups, on publishing photographs and reports on the South African POW's being held captive by the MPLA, and, after 31 March 1976, on statements about refugees and refugee camps under the control of the SADF. The media were also advised on two occasions to play down reports about the MPLA as these could imperil South Africa.

These rulings helped the bureaucracy to establish its primacy over the media. While the defence correspondents as a group were relatively unorganised the military and political authorities were relatively well organised. There was little opportunity for the type of press "penetration" of the bureaucracy described by Tunstall in his Westminister study. The objectives of officialdom in communicating with the media were principally to use them as a one-way

channel to the local public and the world carrying Pretoria's political and diplomatic line, and at the same time prevent unauthorised disclosure of South Africa's guilty secrets. To gain maximum ascendancy over the media the authorities needed a legitimate formula, which they found in a consensual appeal to the national interest. Essentially this added moral authority to the already "authoritative" (informed) official news releases. The appeal to the national interest accounted for the subsidiary role of journalists in the liaison process. . By the same token, it assisted the bureaucracy to achieve relationships of mutual trust with journalists based on goal-sharing.

The language of consensualese comes easily to military figures in spite of their bellicose career functions. During the Vietnam war, American journalists were urged to "get on the team" with the military and were ostracised if they wrote critical reports.[22] Engendering a team spirit was also Dr Goebbels's aim when in 1938 he instructed the Nazi press to make the army popular "in word and picture, in individual reports, in comments and in leading articles" in order to reinforce the self-confidence of the German nation in its own strength.[23] Examples could be multiplied from many countries. In South Africa a statement of broad defence objectives was given by Lt-Gen J R Dutton at a symposium on national security shortly after the Angolan war. He said Government policy defined the objectives as:

> National survival as a prerequisite to personal survival
>
> The preservation of the basic principles of the democratic system
>
> The preservation of national territorial integrity, identity and values
>
> Optimal economic development to the maximum economic benefit of all citizens
>
> Good internal and external relations
>
> Orderly evolution as opposed to revolution.[24]

This was a formulation with which no establishment newspaper could possibly disagree. It blurred all distinctions between the Government and its legal opposition under the general rubric of state security and the national interest. The question whether South Africa was an unjust society and not worth defending had been tackled and answered by the Minister of Defence, Mr Botha, a year earlier. Nobody, he said, "denies our imperfection" but

the enemy was international communism which created misery and injustice wherever it went. Hence South Africa had to face up to the total onslaught with a "total effort". Mr Botha went on:

> Military as well as political leaders, and professionals in all fields, must in increasing measure be able to communicate with one another if we are to win this struggle. Communication, including its spiritual aspect, has become a prerequisite for the leaders of a people and of a sovereign state who want to master the art of survival.[25]

The total strategy theme, which was more fully outlined in Section One, is mentioned again to draw attention to the supra-political tone of military communications doctrine.

Whether these self-professed goals expressed the truth about military objectives is another matter. Giliomee identifies the military and big business as two emerging power factors in the white state which could redirect the policies of the executive arm. So far the military had remained subservient to the civilian leadership but military leaders had been pressing for a clearer and more enlightened approach to the country's internal problems.[26] Schieber, reviewing South Africa's military strength in a changing political context, observed that "an accurate description of South Africa's military base...must take cognizance of the political motivation and strength of its leadership" along with overall military potential.[27] As the main prop of the minority-ruled state the military obviously are deeply politically implicated. It would be natural to expect them to adopt specific communication objectives expressing their group interests in a manner not always corresponding to that of the civilian leadership with its own interests. Hitherto, however, the particularistic biases of the military have been muted by strong political leadership under Mr Botha, and, as Gilliomee suggests, the "harmonious relationship" can be expected to continue so long as Mr Botha remains Prime Minister.[28]

Ideologically, the SADF during the Angolan war projected the Government's view that the communist menace in Angola had to be combatted. Both the Minister of Defence and his Chief of the Defence Force, expressed themselves

on this point at different moments. On 28 November 1975 Mr Botha spoke of "confusing propaganda" emanating from abroad which was designed to cloud the "Russian-Cuban interference in the affairs of Angola".[29] Three days later Admiral Biermann said that the Cubans and Russians were attempting to disguise their presence in Angola.[30] Many media accepted this. Beeld, in an editorial on the "Red bear" warned that Russia was stalking Africa and in a mood to colonise it - but in the struggle against imperialism "South Africa is the oldest vanguard on the continent."[31] Where newspapers disagreed it was not over the communist menace but over the appropriate response for South Africa. The Cape Times warned that South African involvement in Angola could mean falling into a Russian trap: the civil war should thus constitute no exception to the Republic's sound policy of non-interference in the affairs of others.[32] The Rand Daily Mail proclaimed: "Russia must get out of Africa!"[33]

As a general rule, the major goals of military communications policy in wartime are to protect security secrets and to raise morale while undermining that of the enemy. From the military viewpoint it is imperative to maintain secrecy where the enemy could benefit from news of the deployment of armed forces, details of their weaponry and their planned actions. Another motive for censorship can be to maintain morale - the morale of the fighting men and of the public. In the short term censorship of bad news of military defeats or setbacks can prevent morale from plunging and can stay a rout at the front and panic at home. But once military news ceases to be credible it becomes worse than useless: it actually contributes to defeat. This was discovered by Goebbels after 1943 when Germans who suspected the truth about their country's perilous position ceased to listen to official news broadcasts and tuned in to the BBC instead. The deliberate "management of ignorance" by the Nazis provoked even loyalist troops in the Wehrmacht to indulge in "black listening" to foreign radio stations.[34] This is surely a phenomenon modern military strategists have pondered and absorbed. Journalists too have their thoughts on it. As Andrew Drysdale, editor of the Pretoria News, commented to the author:

> If the situation is running in one's favour the problem [of the effect of censorship on public morale] is not acute, but supposing we were to get into a situation where all of a sudden the papers announced: A bomb dropped

> on East London yesterday - it was not one of ours...if we had to take it to that point where the enemy is hammering at the front door, then we would be in a very difficult position.

Even Bob Hitchcock - the only defence correspondent to lose his accreditation over Angolan war news (the case is dealt with later) - stressed in an article reviewing the war that "the walls have ears...and certain aspects of military operations must remain secret." The corollary, however, was that censorship should not be "irrational" and should promote public confidence in the authorities.[35] Thus the military can count on significant press support for censorship of security information as well as some support for limited censorship to protect public morale.

As military men see it, in time of war the mass media should be regimented to instill a warlike spirit and imbue the foe with terror or win him over. The truth is strictly secondary in this programme but important nonetheless for reasons of credibility - and hence morale. As Qualter points out in a survey of 20th century war propaganda, appeals to national pride need to be supplemented by attention to the "ideological side of the conflict." The propagandist uses primary tools such as air-dropped pamphlets and broadcast speeches, along with secondary channels of communication such as news reports to convey emotional and intellectual attitudes to various audiences.[36]

The attitudes of military personnel towards the press influenced the way they handled inquiries and gave newsbreaks. Though personal likes and dislikes probably played their part in these attitudes, the PRO's were subject to systematic pressures which shaped their outlook. Group identification with the role of the military was certainly a major factor, while personal career ambitions curbed any tendencies towards conflict with their organisational chiefs. American studies of the attitudes of U.S. military censors indicate that the pressures towards conformity are strong but not unmitigated. Singletary found that censors were more favourable toward the media than officers who were not censors - but the censors also approved more of censorship. This ambivalent finding persuaded the researcher that censors strove to fulfil both aspects of the American armed forces' twin objectives of censorship: (a) to insure the prompt release to the public of the

maximum information consistent with security, and (b) to prevent disclosure of information which would assist the enemy. Censors performed as they were trained - namely as "arbiters between the need of the press to publish and the need of the military to maintain military security.[37]

Orwant and Ullmann suggested that officers' media attitudes would be shaped by three main factors: (1) the traditional esprit of the Army and its emphasis on authority and institutional identification, (2) the professional media expertise of the officers, which would help them evaluate press coverage of military news, and (3) the involvement of the officers in military issues, which would probably induce them to evaluate media treatment of issue more critically than civilians. The study broadly confirmed these hypotheses.[38]

During the war inquiries from the press kept the military PRO's busy night and day. The ever-patient, ever-polite Director of Public Relations, Brigadier Cyrus Smith, was to say later that problems had been circumvented by mutual understanding between pressmen and PRO's. The press had never deliberately created problems for him and in his contacts with them he had become aware of the "tremendous responsibility" of editors towards their readers.[39] Clearly the question of trust was important to the SADF. Gideon Joubert of Die Burger - a naval officer for 16 years before he became a journalist - told the author that because of his military background he could understand the need for secrecy and had sometimes worried that the SADF was telling journalists too much in the confidential briefings. Some of the journalists could be trusted implicitly because they were still soldiers in the Citizen Force reserve but others were more doubtful quantities.

> I feel that had an effect that very often the generals felt they could not speak openly. Even with people who were accredited and accepted they were still a bit wary.

The attitudes of military personnel towards pressmen influenced the way they handled inquiries and gave newsbreaks. Said Neil Hooper of the Sunday Times:

> As they get to know us better and trust us we are likely to get more out of them... You phone them up: if they like you or like the story, or if they see a chance to put their version across, they will provide you with more information than you had from your original sources,

> whoever they were. (E.g. telex messages from abroad, local contact stories, etc. - author). It's like with the cops. If you co-operate you'll get further.

The legal adviser of a newspaper told the author that after observing the PRO's in action and reviewing some of their decisions he had reached the conclusion that they erred "very much on the side of caution". They were unwilling to risk their jobs by passing any story which the Minister or senior SADF staff might later object to. Sometimes stories submitted to the Directorate for vetting had done the rounds of the military bureaucracy before any decision was taken. There had been times when information originating with the PRO's of the various armed services, or cleared by them, had been submitted to the Directorate and suppressed. In one case the Minister's own clearance was withdrawn later because another department of state was said to have objected to something in it.[40] While these anomalies could be frustrating to journalists the fact that they occurred at all indicated that there were some doubts how to handle particular issues. Shrewd journalists learnt to take maximum advantage of the few loopholes in policy and organisation; but as a rule, official control was fairly tight and the defence bureaucracy was impenetrable to the media. While the authorities may have experienced internal rivalries and conflicts, these were not open to exploitation by newsmen. Media rivalries, on the other hand, were a factor in news manipulation.

Liaison between the military and the media took three basic forms. First, there were the daily contacts - usually over the telephone, sometimes face-to-face - when journalists asked for clearance on reports and/or PRO's tendered their "advice". Then there was the briefing, which might be wholly or partly confidential and was intended to give defence correspondents a better grasp of the current military situation. Lastly there were tours to military installations or areas under SADF control. These procedures all provided means for news management. The briefings and tours by their nature tended to produce standardised news in which the agenda was set for the media and all they had to do was report what they were told or shown. The daily contacts allowed more flexibility both to the military establishment and the media, as the personal interview favoured the production of exclusive news tailored for particular ends. News was biased at source by selection, omission, "advice" on how to treat it, and by placing it with favourable media. Journalists

seldom managed to publish anything but what the military or political authorities wanted out in the open.

The techniques of news manipulation will emerge in later sub-sections but it is useful to have a typology to describe them. Chibnall has developed such a typology in an extremely valuable study of Scotland Yard's relationships with the British media. He argues that control agencies usually recognise three broad goals in their dealings with the news media, with specific manipulative techniques corresponding to each. The goals are (1) to protect the public reputation and image of the control agency, (2) to directly facilitate its work, and (3) to promote the aims, ideologies and interests of its members. Although these goals are not always admitted they mean in practice that news disseminated by the control agency is not governed by the truth but by the "appearance of the truth". Under Goal 1, were "sticks" and "carrots" (constraints and incentives) designed either to coerce or persuade reporters to contribute towards a favourable public image of the control agency. The techniques were: "freezing out" (the exclusion of an offending reporter from further help by the agency); "buttering up" (the converse of the freeze-out, aiming to make a good impression on the journalist by giving him privileged treatment); and harassment and repression (the threat to employ, or the actual employment of, legal sanctions or other means of intimidation to force reporters to conform and to deter deviants). Under Goal 2 were "passive" techniques to prevent, as well as "active" techniques to promote, the progress of control agency projects such as the capture of a robbery gang by the police. Passive techniques included the use of secrecy (holding back significant information from newsmen); suppression (exerting pressure on editors to drop a story); and "stops" (a form of temporary suppression in terms of which the control agency takes the media into its confidence and appeals for a postponement of publication. Active techniques comprised the use of "smokescreens" (statements or leaked stories of dubious veracity to confuse and divert the media and defuse public criticism), and defamation, deception and pressurisation, all of which were "dirty tricks" typical of propaganda campaigns, designed to smear, hoax, or cause panic amongst target persons or groups. Lastly, Goal 3 encompassed techniques whose aim was broadly political in that they sought to publicise and advance the policy objectives of those in charge of the control agency. Chibnall does not name these techniques but suggests that they may take the form of "direct" exploitation of media access to

deliver policy statements, or "less direct" means, such as timing public statements for maximum impact. Chibnall concludes his survey of types with the observation:

> Journalists who rely on powerful organisations for day-to-day information, then, face severe and possibly insoluble problems. They are at the receiving end of a constant trickle or flow of propaganda - sometimes open - sometimes disguised - which cannot simply be ignored because it is vital to their professional life.[41]

The next sub-section details several other studies showing how journalists are dependent on official sources whether or not they believe what they are told. They respond by distancing themselves from the propaganda machine or developing an affinity with it, or with a combination of these attitudes and roles.

3.4 Journalists' reactions to manipulation and control

Journalists, as secondary gatekeepers in the system of official information dissemination, are not mere functionaries but take real decisions which affect the form and content of messages. This gives them power to negotiate with the primary gatekeepers whose communication goals cannot be realised without some co-operation from the media. Journalists are professionally entrenched within media organisations while official press liaison personnel stand outside these organisations. Every news medium, whether private or state-owned, has its particular biases or policy norms embodying the expectations of managements, editors and audiences. As Breed has shown in a study of social control in the newsroom, media policy is carried out by editorial staff whether or not there is any overt statement of policy or mechanism designed to put it into effect.[42] News from whatever source is adapted to conform to the overall pattern of news selection and presentation which distinguishes a medium from its competitors. Anyone wishing to influence the channel from without needs to take account of these media policies. The professional codes and newswriting conventions of journalists also have to be considered, since to flout these is to invite rejection of one's message by journalists. Too often, to their own disadvantage, officials

fail to pay due respect to the autonomy of journalists and try instead to impose their will by dictating how the news should be written. This was deeply resented in the Angolan case. Sigal, reflecting on the "ideology" of newsmen, notes that while their dominant role conception tends to be that of the neutral or impartial observer their actual performance is shot through with evaluative judgements.[43] The journalist does not want to have his discretion and judgement tampered with by outside agencies.

To a large extent, however, the conventions of journalism are dictated by the needs of media organisations and are enforced by professional sanctions. For practical reasons the media must be organised on a departmental basis to cope with the flood of all types of information, write it up, comment on it, and edit it. As Dimmick has pointed out, "office politics" becomes a central feature of the gatekeeping process because conflicts between different departments have to do with the way news is processed into its final shape. Media organisations, in his view, are "political coalitions" in which tension and strife are symptomatic of the struggle to resolve questions of policy.[44] Amongst the sanctions employed to ensure group identification with the goals of the organisation are the rebukes meted out to those who fail to meet deadlines or produce stories according to the diarised schedule. The news diary itself reflects a professional consensus (usually arrived at in conferences of senior editorial personnel) on "what the social universe looks like" and "how things happen". Cohen and Young apply these phrases to explain how journalists systematically attempt to fit events into their particular world-views. Stereotyping of the news underlies so-called "objectivity". One of the strongest sanctions in the newsroom is to demand that journalists maintain their objectivity (i.e. agree with the consensual world-view) in what they write.[45] Because media operations are punctuated by deadlines, the production of news assumes a routinised, periodic nature corresponding to the daily or weekly cycle of the organisation. Journalists have to conform to deadline needs with well-timed, properly phrased reports that can be fitted into the mosaic of reports embodying the medium's protrayal of reality. Thus outside sources aiming to influence or control media content achieve better results if they package the news to accord with the bureaucratic demands of the media organisations concerned.

The conventions of "straight news" reporting are deemed to absolve the journalist from responsibility for the slanted or untrue content of reports.

The major convention of sourcing whatever appears in print - particularly explicit opinion - is a device which, whatever its other merits, tacitly conveys to the reader the observer status of the professional communicator. This convention is easily exploited by officials and others with the resources to organise press conferences, offer tour junkets to pressmen, exgurgitate a stream of brightly worded handouts, and in other ways manufacture pseudo-news out of non-events. Indeed, this material, if not always big news, is often welcomed by the media because it helps to fill space. As Sigal points out, the straight news format allows the publication of stories based on the views of a single news source, and most news "is not what has happened, but what someone says has happened" - that "someone" most often being an official or institutional person with authoritative status.[46] The combination of professional detachment and authoritative information and comment is so compelling that in general few journalists see reason to question it as a means of recording the "news". Although it is often stipulated in newspaper stylebooks and instructions to staff that opinions should be "balanced" with comment from other sources, the straight news format does not guarantee that this is done. Even if it is, the other sources are likely to be institutional persons in their own right - parliamentarians, local spokesmen, etc. - and so the dependence of journalists on establishment figures is scarcely lessened.

None of this means that all journalists share the same outlook on the correct attitude to adopt towards outside sources, or even that journalists as individuals are always consistent in the attitudes they do adopt. As Chibnall found in his study of police reporting in Britain, journalists' products (news) were "cast in a standardised form" reflecting the dominant conceptions of what was newsworthy and what a "responsible" reporter should write. But they took up varying attitudes towards their work. Some regarded news as just a commodity for sale, others thought of it as a vital public service, a medium for creative expression, or a means of representing the views of deviants or the exploited in society. In many individuals a number of apparently contradictory definitions of news subsisted together and were evoked when it suited the particular practical purposes of the definers. News meant different things to different people or to the same people at different times. To many a journalist it was "convenient" to define the enterprise in terms of industrial commodity production —

> because he knows his work will be open to criticism. He is probably not producing particularly penetrative or "literary" journalism, but he may still be producing a subtly individualistic and painstaking piece of prose to which he has some kind of intellectual commitment. Thus, while he distances himself from his creation by defining it as a commodity, he may still take pride in his mastery of the genre of popular journalism. He may argue that it is more intellectually taxing to produce a short account of an event using words of two syllables than it is to construct a longer account using longer words. Moreover, he realises that he is providing the public with information which they could obtain in no other way.[47]

News management posed a real threat to the professional pride of the journalist, according to Chibnall, but after the initial realisation that official sources were "selling him a line" he generally came to accept it as inevitable. His awareness of its existence "merely reinforces an incipient cynicism towards news".[48]

Cynicism, however, is not the only - or even the most likely - response of the average journalist to the pre-eminently consensual appeal of national defence authorities. In South Africa, as elsewhere, the national interest exerts a powerful influence on concepts of journalism and may override the more specific media-orientated notion of the public interest. Aitken concluded his study of official secrecy in Britain with the difficulty unresolved:

> There is no ideal solution to the problems of Official Secrecy, but one which strikes a fair balance between tight security for important national secrets and open government for those areas of official administration about which the public has a right to know, is surely the best of compromises in an imperfect world.[49]

Who decides on the "fair balance"? That is the basis of the problem, for ambiguous concepts of the national and public interest will in practice take

on a more definite meaning in accordance with the power of the government of the day to compel or persuade the media to accept its definition of the national interest. For journalists, conflicts can be minimised - though never entirely removed - by embracing some idealised notion of the "national interest" which subsumes the public interests served by the media. This involves a recognition of the partisan nature of the media in an essentially pluralistic political system which, nonetheless, has the support, as a system, of all its citizens. Journalists working for commercial media are naturally inclined to see the system as a pluralistic one in which competing groups strive to maximise publicity and returns for themselves. This applies to political parties, businesses, the media, and even government departments - with the exception of the military and certain others in the common weal. Only when the military is obviously used to serve a sectional interest does the national interest become forfeit as journalists fall back on concepts of the public interest as distinct from the government's interest. This certainly happened in the Angolan case.

The essential conflict in journalists' minds and behaviour when reporting defence matters lies between adopting what will be called an "independent-newsman" stance and a "military-supportive" one. These role models are never clearly separated in actuality. This is partly because, as Chibnall suggested above, journalists view their roles differently in different circumstances; but also there is the unresolved dilemma - often consciously realised - of whether to act as an adversary of government or to identify with it in the war situation. Dimmick has defined role conflict along with role strain as the two besetting problems of the military reporter.[50] Role conflict arises from the incompatibility of two or more roles which a person is seeking to enact. Such conflicts arise when the reporter's sense of professional commitment to getting and reporting the truth seems to run counter to his patriotism. Role strain involves stresses on a desired role, such as when a person is hindered from carrying out a role he understands and accepts. Role strains on defence correspondents can include censorship, the physical risks of obtaining front-line news, the wearying and sometimes shocking effect of the job on a man's nervous system, and difficulties of communicating with one's office owing to the prevailing chaos. Both role conflict and role strain will be reduced in proportion to the journalist's identification with the goals of the military and his acceptance of military policy towards the news media.

The choice of the independent-newsman model usually involves greater conflicts and stresses for the journalist concerned. By insisting on writing what he individually perceives to be the truth, the journalist risks not only falling foul of military displeasure but can run counter to the consensus of his colleagues on what the news is and how it should be interpreted. Anyway the need to provide matching coverage entails keeping abreast of what the official agencies are saying although one may not believe them. The independent newsman ideally seeks to enhance the rationality of his audience by giving them the fullest facts and the most significant opinions irrespective of the interests involved. The military-supportive newsman, on the other hand, is also an idealist who puts public morale, the image of the fighting forces, and counterpropaganda ahead of the truth on any issue (although this does not preclude the truth). Quite obviously, the institutional needs of the media and the military will be more smoothly satisfied where there is no conflict between the official source and the journalist recipient of news. The journalist soon discovers that there are forms of news which suit the institutional goals of both the media and the military. "News" is produced by cultivating good relationships and joint participation in public relations campaigns. This can involve being a witting or unwitting accomplice to secrecy, suppression, news "stops", smokescreens, smears, and kite-flying (testing the air for responses to policy options). The independent newsman, meanwhile, may find himself frozen out for lack of co-operation. Of course, as the case of the Windhoek Advertiser and the Allgemeine Zeitung showed (see Section Two), being frozen out can have its advantages. But the risks are considerable.

Journalists all develop techniques of their own to cope with the manipulation and control applied to them. Even supportive newsmen can find the military's demands to be more than they are able to satisfy, given particular media policies, and will resort to ways of bargaining for the news in order to reach the best compromise with the policies of the military. Bargaining is equally important, or perhaps more so, to independent journalists, since they have to offer solid incentives to the military in order to overcome their resistance to releasing news to them. It is possible to originate a typology of journalistic bargaining methods, based on typical responses to official manipulation. These methods would include (a) forms of leverage, using one source to prize open another (e.g. the threat to bypass a source and go to others for "their side of the story", or conversely, the offer to treat one's source of information as confidential and go elsewhere for confirmation and

reactions); (b) the related technique of "trading off" one news item against another (e.g. offering to drop an embarrassing or awkward piece of information in return for a newsbreak in some other area); (c) interrogation, or intense and persistent questioning, suggesting that the pressure will let up only when the news medium gets answers (such interrogation may take the form of public queries in reports and editorials, or private conversations between journalists and officialdom); (d) the device of ventriloquism, or putting words into a source's mouth and reporting them as his own (probably the oldest trick in journalism); (e) "speculation" in news reports and editorial comment designed to draw attention to facts which can not be made public; and (f) overtures to officialdom, aiming to bring about more open administration and offer incentives towards less secrecy. Though by no means exhaustive, this list suggests the wide range of techniques available to the gatekeepers of media organisations. Even relatively powerless journalists like South Africa's defence correspondents have these resources open to them and can at times force more information into the public arena.

News, then, is by no means the product of comprehensive surveillance by impartial individuals in organisations devoted to neutral concepts of the public and national interest. On the contrary, it consists of highly politicised and somewhat personalised accounts of "what the social universe looks like" to groups with access to the media. Journalists have the most direct access and this gives them real power to shape the news. But in the field under study the external primary gatekeepers are always trying to dominate and often succeed. News emerges from the symbiosis of two bureaucracies whose work is facilitated by complementary rather than conflictual relationships. Where the operational needs of the bureaucracies conform closely - as in the manufacture of a steady stream of publishable reports - the transmission of "straight news" is smooth and uncomplicated. The transactions of newsmen and officials become more complex where media organisations have different operational needs from those of the bureaucracy or where individual journalists reject their servile role. Outright conflict, however, seldom occurs because this would disrupt the primary function of reporters on the beat - to provide coverage matching that of competitors. So long as this function is fulfilled, the media organisation concerned can tolerate limited conflict with the official bureaucracy. Journalists, for their part, may tolerate role conflicts and role stresses up to a certain point, beyond which either their efficiency goes or their editors realise that they are no longer "objective" within the consensual framework and reassign them or sack them.

3.5 South African journalists' responses

(i) Senior personnel

Most of the journalists interviewed for this study regarded the Government's secrecy and lack of candour as the major topic of concern. They had strong views pro- or contra- the kind of censorship which had been exercised during the war. They justified their views with reference to national security or the public's right to know - usually repeating the arguments which had been heard in Parliament and voiced in newspaper editorials. This was especially true of editors and other senior staff who saw the issue primarily in political terms. John Patten, political correspondent of The Star, expressed the disillusionment of Opposition pressmen over what they saw as the Government's betrayal of good faith:

> The military correspondents were passing on messages that the Government wanted us to hear. They said it was in the public interest and all that sort of thing, but there was a doubt as to whether or not it really was. To begin with we felt that we were possibly withholding news in the national interest. Later on this was superceded by the view that it was not in the national interest to be withholding news. A doubt changed to a certainty and we saw that we had been made to serve a political interest.

Patten's editor, Harvey Tyson, commented in a letter to the author that "we were very angry - and rightly so - at the time, and we shall continue to be indignant in our dealings with Defence on this issue." Allister Sparks, at the time editor of the Sunday Express, said he had "searched my conscience" whether it was right for his newspaper to publish the "lies" coming from official sources. Tertius Myburgh, editor of the Sunday Times, said the role of defence correspondent had become one of the "great non-jobs" in newspaper work, exploding the romantic myth of writing under fire, because these correspondents had served merely as willing or unwilling "conduits for press releases." One could fulminate against the situation in editorials and run the occasional short report announcing to readers that material had been censored, but in the long run where did this get the newspaper? The Defence Act remained, and maybe the tactic only confused readers

more than they were confused already, said Myburgh. The lower echelons of the military - including the liaison staff with which the press dealt - were themselves not fully in the picture, said Raymond Louw, editor of the Rand Daily Mail. He said it was ironic that these officers were empowered to use the "blue pencil" freely with newspapers, "because we often gained the impression that they didn't know what we knew" (from agency and other sources).

Pressmen constituted a kind of informational elite, privileged to receive outside agency reports and also privy to confidential briefings by the military. The dangers of confidentiality were noted by the editor of the Pretoria News, Andrew Drysdale, who said his position in Pretoria had made him especially wary of becoming "too closely associated" with the Directorate of Public Relations of the SADF. That did not mean that he was "hostile" but

> I think that as in so many aspects of journalism one can become part of the "old boy" network, and that is an exceedingly dangerous thing. The trouble with [confidences] is that one ultimately restricts oneself... You are then bound by honour not to disclose.

The way to avoid too close an identification with the military was to record the source of the news in every instance:

> We are seldom in a position either to gainsay or confirm what has been said. We have to publish in good faith but the attribution is necessary... Since we are straitjacketed in terms of the law, if we are going to run that stuff we have to be awfully careful to indicate to our readers whether... these are the dinkum facts or whether there is some other motive involved.

Drysdale's remarks probably summed up fairly accurately the attitudes of his fellow editors in the Opposition press to the problem of bias at source. The "dinkum facts" were established by a consensus amongst newsmen (deriving from a combination of agency reports, own correspondents' messages, and SADF news releases) as to where the truth really lay. The Opposition press distanced itself from the official "line" with the techniques of straight reporting.

Amongst senior journalists in the pro-Government Afrikaans press there was a more acquiescent attitude to official news policy, though perplexities arose in some minds. The orthodox view, backing both intervention in Angola and the secrecy surrounding it, was expressed by Ebbe Dommisse, assistant editor of Beeld.

> In general our attitude to censorship is clear. We always operate within the law, and there is a very specific law about Defence Force reporting. As far as the Angolan war was concerned, we knew that there were South African troops involved but the law prohibited us and other newspapers from publishing anything about it, except with the permission of the SADF. We operated within that framework. ...Our attitude I suppose was that the Government should be trusted - I mean, they're not going to send the kids into Angola just for the hell of it: there were big issues involved. What I think in cases like this is that the Minister of Defence is on our board of directors[51] and we would ask him "What's going on here?" and he would tell us: "All right, I'll state the whole case in Parliament" - so we waited to see what he said.

Trust in the Government and SADF was not shattered even when it was realised that they were unreliable and prone to distort information for their own ends. Dommisse explained his attitude as follows:

> This was obviously a secret war and there were things that could not be said clearly. You have to accept that, it's like that in every war. The first casualty is always the truth! ...I think we were sometimes fed information which was obviously put out to confuse the enemy - as in every war - and we published it, not knowing at the time that it was wrong. We were publishing in good faith.

Dommisse added that he was not sure the military always understood the nature of news, because "they change the funniest things under the sun." Often, it seemed, they were on the lookout for "things that would cause dissatisfaction" inside different Government departments. They also cut "irrelevant things", and if he were a censor he would work "completely differently".

Sometimes Beeld and its sister paper, Die Burger, had wanted to publish a story but realised they could fall foul of the "tricky" provision in the Defence Act forbidding the publication of anything which could spread alarm or despondency. Still, there were "ways" of writing the story that South Africa was involved in Angola - by printing maps and referring to "mercenaries" and the "allied forces" (geallierde magte). The two papers carried a fair amount of clout with the military and they had a staff of about 20 in Pretoria to cover all Government affairs, so it was "quite easy for us to operate". There had been times when SADF personnel met Nasionale Pers people for discussion "across a table" about problems.

The basically supportive Nasionale Pers newspapers had resorted to bargaining when they felt the military could disclose more to its own advantage and that of the country. According to a source in Perskor, there was "an element of unfairness" in the treatment accorded to Nasionale Pers and it rankled. Differences within the National Party went all the way to the top. Cabinet Ministers on Perskor's side represented the view that South Africa should have been more cautious about intervention, but newspapers "couldn't write about the conflict at that level". Perskor papers contented themselves with covering as much of the officially approved news as possible while discreetly questioning the intervention policy in editorials. There was some sympathy for the Opposition newspapers who attacked censorship. The author's confidential source on the Johannesburg afternoon daily, Die Vaderland, said the feeling against censorship was inspired by the belief that the Government should have told the nation what it was doing in its name.

> There was a lot of fear, rumour, and despondency in the country simply because people were not told what was happening. There was definitely a feeling of uneasiness because South Africans just didn't know where they stood or what was expected of them. There were all sorts of

> stories flying around. For instance, you heard that we were near Luanda but nobody was sure. ...It was a very dangerous adventure we got ourselves into there...a war which wasn't declared and the Government not saying what we were there for, what we stood to gain from involvement, and what it was all about.

This amounts to politicising the issue and it reflects a fairly independent stance. The source conceded that there were different points of view within Perskor. However, there is little to distinguish what he said from the Opposition's call for a more open information policy. The corrosive effect of rumour on public morale was to be a leading theme of Opposition criticism in Parliament and the press, while the issue of intervention was to be publicly debated only after it was all over.

There is evidence that the authorities were deliberately discriminatory towards different media, as the reader will see in the remainder of this Section. A kind of hierarchy of favouritism came into being before the war and was refined during and after it. The SADF gave preference to foreign media over local media, pro-Government over anti-Government media, the SABC radio and TV services over the press as a whole, and Afrikaans over English papers. They were also accused of catering more for daily than weekly papers and more for the Reef and Pretoria media than others. The accusation that Nasionale Pers was ranked a cut above Perskor has been mentioned already and was a key issue during the war.

The Defence Force was not to blame for the fact that its Directorate of Public Relations was based at Defence Headquarters in Pretoria and thus very accessible to the Reef media. The neglect of weekly papers was an oversight that was corrected soon after the war when the Defence Committee recommended certain concessions to suit the deadline needs of morning, afternoon and weekly papers - thus spreading news transmission and manipulation more equitably. (See Section Two.) Official news policy towards different media could best be described as opportunistic, for while the hierarchy was a fact of life for everyone there were significant exceptions made to it. The military "placed" news where it was most likely to have whatever propaganda effect was desired. This explains why the foreign media topped the pyramid -

not because journalists from abroad were more liked by the authorities (they were certainly less liked and trusted), but because they gave Pretoria access to the international audience it sought to reach with its appeals for help.

All of the journalists interviewed agreed that the SABC and the foreign press had benefited from discrimination. To support their charges they mentioned a variety of incidents. Notable among these was the fact that foreign pressmen were briefed before the local group, and by more senior authorities, when the Government decided to admit limited involvement in Angola during November 1975; the fact that Kobus Bosman, at that time a radio newsman, had been allowed to broadcast from inside Angola while the press was kept out; and the fact that the SABC was given special facilities to produce its television documentary, the Battle of Bridge 14, after the war. When it came to discrimination between different sections of the press there was less agreement. Favoured pressmen evidently believed they had every right to exploit "good contacts" if they had them. As one put it, news was a "selfish" business - "and I don't think we can be blamed" for making the best use of inside sources.

Ebbe Dommisse of Beeld said that in a competitive situation the Nasionale Pers group always fought for its own newspapers in the first place. It was undeniably true that the radio and television services got preferential treatment from the Defence Force as well as from the police. It was also true that the foreign press got better newsbreaks during the war - "for reasons that the Defence Force knows best". Nasionale Pers had complained about this favouritism, and could put its complaints "rather strongly because we have good access". When Nasionale Pers complained, it was to advance its own interests although the newspaper industry as a whole probably gained some advantage. Said Dommisse:

> You see we are in a hell of a competitive situation, that's why we reason as we do. I suppose our complaints make an impression but sometimes for us as a newspaper it's not worthwhile to have other newspapers having equal access to news because we've got a head start there. Why should we share it with somebody else? Any newspaper

> with good contacts is going to try and preserve them and not give them to anybody else. I mean you often find that especially the English-language press do have a drawback there and they clamour for press officers and liaison or whatever, and we say: "Oh well, if you want to have it then you must have it." But you know these press officers and people like that just give you the old ordinary stuff that everybody else has and that's not what makes news.

The competitive ethic was a double-edged weapon to be used against other newspapers as well as with them in defence of press interests.

Not all Opposition journalists thought the Afrikaans press was getting a better deal. Andrew Drysdale of the Pretoria News said he had "never stopped to think about it" but he was sure his paper had never been "scooped hands down" by the Afrikaans press. There was no question but that the foreign press and the SABC had been given information to promote the Government's political viewpoint on the war. Still, he thought newspapers had told the public more "between the lines" in news reports about the Angolan war than the SABC had.

(ii) Defence Correspondents

Some defence correspondents, like their editors, recognised the political dimensions of military secrecy but as a rule they were more concerned with the everyday difficulties of finding something to write. At the liaison level there was a strong tendency to depoliticise the issue for the sake of improved communications. The clear contrast between the press's desire to print as much as possible about South Africa's intervention, and the military's policy of allowing nothing on that subject to appear (until later in the war) created a basically conflictual situation. Here newsmen's patriotism and the identification of the public interest with the national interest came into play. Al J Venter, author of several books on warfare in Africa,[52] and a prolific defence correspondent for Scope magazine, told the author in a letter that he had won the military's trust because "they know my work and they know they are not likely to be compromised". Even

so, during the Angolan war he was subjected to "severe censorship". Early in the war he arrived at Rundu to witness one of the biggest supply operations northwards ever organised by the SADF, but was warned "in the 'friendliest' of terms" about the Official Secrets Act. The censorship, in his view, had been

> one of the biggest blunders made by any South African Government...At the same time, let there be no mistake that while I am critical of several actions (both past and present) of the incumbent government, I am still a South African whose basic personal interest is to see the survival of the society as a viable entity. My contribution to the whole is providing what I term an "awareness"...That my relations with the military in this country are good says something for the fact that there must be some like-minded people in that department as well. Taken as a whole the military in South Africa is a pragmatic institution more interested in survival than in political ideologies.

Having opted for the role of a military publicist Venter found himself thwarted by censorship, but a strongly consensual rationale helped him overcome the annoyance. This became a familiar pattern in the interviews.

Another strongly pro-military defence correspondent was Willem Steenkamp who, like Venter, was to publish some of his experiences in book form after the war.[53] As an intelligence officer with a Cape Town regiment, Steenkamp went into Angola in January 1976 and remained there till the South African withdrawal in March. Before his call-up Steenkamp monitored the Angolan situation carefully and kept his editor on the Cape Times briefed.

> I was doing my primary job, which is analysis and educated comment, not trying to drag stories out of the Defence Force. From time to time this analysis would get into the paper when I did leader page stuff, or often I would take all the copy flowing in and do a roundup news report.

Although his newspaper was outspokenly against censorship - and ran a blank space at one stage which "caused a hell of a fuss" - Steenkamp personally enjoyed excellent contacts with the SADF. With his military background he regarded himself as one of the few properly equipped specialists on the subject writing for the South African media - a fact that was appreciated by the military. The only built-in fault in the censorship system was that "too much stuff can be killed" although in some cases the SADF was "justified in suppressing news". One reason for censorship during the war could have been that the Government "did not want to overemphasise the thing". Since the war, several accounts including his own book Adeus Angola had appeared but Steenkamp said he knew of two manuscripts which the military had flatly refused to allow published. The reason was not that the SADF was still sensitive about "things done long ago and ill done" but rather that the books could have contained information useful to the enemy.

> Military intelligence is a funny thing. You get a little bit of information here and a bit there and put them together and you can draw some very strong conclusions... Intelligence covers a lot of things, it's not just facts concerning troops and arms but tactics, organisations, strengths, and even the mentality of the forces...So I think the reason for censorship was military security. I don't see what political motive there could be.

Steenkamp said he agreed with the "strategic outlook" of the military and therefore did not criticise them much, although if he did not like something he said so. In his opinion the Angolan war had opened up a credibility gap between newspapers and the public because people knew they had been misinformed. The Government perhaps now recognised that in a war situation "facts kill rumours". Even atrocity stories such as the allegations of Bill Anderson (see Section One, page 27) were cleared for publication by the military after the war and refuted by them. The best form of counter-information was hard fact. The Government had fallen down over Angola because it did not understand this.

> I would be sitting under a bush in Angola and my wife would send me a newspaper clipping about this terrifying weapon, the Stalin's Organ - we call it the Red-eye. I thought to myself, Good grief, look at this thing: It's a relatively simple and crude unguided artillery rocket launcher which the Russians started using in 1941 and hasn't been modified much since. The SADF had captured one of these things and was showing it around the country but nobody made a concerted effort at counter-information... And all the newspapers, knowing no better, went off: This is the sort of weapon our guys have to contend with in Angola - a bloody impressive-looking great big lorry it is too - it looks pretty fearsome, and yet it's not.

To Steenkamp this showed that the press was as much at fault as the military in not employing specialists to put the facts clearly before the public and interpret them correctly. A journalist with an obviously independent role concept commented that the Government had a good grasp of propaganda because the Stalin's Organ had been shown around with the object of scaring the public into supporting South African militarism.

The defence correspondent of Die Burger, Gideon Joubert, drew a distinction between the military and political aspects of intervention. He said a newspaper should back the country's armed forces "100 per cent" and "try to keep the morale of the people high". It had been unfortunate and "a bit unfair" on parents that they sent their sons to fight in a war they did not know about, but it was an extremely delicate diplomatic issue at the time and the Government "had no option in this thing".

> I differed with the Defence Force at times. There was this occasion when a mine blew up some black children in Owambo. I thought people should know about this - how cruel they [terrorists] are to children - but the Defence Force said no... They have their reasons, I don't know what they are but there it is.

A journalist who was reluctant to talk about his work and then gave only a brief interview was Gordon Winter, defence correspondent of the Sunday Express during the Angolan war.[54] Winter said his relationship with the military had been "very good", for unlike most SAAN staffers he was "sympathetic to the Defence Force". Even if an alleged "massacre" by the SADF took place he "wouldn't write it up that way". He claimed to have "the availability of (Mr P W) Botha - being friendly with him on a personal basis" and as a result had experienced "no difficulties" with his stories. He said he had been on several trips to operational areas and the only occasions when he consciously had to suppress information were when the PRO's asked all journalists not to mention the names of places they had visited.

To some defence correspondents the Angolan censorship seemed incomprehensible. Johan Snyman, defence correspondent of Die Transvaler, regarded it as "a riddle". It was not a "healthy situation" for rumours to be spreading about Cubans or the capture of South Africans: facts which were known to the world but not admitted to the people of the Republic. Carel Birkby of To the Point was exasperated by the censorship and deeply frustrated by the knowledge that good front-line action was going unreported.

> I don't think there was anything in the Angolan adventure that needed to be suppressed at all. As far as I know there were no colossal defeats that had to be hushed up; and I don't think the troops were suffering any undue hardships. I could see there might have been a need for time-lags - you know sometimes you don't want to have things published within an hour of their happening as you destroy the possibility of the whole thing succeeding - but there was nothing in that campaign which couldn't very fairly have been published.

There was no conflict in Birkby's mind about what he ought to be doing - bringing the news back to the people at home: a contribution to the war effort - but the situation induced great stress for him.

A minority of the defence correspondents interviewed regarded the censorship as deliberately manipulative and engineered for political reasons. To

them it was unjustifiable. These men found it increasingly difficult to carry on their jobs. Henri Geyser of the Argus went to his editor shortly after the war and asked to be relieved of the defence beat. "I felt it would be impossible for me to continue...it would be a propaganda exercise," said Geyser. The editor accepted with good grace and found someone else to fill the beat. (Meanwhile Geyser's fellow defence correspondent on the Argus, Johann Beyers, made up his mind to leave the newspaper and join the SADF as a public relations officer, gaining rank as a captain). In Geyser's view, "if one has to talk about morale, you don't need propaganda".

> To me one example where propaganda was not needed was where Israel said, "We are in a war and we are going to fight it." They had man, woman, child, granny and grandfather backing them. There was a feeling of unity, of one country in a conflict, and all were in it together. My feeling is that if the South African Government had at the time of Angola put its cards on the table and told us that we were in a war - stand with us - I am sure they would have had the support of certainly a large percentage of whites including English-speaking Opposition people.

As a second lieutenant in the Citizen Force, Geyser was called up to serve in Angola and as a result saw some action - about which he could not write. Speaking "as a soldier more than as a journalist" Geyser maintained that the only justifiable reason for censorship was military security, to prevent the enemy knowing one's plans. Clearly, Geyser was a victim of both role conflict (between his professional ethic as an independent journalist and the demands of the military) and of role stress (the censorship making it impossible to carry out what he regarded as a proper informative role).

(iii) The case of Bob Hitchcock

An incident fraught with significance in terms of the general theoretical approach outlined earlier was the de-accreditation of Bob Hitchcock as defence correspondent of the Rand Daily Mail. This happened in March 1976, not long after the official list of accreditations had been drawn up and

ratified, though by that time Hitchcock had been the defence correspondent of the newspaper for some years and had even covered the 1973 Yom Kippur war in Israel.

Hitchcock was the only defence correspondent to be publicly critical of news censorship during the war. He also carried his watchdog function on the SADF further than most others would dare. On the question of censorship, he felt there were definite "political overtones" and that the SADF had been "managing the news to their own advantage". Censorship he could accept if it were fairly done and necessary for strategic reasons, which he thought had been the case when he reported the Yom Kippur war. Hitchcock had been one of the roughly 900 war correspondents who flooded into Israel in October 1973 after Egypt and Syria had carried out a surprise attack on the country. Assigned to cover the war for the Rand Daily Mail, Hitchcock, like other foreigners, found that military censorship was strict but after representations by the foreign press corps it was eased and expedited. There was nothing "haphazard" about it - and therein lay a major difference with South African military censorship. Reporters in Israel were allowed to visit either front at Suez or the Golan Heights but had to file all their messages through Tel Aviv.

> You went back and wrote the story and then you took it to one of a dozen military censors who were all sitting at a long desk where you queued up and handed your story to an officer. You very soon got to know what they were looking for - for instance you must never publish the type of military hardware used in operations, or the exact number of men used by the side you were covering: i.e. strategic and tactical information. There were these basic points and after a week barely any correspondent had anything endorsed at all. We were permitted to criticise the Israeli Government if we didn't agree with the way it was handling the war. You knew exactly where you stood.

Perhaps Hitchcock's recollection of the censorship made it seem better than it was - certainly many of the foreign journalists in Israel continued to resent the censorship, as a study of their attitudes was to show.[55]

Hitchcock's general point was made in an article he wrote at the time of the Angolan war, arguing against too restrictive censorship, which he said left people "suspicious of every official statement issued".

> Rational military censorship is not easy to achieve. It takes experience and a talent for balanced and imaginative thinking on the part of the military authorities. This is no reflection on the efficiency of South Africa's war machine, which is strong and runs smoothly. Though the censorship issue, unless solved, could soon affect the performance of the machine.[56]

As an example of the "weak links" in the press-defence liaison chain, Hitchcock said it had taken the SADF five days to release to the media the names of four soldiers killed in "actions on the South West Africa border". (In fact they were killed in Angola). The public still did not know the numbers of wounded in those actions or the names of the wounded. He suggested that a team of "enlightened" military censors should be appointed to work in shifts serving morning, evening and Sunday newspapers. They should be instructed to cut only specific details of men and military hardware operating in a war zone.

> There are a few other considerations involving security and reporting on activities in operational areas. But keeping from one's own population information that the world has access to is not one of them.[57]

Hitchcock did not shirk politicising the issue - but he was to pay the price of audacity. Soon after the war he received a telephone call from the Directorate of Public Relations telling him that his accreditation as a defence correspondent had been withdrawn. The decision was never explained but Hitchcock surmised that he had been too independently critical of the SADF to be tolerated any longer. One item which may have figured in the decision concerned something he had written about lax security precautions at a military camp in Cape Town. He described how early in 1975 he had

attended a top-level briefing for military correspondents on arms manufacture and distribution. He entered the camp and then the briefing room without an identity check or a search for concealed weapons. In the room were the Minister of Defence and the Chiefs of Staff - apparently unguarded.

> That morning, had I been bent on assassination, I could have eliminated, with two sharp bursts from a hidden weapon, the entire top strata of South Africa's Defence system.[58]

Hitchcock explained that this provocative article had been written in a spirit of constructive criticism to persuade the army that electronic devices and more vigilance were needed to strengthen the security set-up. He cleared the article with the Directorate and after it was published a number of senior officers congratulated him on doing it.

> They felt that this lack of security should be brought to the attention of the military, and it was in favour of the military... But I was told by a senior officer at DHQ that the Minister was very upset about it and was considering taking action against me...it had just angered him that we had published these weaknesses.

Another item which may have had something to do with the de-accreditation was a news report Hitchcock had written on the possibility of the SA Air Force using its Mirage jets to do battle with the Russian MiGs coming into Luanda. This had been discussed in the overseas press. Hitchcock questioned a senior Air Force spokesman about the issue - "and at no time, as far as I was concerned, was that conversation off the record" - and went ahead with a "speculative piece" which appeared early in February 1976. He predicted the likelihood of aerial combat becoming a new dimension of the war in Angola.[59] Later he heard that the military authorities thought this story had embarrassed South Africa.

Some of Hitchcock's own colleagues in journalism felt that at times he had gone too far. Judging by their comments to the author, several felt that Hitchcock, though supportive of the military and loyal to the country,

had overstepped the consensus of "correct" journalism and respect for the military. It was felt that issues like the lack of security at military camps should be brought to the SADF's attention privately. One journalist remarked that Hitchcock could not have been of much account as a military specialist if the SADF felt they could get rid of him with as little ceremony as they did. Of course, to the independent-minded, the incident certified Hitchcock's integrity as a journalist.

According to the editor of the Rand Daily Mail, attempts to get specific reasons for Hitchcock's expulsion all failed. After personally approaching the military, Raymond Louw put his queries through the NPU. The NPU discussed the case at a meeting but declined to take it up officially. The general secretary of the NPU told the author that matters like this were usually left to the newspaper proprietor concerned, but in any event it was not the Department of Defence's normal practice to give reasons for its rulings. Later word got back to Hitchcock that he was regarded as a "security risk" - and he immediately offered to resign from the Rand Daily Mail in order not to embarrass the paper. Louw refused to accept his resignation, telling him that he did not regard him as a security risk. That was where the matter ended, Hitchcock being reassigned to the race relations beat while another Rand Daily Mail staffer, Don Marshall, stepped in as defence correspondent.

The disruptive influence was expunged from the liaison process and things went on as before, no doubt with a better "mutual understanding" of the complementary goals of the press and the military.

3.6 Techniques of story clearance

The Hitchcock case was an object lesson to the media and defence correspondents not to be too critical of the military establishment. The rewards of a lower-key co-operative approach outweighed the appeal of high-profile watchdog journalism. A variety of journalists, both pro- and anti-Government, expressed the conviction that they had been trusted enough by the military not to have to clear every report with the PRO's. This emerged as a chief anomaly under the Act and the Agreement, in which there was no provision allowing journalists to publish military information without clearance.

This needs to be kept in mind while discussing the various techniques used by defence correspondents to get stories past SADF gatekeepers. Although in terms of the Agreement newspapers had undertaken to refer reports to the Directorate, this was not always done. It was tacitly accepted that they had the option not to go to the Directorate at all and to take their chances under the Act. Naturally, few did this where they felt doubtdul about a report - then they sought "advice". How did a reporter or his editor judge whether to apply for clearance? One said he had a "seat-of-the-pants" feeling acquired through years of dealing with the SADF, so that he knew whether a story was "sensitive" or not. Another said he "didn't clear very much with them at all: I know more or less what is going to be absolutely difficult, so I don't write that." Self-censorship and the vetting of ideas in advance of reports being written were two of the consequences flowing from the informal understandings of pressmen and PRO's.

(i) <u>Obtaining information</u>

Like all journalists on specialised beats, defence correspondents tried to cultivate friendly "inside" contacts in the SADF and also relied on tip-offs to local news stories, agency copy, and so forth for "leads" on newsworthy items. It would be a mistake to assume that the correspondents were interested only in the big national news emanating from Pretoria and the war zone; much of their time was consumed finding and following-up "local boy" stories - and here they could usually rely on generous Defence Force help and access. Even Bob Hitchcock had co-operation:

> If you wrote something about a soldier and it was completely innocuous, then a junior PR officer might say, "Ja, that's fine." Usually these were stories which showed the SADF in a good light. Let's say that a young trainee in Bloemfontein had heard that his wife in Cape Town was about to have triplets, the SADF might even lay on an aeroplane - it's a hypothetical example, but you could get past [the censors] with that kind of thing.

One journalist commented that "it was the easiest thing in the world to get that sort of stuff" but he had had his fill of writing "sock-darning appeals" while the real news lay hidden. Still, in the absence of hard news,

"local boy" copy was popular with news editors and was much in demand by anxious waiting parents. But it was hardly a substitute for facts about the war. Malcolm Smith in Windhoek described how a weeping mother came into his office to tell him that she had not known where her son was when one day she received his body back from Angola.

> When I phoned them they were very obstinate about it. I said to them: "Now you're really getting out of hand." And they said: "Well, of course we must lose men in the war." I said that was accepted but it wasn't accepted that there is such secrecy even a mother doesn't know where her boy is.

Smith did not succeed in levering any further information out of the Defence Force in these circumstances or in others. Some had more success. Willem Steenkamp used his extensive network of acquaintanceships in the military to keep abreast of major and minor developments.

> Getting official comment and information is difficult sometimes but the thing is I've got very good contacts and they tell me all sorts of interesting things. I might pick up something and go to the PR's with it. "Oh!" they say, "Where did you get that?" I reply, "Well, let's not worry where I got it." A story doesn't necessarily go to the point of them killing it. What I do is say, "As soon as you can, let me know whether I can use it" - and they do this for me.

It was no easy matter to get story exclusives and those who did prided themselves on their enterprise and originality. Steenkamp's morning paper opposition, Gideon Joubert on Die Burger, denied to the author that he was fed defence news tips by the Minister or the National Party. He said that on occasion he had approached the Minister "as a journalist" for information or comment, and once or twice Die Burger's political staff had been asked to persuade the Minister to release some item - the outcome being either a refusal or a press statement. Other journalists thought this just showed what an unfair advantage Die Burger (and Beeld) enjoyed. Johan Snyman

of Die Transvaler remarked that he did not feel that the doors had been "closed" to his newspaper by the Minister, but his competitors certainly seemed to be on a more favourable footing. His own contacts in the Directorate were

> not exactly the kind of "friends" I could drop in on for an evening's chat. I knew them on first-name terms (but) one thing I must add: having good contacts with the SADF was less useful than in other spheres. Whether you had a pal or not, once they had given you their news you would get no more out of them.

If an enterprising journalist came up with a story that the SADF had no intention of "chopping", said Snyman, then he would naturally benefit and get a scoop. But in cases where the story was sensitive "the officer would give you only so much and no more, and your relationship with him was immaterial really."

One reporter who tried making overtures to Mr P W Botha to persuade him to release more news found it got him and his newspaper, The Star, nowhere. John Patten, who knew the Minister from the Houses of Parliament, was instructed by his editor during November 1975 to confront Mr Botha after a Cabinet meeting at the Union Buildings and ask him to reconsider the whole matter of censorship. Patten tackled Mr Botha outside the Cabinet room and was ignored, but he followed, talking all the way until the Minister got into his car and drove off.

> I tried to put the point that the overseas press were well aware of what was going on and that...our image was being destroyed abroad because we pretended we weren't there. I said the South African Government couldn't justify why we were there so long as there was this secrecy. It was an appeal to him to come out and say what was going on...He brushed me heavily aside and said: "I'm not taking orders from any newspaper editors."

The bureaucracy was most permeable at the bottom and least so at the top as far as the press was concerned. Some service chiefs did give newsmen items. In one remarkable case a senior SADF source was responsible for putting out a patently untrue story, evidently as part of the concerted plan to draw a smokescreen across South Africa's actions. This says something for the cohesiveness of the military brass and the political leadership. Interestingly enough, the paper chosen for this exercise was the Rand Daily Mail, whose international credibility stood high. When South African soldiers began to die in increasing numbers during November 1975 - at a time when South Africa's Zulu and Foxbat columns were secretly pushing northwards to the Cuanza River - the deaths were officially attributed to "terrorist" incidents at the "border". Of course the "terrorists" concerned included MPLA and Cuban troops, while the "border" covered half of another country. This labelling was taken to excess in a story fed to Bob Hitchcock and used as the Rand Daily Mail's front page lead on 26 November. Hitchcock reported:

> Terrorist suicide squads based in Zambia and Angola are responsible for a sudden escalation of skirmishes in South Africa's northern operational area. The same suicide-terror squads are also responsible for the increased number of casualties among South African troops stationed in the area. Authoritative sources not connected with Defence Headquarters told me there is evidence that the terrorists are better trained and better equipped than they have ever been, and that high casualties among them do not seem to worry their leaders. Their new weapons supplies are said to be coming from the large amount of sophisticated military hardware being lifted into Angola by Russia for the MPLA.

The "terror squads" were said to number between 25 and 35 men, - "bigger combat units than have been thrown against SA forces in the past."

Questioned about this amazing report, Hitchcock said he had taken his information in good faith from a high authority in the Defence Force itself. If this is so - and there is no reason to doubt Hitchcock's word, as the report was never refuted by the SADF - it reflects a breathtaking degree of

official cynicism towards the media and the public. Hitchcock added that there were several occasions in his experience when the term "authoritative sources not connected with Defence Headquarters" (or words to that effect) had been employed at the request of military sources to mask their identity. In cases like this the highly-placed sources made it unnecessary to obtain clearance from the Directorate of Public Relations.

Sometimes the Directorate seems to have acted with the best of intentions to give everyone a fair deal, only to find they satisfied no-one. A number of newsmen had the disheartening experience of digging up exclusives but, when they went to the PRO's for further information or clearance, the response was to issue a statement to all media or organise a briefing for defence correspondents. Journalists came away from briefings and tours with virtually identical information. Taken together with censorship, the thwarting of individual initiative caused dismay, rage, and lethargy - often in that order. Johan Snyman summed up his feelings and proposed a new way of doing things:

> It wasn't exciting...it bored me terribly, it frustrated me. If you got a chance to write a story and you accompanied a group, your movements were so restricted that you couldn't get away from the crowd. Everyone saw the same thing and our news became a "standard edition"... What I say is that when a chap has an idea he should be allowed to follow it up himself. It won't cost the army so much more. They have planes and things going up there to the operational area all the time. It would be an incentive to defence correspondents if they encouraged this kind of reporting, but they don't.

The seasoned Carel Birkby - not one to be easily discouraged - complained that "they made it impossible for you to obtain news". He seldom went to briefings in Pretoria because as a weekly news magazine writer it was a waste of his time to cover something that the daily press would use long before he could. He had plenty of old friends in top army jobs but during the Angolan war they simply clammed up; and if he was lucky enough to receive leaked information about South Africa's role in Angola he knew there was no point in writing it: it would have to go on the spike.

After 28 November 1975, when South Africa admitted limited involvement in the war, it became scarcely any easier to find exclusive news. Editors and defence correspondents attended a number of confidential briefings where they learnt the extent of involvement but were forbidden - under the Official Secrets Act - to write much of what they knew. Meanwhile the trickle of news from returned servicemen, agencies and radio broadcasts had become a flood. Journalists found they were constantly quizzed by members of the public who wanted to know what was going on. The most frustrating experience of all was to know - and not tell.

Although not a defence correspondent, Allister Sparks, editor of the Sunday Express, wrote a number of articles about the war on the basis of background information culled from the briefings. Since he could neither quote what had been said nor source his material in any other way, he adopted the technique of "speculating" and putting "hypothetical cases" to the public. In one such article during December 1975 he argued that "if" South Africa was contemplating going into Angola it should think again about the likelihood that such a mission could backfire.

(ii) Clearing information

Questioned about the way stories were vetted and cleared, journalists fell into two fairly distinct camps: those who thought the process was straightforward and others who said it was not. These attitudes appeared to correlate quite closely with the supportive/independent dichotomy. Journalists who readily accepted that newspapers should conform with Pretoria's strategy were able to work out a modus vivendi with the military PRO's which left their self-respect intact though their stories might be cut. They shrugged off the disappointments of their secondary role. Others took their knocks harder. They found it difficult to reconcile themselves to the nagging demands of story clearance, and when their inspired ideas were cut down they tended to berate the bureaucracy for its stupidity and unfairness. But they were in a minority and were also wary of speaking freely on the subject.

The vetting of ideas before articles were researched or written was one of the more pernicious outcomes of the system. It entailed both pre-censorship by the authorities and self-censorship by journalists. If a journalist's

idea met with no enthusiasm from a PRO it was only natural to drop it. There were many references to this practice in the interviews with defence reporters, as if it had become such a matter of course that there was no need to feel sensitive about it. Those who thought about it could be appalled at themselves. Said Henri Geyser:

> Without wanting it or being conscious of it you eventually live in the sort of environment where you wonder if it is really worth the fuss to dig for a week on a story that is not going to see the light of day. This is a terrible confession to make as a journalist but I feel this is very much the way of life of journalists in South Africa today.

The incentive to go to a PRO for "advice" on a story before beginning it was strong. Bob Hitchcock described how he did it:

> I would often put up suggestions for stories to Col. Keyter (second-in-command of the Directorate) and discuss them with him. I would say to him: "Now taking the concept of what I've outlined, is it worth my while doing it?" And he'd say: "Yes, I think it's worth your while but I must see the story before I can decide".

Some said there were times when a half-formed idea was discarded even before taking "advice" on it: it would be turned down. On the other hand, there were those who cheerfully approached the military for co-operation over stories they planned to write - and often got it. Gideon Joubert was highly complimentary about Brigadier Cyrus Smith and his staff:

> They were nice chaps, very good chaps...they always tried to get our co-operation without issuing any orders. They didn't like to say - you're not to do this or that. I never found I was in difficulties there. I never found that I disliked the way they asked me not to write things.

In a number of instances mentioned in the interviews, journalists said PRO's gave them permission to use reports but asked them to rephrase sections to

exclude sensitive words and phrases or to play down the story. Journalists were also given permission to "speculate" in cases where the SADF did not wish to be cited as the source. One example will suffice to show how this technique could be used to draw a smokescreen across the terrain. John Patten said his beat as political correspondent sometimes overlapped with defence, and though he was not accredited with the SADF he had rung them up on one occasion during October 1975 in connection with a reported "raid" into Southern Angola. Defence Headquarters had announced in a terse communique that seven Swapo soldiers had been killed, two camps wiped out, and quantities of equipment confiscated when South African units crossed into Angola. Patten asked the Directorate of Public Relations to elaborate.

> We were encouraged to "speculate" without quoting the Defence Department in any way that they were now engaging in "hot pursuit".

All newspapers were fed the same line. Next day the Rand Daily Mail, for instance, reported that "after eight days of feverish activity" the border had once again lapsed into silence. South Africa had carried out a "reprisal raid" following a "sneak attack" by armed insurgents who had struck at South African border posts.[60]

Neil Hooper of the Sunday Times developed a shrewd step-by-step technique for getting stories past the censors. It smacks strongly of "trading-off": the give-and-take of a negotiator using all his tact to gain a point without causing offence. He made a practice of ringing up friendly PRO's and sounding them out about story ideas and angles, always ensuring that he was well briefed beforehand so that the PRO was aware that he knew quite a lot already. If the PRO's liked an idea they might even add to his information, and Hooper would get to work in earnest. Then:

> Important stories I would take to Pretoria in person. You have to take some trouble to get a story through, even if it means half a day just driving there and back to see some officer. I was driving back and forth from Johannesburg all the time. A Sunday newspaper needs exclusives and it needs stories in depth, so my stuff

> had to be carefully gone over and talked about. I would try and bargain over a difficult point, to keep as much of the story in as possible. I would offer to rephrase things or turn them around. I wouldn't say my aim was to make the story innocuous. I was trying to get round the system and get as much accepted as I could. In fact they used to pass most of the stuff I had written with bits cut out here and there. Actually it was useful to go to Pretoria because they would often mention something else that I didn't have and I could strengthen the piece. I never gave up on stories they killed, mind you. I harassed them week after week. They [sometimes] became embarrassed and gave me other stories to keep me happy. Personal influence counts, and if you can talk Afrikaans fluently that counts too. In some respects I think the PRO's were more irritated by the prohibitions than we were: they had to deal with us directly and explain decisions. It was difficult for them.

The product of all this haggling might, after all, be a mediocre, fragmentary or vague report but the whole business kept the reporter's interest up. By using all the resources of the internal gatekeeper - including access to other sources, personal choice of content, and persistence - Hooper showed that the case was not hopeless. He applied what limited power he had. There were others like him though none sketched their method quite so graphically in the interviews.

Willem Steenkamp, too, kept up a stream of inquiries in order to get results. Going on what he learnt from the SADF's background briefings he knew when a report from an agency or some other non-military source verged on sensitive areas but he would check up with Pretoria anyway: "There's just a chance". Discreet pressure repeated at intervals in the nicest possible manner could finally bring about permission to use a story in some form or other. In some circumstances he would not bother to clear a story at all, even where it was likely to be controversial.

> Here's a small but illustrative example. A little while ago (i.e. 1977) a bunch of national servicemen claimed that they had been forced to have terribly short haircuts...We went along, looked at them and interviewed them, then spoke to the Navy about their complaints, got hold of the barber, and published everything. It wasn't necessary to clear that story: we worked in co-operation with the Defence Force and they said, "Go ahead".

Innocuous items could, however, cause upset, and a journalist's failure to clear them might prove to be a mistake. Carel Birkby heard on the military grapevine that the Chief of the Defence Force, Admiral Biermann, was retiring and General Magnus Malan would take his place (1977). He published - and found himself in trouble for breaking army protocol since there had been no official announcement.

Negative comebacks on stories usually took the form of irate telephone calls from senior SADF personnel. Obviously the press was closely read and the military reacted to anything it deemed likely to undermine its image, functions, or policy goals. The press had to be kept in line. When Johan Snyman broke a midnight embargo by publishing at noon the day before (he said it was a misunderstanding) he was informed over the telephone that the army would "get hold" of him. The threat was enough to make him extremely cautious thereafter. But except for Bob Hitchcock, no defence correspondents had any concrete action taken against them. Without, perhaps, making a conscious policy of it, the SADF used the more subtle method of freezing out - and it worked. Defence correspondents became experts at keeping in with their contacts in the SADF, using their own techniques of buttering-up military men.

The impression should not be gained that the defence correspondents as a group regarded the system of military news dissemination as grossly unfair and cumbersome. On the contrary, nearly all were careful to say that the PRO's had tried to be fair and they were not responsible for the political aspects of censorship and manipulation. It seems that the better the journalists got to know their counterparts in the PRO apparatus the more they liked them and understood their problems within the bureaucracy. Defence correspondents

sometimes defended the military bureaucracy against criticism from other journalists not working on the defence beat. An argument erupted at one newspaper's 1975 Christmas wet-stone party when members of staff took up differing positions on South Africa's role in Angola and on the censorship of news. According to a political writer, he and others said the newspaper should come out strongly for non-involvement, but "already some of the people who had been working closely with the military were saying: 'Ah, but there are other factors involved.'"

In terms of the present analysis, those "other factors" came down to a basic dependence of newsmen on military sources of news. Since many of their dealings with the military were carried out in conditions of secrecy or confidentiality there was room for the journalists to rationalise about their dependent role without, as a rule, being exposed to the scrutiny of their professional colleagues. The latter, at any rate, realised that defence correspondents were a special breed with great responsibilities but little autonomy. As one said:

> They were tied hand and foot. But they still had to produce the goods. That's a difficult job, you know.

Media consensus had it that the defence correspondents did their best under difficult circumstances. While there was no consensus in the press as a whole over whether official policy was right or wrong, it was generally understood that defence correspondents got all the news that was (officially) fit to print.

3.7 Examples of news manipulation

The catalogue of manipulated news is endless, and for the purposes of this Section it is enough just to highlight three news events illustrating the SADF's methods of controlling information. It may seem to the reader that the Directorate of Public Relations and its higher authorities have been cast as the villains of the piece while the press is seen as the victim, albeit at times a willing one. It has to be emphasised that the processes described and analysed in this Section are to a degree impersonal and operate irrespective of the policies and relationships of the particular groups and individuals involved. While, for instance, Afrikaans pressmen found

their language often helped them to establish and maintain friendly liaison with the SADF, and pro-Government pressmen fell more easily into the role of military-supportive journalists, these cultural and political factors were incidental to the fundamental dependence of the media on the single institutional source of news. The correspondence between newspaper routines of newsgathering and the mechanisms developed by the control agency to supply that news was the upshot of mutual need. Shared goals facilitated the assimilation of journalists to the strategy of the bureaucracy. Conflictual goals exposed and isolated individual journalists and newspapers to ostracism by the bureaucracy as well as to pressure from colleagues who saw no point in disrupting the liaison. Overall, the consensus that military news was important in the national or public interest and had had to be carried irrespective of any alleged bias impelled newspapers to co-operate with officialdom.

(i) The Caprivi "massacre"

The first case illustrating these general points occurred before the Angolan war but is too significant to ignore. In 1974 two Swedish television journalists, Per Sanden and Rudi Spee, alleged that 105 tribesmen had been massacred by South Africans in the Caprivi Strip during October 1968. They had apparently got this story from Swapo and in support they showed a film which they claimed to have shot at the scene of the incident. The South African Government indignantly denied the charge and challenged the two men to make an on-the-spot investigation or produce their evidence. They retorted that they would only do so if a number of conditions were met - but these conditions were unacceptable to South Africa. The Government was determined to prove its case, though, and subseqnently invited 35 local and foreign journalists to tour the area, in August 1974. After a search with three helicopters and interviews with people in the Caprivi strip, including missionaries, the newsmen reported that they had found nothing to substantiate the charges. It was agreed that the Swedes had been hoaxed by Swapo.[61]

It so happened that at about that time the South African press was being careful not to provoke the Government in any way that could be avoided. In September 1973 the Prime Minister, Mr Vorster, had announced that legislation would be introduced in 1974 to discipline the press by bannings if necessary. His complaint was that newspapers had ignored him when he

"begged, pleaded and threatened" them in regard to the need for self-censorship to avoid sowing of racial hatred and incitement leading to uprisings.[62] This was a familiar litany by now. In response, the NPU had strengthened its Press Code of Conduct and empowered the Press Countil to impose fines of up to R10 000 on newspapers which failed to exercise "due care and responsibility" in matters which could have the effect of inciting racial hostility or which could endanger the security or defence of South Africa.[63] A jittery atmosphere prevailed in the press.

When the Caprivi "massacre" story broke, journalists recalled what had happened in October 1971 when Mr Vorster accused the press of distorting his words concerning certain events in the Caprivi strip. On that occasion the Prime Minister had told the National Party Congress in Pretoria that a number of South Africans had been injured in landmine explosions in the strip, and he intimated that South African forces were pursuing the guerillas into a neighbouring country which had been "making available its territory for this sort of aggression."[64] Newspapers in South Africa and abroad concluded that South Africa had entered Zambia, the only possible host country for guerillas at that period. The Rand Daily Mail and The Star, Die Transvaler and Die Burger, The Times and the Daily Telegraph carried prominent reports about the crossing into Zambia. But on 6 October the Prime Minister blamed the newspapers for making this inference. He said the pursuers were still in the Caprivi Strip, and he berated the press for upsetting world opinion at a time when South Africa's foreign relations were at a very delicate stage.[65] Later that month, the United Nations Security Council adopted a resolution calling upon South Africa to respect Zambia's sovereignty. South Africa was accused in the world body of entering Zambia.[66]

Newspapers in the Republic which had drawn the "obvious inference" from the Prime Minister's words defended themselves against charges of sloppy journalism and lack of patriotism. A Rand Daily Mail editorial remarked that the situation was "obscure" and that the country was "left guessing" about what had really happened along the border. The paper said Mr Vorster must have known that people would draw the conclusion that the terrorists had been pursued into the territory whence they came, and he deserved censure for "the grossest irresponsibility in making an initial statement capable of such serious misinterpretation by every newspaper, radio and news agency

representative, local as well as foreign, who heard him." The paper suggested that the Government was trying to turn the press into a scapegoat to blame for the consequences of its own highly questionable decision. "He wants the blood, as he so indelicately put it, to be on our heads, not his." The Mail added that all honour was due to the six South African policemen who had indeed shed their blood guarding the country.[67]

The 1971 Caprivi incident had boded ill for the news media in the increasingly tense international climate over Namibia. It demonstrated vividly that the Government saw the news media as a potential weapon in diplomacy and as a scapegoat for failed statecraft. It was no wonder, then, that in 1974 the press was grateful for the chance to show its worth as an independent monitor and critic of the Caprivi massacre allegation. After the tour of the area by defence correspondents, the Government received unanimous praise from the home media for taking them into its confidence. The influential Nationalist Sunday paper, Rapport said that the press probe had yielded dividends which a plain denial could not have provided.[68] The Star said the massacre had, "so far as possible" been disposed of by the sensible device of inviting publicity.[69] The untruth had been nailed, unfair and nasty rumours scotched, dishonesty against South Africa revealed, and good had come from bad - so said various editorials in both Nationalist and Opposition papers. The Argus conceded that "there might still be unanswered questions" or "doubts among the reporters that they were able to uncover the whole scene" but the press had found nothing to suggest that there was even a vestige of truth in the allegations, which smacked of propaganda.[70]

The way the news media had been handled helped to improve relations with the Government and to assuage the bad memories of the 1971 Caprivi incident. It seemed to promise the opening of an era of easier access to the war zone and much-improved understanding of the role of the press on the part of the authorities. These expectations were to be dashed during the Angolan war. The Government had not accepted the principle of free access at all, and when it had something to hide, hide it it would. Yet the event was remembered by journalists in the interviews as an example of useful co-operation between the press and the military.

(ii) The blank spaces affair

The most sensational protest against censorship during the war came from the Rand Daily Mail, which twice in a matter of four days carried blank spaces on its front page. The protest was prompted partly by the fact of censorship but also by a decision of the Directorate of Public Relations to give another newspaper - The Star - first break on certain information. This decision has never been officially explained and one can only speculate that The Star was favoured in this instance because it may have been the first paper to request clearance. The Mail's resentment over the decision was, however, quickly lost sight of in the furore which erupted over the issue of censorship itself. In the light of all that has been said here about competition between media, it is as well to keep in mind that the Mail was protesting against both censorship and discrimination.

Censorship per se was in fact an issue at that time - the week from Thursday 14 November 1975 - because overseas television and print media had obtained and published hard facts and photographs revealing South Africa's presence in Angola, but media in the Republic were forbidden to quote from these reports. (See Section One, pp. 45 - 46). Editorials appeared in most Opposition newspapers demanding that the Government tell the nation what was happening. As The Star put it:

> It is known that Pretoria, in concert with several other countries, has a political commitment to prevent Moscow-based communism gaining a foothold in South Africa. From that commitment one would imagine would flow quite naturally another political commitment to assist where possible in opposing any Russian bridgehead in Angola. But do we have anything more than a political commitment? If we do, then it is time for South Africans to be told, so that they may know what the issues are and what is expected of them.[71]

The heavy stress on the word "political" (the italics are The Star's) constituted a big and obvious hint that South Africa was making some practical, armed contribution to the conflict. The reader could hardly miss the implication of The Star's front page on the same day, when a lead

report on South African army troop losses in action was "coincidentally" placed beside a large map of Angola showing how Unita and FNLA forces were approaching Luanda from the north and south. The Natal Mercury went so far as to publish a report that South African troops were in Angola.[72] And the Cape Times, as was becoming its practice, reported prominently that it had been refused permission under the Defence Act to publish material about "alleged developments in the Angola civil war".[73]

The first blank space appeared in the Rand Daily Mail on Saturday 15 November. In a small white box below the main story about Russia backing the MPLA, the newspaper reported that an item "which would have occupied this space has not been published because permission which is required in terms of the law for such publication has not been granted." The item concerned the report on British Independent Television showing South African troops and armoured cars in Angola. The Mail disclosed neither the nature of the item nor the law involved. The protest against military censorship was thus not explicit. Perhaps the newspaper was still seeking to uphold the spirit of the Agreement with its stipulation that even a "no comment" report could embarrass the Minister of Defence.

By Tuesday of the following week these inhibitions had disappeared. The front page lead, headed: "More servicemen killed in action" began with a 15cm double-column blank space in which appeared the following paragraph in small type:

> For reasons totally unrelated to military considerations or the security of the state, an announcement of the death in action last Thursday of South African servicemen has been delayed by the Defence authorities. This information, of vital concern to the country, will only be released officially for publication this afternoon, although the Minister of Defence approved it for publication yesterday.[74]

The space was topped by a photograph of Lieutenant Christopher Robin, one of the casualties, along with a facsimile of his death notice which had appeared in the Mail's classified section on the Monday morning. A report below the space stated that the newspaper had established that "several"

South African servicemen had been killed on 13 November. Though the exact number of deaths was not known to the newspaper, it was "less than eight".

In fact it turned out to be three. Over the weekend the military authorities had told next-of-kin of the deaths, with the result that there were death notices in the Sunday and daily press. Some five hundred people had attended the cremation service of Lieut. Robin in Johannesburg. But still no public announcement was made. The day that the Rand Daily Mail appeared with its second blank space, Die Transvaler came out with a front page lead headed "More die at border" and assuring readers that a communique was expected "today". Die Transvaler also speculated - wrongly - on the names of servicemen besides Lieut. Robin who were believed to have died, and later that day Die Vaderland did the same, giving an incorrect list of the casualties. Beeld meanwhile had reported the deaths without giving names.

That afternoon - Tuesday 18 November - The Star appeared with all the details officially cleared in its front page lead. The introductory paragraph said:

> An officer and two privates were killed last week in fighting with Swapo terrorists on the border, Defence Headquarters announced today. The guerillas were driven off, taking their dead and wounded with them.

This was the story that appeared next to the map of Angola depicting the "Unita/FNLA" alliance closing in on Luanda. In the welter of recriminations then and later over the way the Defence Force had withheld and then released the story, no-one dared to accuse the authorities of falsehood, although by then it was clear to many journalists that South Africans were dying far into Angola. The official SADF war history, published 14 months later in February 1977, admitted that the first South African troops had died in Angola on 12 and 13 November 1975 in fierce fighting around Novo Redondo and Santa Comba.[75] It was in no-one's interest to tell the authorities they had been lying. In mitigation, it should be noted that the situation was obscure at the time, and while there was a strong presumption that the three had died in Angola, only the SADF knew for sure. The press played safe by treating the Tuesday afternoon news release as if it were the truth. The Directorate had fumbled the pack but still managed to pull off the trick.

The Rand Daily Mail ascertained that the Minister of Defence had cleared the details for publication "before lunch" on the Monday. Why, it asked in questions put to the Directorate and later published, was the news release delayed at all after that? The answer: No comment.[76] In an editorial the newspaper said it was "not with any sense of righteousness" that it wished to point out the dangerous consequences of "tardiness" in making public the fatalities. Rumour died only when people were kept properly informed - "quickly". It was "indefensible in the circumstances" that four days had been allowed to elapse simply because the news had been "promised to another newspaper".[77]

The Star never commented on the issue of discrimination in this case but confined its remarks to the censorship issue as such. It had succeeded in getting an exclusive for itself and was obviously not going to beg apologies or find fault with the processes which had favoured it. Journalists in other newspapers had a variety of things to say about the incident. To Gideon Joubert of Die Burger, running blank spaces was "childish" and caused emotional reactions which were dangerous in wartime. A source on Die Vaderland told the author that he secretly sympathised with the Mail's gesture:

> I liked it. I can definitely say that...From my personal point of view I thought it was a disgrace not being able to report what was happening.

Willem Steenkamp observed that the Mail's protest was "colourful" but only made the job of its defence correspondent harder when he had to go back and get more news. Others said it was "brave", "rash", "stupid", and "showed up the Agreement for what it was - interference". .The Minister of Defence, bombarded by press queries and angered by the rash of protests, threatened to scrap the Agreement and called an NPU delegation to see him later in the week. (See above: Section Two, page 76.) Whatever transpired between the Minister and the Directorate over the latter's decision to stop the story till Tuesday is not known to the author. As for Raymond Louw, editor of the Mail, he remained quite unmoved in his conviction that he had done the right thing no matter how much it rocked the press's boat. He told the author that when censorship arose from a mere private agreement between a newspaper and the authorities it was not a security matter and "not in the public interest".

(iii) "Advice and logistic support"

Whether it was in the public interest to keep on reporting untrue or distorted information was a question never ethically resolved by newspapermen though in practice they continued to do it. When the information came from the most authoritative source of all - the Minister himself - it was neither polite nor particularly wise to doubt his word. The Government had the power to ban newspapers while the Defence Act could put an editor behind bars or at least cost a newspaper a lot of money in fines and legal fees. The one-sidedness of military news coverage emerged with unprecedented clarity at the end of November 1975 when the Minister of Defence and top SADF officers briefed the press on what was happening in Angola. The author does not know what was said in the confidential briefings but the published reports said mainly that South Africa was providing "advice and logistic support" for the Unita/FNLA alliance - a claim which fell far short of the full truth. The curious thing about these reports was that in South Africa the Minister's name was nowhere mentioned as the source, while Admiral Biermann, another source, was not quoted on details of what South Africa was contributing to the alliance. Instead the reports were attributed to those "authoritative sources" in Pretoria with whom the reader is by now, no doubt, familiar. The reason for this arcane manoeuvre is difficult to discern. Perhaps the military and political authorities thought it would distance them somewhat from the rather embarrassing confession of South Africa's role, incomplete as this confession was.

In any event, the way the briefings were handled once again put up the backs of the local press. As was suggested earlier, the Government needed to reach a world audience and thus gave priority to foreign media. On 27 November 1975 foreign journalists were briefed in Pretoria and assured that while South Africa was providing advice and logistic support for Unita/FNLA it was not taking part in the civil war in an active capacity. The first time the Minister's name popped up was on 29 November when he was quoted as saying:

> I do not know who is advising them in Angola or who is providing them with logistic support. We are advising ourselves and providing our own logistic support.[78]

The product of this official masquerade was renewed confusion in the ranks of the press and amongst the public. Just how far South Africa was or was not implicated seemed to be as much a matter of mystery as ever. As the editor of the Cape Times, Anthony Heard, commented in a memorandum on the war which was sent to the author, the original reports sourced to Pretoria had obviously been issued with the approval of the Defence Force but were now being denied by the Minister. This could scarcely signify a difference of opinion between the military and the Minister (his control was too tight for open disagreement). The most likely explanation is that Pretoria wished the facts to remain fairly vague.

A rumpus erupted over what The Star called the "outrageous" neglect of the local media. The newspaper said the Government's first duty was to the South African public.

> The sons of South Africans are involved in Angola, not the readers of overseas newspapers. And it is time that those responsible in Pretoria recognised that their first duty is to South Africa and to the people who put them where they are today.[79]

Die Transvaler expressed itself in guarded language, conceding that a "measure of tension" had developed between the Defence Force and the press. Now that the truth of South Africa's role was known, however, "everyone should help in his own sphere".[80] Journalists of different persuasions commented to the author in the interviews that they recalled the favouring of the foreign press in late November 1975 as an especially clear case of discrimination. Military-supportive and pro-Government newsmen added that there were probably good diplomatic reasons for the move.

The South African corps of defence correspondents was finally briefed on 1 December 1975. According to reports in the Vaderland and Rand Daily Mail, Admiral Biermann (but not the Minister) was amongst those who gave the briefing in Pretoria. The correspondents were shown photographs of Russian armoured cars and Cuban training handbooks. They were told: "In an effort to disguise their presence in Angola, Cubans either remove the covers from their military training handbooks or attempt to obliterate incriminating titles." (The irony of this charge was that South Africans too had tried to conceal their presence by removing name tags and insignias from their uniforms, vehicles and aircraft - but that was not reported at the time.)

The photographs of Russian amphibious pantzers were said to have been taken by Admiral Biermann himself at Novo Redondo, 650km north of the Angola-Namibian border.[81] If defence correspondents hoped to be taking photographs in that vicinity themselves soon afterwards they were to be disappointed.

Admiral Biermann conceded that the MPLA now "held the initiative" and had halted the Unita alliance along the southern front. He warned that the alliance would have difficulty containing the MPLA if they did not get large-scale support soon from the West. This was the bottom line of all news disclosures by South Africa at this time and appears as the primary motive for these disclosures. The right of the home public to know was not uppermost in the authorities' minds.

Discrimination in favour of the foreign press was repeated when a group of them were taken on a 48-hour trip to Southern Angola in the first days of December 1975. Although they got nowhere near the front line, their eye-witness reports on South African soldiers guarding the Ruacana and Calueque power and water schemes were the first such reports to reach the South African public when the local press was given permission to use the material. The newsmen also visited South African outposts 20km into Angola and saw a refugee camp at Chitado where 600 Portuguese were sheltered. Evidently the SADF wished to portray its actions as partly inspired by humanitarian motives, for the refugee problem was dwelt upon.[82] It was not until 10 days later that South African defence correspondents toured the same sites. They were told nothing new but while they were there four South African soldiers were taken captive by the MPLA somewhere in the heart of Angola. The journalists heard this information in an SABC radio report sourced to Luanda and probably cleared by the Directorate of Public Relations in Pretoria. A number of them begged and pleaded with SADF senior officers to be taken to the place where the men were captured but this was refused. The corps returned - "disgusted" as one put it - to South Africa in time to see front-page photographs of the captives being paraded in Lagos.[83]

3.8 Conclusion

The Government's treatment of South African newspapers during the Angolan war was undeniably clumsy but relationships were soon mended. When the Minister threatened to abandon the Agreement the NPU fought to preserve it and succeeded in making it an even better instrument of manipulation than it had been to

begin with. The blunders of official news policy were not attributable to the Agreement itself but to its crude application by authorities who pitched their messages primarily to the world, not to the domestic audience. If the local press mattered at all it was chiefly as a potential source of trouble and embarrassment to the Government, and the answer was to regiment them ruthlessly. Regimentation could have suited the press - at least it would have guaranteed equal matching coverage to all - but unhappily with regimentation went discrimination which undercut various competitive interests. There was an outcry by newspapers which felt themselves to be hidebound within a hierarchy of status and preference. Sometimes even the rules of discrimination were obscure, as in the blank spaces affair. In these conditions all elements of the press were unlikely to co-operate in equal measure, since equal measures were not applied to them. The new official perceptions of how to handle journalists and the press as a whole which took root after the war have been described in Sections One and Two.

The notion that competition amongst newspapers inevitably promotes the growth of knowledge about public affairs has to be qualified in terms of what has been learnt here. While it is true that journalists seeking exclusive stories will turn up interesting new items for public consumption, there is no reason to think that this information will be any less controlled than that which is disseminated in identical form to all newspapers. In order to get news at all journalists must develop good relationships with their contacts and they will try to maintain these for future leaks and statements. The inducement, therefore, to take the line offered by sources is acute. Professional detachment is an ideal which is rarely approached by the journalist covering official beats like defence where all information stems from or has to be funnelled through a bureaucracy whose goal is total control of what is reported and believed. The opportunities for prizing open the bureaucracy and exposing differences of outlook and opinion within it (along with new information) are rare in a department as closed and authoritarian as the SADF.

If all news originating with such bureaucracies is one-sided and there is no alternative to it, what can newspapers usefully do about it? It would seem ludicrous to suggest that major newsmakers like the armed forces and the police should be ignored because they give only one side of the story. The realistic approach is to keep on reminding readers that they are not being told the full facts known to the newspaper. This was conscientiously done

by The Cape Times which foonoted censored reports to the effect that they had been cut, wrote editorials on defence censorship and speculated in leader-page articles on the reasons for censorship. In addition, defence writing requires - as Willem Steenkamp and others have recognised - skilled specialists with a background knowledge of warfare and of the men who make war. Specialist writers could interpret the military situation and give the public a better contextual view not only of actions undertaken by the armed forces but also of the diplomatic setting in which conflicts arise and are resolved. It is very doubtful whether the South African press can find, or will be willing to pay, many specialists of the required calibre - while even if they were available, there is some question whether they would consent to work within the frustrating bounds of current military censorship.

POSTSCRIPT

THE "NATIONAL INTEREST" AND THE "PUBLIC INTEREST":

Comments on the Findings of the Steyn Commission of Inquiry into Reporting of Security News

Any intentions the author may have had of recommending "improvements" in the system of military-press liaison have been forestalled by the publication of the findings and recommendations of the Steyn Commission of Inquiry into defence and police news reporting. The implications of those findings are the subject of this Postscript, which will attempt to situate the "national interest" and the "public interest" in the context of Mr Justice M T Steyn's call for a co-ordinated national policy on information. The author was busy tying up the loose ends of the case study when the Commission reported to Parliament in April 1980. At one stroke the Commission's report convinced him that no improvements could be made to the system of military news clearance because to improve it would only mean making it more efficient as an instrument of propaganda. There is a necessary connection between officialdom's access to media channels and the credibility of its propaganda embodied in "news". Although this case study of the Angolan War held many lessons likely to be of benefit to journalists in the practice of their craft, the author declined to draw these lessons out in a set of practical hints for his colleagues, lest these hints be taken up by the manipulators and turned to their own benefit.

The manipulators will doubtless continue to manipulate, and the journalists to write; of broader interest is the direction the body politic is taking under largescale official indoctrination through every news medium. The Government is trying desperately to construct a working alliance of dominant groups but, as always, it retains the repressive option if all appeals to public duty fail. Liberals, for their part, are finding it difficult to resist the seductive language of consensualese with the promises of reform and amelioration of the political system that the Botha administration is holding out. Meanwhile the generals in Pretoria wait in the wings and chart the escalation of violent conflict in South Africa and along its borders; the time may come when the generals are called to the political stage for the ultimate defence of white domination.

The six-man Commission under Mr Justice Steyn was appointed towards the end of 1979 to look into reporting of security matters affecting the SA Defence Force; early the following year its terms of reference were broadened to include reporting on the Police Force. The Commission's findings were hailed as a victory for the ideal of press freedom and a vindication of the press in the face constant Government accusations of lack of responsibility and lack of patriotism. Its wide-ranging recommendations include proposals that the Official Secrets Act of 1956 should be reviewed in order to limit its field of

application, and that Section 118 of the Defence Act should be extensively amended to reduce its breadth of impact. It said the SADF (and the SAP) should give attention to improving their liaison with the media through the greater professionalism of their PROs and through more timeous liaison in the main centres outside Pretoria. The Press, for its part, must give "urgent attention" to "better professionalising of journalism as a calling and in any case only senior journalists should be appointed to handle SADF and SAP matters," said the Commission. The system of accrediting correspondents should be refined so that the correspondents did not regard defence and police reporting as "just another beat", but as a field in which there could be proper reporting and insight in depth. To this end, the military and police liaison offices should provide more meaningful briefings. As a general principle, the Commission recommended that Government secrecy should be meaningful and restricted to the minimum necessary to safeguard the security of the state and the community.(1)

Such reforms, if implemented, would certainly attend to many of the gripes of the newspapermen interviewed for this case study. The impulse behind the recommendations - which are too detailed to be examined at any length here - was summed up by the Commission in the following words:

> A free, fearless, alert and well-informed but honest and basically loyal press is an extremely valuable social property. Without it, a democracy wilts; with it a democracy can come to full bloom. The South African press, which generally fulfils these requirements, must be treated accordingly. This does not mean that the authorities must adopt an attitude of helpnessness towards the press or try to turn it into a propaganda mouthpiece of the Government... There must be an attitude of robust mutual appreciation for each other... In this way the two-way feedback will be beneficial to both, and promote the public interest.(2)

These libertarian sentiments were fully in line with the new enlightened approach of the authorities to the press - an approach, it has been said often enough in this case study, reflecting the lessons of the Angolan War. The Commission's liberalism, however, was coupled with, and tempered by, an emphasis on national security. It said there was a need for a clearly formulated information policy and plan for South Africa, to be accepted as an aspect of the national strategy. Respect for the security forces had to be

established and promoted amongst the general public, otherwise their ability to carry out their functions would be seriously affected. The best possible arrangement must be reached to involve the news media and the whole South African population to the greatest practical degree in the process of internal development, and to prevent attempts to stop the development process.

This prescription for an integrated communications policy in which the news media were to play a role had definite totalitarian overtones. Yet the Commission insisted that the press was not to be deprived of its watchdog role, and that its right to report matters of public concern should be limited only where matters adversely affecting the security of the state were concerned. The report said public attitudes could not be suppressed by passing laws against them. Oversensitivity by offialdom towards criticism sometimes led to unnecessary suppression of information and tended to create circumstances in which rumours thrived and panic occurred through uncertainty. What was needed between the authorities and the press was a "partnership" of mutual respect.

> The security interests of the state in reality demand that the state and the press should act in fruitful unison rather than oppose each other in sterile hostility. This does not mean the press should be subordinate to the state, it merely requires more circumspection in respect of reporting.(3)

By exposing administrative malpractices, corruption, neglect and dishonesty, the press was not being disloyal but on the contrary was facilitating effectiveness and promoting a sound relationship between the community and the security forces. It could surely do this without having to publish sensitive facts about operational methods, equipment or actions of the security forces, which had to remain secret.

To what extent did the Commission really vindicate the press? Crucially, it upheld the claim to civil rights and press freedom in the very terms that opposition editorials had been using for years. But, as the Cape Times pointed out, in its comments on the Commission's findings, no matter how much the system might be ameliorated, it would remain one of censorship in defence and police matters as long as the relevant laws remained on the statute books.

Some of the recommendations, such as the one which proposes a

> limitation of the scope of the restrictive clause of the Defence Act, might be read as easing things somewhat in favour of the media. But there are other recommendations which could have a contrary effect. Everything depends on the spirit in which these recommendations are implemented. Once the government seeks to set the limits of press freedom by legislative enactment, you can no longer speak of a free press without qualification. The legitimate limitations of press freedom are those which are imposed by the press itself, in the public interest, and not those brought forward by the political authority.(4)

The argument here is that the press should be free despite what the government may say about national security and the national interest. To take this line is to reassert one of the highest tenets of libertarianism, and also is most difficult to uphold, namely that the public interest overrides the policy of any government. This was what Thomas Jefferson had in mind when he wrote, in an oft-quoted passage:

> The basis of governments being the opinion of the people, the first object should be to keep that right; and were it left to me to decide whether we should have a government without newspapers without a government, I should not hesitate a moment to prefer the latter.(5)

Superficially absurd as this is - no state could conceivably exist without a government - it has still a compelling inner logic for the libertarian without which he can make no claim to press freedom of any kind. According to this logic, government should not be imposed on people from above but should belong to to them and represent their will: it has no other claim to power. A "socially responsible" South African press would seek to represent the "opinion of the people" wherever this was to be found and whoever expressed it. Government propaganda would not be permitted to substitute itself for the opinions of all other social bodies.

It is highly doubtful whether any major newspaper will dare to take this general line over all issues of "national security" - the risks are too great, both for the survival of the newspaper as a profit-making enterprise, and for the personal futures of the journalists and publishers involved. As Section

Two of this study showed, the cartel of newspaper publishers represented in the Newspaper Press Union have all along collaborated with and appeased the Government whenever it has demanded greater press self-censorship to accord with the official definition of the national interest. Cowed, apparently, by the unremitting persecution of the opposition press, publishers are willing to negotiate over any demand and will not treat press freedom as absolute in any sense, no matter what lip-service is paid to the ideal. And yet, if editors and journalists are finding the situation uncomfortable, they too have difficulty in putting the Jeffersonian argument to the test of actual practice. Where does "responsible" journalism end and "subversion" begin?

This is a libertarian dilemma, one that has been exploited by government authorities often in South Africa and in other countries. The dilemma springs from the assumption libertarianism makes that people in a democracy share fundamental norms, values and goals. If this is the case, then at some point their consensus becomes an orthodoxy beyond which it is not permissible to tread lest the system as a whole be threatened. The libertarian dilemma is in fact a symptom of the tendency of consensual theory to collapse all individual and group rights and freedoms into a destructive identification with the interests of the state.

This is not as far-fetched as it may seem. As the Introduction pointed out, consensual theory has never been able to come to terms with the dilemma of "necessary control". While it posits, on the one hand, that the greatest "efficiency" of the system is achieved through *free communication*, it accepts that in certain circumstances efficiency is best served by *imposing controls*. The contradiction is never logically explained and the dilemma is left to governments to resolve on the basis of political need or opportunitism. Governments like to regard "the public interest" and "public opinion" as resources to be summoned to the defence of fundamental values when circumstances demand it. At moments of clear and present danger - when a system is facing war or revolution - then, as far as most governments are concerned, circumstances clearly demand the maximum show of loyalty from the citizenry and the press.

This characteristic reasoning of the official mind comes chillingly close to the rationale presented by Clausewitz for national co-ordination under the banner of the national will. In the hands of figures like Hitler and Stalin the mystique of the national will developed into a praxis of political

indoctrination designed to fit the mood and disposition of the masses to the goals of the state. The ruling group arrogated to itself the right to determine the national will because it was "the personified intelligence of the state" working through the organs of government. Liberals shunned this doctrine but they could hardly escape from it themselves so long as they saw the state as the representative of all the people. In good times the liberal state was a benign and rather remote presence, a neutral arbiter between groups competing in the arena of democracy; but in dangerous times it had to exercise greater sway for the good of all.

The attempt to construct a rationale for the mobilisation of democratic society under unified leadership results in a peculiar - but significant - strain of neo-Clausewitzian thought. Quincy Wright, a modern writer on war, has lamented the "inadequate integration" of plural democracies, pointing out that they are at a disadvantage against societies which can mobilise their people using totalitarian methods. The difficulty facing liberal states, says Wright, is that the more tolerant they try to be of a variety of opinions on nationally divisive issues, the less they are able to maintain law and order or organise to meet enemy threats. Writing in 1942, he observed:

> (The) liberal society... presents an opportunity for propagandas of disintegration, and, because of its unpreparedness, presents a tempting target for attack by aggressive nations. These relationships have been illustrated by the aggressions of the totalitarian States since 1931 and suggest that either excessive or inadequate social integration within a state presents dangers for peace.(6)

This is the philosophy of deterrence, which contains the paradox that in order to keep the peace one must be in constant readiness for war - with all that that implies about the psychological state of the people and the need to keep them in readiness. In practical terms deterrence makes sense - it works - but in resorting to this philosophy as a defence of democracy against totalitarianism something vital in the ideal of freedom has been surrendered. The problem here is that libertarianism is a state doctrine in the West and therefore requires a political defence against enemies.

The logical trap of consensus theory which allows control to be rationalised in the name of freedom, is only one of the drawbacks of the libertarian

creed. Major practical objections can be raised against the belief that a "free press" will ensure good, honest, democratic government in the interests of all. (It should be noted that while South Africa is clearly not a democracy in any full sense, democratic values are invariably cited to justify the the claim to press freedom.) It is hardly possible to conduct a case study of the kind presented here without reaching the conclusion that commercial news media form an integral part of the framework of social control and domination by some groups over others.

The historical development of the press in capitalist society has been a sorry spectacle of increasing monopolisation of ownership and centralisation of control over content. The growth of business monopolies has meant that press establishments are locked into sets of holding companies whose shareholders are amongst the chief beneficiaries of capitalism. These owners through their boards influence the appointments of editorial staff and also shape the broadly profit-oriented policies to which journalists must subscribe or go elsewhere. In actual practice the majority of journalists find little difficulty in subscribing to the principle that their work should reach the widest audiences; this enhances their influence and status, or so they think.

The conventions of journalism itself are linked with the commercial interests of media groups. Journalists have perfected skills of presenting news in a popular and entertaining style which frequently packages the content out of existence. Content is, nevertheless, a commodity worth retaining, a product in the manufacturing process which consumers buy to keep themselves informed. Therefore content is of competitive value, and in situations like the one covered in this case study, press groups will struggle to match coverage and to obtain exclusives in order to offer the best all-round product. The journalist's search for truth is hardly ever free of commercial constraints and incentives. It may not be fair to say that journalistic ethics are merely the reified forms of commercial imperatives, but the line between altruism and commodity production is a difficult one to draw, even - or especially - in wartime when the news is so "hot" that everyone wants to read it.

Two very serious consequences flow from the organisation of news media into bureaucracies routinely purveying information, opinion and diversion. First, the press depends on professionally trained men and women - "press people" whose "freedom" press freedom really is[7] - and this in effect denies the bulk of public access to press channels except through editorial

"gatekeepers". The latter display one facet of their freedom by selecting and rejecting material in terms of their personal and policy biases, rationalised as professional expertise. But they are not all-powerful; they are servants of the media organisations and thus of the nexus of interests it represents. At the same time, the organisation is prey to external pressures, primarily from governments, advertisers and public pressure groups, probably in that order. This raises the second serious consequence of the bureaucratisation of news: essentially, the "public opinion" which bursts forth in every daily edition consists of the opinions of power-holders at various levels reacting to each other. News "coverage" entails the framing of "beats" to correspond with the major institutions of political and civil society which, by virtue of their bureaucratic nature, produce "news" as machines make sausages. The news-gathering and the news-making bureaucracies mesh, not always gracefully or without a clashing of gears, but mesh they do. This is the basis of news manipulation by external sources who control the material of press beats.

No single group is so favourably placed to exploit this situation as governments, the supremely visible power-holder in a society. Close on its heels comes its ally in most situations, the administrative bureaucracies, followed by business corporations and other vested interests. The official source of whatever kind is dominant, as New York Times associate editor Tom Wicker commented in a article written at the time of the Vietnam War:

> (The) biggest weakness (of the press) is its reliance on and acceptance of official sources - indeed its "objectivity" in presenting the news. That is, the fundamental reliance of the American news media in my experience has been, with rare and honorable exceptions, on the statement by the official source, be it government or business or academic or whatever. And much of what we mean by objectivity in American journalism concerns whether due credit is given to the official statement, the official explanation, the background explanation from the official source... If you think about objectivity in the American press - that is, the question of giving both sides of a picture, of trying to come to a rational balance of the facts in a case, trying to weigh the pros and cons and see what is most important - you can see that the tradition of objectivity is bound to give a special kind of weight to the official source, the one who speaks from a powerful institutional position... We

> tend to give weight to the official source, as if we believe that the man wouldn't be there if he didn't know what he was talking about; the institutions wouldn't be functioning if it didn't have some sort of relevance to whatever area it is functioning in.(8)

The ideal of "social responsibility" has been invented to motivate journalists to break out of the circle of official news and opinion, prompting to seek out the views of the minorities, the-man-in-the-street, and even groups outside the law so that all have freer access to the channel. To give them their view, many editors and reporters in South Africa as elsewhere have shown imagination and courage in the search for "unofficial" points of view. But this does not happen naturally as libertarians believe it should; it has to be willed, and in such voluntarism meets severe constraints in the system. The "public opinion" represented in the press, the image of social reality it projects, is a fragmentary portion of the whole and is loaded towards the perpetuation of the status quo.

The structural conditions of journalism result in the exclusion of large groups of people from media control, access, and attention by the press, whilst the state and big business exercise a preponderating influence on the choice, substance and form of published material. The press, like other institutions, is wedded to the structural relations and ideological forms of the system as a whole. The alliance of dominant groups effectively use the press to integrate social consciousness as this pertains to the changing, newsy world of the everyday. The press provides "definitions of reality" in terms of the dominant ideology and is thus, as Ellul pointed out, the leading agency of total propaganda. As the expression of deep structures this propaganda is all-pervasive in news and comment and is not identified as propaganda but as "objectivity". That which is identified as propaganda or "differences of opinion", meanwhile, is the partial, manifestly group-based stuff of conscious doctrines and deliberate aims, which accentuates, this way or that, the implicit taken-for-granted values of the system.

Propagandists invariably try to evoke consensual values, though the obvious effort to do so - and so rebut rival propagandists - is what makes them "controversial". An example was the claim by President Nixon that the "silent majority" of Americans supported United States involvement in Vietnam and rejected the anti-war protests. In the bid to bring visible public opinion

into conformity with government attitudes, Nixon's Vice-President, Spiro Agnew, attacked the news media for being unrepresentative of the majority and menaced them with threats of licensing and other curbs unless they fell into line. In challenging the media, Nixon was not acting as the sole "personified intelligence" of the state - a metaphysical idea(9) - but was stating the perceived needs of political power in the capitalist state. In doing so he found himself contending with elements of capital - the powerful East Coast media establishment - over what they regarded as their exclusive right to control information and opinion, even on nationally sensitive issues. The rights of media autonomy are jealously guarded by the fractions of the ruling class which possess them; naturally they cite "public interest" as their justification.

The guardians of libertarian philosophy in Western society today depend, ironically enough, on the very vested interests whose financial and political power has so decisively undermined individual and group freedoms. It is the media which, despite their present form, give fullest expression to this philosophy. In doing so they help to mystify the unpalatable and inadmissible structural realities of the capitalist state. The conscious goals of power are not decided in the interplay of the public marketplace but in the corridors of the ruling groups. Goals are fixed by negotiation and internecine struggle at the top involving cartels of super-bosses and super-"servants" of the public. Meanwhile the referencing downwards of power groups to their constituencies, employees, customers and audiences is conducted as a noisy, vigorous, extravagant and confusing turmoil of propagandas - in the plural - whose function is social control through "free choice".

To sum up, the "freedom of the press" - implying freedom of expression for all - is a misnomer for the freedom of particular groups to control mass communication. In the first instance it means the freedom of "press people"; but they are mainly the functionaries of the system which prescribes what social reality is, how to "see" and "think" it. They merely wrap it up and present it to the audience. The phenomenon of "public opinion" in the mass media is a consensual illusion generated by the modes of news treatment which continually facilitate the passage of official statements and doings into popular print. In this setting, objectivity means balancing views off against the orthodox official line, wherever that may fall; and certainly where national security is at issue the line generally falls on the conservative

side. As it is the state which has to enforce security it becomes the state's role to define it both operationally and doctrinally. The office-bearers of the state - those put there by democracy - will to all intents and purposes be acting in the "national" as well as the "public" interest when they legislate and govern. The press is supposed to keep a check on what they are doing but as the press is crucially an agency of structural propaganda, its differences with the political power will seldom, if ever, go beyond alternative strategies of control.

Pragmatic need and consensual rationale generally combine in the libertarian system to produce a tame press in wartime. Issues of national security may be removed entirely from the political arena, facilitating the work of the press as publicists for the state. Depoliticisation of the issues goes hand-in-hand with the disciplined integration of society to attain the political object set by the ruling group.

The Steyn Commission report recommends just such depoliticisation of security issues and co-ordination of society to confront hostile forces. The chances are that big business, including the press establishments, will go along with the strategy of co-ordination. Despite the difficulties that South Africa's dominant groups have had in the past in bringing about a consensus amongst themselves, it seems they are closer today than at any time in their recent history to achieving solidarity on the national security issue. A quotation from a spokesman for the industrial sector will bear this out. Writing in defence of press freedom and against further Government restrictions on news and criticism, the chairman of Premier Milling states:

> The argument for a free Press rests simply on the notion that for people to feel secure, to be able to vote intelligently, remedy ills or detect malpractices, they first need to know what is going on around them. And in today's sophisticated world that cannot happen unless there is a Press which is free to tell them...
>
> (A) Free society finally rests on the reconciliation of different and competing interests. A free society involves tolerance of differing views, a tolerance of dissent and a tolerance of minority opinions. The Press is a vital catalyst in this process... The raison d'etre for the Press is to give the public all the facts. It can only do so if it is not under

> obligation to anyone, to any vested interest or to a Government. An obligation to vested interests or a Government must inevitably lead to distortion, and finally, worst of all, to blatant propaganda...Let us jettison, once and for all, the paranoid notion that criticism of those in authority implies a lack of patriotism - far from it, for it may well be evidence of a deep and passionate concern for a of national life and survival.(10)

The ideology which legitimates the system is built into its apparent diversities. The emphasis in the above argument falls on the reconciliation of competing (but not conflicting) interests by means of open communication. This is the libertatian "efficiency" theory once again. Again the flaw is that it collapses, of necessity, into consensual talk which assumes that everyone ultimately, no matter what their viewpoints, must owe highest allegiance to the state. In a state as oppressive and exploitative as South Africa this is an extraordinary argument to use; yet clearly what is hoped for is that the few vestiges of democracy which do exist in the South African state can be preserved and built upon in the future. Not everyone has the vote today, but maybe they will have it tomorrow; there is a road to reform and the government must take it. The demand of the libertarians is for far-reaching reforms within the known system. To democratise South Africa would go a long way towards mollifying the country's critics abroad and make capitalism safer at home.

The tortuous interncine conflicts of the dominant groups make a deceptive appearance, for all comprise parts of the structured whole. But the Government's strategies and policy aims are seen as objectionable by many of its potential allies inside and outside South Africa who express dismay and repugnance at the policy of apartheid and all that it entails in the way of repressive rule. It is recognised as being the Government's task to impose order where the system threatens to break down or be disrupted by revolutionary elements. This would be the task of any government executing the will of a dominant alliance. This task has become complicated and confused by nationalism's own purposes in government. The ruling party operates by repression, using the blunt tools of authority to impose its sectional will. This is quite clear from the daily evidence of coercion applied at many levels of society, from the pass law courts to censorship of the press. Nationalism, in fact, has been pervasively repressive, even where

its potential allies in the system are concerned. It has had to be, because its politics have not been consensual for all in the dominant alliance, let alone for society as a whole. The oppressive hand of the ruling party extends over every area of political life as it conspires to dominate in isolation.

Issues of great moment hinge on whether the total strategy does or does not succeed as a consensual strategy to unite the dominant groups. The strategy is not just a doctrine - the doctrine of the P W Botha administration with its military cast of mind and methods of organisation. It is a plan of reconstruction designed to bring into co-ordinated action the full resources of South Africa to repel physical attacks on the system from within and without. To achieve this co-ordination more will be required than the repetition of slogans of national unity. The various elements of the dominant alliance do not need to be told of the dire perils facing the system today, nor do they need to be persuaded of the desparate urgency to implement a plan of co-ordination. These things are self-evident. But before total co-ordination becomes possible there must be a reordering of the interests represented in Government, entailing an alteration of official policies to conciliate the elements of the alliance which at present are excluded or overlooked in the exercise of state power.

There are grounds for doubting whether the nationalists can make any such transition. The party, and the system with it, is in crisis because it does not seem possible for the party to eliminate its racial assumptions without destroying what it sees as the very basis of its own power. It may be right, of course; perhaps the National Party would not survive the drastic surgery. Yet if it does not volunteer for the operation its chances of leading the dominant groups towards complete co-ordination are correspondingly reduced and the system made more vulnerable than it already is. The alternative option - the one hitherto preferred by the party - is to resort to the increasing use of repression in every sphere combined with whatever propaganda for its rule that the party can succeed in putting across.

Because the National Party is obviously sectional, and because its policies are seen as the target of world hostility, its propaganda both at home and abroad constitutes a controversial domestic issue. Even during the Angolan War when the Government tried to justify censorship on the basis of national security its opponents doubted its motives. National Party rule has reached what Poulantzas, discussing the rise of fascism in Germany and Italy,

described as "the crisis of hegemony". Poulantzas noted that in both countries there had been a deep crisis of party representation and a deep ideological crisis within the "power bloc" of the dominant groups before the Nazis and Fascists took control. He went on:

> (No) dominant class or class fraction seems able to impose its "leadership" on the other classes and fractions of the power bloc, whether through its own methods of political organisation or through the "parliamentary democratic" State.
>
> Basically, the power bloc, like every other alliance, does not generally consist of classes or fractions of "equal importance", sharing the crumbs of power among themselves. It can only function on a regular basis insofar as a dominant class or fraction of a class imposes *its own particular domination* on the other members of the alliance in power, in short insofar as it succeeds in imposing its *hegemony* and cementing them together under its leadership.
>
> The inability of any class or class fraction to impose its hegemony is what characterises the conjuncture of fascism...(Poulantzas' italics)(11)

The lack of leadership in the contemporary South African state is manifested in an accelerating slide towards the politics of authorarianism and, possibly, military rule.

The prospect of South Africa falling under a military junta seems less remote with the National Party's own leader and Prime Minister being so firmly ensconced as Defence Minister. Speculation is futile and may be wasted so long as Mr Botha has the confidence of his party colleagues; the turning point may be reached if he loses the party caucus or is unseated from civilian power. Concrete evidence of the military's intrusion into politics was given in March 1980 when the *Sunday Times* published a document in which senior SADF personnel were instructed to take steps to nullify the white opposition's attack on the Government during the Defence Vote, which was pending in Parliament. The document, signed by Major General Phil Pretorius, caused a heated row between the Government and the opposition. The matter was handed over to a Defence Department Board of Inquiry under the former Chief of the

Defence Force, Admiral H H Biermann, who later reported that the document had been mistakenly worded. The evidence heard by the Board was, however, not made public, in order to protect the officers involved.(12) The Prime Minister himself was apologetic about the SADF's role in this incident.(13)

The intrusion of generals into politics is by no means rare in chronically unstable states, as South Africa is inclined to be. It is not only in Prussia that war is an extension of politics. What has so far kept the generals out of the arena of South African politics is more than their professional disinclination for the messy business of controversy; it is that there has been no need to intervene to save the structure. That day may come, and if it does people may marvel that the generals delayed so long, for as S.L. Finer wrote in The Man on Horseback, a study of military men in politics:

> Instead of asking why the military engage in politics, we ought surely to ask why they ever do otherwise. For at first sight the political advantages of the military vis a vis other and civilian groupings are overwhelming. The military possess vastly superior organisation. And they possess arms.(14)

Perhaps what they generally lack is finesse and the ability to persuade others to their point of view without brutally regimenting them. If so, then South Africa's military men began their political education over Angola: not only did it throw them into the limelight of international politics but it taught them the vital necessity of artful propaganda at home.

APPENDIX A

CHRONOLOGY OF ANGOLAN WAR NEWS

NOTE: This chart, while fairly comprehensive, cannot encompass every item of note published during the Angolan war or after it. The main sources have been South African newspapers, particularly the Rand Daily Mail and The Star. For entries on coverage by foreign newspapers, recourse was had to The Times Index, and the New York Times's "Facts on File". An attempt has been made to cite the earliest mention of news events in publicly accessible media in South Africa. It is possible, indeed likely, that African, Cuban and Soviet publications which are not generally available in South Africa carried earlier intelligence of certain events. These sources are cited where reference was made to them in the Western press. For reasons of brevity the terms "prominently reported", "widely reported" and "briefly reported" have been used to indicate the attention given to news items. "Prominent" means major publicity, usually in the form of page one treatment and often over several days. "Wide" reportage means that many media devoted some attention to the event, while "brief" reports were those which appeared in few media or in summary form.

DATE	EVENT	REMARKS ON SOURCE/S
MARCH 1961		
3	Holden Roberto's FNLA forces invade Angola from the Congo, sparking off a 13-year bush war with the Portuguese. The MPLA and Unita soon join in.	Widely reported in the world's press over the years. See J. Marcum: The Angolan Revolution (1969 and 1978)
APRIL 1974		
	Military coup in Lisbon. Portugal's African colonies are promised their independence at the earliest possible dates.	Prominently reported.
JULY		
7	Covert funding of FNLA by the CIA begins, though not approved by the U.S. Congress.	John Stockwell's book, In Search of Enemies (1978) describes the CIA's Angolan programme.
JANUARY 1975		
10	Algarve agreement signed between MPLA, FNLA and Unita by which the movements agree to set up a joint transitional government with Independence to be on 11 November 1975.	Widely reported.
26	The U.S. Administration's "40 Committee" (overseeing CIA activities) approves a $265 000 grant to Roberto to "make him competitive in the transitional government" in Angola. (Stockwell) According to Dr Henry Kissinger, U.S. Secretary of State, in a statement released in January 1976, the money was used for "bicycles and office equipment" to support FNLA political activity.	Rumours of CIA involvement appeared repeatedly in Western media but were not confirmed until Stockwell went public in 1976.
MARCH		
	Soviet and Cuban advisors enter Angola and Soviet arms shipments to the MPLA increase, according to CIA intelligence reports cited by Stockwell.	This conflicts with Cuban claims that communist aid on a large scale began only in November '75.
	During March, Dr Jonas Savimbi, leader of Unita, makes a secret trip to some "European capital" to confer with a South African senior BOSS officer. Savimbi's request for aid is turned down, apparently because South Africa wanted him first to reach an agreement with the FNLA.	Reported in London Sunday Telegraph war history by Robert Moss, Jan-Feb 1977.
	Savimbi subsequently flies to Peking and obtains a promise of a large-scale arms consignment to be routed through Tanzania.	Reported by R.W. Johnson: How Long will South Africa Survive? (1977)
25	First consignment of Russian and Yugoslav arms for the MPLA arrives in Congo-Brazzaville.	Johnson (1977)
28	Transitional government (under the Algarve agreement) comes into being in Luanda.	Widely reported.
APRIL		
14	Savimbi meets the S.A. consul in Zambia. Again his request for arms and other assistance is refused.	Moss (1977)
15	The MPLA are prevented from receiving a shipment of Yugoslav arms when Portuguese officials intervene at Luanda dockside to stop the offloading. As fighting in and around the capital breaks out between MPLA and FNLA bands, the MPLA is said to enjoy the help of 230 Cuban advisors.	Moss (1977). Allegations of Russian and Cuban involvement had begun to appear in Western media after April 1975.
Mid-April	President Kaunda of Zambia visits Washington and tells President Ford that Zambia, Botswana and Tanzania back Unita. Kaunda is concerned over the future of the vital Benguela railway which crosses the Unita heartland.	Johnson (1977)
28	Fierce fighting erupts between the MPLA and FNLA in Luanda. The city dissolves into chaos as refugees throng main roads and the port.	Prominently reported

MAY 1975

Date	Event	Source
15	Portuguese government declares virtual martial law in Angola with warnings to all factions to cease fighting.	Widely reported
	Agostinho Neto, leader of the MPLA, visits Congo-Brazzaville for talks with a Cuban representative concerning possible support for the MPLA.	Reported by Gabriel Garcia-Marquez, giving the Cuban version of the war, in the Mexican periodical Proceso in January 1977.
JUNE		
21	Roberto, Savimbi and Neto meet in Nakuru, Kenya, under OAU auspices and sign an agreement to "renounce the use of force as a way to resolve problems." The agreement is broken almost immediately as FNLA and Unita fighters enter into a tacit alliance against the MPLA.	Widely reported.
JULY		
Early July	Daniel Chipenda, representing the FNLA, confers with General Hendrik van den Bergh, head of BOSS, in Windhoek. South Africa agrees with Chipenda to intervene in the war, probably under pressure to do so from America and France.	Johnson (1977). The Times of 8 December 1975 reported Chipenda's visit but no details of negotiations.
13	The 40 Committee approves a $14 million paramilitary programme to support the FNLA/Unita alliance against the MPLA. CIA arms deliveries begin via Kinshasa, Zaire, with President Mobuto's knowledge and support. The U.S. meanwhile ignores calls for United Nations or O.A.U. mediation to end the conflict. The CIA policy is to wage a limited war to hinder the MPLA and make Soviet backing costly in men and arms.	Stockwell (1978)
14	South African troops cross into Southern Angola and take up positions along the Cunene River and near Ruacana to protect the Calueque-Ruacana hydro-electric scheme, a South African-financed venture. There are skirmishes with the MPLA and Unita.	This scenario is given by Johnson (1977). The date of S.A. entry into Angola remains in doubt.
Late July	Savimbi meets a South African general in Namibia, and South Africa now agrees to provide Unita with military instructors. Some 6 000 Unita troops are rapidly trained. After a flying tour of various African states in a Lear jet given to him by Lonrho, Savimbi claims the support of Ghana, Nigeria and Zambia.	Johnson (1977) records Savimbi's visit. Johnson and Stockwell agree on African tour and Lonrho's expensive gift.
26	Fidel Castro in Cuba asks a Portuguese envoy whether Lisbon would allow Cuba to send aid to the MPLA - but the request is not countenanced at all.	Garcia-Marquez (1977).
	At an OAU summit in Kampala, the three Angolan movements are urged to settle their differences peacefully and dispense with foreign interventionists. As an anti-war gesture, President Nyerere of Tanzania blocks the transfer of Chinese arms via Dar-es-Salaam and intended for Unita.	Widely reported.
AUGUST		
4	U.S. Senator Clark Clifford, chairman of the Senate Foreign Affairs Committee Sub-Committee on African Affairs, begins a tour of Angola in which he tries to ascertain the extent of American and other foreign involvement. Before his departure he is briefed by the CIA's Director, Colby, who explains that no American arms are being sent into Angola and no Americans are involved in the conflict. Throughout the ensuing months of war until halfway into 1976 the CIA continued "lying" to Congress, the press and people.	Stockwell (1978).
4	The MPLA now controls 12 of the 15 provinces of Angola. Savimbi declares war on the MPLA from his headquarters at Silva Porto. He says Unita - which till now had stayed out of the fighting - would reply to attacks on it by other movements.	Widely reported.
5	In Luanda the MPLA produces documents purporting to show that the FNLA has South African backing and employs white mercenaries.	Briefly reported.
6	Neto says in Luanda that South Africa, Zaire, and the United States have decided on the "partition" of Angola. MPLA sources repeat the accusation that South Africa is backing the FNLA, and accuse the FNLA's military commander, Chipenda, of having contacts with "highly placed South Africans" who promised military and economic aid. South Africa closes its Luanda consulate for an indefinite period.	Widely reported.
7	A flood of Angolan refugees - estimated a 200 000 - pours out of the country, bound for Portugal and states bordering Angola, including Namibia. A group of S.A. press correspondents is allowed to visit two camps for refugees at Grootfontein to see how about 600 are being cared for.	Prominently reported in South Africa, the refugee issue becomes a major emotive news topic.
8	Fierce fighting flares up in the immediate vicinity of Ruacana. The Star reports that a team of South Africans involved in construction work are scheduled to negotiate with Unita which is now in control of the area. No mention of South African troop incursions, if any.	Briefly reported in S.A. and world media.

AUGUST 1975

9	Fighting erupts around Angola's southern port of Mocamedes, and there are also indications of fighting around the inland town of Pereira d'Eca close to the Namibian border. The situation is obscure but fighting is reported to involve Unita.	Widely reported.
9	The chaos and confusion make it possible for Swapo ~~guerillas~~ to cross the border to murder and rob in Owambo and to disappear again into Southern Angola. Swapo also threatens the hydro-electric projects at Ruacana and Calueque. "The South African Defence Force moved in to protect these two projects when the Portuguese Government failed to do so. In this action peaceful contact was made with representatives of Unita-FNLA and MPLA."	Official S.A. War history, released February, 1977.
11	First reported involvement of South African forces. The Lisbon Daily, Diario de Noticias states that there is S.A. troop activity around Ruacana.	Briefly reported in some world media but not in S.A.
11	Mr. P.W.Botha, Minister of Defence, bans reports or speculation concerning South African Military movements and activities on the Namibia-Angola border in particular at Ruacana.	The blackout on news concerning S.A. involvement began on this date.
16	First 200 Cuban instructors arrive in Angola	Moss (1977)
16	Mr. Botha repeats his ban on news of South African involvement.	
Mid-August	CIA Intelligence reports show the presence of Soviet advisors and Cuban troops in Angola. Cubans are thought to have started training programmes as early as June.	Kissinger statement, January, 1976. Stockwell (1978).
Late August	The MPLA Defence Minister visits Moscow and is reportedly refused Russian troop support and referred to Cuba for help. He then meets Cubans and tells them South Africa is about to intervene in the civil war.	Details in Johnson (1977).
Late August	The MPLA claims that between 800 and 1000 South African troops and a dozen helicopter gunships moved into Angola on 22 August, in the direction of Pereira d'Eca.	Reported in world media, not in S.A.
Late August	Meanwhile at a "crucial meeting" towards the end of August, in Unita-held territory inside Angola, a senior South African army general agrees that S.A. will provide instructors for Unita.	Meeting was secret. First reported in S.A. in Moss articles, February 1977. Also in Johnson (1977).
24	The Peking Review, official mouthpiece of Red Chinese policy, attacks Moscow for "flagrantly stirring up armed conflict in Angola" and for "continuing to ship a large quantity of heavy arms into Angola to whip up civil war". Only a few lines are devoted to criticism of the United States role in Angola.	The Observer, London.

SEPTEMBER

Early Sept.	BBC World Service and other Western news media give wide currency to reports of a movement of South African troops into Angola with armoured cars and helicopter cover.	Publication of these reports is prohibited by the SADF while the Minister of Defence declines all comment.
2	"Mercenaries" said to be fighting for Unita are operating deep in southern Angola. They have pushed the MPLA out of Rocadas and Pereira d'Eca. The Star notes : "Whether the force consists of former Portuguese soldiers or paid soldiers 'freelancing' is not known. Portuguese military sources disclaim reports that the force is a group of regular troops from a bona fide foreign army, however".	This was one of the first times the "mystery mercenary force" was mentioned in any S.A. newspaper.
3	Parts of a speech given by the Minister of Defence at the National Party Congress in East London are not cleared for publication. The Cape Times carries a report on the speech with a footnote saying that the Defence Act has been invoked to keep sections of the speech out of the press.	Press campaign against censorship begins.
3	South African newspapers are authorised to carry speculative reports suggesting that SA troops "may" have been using hot pursuit tactics across an unspecified border. The SADF official history was to record that during these operations Cuban weapons and ammunition dumps were found, whilst refugees also mentioned Cubans supporting the MPLA.	"Hot pursuit" story appears prominently in SA Press. The Cape Times footnotes its report to the effect that it is "published in the form in which it was authorised by the Minister of Defence."

SEPTEMBER 1975

Date	Event	Source
5	The South African Secretary for Foreign Affairs, Mr Brand Fourie, states that South Africa has sent a 30-man patrol some 36 km into Angola to protect the Ruacana project. He said the Portuguese authorities had agreed to take over this role and accordingly South Africa would "as soon as possible suspend all measures taken by us ... and withdraw the personnel concerned".	Widely reported in SA and world media.
8	An MPLA spokesman in Congo-Brazzaville says the "recent entry by South African troops into Angola was an attempt at internationalising the conflict and forcing MPLA troops to fight on a number of fronts".	Reported in SA and world media
9	Mr Botha sent a message to editors explaining why he had not permitted South Africa's incursion into Angola to be publicised until 6 September. He said protracted negotiations had been going on since 12 August, and the Portuguese had replied only the previous week.	Message to editors not reported.
11	Zaire commits its elite Seventh and Fourth commando battalions to the FNLA side, flying them to Ambriz, north of Luanda. Another Zairean force crossed the border into Cabinda, an Angolan territory which had declared a seperate independence.	Stockwell, 1978. Zairian involvement was sporadically reported in world and SA media during the war.
17	Zairean, FNLA and Portuguese mercenaries retake Caxito and threaten Luanda.	Reported in world media.
Mid-Sept.	An MPLA delegation visits Washington in hopes of persuading the United States that the MPLA is not necessarily hostile to the United States. State Department officials rebuff the delegation. The CIA continues feeding biased and untrue information about the situation in Angola to the press and Congress.	Stockwell, 1978.
21	A team of South African military instructors arrive in Silva Porto to train Unita troops. They are reinforced by some 120 regular Zairean regulars with six armoured cars. South Africa's "Foxbat" column is sent to hold a line 30 km north of Huambo against the advancing MPLA.	Johnson (1977). This version conflicts with the official SADF version given below. Neither was reported in South Africa until 1977.
24	The South African Defence Force sent an officer to Silva Porto to advise Unita on training and reorganisation, and to hold Nova Lisboa at all costs. A team of 18 instructors with three anti-tank weapons and a few machine guns joined the liaison officer.	SADF official history.
24	South Africa entered the civil war in September 1975 in response to "desperate appeals" from Unita.	US Secretary of State Henry Kissinger, in January 1976.
24	The Rand Daily Mail reports in a story datelined Lusaka that sources in Zambia claim more than 1000 Cubans are fighting beside the MPLA. Ships have been seen off-loading troops at the Congo-Brazzaville port of Point Noire, and the Cubans are said to have the backing of the USSR.	Other SA papers carried similar reports, as did most Western media at this time.
25	Dr Savimbi tells pressmen in Silva Porto that Unita troops would soon begin a strong drive to capture the key port of Lobito. He did not disclose the nature of his forces but gave the impression they had been augmented. He said on the MPLA side there were Cubans, Algerians, Mocambiqueans and a few Vietnamese. Meanwhile the MPLA said that their troops had been involved in further clashes with "foreign mercenary" forces at Rocadas, 80 km from the Namibian border.	Reported in world media.
OCTOBER 1975		
4	OAU conciliation commission seeks to end conflict, but MPLA refuses to support it.	Briefly reported.
6	A company-strength Unita force with 14 South African infantry instructors led by a major, clashes with an MPLA/Cuban force at Norton de Matos, halfway between Lobito and Nova Lisboa. The South Africans manned anti-tank weapons and machine guns. Unita claimed 116 of the enemy had been killed. There were no SA casualties. The MPLA march from Benguela was halted.	During October 1975 SA troop involvement was not observed by any world or SA media - it remained a secret. Details: SADF official history and Robert Moss, Jan-Feb 1977. This was the first acknowledged engagement fought by SA troops.
7	South African instructors urgently request reinforcements. A large consignment of equipment is flown in by American-built C-130 transport aircraft. Pretoria then orders formation of "Zulu" column.	Moss (1977), official SADF war history and Johnson (1977).
10	Chipenda with 1000 FNLA troops augments "Zulu" column on Namibia-Angolan border.	Johnson (1977)

OCTOBER 1975

11	A senior South African Defence Force officer becomes adviser to a lightly armed FNLA/Unita force of about 1000 men with vegetable vehicles and removal vehicles as their transport. Six SA army officers and seven non-commisioned officers accompany him, and the "Zulu" battle group comes into being with the task of recapturing as many towns in southern Angola as possible.	SADF official history and Moss, Jan-Feb 1977.
14	Operation Zulu begins as the SA/Unita/FNLA column moves across the border from its base at Runtu. In the next 33 days the force covers 3159 km with 1 SA soldier killed and 20 injured. In a series of engagements it claims 210 enemy killed, 96 wounded and 56 captured. Four FNLA/Unita troops die and 21 are wounded.	SADF official history.
16	MPLA puts captured FNLA "mercenaries" on show in Luanda.	Widely reported.
Mid-October	"Foxbat" combat group formed. After the clash at Norton de Matos on 6 October "it now became obvious that the struggle, with strong Cuban support, began to take on a conventional colour and as a result a squadron of armoured cars with crews was sent in the middle of October to Silva Porto, where it joined the South African trained Unita forces to form the Foxbat combat group."	SADF official history.
19	Neto in Luanda warns of an "imperialist invasion" of Angola now in progress and mentions that Chipenda has held talks with South Africa.	Reported in SA and world media.
19	Zulu captures Pereira d'Eca, the southern district capital, with little resistance.	SADF official history.
20	Rocadas captured by Zulu. South Africa sends a couple of armoured cars and a mortar detachment to join the column.	SADF official history. Western media, including SA media, report the progress of Unita/FNLA forces.
20	Two South African-owned C-130 aircraft fly into Ndjili airport (Zaire) at night to meet a CIA C-141 flight and whisk its load of arms down to Silva Porto. CIA officers and BOSS representatives jointly supervise the trans-loading. Stockwell writes that the SA-Unita armoured column made "the most effective strike force ever seen in black Africa, exploding through the MPLA/Cuban ranks in a blitzkrieg, which in November almost won the war." CIA Director Colby is quoted by Stockwell as having stated "falsely" that the CIA "stayed well away from" involvement with South Africa.	Stockwell (1978)
20	South African newspapers are allowed to report that SA security forces have engaged in a "hot pursuit" raid into Angola following a sneak attack by Swapo insurgents on Namibian border posts. An SADF statement says two Swapo camps on the Angolan side were destroyed, seven insurgents killed, and military equipment confiscated.	Prominently reported in SA. Briefly reported in Western media
21	<u>Le Monde</u> quotes Savimbi, saying that ships have brought 750 Cubans and 10 000 tons of war materials to Angola in the past week.	Reported in West and SA.
22	Joao de Almeida, an important communications centre and the MPLA's southern headquarters, is recaptured after a fierce battle.	SADF official history.
23	Zulu column begins to move into Angola. This was the day, according to the London-based Institute of Strategic Studies, when South Africa's direct military intervention took place. The ISS said SA's role took four forms: (1) strikes at Swapo bases in southern Angola; (2) guarding of vital installations at Ruacana and Calueque - from August 1975; (3) a force of "several hundred" troops, later rising to about 2000, was sent to reinforce the Unita/FNLA alliance with logistic, reconnaissance and limited combat functions; (4) SA troops guarded and controlled refugee camps at Chitado, Pereira d'Eca, Cuangar and Calai.	Johnson (1977) and ISS. <u>Strategic Survey, 1975</u>, was published in London and reprinted in summary form by <u>The Star</u> in May 1976. It was the first war history to appear in SA.
23	The MPLA accuses South Africa of accompanying the FNLA 240 km into Angola. The MPLA says it has ordered a mobilisation of all men aged 18-25 to counter a "general invasion" from both SA and Zaire. Reporting the MPLA allegations, <u>The Times</u> states that SA has replied they are "utter nonsense".	Widely reported in world media. Allegations against SA not reported in SA media. But some newspapers (e.g. <u>Die Transvaler</u>) report that the MPLA alleges an "international brigade" is attacking from the south and that SA is threatening Angola.
24	Cuban "mercenaries" reported to be helping the MPLA keep a grip on the country till independence.	Briefly reported in West and SA. Cubans are kept in the dark about their country's role.
24	Zulu captures Sa de Bandeira, capital of a southern district, and Unita/FNLA administration is established. Zulu is once again strengthened with more armoured cars and 81 mm mortars.	SADF official history.

OCTOBER 1975

Date	Event	Comment
26	Foxbat, comprising a South African-trained battalion, SA advisors and an armoured car squadron, moves from Silva Porto to Texeira de Silva. A detachment sent to the Santa Comba-Cela area to check the MPLA southward advance kills a Cuban general.	SADF official history.
28	Zulu captures the port of Mocamedes and carries off a large quantity of ordnance after fierce resistance.	SADF official history.
29	South African newspapers report that an MPLA spokesman in London has charged that a "mercenary force" had entered Angola from the south about 10 days previously, and the MPLA could no longer say it had complete control of 12 of the 16 provinces. The mercenary army of about 1000 men is supported by rocket-firing helicopters and made up of Portuguese, American Negroes, Belgians, Tunisians and troops from neighbouring Zaire, according to the MPLA.	Reports on "mercenaries" are becoming the established way of describing the mystery attacking column.
30	BBC team detained by MPLA in Luanda.	Widely reported.
30	South African Defence Force headquarters issues a directive. Reports on all rumours of SA troop involvement, "from whatever source,or even oblique references to such involvement or co-operation" must be referred to DHQ for clearance.	
31	South African papers report on MPLA communique saying the city of Mocamedes has fallen and been occupied by "South Africans, Portuguese and members of a rightwing movement called the Portuguese Liberation Army".	"South Africans" mentioned here - and in other SA reports - were not identified as troops. Implicitly, they were mercenaries or freebooters.
31	Two South African newsmen who arrived in Luanda are reported detained by the MPLA on suspicion of being spies. They are Roger Sargent and Chris van der Merwe of the "Mail" Africa Bureau.	Widely reported in SA at the time.

NOVEMBER 1975

Date	Event	Comment
1	BBC television and radio team is released by MPLA after representations by the British Government.	Prominently reported in all Western media.
1	The Zulu and Foxbat battle groups combine to crush MPLA/Cuban forces at Cubal.	SADF official history.
2	The Sunday Observer reports that the mystery attacking column is led by English-speaking officers who are believed to be South Africans.	Report not treated prominently by Observer. Not published in SA media, but Sunday Observer could be bought in bookstores during the ensuing week.
2	After a series of meetings in Kampala during October and early November under the auspices of the OAU's political bureau, the MPLA, FNLA and Unita agree to a ceasefire. Fighting continues.	Widely reported.
4	"Mail" Africa Bureau reports that anti-South African feeling is being whipped up in Luanda by reports that "South African mercenaries" are fighting MPLA forces in the south of Angola.	
4-5	Zulu attacks and occupies Benguela, taking the city in spite of heavy fire from mortars and 122mm (Stalin's Organ) rockets. Many well prepared defensive positions were deserted by Cubans and MPLA who in their haste left secret documents, weapons, petrol and food.	SA newspapers continue to use "mystery column" label. A report in The Star blames rigid MPLA censorship for preventing newsmen from obtaining a clear picture of the fighting.
5	August Lopez, an MPLA leader, says at a press conference in Lusaka that parts of south and central Angola have been occupied by "troops from neighbouring countries" - he does not specify which.	Reported in the Windhoek Advertiser as being "of particular importance to SA".
5	MPLA troops subject foreign journalists to questioning and harassment.	Briefly reported.
5	Cuba decides to enter the war. The central committee of the Cuban communist party, meeting in Havana, decides to send troops to Angola in "Operation Carlotta". The USSR is informed of this decision.	This late date is given by Garcia-Marquez (1977) but challenged by Stockwell, Moss and others.
6	A United States State Department Official refuses to say whether the US is intervening in Angola, but says that there is "no evidence" of US military supplies being sent by neighbouring Zaire to support Angolan factions.	Widely reported.

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6	The South African Defence Force sends a senior officer to act as an observer at Holden Roberto's HQ in Ambriz, northern Angola. Roberto disregards SA advice that he should retain his territory and not launch an offensive. He "gambled away his forces on careless attacks ... the results for FNLA were disastrous".	SADF official war history.
6	The Rand Daily Mail's London office reports that the MPLA is threatening to bring charges that Sargent and Van der Merwe, the detained journalists, belong to a mercenary army - the charge carries the death penalty.	Prominently reported in SA and widely reported in West.
Early November	24 defence correspondents visit defence installations in different parts of South Africa to view improvements and changes in anti-insurgency techniques.	Widely reported in SA.
7	The thunder of guns can be heard in the northern suburbs of Luanda as a combined force of FNLA, Portuguese and Zairean troops accompanied by United States and South African advisors move on Luanda from the north.	Moss (1977) and Stockwell (1978).
7	Zulu takes Lobito without resistance and continues its northward advance to Novo Redondo, the northern border of FNLA/Unita influence. According to Stockwell: "A hundred miles southeast of Luanda, the South African armoured column was having a field day, covering vast distances so rapidly the Cuban/MPLA forces had difficulty retreating ahead of them".	SADF official war history.
8	The Times reports that the military situation is "confused".	
9	The Argus Africa News Service, in a comprehensive article on the mystery column, notes that the MPLA's "propaganda machine" in Luanda is claiming that the column consists of regular South African forces. But Portuguese military authorities say that it is an FNLA-Unita force backed by mercenaries, including South Africans, with French-made armoured cars supplied from Zaire. Aid is coming to Unita "from Europe" in unmarked Dakota and Hercules freighters landing at Nova Lisboa.	This is the most accurate - but still misleading - report to appear in SA at this time.
9	Rand Daily Mail journalist Roger Sargent, a British citizen, who spent 11 days in an MPLA prison, is freed after representations are made on his behalf by British authorities. Van der Merwe, a South African, is held for a further month.	Prominently reported in SA.
10	Savimbi visits Pretoria to plead with Prime Minister Vorster to keep his troops in Angola at least until the summit meeting of the OAU on 9 December. Savimbi claims this plea has the backing of conservative African heads of state. Vorster was under strong pressure from the United States to stay in Angola, and also received pleas to the same effect from African leaders via BOSS.	Moss (1977) and Johnson (1977).
10	Russian interference attacked by Zaire and Uganda.	The Times and other Western media give prominence to the Soviet threat.
11	Independence Day in Angola. All three black movements in Angola declare national republics with different capitals, but the MPLA government in Luanda is immediately recognised by the Soviet bloc and radical African states. Unita and FNLA sign protocol agreement to set up joint government.	Prominently reported in world media, including SA.
11	South African involvement at this stage comprises about 300 advisors/instructors and personnel as well as a limited number of armoured cars, mortars and anti-tank weapons. On November 11 the SA/Unita/FNLA alliance holds the line north from Lobito to Santa Comba and eastwards from there to Luso. Foxbat has shown that the allies move northwards with great ease but "the geographical borders of South Africa's involvement as well as the possibility of SA withdrawal by November 11 ... prevented it". The SA forces remained in their positions while mediation went on in anticipation of a political solution.	SA official war history.
11	The FNLA/Zairean force of 1500 men which approached Luanda from the north is routed by Stalin's Organ rocket fire on the plain of Quifangando, 20 km from Luanda. Although the advancing column is supported by armoured cars and four South African 5,5 inch artillery pieces, these are no match for the Cuban/MPLA barrage. There was no engagement of troop units but the attackers broke and fled, and for the FNLA and Zaireans "the war was virtually over".	Battle was sketchily reported in world media at the time. Details given by Stockwell (1978).
12	Zulu column, driving towards Porto Amboim, takes "heavy casualties" at the hands of the MPLA and Cubans but nevertheless manages to occupy Novo Redondo. When a mortar bomb fell in the middle of a contingent of South Africans, 18 were wounded, one fatally. A request for further reinforcement is refused by Pretoria and the column is told to stay where it is.	Moss (1977). Moss claims the dead man was the first SA soldier to die in Angola.
13	Amin of Uganda praises British, American and Chinese policy towards Angola.	Briefly reported.

NOVEMBER 1975.

Date	Event	Comment
13-14	Three South African soldiers killed in action.	SADF officially releases their names five days later, on 18 November, to afternoon newspapers.
13	Foxbat, strengthened by Zulu, has to contend with heavy 122mm rocket fire in the Santa Comba area. New battle groups are formed after this to help the SA/Unita/FNLA alliance hold on to their territory, and additional artillery support in the form of 140mm guns is sent.	SA official war history.
13	An ITN news report beamed to British viewers features information about South African troop involvement in Angola. Reporter Michael Nicholson describes and shows photographs of SA troops in Angola. The next day, SA newspapers are forbidden to publish details of Nicholson's allegations. Some, like The Star, report the ban, hinting that the TV material showed "certain incidents" in southern Angola.	From now on the outside world was presented with growing evidence of SA involvement - but SA was kept in the dark.
15	Rand Daily Mail carries a small blank space on its front page with a note stating that "permission" for publication has not been granted. The relevant law (the Defence Act) is not named. The censored report concerned the British ITN allegations of South African involvement.	
15	Russian arms and Cuban troops arrive in strength to support the MPLA. China, meanwhile, criticises Russia over Angolan intervention.	The Times, widely quoted in West, including SA.
16	The London Sunday Observer, Sunday Telegraph and the Sunday Times prominently carry independent reports describing young white South Africans in the vanguard of the armed thrust into Angola. Journalist Tony Hodges reports seeing over 50 uniformed SA troops stacking arms in airport hangars at Benguela while two SA - manned Panhard armoured cars guarded the access road. The soldiers, armoured cars, and transport planes bore no identifying insignias. No photographs were allowed. It was widely believed that the war materials came originally from the United States and had been routed through Zaire. Fred Bridgeland writes from Lobito that the were supplied by giant C-130 transport aircraft in camouflage. Savimbi, asked about SA help, says: "Maybe they are South Africans or Rhodesians, but they are more French." He says he needed troops with armoured cars and he had to get them from people who could match the Russian-backed MPLA.	These reports accurately reflected the position in southern Angola. They were the first detailed exposés of the SA presence.
17	The South African Defence Force prohibits publication of details contained in London Sunday newspapers.	Ban is widely reported in Western media. Opposition English language SA papers inform their readers of the ban in news reports and editorials.
17	Amin, Chairman of OAU, states that a peacekeeping force should be sent to Angola	
17	Unita, embarrassed by its links with the South Africans, issues a statement in Lusaka claiming that the whites are "Angolans".	Reported by SA newspapers.
17	Russia attacks FNLA in statement released in Moscow.	
18	The South African Foreign Minister, Dr Hilgard Muller, tells foreign newsmen in London that SA is not involved in the war against the MPLA. SA troops were in Angola to defend labourers, equipment and the water supply from the Cunene River. It had been thought advisable to curb SA press "speculation" about the war because it could have seriously unsettling effects on Owambo and neighbouring territories. Sections of the reports from London were censored in South Africa.	Widely reported in world and SA media.
18	The Rand Daily Mail carries a large blank space in its front page lead story as a protest against what it considers to be unfair and unwarranted discrimination by the SADF in favour of The Star. The latter had been granted the exclusive right to publish details of recent casualties on the battlefront.	
18	South Africa states that it is preparing a strip of no-man's land between Angola and Namibia.	Widely reported.
19	President Julius Nyerere of Tanzania tells an audience in Oxford that South Africa has been using Namibia "as a base for its troop incursions into Angola, and as the staging post for mercenary activity in that country."	Reported in SA and in world media.
20	Dr Hilgard Muller, appearing in a British ITN programme, says: "South Africa is not involved in that war (in Angola) ... I must point out, however, that there are small numbers of SA troops at the Cunene project." The SADF later prohibits local newspapers from publishing details of the ITN allegation that SA troops had been directly involved in the capture of Lobito.	Only Muller denial carried by SA media.

NOVEMBER 1975

21	Commenting on reports of large-scale South African troop movements through Namibia to the northern border area, the Minister of Defence, Mr. Botha, says the moves are "not unusual nor large-scale preventative steps". An SADF spokesman admitted that SA Airways Boeings and troop trains were carrying troops northward but said this was done regularly. He added that SA was reinforcing its northern security.	Windhoek Advertiser carried a report and photographs of a Boeing in transit through Windhoek.
21	An article in the Russian mouthpiece, Izvestia, says South Africa had entered Angola because the crash of Portugal's colonial empire had frightened the Republic's white rulers. SA was also busy "establishing the base for the manufacture of weapons of mass destruction" - a reference to nuclear weapons.	Reported in The Star.
21	The South African Minister of Defence, Mr Botha, accuses Russia of employing "militaristic imperialism" in Angola. He was reacting to the Russian accusations. He said "the Republic ... is not bringing in Cubans to fight against the rights of two movements like the FNLA and Unita in their own country."	Widely reported in SA.
22	The Washington Post carries a story from Lusaka reporting that South African soldiers are fighting in Angola. "The propaganda and political war was lost in that stroke. There was nothing the (CIA's) Lusaka station could invent that would be as damaging to the other side as our alliance with the hated SA was to our (i.e. America's) cause".	The Post report merely confirmed what other Western media had reported. The strategic impact of the disclosures is described by Stockwell (1978).
23	Reports that 20 Russian soldiers have been captured by Unita troops are described by Tass, the Soviet news agency, as a "provocative forgery" intended to mislead world opinion and divert attention from the intervention in Angola by "the South African racists, the Maoists, and other imperialist forces". Unita had claimed the Russians were captured when its forces took the town of Malanje.	The Times and other Western media.
23	The Sunday Times of Zambia warns in an editorial that African leaders are causing "genocide" by inviting foreign involvement in Angola. It attacks both South Africa and Russia for causing suffering, likening what is happening to the slave trade of the 18th and 19th centuries.	Reported in SA.
24	Speaking in Detroit, the United States Secretary of State, Dr Kissinger, says "We cannot ignore the extensive Soviet build-up of weapons in Angola, which introduced great power rivalry in Africa for the first time in 15 years." He said the US could not be indifferent to an interventionist policy involving Russian power so distant from "traditional Russian interests". He said he was also concerned at the sending of thousands of Cubans into the Angolan conflict.	Prominently reported in the West, including SA.
25	Unita and FNLA set up "coalition government" - but former Portuguese High Commissioner says MPLA must be involved in whatever government is formed.	Widely reported.
25	The Minister of Foreign Affairs, Dr Hilgard Muller, says in a South African television interview that SA troops are in Angola solely to protect the Calueque project.	Dr Muller's third denial, in the fact of many allegations to the contrary, is given prominence by SA media.
26	MPLA claims to have captured black South African troops.	Briefly reported in West. Not in SA.
26	Four more South African soldiers are reported killed in the "operational area" while taking part in a "hot pursuit action" against "terrorists" while other SA troops involved in the same clashes are wounded. The deaths brought the number of SA troops killed in November to nine.	Prominently reported in SA media.
26	The Minister of Defence, Mr Botha, accompanied by the Chief of the South African Defence Force, Admiral Biermann, and senior officers in the army and Air Force, leaves for an undisclosed military area for discussions and inspection, SADF headquarters announces.	Reported in SA media.
27	Three vessels carrying Cuban troops arrive in Luanda - the first such ships, according to Johnson. (Moss claims there were 1500 Cubans in Angola by 20 October, and at least 4000 by 11 November. Garcia-Marquez maintains that there were only 650 Cubans in Angola on 20 November.)	Controversy over the date and extent of Cuban entry into the war abounds in world media at the time, and continues in the war's aftermath.
27	The Minister of Defence says on his return from "Military area No.1" that certain South African news media were contravening the Defence Act by publishing "panic reports", especially from communist sources. SA, he said, would be wise to pay attention only to official and authoritative statements on Defence matters issued by DHQ Pretoria. Any report aimed at giving the impression that the SADF was not in full control of the border operation was "Malicious and devoid of all truth".	Widely reported in SA media.

NOVEMBER 1975

Date	Event	Comment
27	The MPLA claims to be "winning on all fronts" and says it has captured "several white mercenaries" - but gives no further details.	Reported in world and SA media.
27	Nigeria reverses its previous stand on Angola and states its support for the MPLA government, citing as its reason the fact that South Africa had intervened.	SA is losing the propaganda war while holding fast on the battlefield. World media register the diplomatic setbacks of the Unita/FNLA alliance.
27	Foreign journalists in Pretoria are briefed by the South African Defence Force and the Minister of Defence on South Africa's role in Angola. They are told SA has troops in Angola and is providing "advice and logistic support" to forces fighting the MPLA. The authorities use the background briefing as an opportunity to appeal to the West to come to SA's aid and join actively in preventing the Soviet Union from establishing a permanent foothold in southern Africa.	This was SA's first admission to the world that it had a role in the civil war. SA newsmen were not invited to the briefing, nor were SA media allowed to report the substance of the briefing till the following day.
28	South African afternoon newspapers carry the first reports of SA's admission of her role in Angola. The information is attributed to "authoritative sources"	This was the first admission in SA that the country was contributing to the Unita/FNLA campaign. Papers made the point that the reports were issued with the approval of the Dept. of Defence
28	At the United Nations in New York, Russia, China and other communistic black countries attack South Africa for its "colonial aggression". Russia and China also attack each other. The United States fails to defend SA's Angolan action. Meanwhile Nato remains silent and shows no signs of responding to the SA appeal. President Amin, head of the OAU, warns Unita and the FNLA that the OAU might have to review its position of neutrality regarding the three Angolan factions.	During the ensuing week, SA newspapers and broadcast services gave prominence to these diplomatic events.
28	President Ford attacks Soviet policy over Angola.	Prominently reported.
28	Two more South African troops killed in the operational area. This brings the November total to 11 SA dead in Angola.	Prominently reported in SA as "border deaths."
29	Kissinger says United States has no intention of intervening in Angola.	Widely reported.
29	Morning Group newspapers in South Africa quote the Minister of Defence saying: "I do not know who is advising them (i.e. Unita and FNLA) in Angola or who is supplying them with logistic support. We are advising ourselves and providing our own logistic support". He was reacting to reports that SA was providing support to the FNLA/Unita alliance. He said emphatically that SA was not taking part in the civil war but was interested only ting her own borders and her interests in the hydro-electric scheme in the south. He condemned the "confusing propaganda" emanating from Russian and Cuban sources.	These Ministerial comments threw some doubt on the "authoritative sources" quoted the previous day. SA still did not know that its men were actually fighting alongside FNLA and Unita

DECEMBER 1975

Date	Event	Comment
1	Nigeria recognises the MPLA government as the representative of the people of Angola because of "very positive evidence" of the involvement of South Africa on the side of FNLA and Unita. A statement by the Tanzanian Foreign Ministry says an OAU summit is urgently needed to "speak clearly, firmly and collectively against SA's invasion of Angola". It said SA was "scared of the African revolution" and had elevated the struggle to one between nationalist forces on the one hand and neo-colonialist and imperialist forces on the other.	Widely reported in world and SA media.
1	South African defence correspondents are briefed about the Angolan war by the Chief of the South African Defence Force, Admiral H H Biermann and senior officers Among the points made: The MPLA now held the initiative; SA and Unita forces had halted and were regrouping on the southern front; Russian handbooks had been found on dead Cubans; equipment taken from MPLA indicated co-operation with the Frelimo government in Mocambique; and FNLA and Unita could not gain the upperhand against Russian and Cuban-supported MPLA without considerable help from the West. The SADF released pictures of captured Soviet weapons.	This briefing came four days after the foreign press briefing. Widely reported in SA and abroad. Photographs of communist weaponry are carried prominently in SA media.
2-4	Foreign journalists are taken on a 48-hour tour of South African bases in southern Angola where they see how SA troops are protecting the Calueque scheme and also guarding refugee camps. The tour included journalists of the BBC and London newspapers, American press agencies and newspapers, and Australian, German, Swiss and French correspondents. There were no SA correspondents on the tour.	Once again the foreign media get preferential treatment. SA papers use some of the foreign reports at second hand.

DECEMBER 1975

Date	Event	Source / Comment
3	South African pictures of Soviet weapons captured from MPLA appear in Western media.	
5	Tanzania recognises the MPLA government.	Widely reported.
8-11	A South African battle group named X-ray joins the battle for Luso, a town Savimbi needs to ensure that the Benguela railway line will remain in Unita's hands. There are heavy losses on both sides, "about 250" MPLA being killed.	SA official war history
9-12	Battle of Bridge 14 takes place in the region of Santa Comba. Foxbat deals the Cubans a "shattering blow" in the battle, fought to deny the Cubans access across a river to the anti-communist lines. The South African Defence Force history claimed that the enemy lost 400 men - 200 were Cubans - and masses of equipment. Moss said the Cubans lost 90 men.	First reported in SATV programme, "Brug 14" in April 1976. Further details and location given in Moss (1977) and SA official war history.
10	The Times reports that Unita has denied receiving aid from South Africa. Unita said it had offered bases to Swapo.	Widely reported in West and SA.
10	Prime Minister Vorster says South Africa has "no territorial claims" in Angola. SA would not hide behind others "though we are small" and if the country was being attacked in the outside world because of its opposition to communism "then so be it". He spoke of "rumours" of SA involvement in the war, but did not discuss these except to say that the United Nations and World Council of Churches had condemned SA while failing to deal with the question of Russian involvement.	Prominently reported in SA and widely reported in the West.
11	The South African Defence Force releases maps showing how the FNLA and Unita positions stood in August, and how they stood now.	These maps were prominently used by the press, and lent support to the belief that SA's aid had decisively swung the scales. By the time the maps appeared, though, there was a stalemate in the war, and the tables had turned in favour of the MPLA on the diplomatic front.
11	Rumours of CIA involvement provoke press questions in United States.	
12	In a speech to the 15 foreign Ministers of Nato, Dr Henry Kissinger says the United States cannot accept Soviet military bases in Angola, which would upset the world balance of power. He said he "regretted" the Soviet arms shipments to the territory. (This was thought to have totalled some $ 400 million against roughly $ 32 million in aid from the CIA - Stockwell.)	Prominently reported.
12	A newly formed South African group known as Orange occupies the Salazar bridge over the Cuanza River, north of Mussende.	SA official war history.
15	Battle group Orange comes to blows with Cuban forces at Quibala in order to retain a Unita stronghold at Cariango. The Cubans used jet aircraft and tanks, one of which was put out of operation.	SA official war history.
16	United States Congress blocks Defence Bill until information is given on US involvement.	Prominently reported .
16	In a radio report from Kampala, Savimbi is quoted as having told President Amin that South African troops were about 350 km inside Angola. "We are very much aware that SA has penetrated Angola, but since its troops are equipped with very sophisticated weapons we cannot fight them," Savimbi was quoted as saying. The Rand Daily Mail used the story as its page one lead, adding: "South Africa officially admits having troops no more than about 40 km inside Angola".	Widely reported in Western media. In SA this report added to the confusion over SA's role and its relationship with the FNLA/Unita alliance.
17	The MPLA parades four captured South African soldiers before a press conference in Lagos.	Prominently reported in world media and in SA press.
18	Confirming that four men serving with the South African Technical Services Corps are missing in Angola, the Minister of Defence tells the press: "These personnel are used only for logistical duties and were sent out to fetch an unserviceable vehicle". Botha offered to withdraw from Angola if Russia and Cuba stopped arming gangs to attack the border.	The moment news was received of the POWs, newsmen besieged Pretoria with questions. The press published photographs of the prisoners and details of interviews with them. There was a widespread realisation in SA that the country's troops were more deeply involved than had been officially admitted.

DECEMBER 1975

18	South African defence correspondents, on a tour of the Calueque, are refused permission to go north to the spot where the four POWs were captured.	This was the first time SA newsmen had been officially conducted into Angola.
18	President Ford rules out any American military involvement in Angola. He discloses that he has no intention of going beyond the present programme of limited aid to Unita and FNLA. Congressional fears had been growing that Angola could become another Vietnam.	Prominently reported. This setback for SA took second place in the news to the POWs. The day as a whole marked the turning point of the war for SA.
19	The Times reports allegations that South Africa has 1000 regular troops in Angola.	Not reported in SA.
19	The United States Senate votes 54 - 22 to stop giving secret help to pro-Western forces in Angola.	Prominently reported in world and SA media.
20	Savimbi flies to Pretoria to see Vorster, with Zambia's backing. Pretoria had informed Savimbi of its intention to withdraw its forces. Johnson writes that South Africa had realised its mistake in not honouring its commitments to pull out after Independence on 11 November. Once again Savimbi is successful and Vorster agrees that troops will stay a little longer. There are continual pleas from conservative black states for SA to remain in Angola.	First reported in SA by Rapport, 15 January 1976. Details in Johnson (1977).
20	British ITN commentator Michael Nicholson tells his viewers that he is virtually certain that South Africa entered Angola only after Mr Vorster had come to an understanding with the United States that he would get American support. SA now felt it had been double-crossed.	Reported in SA.
20	Russia claims Maoism has entered alliance with racism over Angola.	Widely reported.
22	The Leader of the Opposition, Sir de Villiers Graaff, says he sees no reason why Parliament should be convened immediately to discuss the Angolan situation. He was reacting to a demand by the leader of the Progressive Reform Party, Mr Colin Eglin, that the government "take the people of South Africa into (its) confidence".	Prominently reported in SA.
22	President Ford attacks Cuban intervention.	Prominently reported.
22	Holden Roberto praises South Africa. "I am strongly against apartheid, but I will say this for SA - when they see a neighbour's house burning they come to put out the fire", he told Newsweek.	Reported in SA. The same issue of Newsweek - like other Western publications entering SA - carried information about the country's role.
22	MPLA thanks Russia and Cuba for aid.	Widely reported.
23	The British Foreign Secretary, Mr James Callaghan, calls in the South African Charge d'Affaires and the Soviet Ambassador for separate talks on the withdrawal of their forces in Angola. He said on BBC television later that if both interventionists were to withdraw "there would be tha making of a bargain" giving the OAU the chance to construct a government of national unity.	Reported in world and SA media.
23	China criticizes United States Senate's "betrayal" of US Angolan allies.	Briefly reported in West.
23	Dr Castro publicly reiterates support for his MPLA allies in Angola.	Widely reported in West and SA The discrediting of Unita and FNLA because of SA involvement allows communist backers of MPLA to adopt a higher profile.
25	The needs of the war are "beyond our limits" says Vorster in an interview with a New York newspaper. The MPLA had "inferior forces" but Russian tanks, 122 mm rockets mounted in clusters of 50 (Stalin's Organs) could only be offset by big power weapon supplies.	Widely reported in SA.
27	USSR indicates that aid for MPLA will continue. Meanwhile the OAU Chairman, Amin, defends the Soviet presence.	Widely reported.
28	The Johannesburg Sunday Times reports that in the past week the Prime Minister has attended crisis talks in Plettenberg Bay with the Minister of Defence, the Chief of the Defence Force, the Secretary for Foreign Affairs, BOSS officials and senior South African Defence Force officers. The paper added that SA's contribution to the OAU's peace initiative might be to pull out of Angola - provided certain conditions were met.	The West's lack of response to SA is seen by many SA newspapers as a betrayal.

DECEMBER 1975

Date	Event	Coverage
28	Signs increase that the MPLA is planning an offensive to score some military successes before the OAU conference, scheduled for early January.	
29	Three more South African soldiers die in the "operational area".	Prominently reported in SA.
30	Unita mounts a drive to capture Texeira de Sousa, describing the town as "the last major stronghold held by the MPLA" on the Benguela railroad. The Unita spokesman in Lusaka did not say what success the armoured force was having.	Briefly reported in SA and world media.
30	South African editors receive a directive from the SADF: "Newspaper comment and speculation on the four SA soldiers now held by the MPLA is hampering extremely delicate negotiations. Further unauthorised publication in this regard will invoke the Defence Act".	From this time little appears on the POW's until they are released in 1978.
31	United States Senate objects to use of existing CIA funds for continued assistance to FNLA/Unita.	Widely reported.
31	A statement from OAU headquarters in Addis Ababa denounces South Africa's reported conditions for withdrawing her troops from Angola. The statement said that for the OAU to safeguard SA interests in Namibia would be a "flagrant flouting of one of the most fundamental objectives of its charter", and instead the OAU would take concrete action to end SA "aggression".	Widely reported in SA.
31	President Kaunda of Zambia suggests that the South African forces should leave Angola by or during the OAU meeting early in January.	Johnson (1977)
31	In a New Year message Prime Minister Vorster reiterates that only a broader Western involvement in diplomatic and other fields could stop the attempt to foist a Marxist state on "unwilling people". He warned that if the non-communist world allowed Angola to be "hounded into the communist fold at the point of a bayonet" the price for Africa would be enslavement far worse than that of the 18th and 19th centuries. He added that an "ultra alert" had been declared for SA troops in the "operational area".	Prominently reported in SA and reported abroad.
Late 1975	Chinese aid to FNLA and Unita was withdrawn when "hard evidence" of South Africa's role came out.	Moss (1977), Stockwell(1978).
Late December	The MPLA/Cuban forces are once again advancing on all fronts. The Cuban daily Granma reports that appreciable losses were inflicted on Unita and the FNLA when MPLA forces took the town of Careango, 300 km southeast of Luanda. Two helicopters and several armoured cars were also destroyed.	Reported in SA and world media.
Late December to February 1976	The CIA, frustrated by Congress's ban on further American involvement in Angola, scouts around for mercenaries to be sent to the FNLA and Unita. $1,5 million is made available to a certain Colonel Castro who promises to raise 300 Portuguese mercenaries - but fails to do so and finally, a few months later, absconds with more than $ 25 000 American and British mercenaries, numbering about 150, were recruited for Roberto's army. They were commanded by an Englishman named George Cullen, also known as Costa Georgiu, a ruthless psychopath who took to murdering black civilians and later butchered 14 of his own colleagues.	CIA's role in funding and assisting in the recruitment of mercenaries is described by Stockwell (1978).

JANUARY 1976

Date	Event	Coverage
	During January and February, a large Cuban/MPLA army with Russian MiG jets, helicopters and heavy armour crushes FNLA and Unita resistance in the north and south as South African troops withdraw.	Steady advance of MPLA recorded by world's media and in SA.
6-7	In statements on the Angolan situation, Britain, the United States, France and West Germany denounce foreign involvement and call for an end to hostilities.	
6	The MPLA captures the northern town of Carmona, which constituted major break on the FNLA front.	
6	A note from Mr P W Botha to editors: "During the next few days, a flood of propaganda will reach our media emanating from pro-Marxist sources on the Angolan issue. The object will be to influence the discussion at the OAU conference. An urgent appeal is made to all news media not to help the enemies of South Africa and the West in the psychological warfare. Among others an appeal is made not to blow up reports re MPLA successes based on flimsy information, thus giving them a diplomatic advantage at the OAU conference. Responsible and careful reporting is called for. Defeatist reporting can only damage our own interests".	SA newspapers appeared to heed this call. The MPLA's advance in Angola was de-emphasised.

JANUARY 1976

7	South African Defence Force headquarters announces that six more SA soldiers - one a brigadier - have been killed in the "operational area" while three more were missing, believed captured.	Mystery surrounded the air crash. Pressmen speculated - but did not report - that the aircraft had been shot down by a Soviet hand-carried ground-to-air missile.
9	Sources in Washington are quoted saying that South Africa has informally told the White House that its troops will withdraw from Angola.	Briefly reported in SA.
10	South African Defence Force Citizen Force units have been called up and many are on their way north to the "operational area". An SADF spokesman confirms for the Rand Daily Mail that SA troops serving in Angola were doing so on a "voluntary basis" only and had to sign a form stating that they had volunteered. The spokesman said he knew of no "laid-down punishment" for those who refused.	The question of the "volunteer" status of SA troops was never fully broached in the press, owing to censorship.
11	A 22 - 22 vote at the OAU's emergency summit conference on Angola means that no decision is taken to recognise the MPLA government in Luanda. President Machel of Mocambique had proposed that recognition be given, but he was strongly opposed by Presidents Senghor and Khama. While all delegations condemned South African entry into Angola, the pro-Soviet faction refused to condemn the entry of Russia and Cuba into the war.	The split vote is interpreted by some pro-Govermnemt media in SA as a vindication of the country's support for Unita/ FNLA.
15	South African Defence Force directive to editors: "Military security is being seriously threatened by news media reporting on Citizen Force Units being called up for training. No unit or formation names nor any numbers may be mentioned. The words 'operational area' or '1 military area' may also not be used in this connection". On inquiry, the SADF said this did not prevent newspapers publishing photographs of departing soldiers, even if their insignia were showing.	The effect was that SA news media tended to concentrate on "local boy" stories about call-ups. The directive affected their coverage of the total situation.
16	South African Defence Force directive: "The Minister of Defence, Mr P W Botha, requests that as from to-day photographs of SA soldiers held captive by the MPLA are not to be published". An explanatory note added: "Defence HQ say they and Minister (are) being flooded by objections from relatives to publication of such pictures".	Later revelations about tension between the Minister and parents casts doubt on the motivation for this directive.
21	South African forces are reported to have lost or abandoned their strongholds of Cela, Santa Comba and Amboiva, all of which were taken by the MPLA.	Briefly reported in some Western media as a setback for Unita/ FNLA. SA withdrawal is widely rumoured.
22	South African forces withdraw "because the anticipated political solution was not accomplished".	SADF official war history.
23	Parliament opens in Cape Town. The opening of Parliament is preceded by speculation and demands from the Opposition press for the Government to make a statement about its involvement in Angola. But Prime Minister Vorster refuses to make any statement until the opportunity arises in Parliament.	SA media focus on Angola as major debating issue.
24	Military censorship is temporarily lifted in South Africa to allow the publication of a statement by Dr Jorge Sangumba, the Unita secretary of state for Foreign Affairs, to the effect that SA troops and technicians have begun to withdraw from Angola on orders from Pretoria. (Officially SA did not have fighting forces deep in Angola.) Sangumba states that Pretoria had sent an estimated 1200 troops to help Unita, mainly in logistical support roles. SA had, however, spearheaded the rapid Unita advance on Luanda.	Widely reported in SA. The Unita statement provokes renewed press questioning and calls for a clarification of SA's role.
25	The night before the Minister of Defence, Mr Botha, is to appear in Parliament to face a barrage of questions over Angola, SATV screens a documentary programme on the war and South Africa's involvement in the fighting. SATV manages to interview Dr Savimbi at his Silva Porto headquarters - further into Angola than any SA pressmen were able to go under official protection.	The programme provokes acerbic comments amongst journalists.
26	Mr Botha tells Parliament that SA troops are now confined to guarding the Owambo border and the Ruacana scheme. He makes passing reference to "other actions" in which the country's troops had been involved and speaks of a limited objective which had been achieved.	Prominently reported in SA media.

JANUARY 1976

27	In an unexpected move, the South African Ambassador to the United Nations, Mr Pik Botha, proposes that the Security Council should send representatives to Angola to determine whether SA or Russia and Cuba are threatening world peace. He also invites the UN to inspect the refugee camps set up by SA.	Prominently reported in SA and widely reported in the West.
30	Speaking at the end of the no-confidence debate, Mr Vorster says that South African troops penetrated "a very long way" into Angola to drive the MPLA/ Cubans away from the Calueque Scheme. He said he took full responsibility for this. He blamed SA involvement on the Russian and Cuban intervention without which "South Africa would never have tries to enter Angola at all". Vorster said the public had been kept informed of the subject of Angola within the bounds of what it was possible to tell them.	Prominently reported in SA.
30	South African Defence Force headquarters refuse to release for publication the names and numbers of SA black soldiers killed and wounded in "border" skirmishes. Earlier in the week the Minister of Defence had told Parliament 190 black soldiers had fought and suffered losses in the border area.	
Late January	Dr Kissinger releases a statement giving the United States view of the war. This says that in early September 1975 poorly equipped Unita forces turned in desperation to South Africa for assistance, and SA responded by sending men and arms, helping Unita to sweep the MPLA out of most of south and central Angola. The statement as a whole is vague on details and mainly concerned with Russian-Cuban intervention. Kissinger does not mention the Cunene Scheme.	This was the first official US admission of some knowledge of the SA - Unita/ FNLA pact. It was reported in summary form in The Star, the Rand Daily Mail and other papers.

FEBRUARY 1976

Early February	Thirteen FNLA mercenaries - including three Americans and several British - are captured by the MPLA. At a show trial before an international tribunal in Luanda in June 1976, four are sentenced to death while others receive heavy prison sentences.	Prominently reported.
3	Mr Botha discloses that 4000 - 5000 South African troops are patrolling a "buffer zone" about 50 km inside Angola and will remain there until "we are satisfied that Angola will not be used to overrun the Owambo with independent elements and refugees".	Prominently reported.
11	The OAU finally recognises the MPLA government, with Zaire protesting against the decision and Zambia refusing to recognise the Luanda regime.	Prominently reported.
13	The MPLA's Foreign Minister, Mr Jose dos Santos, tells Le Monde in an interview that South Africa can protect its interests in Angola if it recognises the new people's republic. SA interests should not be considered a pretext for violating Angolan territorial integrity.	
13-18	South African newsmen take part in a military-conducted tour of southern Angola, inspecting refugee camps. By mid-February, some 11 000 congregated in SA administered camps around Pereira d'Eca.	
15	The Afrikaans Sunday newspaper Rapport carries a detailed report on some of the background negotiations between South Africa and Unita during the war. A correspondent in Washington says that Dr Savimbi paid two visits to SA, in December 1975 and January 1976, arranged by Dr Kaunda, to appeal for military assistance. The plea had been backed by Zaire, the Ivory Coast and Zambia.	This was the first report in any SA newspaper giving the background to Savimbi's links with SA.
27	The South African Defence Force bans any mention of SA POW's in Angola.	
27	Final South African withdrawal takes place, involving about 2000 men who pull back across the Cunene River into Namibia. In all, 43 SA soldiers had been killed since intervention began in July or August 1975.	Prominently reported in SA and widely reported in world media.
31	South African Defence Force directive to editors: "The Minister of Defence has requested that there should in future be no statements about refugees or refugee camps which are under the control of the SADF unless official statements are issued".	The media were largely dependent on official statements anyway, as they did not have access to the camps.

APRIL 1976

1	MPLA troops and Cubans arrive at the Namibian border. The shattered Unita vow to continue a guerilla war against them in the Angolan bush. Some South African newspapers publicise fears of a Marxist invasion of Namibia from the north.	The war is over for SA and world press.

Date	Event	Comment
APRIL 1976		
5	Message from Minister of Defence to South African editors: "In view of the tense relations between the MPLA and the RSA and the extremely delicate nature of the discussions, it would obviously be wrong to disclose the course of any discussions or negotiations in advance. I appeal to you to publish nothing that could jeopardise these negotiations".	Few newspapers were in any position to know what these "discussions were about.
6	The Minister repeats his ban on reports about South African POW's in Angola and adds that "strong exception" is taken to a report that the seven have been shot.	Some newspapers had published reports from agencies abroad concerning the POW's.
29	South African television screens "Brug 14" - a re-enactment of an action that had taken place somewhere in Angola in December 1975. "We have not blown it up to make a propaganda film of it", SA TV's public relations officer tells the Rand Daily Mail. Enemy arms and equipment in the film were real - captured from the enemy - but the film itself was made in the Tsumeb area of Namibia, using SA troops to portray the country's own troops as well as enemy fighters. A Sapa report from London quotes a Cuban embassy spokesman denying SA's claim to have killed between 150 and 200 Cubans. He said Cuban losses in its four months of Angolan involvement had been less than in the Bay of Pigs episode in 1961 - when less than 200 had died.	Widely viewed in SA and extensively reported by the press, the programme was a huge propaganda success. But foreign media viewed the episode with scepticism.
29	To coincide with the programme, the South African Defence Force releases details of the battle, claiming that SA had routed a numerically far superior force of Cubans in the Battle of Bridge Fourteen.	This was the first official admission of an active SA role in the civil war.
MAY 1976		
5	South African Defence Force repeats the ban on POW reports, saying that the position is in no way affected by the recent TV screening of 'Brug 14'.	
6	During a clash in Parliament, Mr Harry Schwarz, Progressive-Reform Party MP, says he had been told by the Minister of Defence that South African troops had not entered Luanda because America had requested that they stay out. The issue came up in Parliament when Mr Botha said a pamphlet put out by the Progrefs on Angola and its consequences was full of "lies". Mr Botha said of the Angolan intervention that it constituted the SA army's "most heroic chapter". He added that SA had taken prisoners of war, and that black units had fought in the army.	Prominently reported in SA
7	The Star publishes a report on the London Institute of Strategic Studies' Strategic Survey, 1975 giving many details of the campaign spearheaded by South Africa. For nearly a year until the appearance of the Garcia-Marquez and Moss versions, this remains the ~~fullest and~~ most accurate picture of what happened in the campaign.	The Star does not ask for SADF permission to publish but simply goes ahead. No other papers follow suit.
JULY 1976		
10	In spite of the official withdrawal of South African troops and the resumption of work on the Calueque project, President Noto alleges that SA forces have again entered Angola. Angolan troops had confronted them. They allegedly burned down three villages and wounded one Angolan citizen. The SADF strongly denied these allegations.	Widely reported in SA and world media.
OCTOBER 1975		
4	The Swapo Foreign Secretary, Mr Peter Mueshishange, said there was "no agreement on joint forces with the MPLA", and that Swapo was only interested in attacking South African troops". This was a comment that Swapo was busy fighting Unita by agreement with the MPLA. There were persistent rumours - appearing in the press abroad - that SA was continuing to support Unita in its guerilla war, bringing about "destabilisation" of southern Angola.	Reported in SA, but specific allegations of further SA involvement are not given prominence.
SEPTEMBER - DECEMBER 1976		
	Willem Steenkamp, Cape Times defence correspondent, publishes his Angolan war memoir, Adeus Angola. The book is a highly personalised account of daily army life under active service conditions. It does not describe fighting engagements involving the South African Defence Force, and is cleared by the SADF with minor changes.	The book is widely reviewed in SA newspapers. New questions are asked about the full extent of the Defence Force's role.

JANUARY 1977

Date	Event	Press coverage
Early 1977	Al J Venter, South African freelance journalist, publishes Vorster's Africa : Friendship and Frustration, containing a chapter on the Angolan War. Venter travelled through Angola during the war and was one of the only Western war correspondents to see any fighting. His Angolan chapter is passed by the SADF with minor cuts. It adds substantially to the record of SA involvement without describing actual engagements fought by SADF.	Widely reviewed.
9	The Cuban version of the war is published. Written by Senor Gabriel Garcia-Marquez, a friend of Dr Fidel Castro, Operation Carlotta appears first in the Mexican weekly Proseso and is republished in American, British and European newspapers. It also appears in New Left Review. This article gave specific details of the Cuban intervention, claiming it began after November 5 1975, although the MPLA had had links with Cuba since 1965.	Briefly reported in SA.

FEBRUARY 1977

Date	Event	Press coverage
3	The South African Defence Force holds a briefing in Pretoria at which it releases details of the Angolan campaign. It claims its forces, amounting to less than 2000 men, could have helped Unita and FNLA conquer the whole of Angola. But the Unita leader, Dr Savimbi,was interested only in "controlling his traditional area" and did not encourage a full takeover. A chronology of SA intervention indicates that Cuban and Soviet support for the MPLA predated the SA incursion. No details of contacts between Savimbi, Chipenda, Roberto or other black nationalist figures with senior SA officials and BOSS are published in the official war history.	Prominently reported. The press greets the disclosures as "the truth at last" and raises few questions about specific dates and details.
4	Argus and Nasionale Pers newspapers begin serialising Sunday Telegraph writer Robert Moss's account of the Angolan war, said to be based on information supplied largely by the South African Defence Force. It closely follows the SADF official history and takes issue with the Cuban version. Moss's articles had begun to appear in Britain during January but were suppressed in SA until the SADF's official war history had been released.	Strongly promoted by newspapers and widely discussed in editorials. Die Burger comments that the Moss articles vindicate the Government against its press critics.
4	The South African Defence Force disclosures about the Angolan campaign showed that the Government had not told the truth to the public or to Parliament at the time, says Mr Colin Eglin, leader of the Progressive Federal Party. Mr Vause Raw, defence spokesman for the United Party, says it was a mistake not to put the country in the picture about Angola. He said the SADF military operation had been a success but history would judge the political decision behind it.	The disclosures fire anew the press controversy over suppression of the Angolan facts.
Mid- to Late 1977	R W Johnson publishes How Long will South Africa Survive? including a chapter on the Angolan war. The book is imported to SA and its chapter on Angola appears without military clearance. Johnson largely accepts the Cuban version of events and reveals some background of covert diplomacy between black nationalist leaders and SA which prompted the latter to enter the war. He draws on A P J van Rensburg's book, published a few months earlier in SA, The Tangled Web, which included a short section on the Angolan war. Van Rensburg alleged that BOSS had had contacts with the Angolan movements prior to intervention.	Johnson's discussion of the war receives little attention from the SA media.

MAY 1978

Date	Event	Press coverage
Early May	Former CIA agent John Stockwell, deeply disillusioned by his role as leader of the CIA's Angolan task force - which "lost" Angola - publishes In Search of Enemies, a searing exposé of CIA inefficiency and miscalculation. Stockwell wrote that the CIA had close links with BOSS and encouraged South African intervention without telling Congress or the White House. Many specific details in Stockwell's account confirm the SADF official war history - particularly the early entrance of the Cubans.	Prominently reviewed in SA, Stockwell's book becomes a best-seller.
8	South African media report the raids on camps "Moscow" and "Vietnam" by SADF units. The camps are alleged to have contained Swapo guerillas. But Jane Bergerol of The Guardian claims some 500 civilians, men, women and children in these "refugee camps", were massacred by the raiders. The raids provoke international condemnation in the United Nations.	Armed strike prominently reported in SA and widely reported in world media. Accusations of massacre are played down in SA media.

SEPTEMBER 1978

2	Eight South Afric an soldiers who had been POWs in Angola since 1975-6 are exchanged for three Cuban prisoners held by SA. The exchange takes place in the southern Angolan town of Pereira d'Eca. The event ended a news blackout of more than two years during which most SA news media had not mentioned or discussed the fate of the POWs. Immediately the men were back in SA a wave of recriminations burst into the open. Some parents expressed their dissatisfaction with the way the Government had handled the issue. It was reported that there had been arguments in the Prime Minister's presence between parents and Mr Botha for his alleged failure to keep the families informed regarding developments. Official sources meanwhile said some of the POWs had disobeyed instructions when they went to retrieve a stolen vehicle in Angola and were captured. Had they not returned to a heroes' welcome as former POWs they could well have faced disciplinary charges.	Only the extreme right-wing paper, Die Afrikaner, had made an issue of the POWs - but no action was taken against it by the Government. After the POWs' release, controversy over the way the issue had been handled was fanned by the statements of relatives. In general, however, the Government received credit for getting the men back.
Late 1978	Mr P W Botha becomes Prime Minister.	Several newspapers comment that the Angolan debacle is a black mark against his name. Even Afrikaans papers concede that Angola was an unfortunate episode for SA.

APPENDIX B

THE STAR'S OPINION POLL ON ANGOLAN WAR NEWS

This is the full text of a report by Kevin Stocks which appeared in The Star on 12 May 1976:

Most White South Africans think the Government was right to send troops into Angola but are unhappy over the fact that this was done without Parliament being consulted.

The majority also feel that South African were not kept properly informed on the Angolan adventure, and that the Government should not stop newspapers from printing information on Angola that has already been published or broadcast abroad.

These are the conclusions of a nation-wide opinion poll commissioned by The Star and carried out by Market Research Africa.

On the question of South African involvement in the Angolan war the following question was asked:

"Do you personally think South Africa was right to send out soldiers to fight in Angola, or do you think it was wrong?"

The following results were obtained:

Right: 64 percent
Wrong: 18 percent
No opinion: 18 percent.

Although there was strong support for the Angolan adventure the majority of Whites thought Parliament should be consulted before South African troops were sent to fight outside the country.

On the question "Do you think the Cabinet should have the right to send our troops to fight in another country, or do you think they should first consult Parliament?" the response was:

Cabinet should have the right: 27 percent.
Should consult Parliament: 53 percent
No opinion: 20 percent.

On both questions there was some difference of opinion between the English-speaking and Afrikaans-speaking sections of the White population.

Thus 70 percent of Afrikaners supported the Angolan adventure compared with 55 percent of English-speakers. Twenty-two percent of English-speakers thought sending troops to Angola was wrong, while only 14 percent of Afrikaans-speakers agreed.

On whether Parliament should have been consulted there was less disagreement. Fifty-five percent of English-speakers wanted Parliament to be consulted compared with 51 percent of Afrikaners.

On the question of whether South Africa was kept properly informed on events in Angola there was near unanimity between the two sections.

Forty-six percent of both communities felt the Government did not keep the country properly informed.

The overall response to this question was:

Government did inform the country: 35 percent
Country was not informed: 46 percent
No opinion: 19 percent.

Most Whites also felt the Government should not stop the Press from publishing information on Angola that had been published abroad. Responses to this were:

Right to censor foreign information: 33 percent
Wrong to do so: 49 percent
No opinion: 18 percent.

Opposed to this type of censorship were 56 percent of English-speakers and 44 percent of Afrikaans-speakers.

Both communities agreed that South Africa had been right to withdraw from Angola, although more Afrikaans speakers than English speakers felt the troops should have stayed in Angola.

On this question two there was a difference between the opinions of the Afrikaans and the English sections of the population, although both communities had an overall vote against censorship of information already published elsewhere.

Forty percent of Afrikaans-speakers agreed the Government should indulge in such censorship compared to 25 percent of English-speakers who shared their opinion..

Overall, 51 percent Whites agreed it was correct to withdraw, and this majority included 57 percent of English-speakers and 47 percent of Afrikaans-speakers.

Thirty-two percent of the Afrikaans community and 20 percent of the English community felt the troops should have been kept in Angola.

The opinion poll was conducted nation-wide in all cities and major towns and in a representative selection of smaller towns and villages.

The poll sample was 1 000, and the conclusions are representative of 86 percent of the total White adult population.

APPENDIX C

SECTION 118 OF THE DEFENCE ACT

(Act No. 44 of 1957 as amended by Act 85 of 1967 to include Section 118)

Improper disclosure of information

118. (1) *No person shall publish in any newspaper, magazine, book or pamphlet or by radio or any other means -*

(a) *any information relating to the composition, movements or dispositions of -*

(i) *the South African Defence Force or any auxiliary or voluntary nursing service established under this Act, or any force of a country which is allied to the Republic; or*

(ii) *any South African or allied ships or aircraft used for naval or military purposes; or*

(iii) *any engines, rolling stock, vehicles, vessels, or aircraft of any railway, road, inland water or sea transport system or air service over which an officer of the South African Defence Force has assumed control in terms of section* 102 (1), *or anything which has been supplied on requisition by the Minister in terms of section* 102 (2),

or any statement, comment or rumour calculated directly or indirectly to convey such information, except where the information has been furnished or the publication thereof has been authorized by the Minister or under his authority; or

(b) *any statement, comment or rumour relating to any member of the South African Defence Force or any force of a foreign country, calculated to prejudice or embarrass the Government in its foreign relations or to alarm or depress members of the public, except where publication thereof has been authorized by the Minister or under his authority.*

[1] (1A) *No prosecution in respect of an offence under subsection* (1) *shall be instituted except on the written authority of the attorney-general having jurisdiction in the area concerned or of a member of his staff designated by him in writing.*

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1 Sec. 118 (1) and 118 (2) substituted and sec. 118 (1A) inserted by sec. 57 of Act 85 of 1967.

[1](2) *No person shall publish in any manner whatsoever any secret or confidential information relating to the defence of the Republic, or any information relating to any works proposed, undertaken or completed for or connected with the fortification or defence of the Republic except where the information has been furnished or the publication thereof has been authorized by the Minister or under his authority.*

(3) Any proprietor, printer, publisher or editor of any newspaper, magazine, book or pamphlet in which any such information as aforesaid is published, and any person responsible for the publication of such information by such or any other means, shall be guilty of an offence, and proceedings in respect thereof may be taken against all or any of such persons.

(4) Any person who discloses to any other person any secret or confidential information relating to the defence of the Republic which came to his knowledge by reason of his membership of the South African Defence Force or by reason of his employment in the public service of the Republic or in any other office, post, appointment or capacity under the Government or by reason of any contract relating to the defence of the Republic or any employment by a contractor under such a contract, or which was given to him in confidence by any person who was authorized or whose duty it was to give him such information, shall be guilty of an offence, unless such disclosure was authorized by the Minster or under his authority or by order of a competent court or it was the duty of such person in the interests of the State to disclose such information to such other person.

(5) In any proceedings in respect of a contravention of sub-section (2) or (4), it shall be presumed, until the contrary is proved -

(a) that any information relating to the defence of the Republic is secret or confidential; and

(b) where the accused is proved to be or to have been a member of the South African Defence Force or to be or to have been employed in the public service of the Republic or in any other office, post, appointment or capacity under the Government, or to hold or to have held any contract relating to the defence of the Republic or to be or to have been employed by a contractor under such a contract, that the secret or confidential information came to his knowledge by reason of such membership, employment or contract.

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1 Sec. 118 (1) and 118 (2) substituted and sec. 118 (1A) inserted by sec. 57 of Act 85 of 1967.

(6) For the purposes of this section any information relating to military equipment shall be deemed to be secret or confidential unless publication of such information has been authorized by the Minister or under his authority.

(7) Nothing in this section contained shall be construed as preventing any person from being prosecuted and punished under any other law relating to the unlawful disclosure of information.

APPENDIX D

THE DEFENCE AGREEMENT, 1969-76

a. Internal Reports

The Minister gave the delegation the assurance that an agreement with the Press still existed and that, subject to the paragraphs below, the understanding of January 11, 1967 was still in force. The whole matter was covered by Section 118 of the Act, but specific agreement had been reached on the following:

(i) The public relations service existing under a public relations officer; this is available to the press at all times and will be expanded and improved;

(ii) news on internal military matters could be obtained from the public relations officer or from the Chiefs of the Arms of the Service and Heads of the Sections. Members will be allowed to contact the Minister personally on matters already discussed with the public relations officer;

(iii) statements on policy matters internal or external will however be handled by the Minister and the Commandant-General;

(iv) the Minister will release as soon as possible news on defence matters that could be released; if he is approached, he will -

> comment or issue a statement, or say that he has no comment to make, or request that no mention be made of the fact that he had been approached and refused to comment as even a 'no comment' reply could embarrass him. The Press must abide by this;

(v) reporters should understand that there should not be any arguments with the Minister or the abovementioned officers on matters that leaked out somewhere and the publication thereof. If it be requested that a report or comment should not appear it must be accepted as such.

b. Reports originating Abroad:

On reports originating abroad the following:

(i) A public statement by an official and responsible person, such as the Prime Minister of another country, the leader of the Opposition or a public figure in that country, on defence matters affecting South Africa, may be published without approval, provided the paper is convinced that it is a public and responsible person who said or made the statement in public, in which case the person must be named and the source of the news supplied;

(ii) all other reports originating abroad, whether it appeared in a newspaper there or originated from an unknown or unnamed 'reliable source', may not be published without prior approval. Defence must first be approached and approval obtained.

F O O T N O T E S

(Published references will be found in the Bibliography)

FOOTNOTES TO THE INTRODUCTION

1. "Truth is the first casualty in war" is a proverbial wisdom. Phillip Knightley adopted the phrase for the title of his lively study of war reporting, The First Casualty.
2. Clausewitz, ed. Rapoport, 1968, p. 119.
3. Ibid., pp.109-110.
4. Rapoport, introducing his edition of Clausewitz's On War, notes that the Prussian theorist conceived of the state as a "living entity, having well defined strivings and endowed with intelligence to seek and examine means to realise these strivings... The personification of the State as an entity with a single will was a natural conception in the era of absolute monarchy, when the interests of political units were identified with the appetites of their princes." Clausewitz, ed. Rapoport, 1968, p. 63.
5. Many of the comparative studies of propaganda in totalitarian societies were written shortly before or during World War II, at a time of tremendous concern for the future of democracy in the Western world. See Chakotin, 1940; Childs, 1936; Kris & Speier, 1944; Mackenzie, 1938; and White, 1939. These writers adopted many of the "functional" assumptions criticised in this Introduction (see pp.7-15). Amongst the best of the post-war studies is the collection by Lasswell and Lerner (eds.), 1965, dealing with the propaganda of world revolutionary elites in Germany, Russia, Communist China, and elsewhere. For further information and discussion on totalitarian methods, see, on Nazu Germany: Boelcke, 1966; Baird, 1976; Doob (in Schramm, 1965); Fest, 1972; Hale, 1964; Kris & Leites (in Schramm, 1965); Shils & Janowitz (in Schramm, 1965); Siebert, Peterson & Schramm, 1956; Speier, 1965; and Zeman, 1964. For Soviet Russia see: Barghoorn (in Berelson & Janowitz, 1966); and Inkeles, 1950. Further references to these societies will be found in works by the "functional" school cited below.

6. Lerner, in Schramm: 1965, pp.480 - 488.
7. Wirth, "Consensus and Mass Communication", In: Turner & Killian (eds), 1957, p. 170.
8. For examples of functional analysis of propaganda see: Lasswell, 1927, 1933, 1939, 1950, 1951, 1965, and article in the <u>Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences</u>, 12, "Propaganda"; also Albig, 1939; Fraser, 1957; and Qualter, 1965. A variant of the functional approach is the psycho-social approach, stressing motivational and behavioural factors in people's responses to propaganda. Here, see: Bartlett, 1940; Brown, 1963; Rosnow and Fine, 1976; and Sargant, 1957.
9. Lasswell, "The Structure and Function of Communication in Society", In: Berelson & Janowitz, 1966, pp-.78-192.
10. Ibid., p.184.
11. Ibid., p.183.
12. Quoted by Ellul, op.cit., p.x. See Lasswell, 1927 and 1950.
13. Doob, "The Nature of Propaganda", In: Steinberg, 1966, p. 385.
14. Ibid., p.390.
15. Qualter, 1965, p. 15.
16. Ibid., p.27.
17. A broad survey of the literature of communication theory dealing with the role of the press in integrating society and bridging social gaps is given by McQuail, 1976, in a report for the Royal Commission on the Press. Concluding his survey, McQuail offers this summary of the functional approach: "At the most general level, there seems agreement that a major 'function' of the press (in the sense of consequence) is to increase integration and consensus in a society, to bridge social gaps and maintain continuity over time... At a similar level of generality it has been noticed that the press is 'functional' for other social institutions, such as law or politics, either by serving particular purposes connected with these activities, or by establishing an agree context in which they can operate effectively." (p.66) McQuail notes that other functions include assisting social change "even if commentators disagree on the amount and speed of change which is generated." It should be noted that this contention regarding change through communication cannot be fitted easily, and perhaps not at all, into a functional framework, since the framework is a static one which assumes the existence of a given system at a given point in time. Structural analysis, which is dealt with in the following section of the Introduction, traces

the historical development of systems and can therefore accommodate the concept of change in communication. Whether communication causes change or is an effect of social change is a question taken up below.

18. Ellul, 1969, p.97.
19. Marx, in the "Preface to the Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy", in Bottomore & Rubel, 1963.
20. A useful recent survey of the development of structural studies of ideology is to be found in Hall, 1978: "The Hinterland of Science: Ideology and the 'Sociology of Knowledge'", in: Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies, On Ideology, pp.9-32. See also an earlier survey by Hall, 1977: "Culture, the Media and the 'Ideological Effect'", in: Curran, Gurevich, Woollacott (eds)., Chapter 13. The introduction to this latter volume is also useful as a critique of the Lasswellian paradigm of communication.
21. Hall, 1977, p.346.
22. Marx, 1976, p.64.
23. Marx, in Bottomore & Rubel, op.cit.
24. The Communist Manifesto of 1848 was a highly effective propagandist document, and remains so today, judging by the fact that the authorities in South Africa (amongst others) have banned it from general circulation.
25. See Barghoorn, op.cit., pp.360-380 for a description of Soviet techniques of indoctrination. He writes: "Lenin established a tradition within which bolshevik 'professional revolutionaries' and, later, specially trained functionaries of the Soviet state and of foreign communist parties have systematically employed modern communications techniques in a continuing effort to bring about ' the radical transformation of the conditions of life for all of mankind.'" (The quote comes from Lenin).
26. The arguments attributed to Gramsci here represent a summary of various works by Gramsci and his biographers, disciples and students in the field. For further readings see: Gramsci, 1978, especially his essay on "The Formation of Intellectuals", pp.118-132; and also Bates, 1975; Femia, 1975; and Hall, Lumley & McLennan, 1977 in CCCS, On Ideology, op.cit.

27. Hall, Lumley & McLennan, in CCCS, On Ideology, p.51.
28. See works by Hall referred to in Footnote 20 above, and Williams, 1961 and 1973.
29. See Althusser, 1969 and 1971; and Poulantzas, 1965, 1973 & 1974.
30. Althusser, 1971.
31. Ibid., p.140. According to Althusser the dominant ISA under capitalism is the educational one, which reproduces the relations of exploitation by means of an "apprenticeship of know-how wrapped up in the massive inculcation of the ideology of the ruling class." (1971, p.148) Althusser's approach is to see the ISAs as a totality within the structures of the state, and he allows little or no leeway for these ISAs to create counter-hegemony.
32. The Poulantzian idea of the social formation is that surface appearances are illusory, that the pluralism of democratic society masks the real co-ordination and domination of the dominant groups. See Poulantzas, 1973; and Hall, 1977, pp.336-7.

FOOTNOTES TO SECTION ONE

Published references will be found in the Bibliography

1. Daily Dispatch, 17 August 1979.
2. The Argus, 16 August 1979.
3. Daily Dispatch, 17 August 1979.
4. For example, the Sunday Times of 19 August 1979 wrote that Mr Botha was "energetically engaged in removing logs from the jam that has clogged our public life".
5. The Pretoria News of 17 August 1979 editorialised that many of the points of strategy laid down by Mr Botha "appear faulty for the very fact that they reinforce separate development as we've known and disliked it".
6. Evening Post, 17 August 1979.
7. Sunday Times, 19 August 1979.
8. Ibid.
9. Ibid.
10. Ibid.
11. Disclosures about Government funding of To the Point magazine were made by the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr R F Botha, in Parliament on 30 April 1979. Other facts about the Information scandal were widely publicised in newspapers throughout 1978 and 1979.
12. The Guardian Weekly, Vol 20 No.13, week ending 25 March 1979.
13. See Peter B. Orlik: "Co-opting the messenger: The Afrikaner take-over of the South African Broadcasting Corporation" (Unpublished, Michigan Univ.) The Director-General of the Corporation, Mr Jan Swanepoel was quoted in the Financial Mail on 14 August 1975 as saying: "We (SABC) are an independent organisation. We are not dictated to by the government." This claim of independence is belied by the blatantly pro-Nationalist content of news broadcasts and editorial commentaries broadcast over the air. See Cockayne, Hansen and Whitehead: "Political representation on SABC-TV: Content Analysis". (Unpublished: Rhodes University, Grahamstown, 1977).
14. Report of the Commission of Inquiry into the Press (Van Zyl Report). Five volumes, 2221 pages. No final report was ever issued.

15. White Paper on Defence and Armaments Production, 1975, p.3.
16. For summarised information on Defence, see the relevant chapters in the annual Survey of Race Relations in South Africa (SA Institute of Race Relations, Johannesburg).
17. Defence Act No. 44 of 1957 as amended by Act no 85 of 1967. A discussion of the history, scope and consequences of the Act insofar as it affects publication of news will be found in Sections Two and Three below, and in Stuart (1978) and Mathews (1978).
18. For full details of the Agreement, its history and effects on news reporting, see Sections Two and Three, Stuart (1978) and Mathews (1978).
19. The background of these Acts appears in Section Two.
20. Speaking in Parliament early in 1976, the Minister of Defence gave four reasons for South Africa's presence in Angola. These were: (1) to safeguard the Namibian border, (2) to provide humanitarian services for Angolan refugees, (3) to track down terrorists who had raided Namibia, and (4) diplomatic reasons which could not be divulged. (Hansard, Assembly debates,26 January 1976, cols 45-53). Further discussion of the Republic's motives may be found in Legum (1975-76, 1976-77), Johnson (1977), Strategic Studies, 1975, and Hallett (1978).
21. Minister of Defence, Hansard, House of Assembly debates, 26 January 1976, col.52.
22. Stockwell (1975), asserts that the CIA gave advice and military aid covertly to South Africa without reference to the White House or Congress.
23. Sources differ on the precise date of South Africa's entry into the Angola fighting. Johnson , 1977, p.144, gives the date as 14 July, stating that SA troops fought a victorious battle against MPLA and Unita forces and also attacked a Swapo base before taking up position to protect the Cunene dam. Keesing's Contemporary Archives, 1975, p.25499, quoting the Portuguese newspaper Diario de Noticias, gives the date as on or before 11 August. The official South African history of the war, published in Panorama magazine (March 1977) p.6, said a South African advisor and 18 instructors helped Unita defend Nova Lisboa between 24 September and 6 October.

24. Hallett (op.cit.), p.162, writes that there was a "marked increase in the size of the South African forces" and quotes the SADF account to the effect that "the South African involvement just before withdrawal stood at under 2 000 men". Hallett also quotes a study prepared by Sean Gervasi for the Centre for International Security Studies in Washington and reported extensively in The Observer of January 11.1976. Gervasi estimated that there were initially two fighting columns, one consisting of 2 000 mercenaries driving SA Panhard armoured cars, and a second "regular unit" of between 1 000 and 1 500 men with tanks and helicopters. In December an artillery battalion and a tank battalion were also sent to Angola.

25. The Observer, 30 November 1975.
26. The Observer, 21 December 1975.
27. Rand Daily Mail, 24 November 1975.
28. The Times, 10 December 1975.
29. Rand Daily Mail, 19 November 1975.
30. Ibid.
31. Rand Daily Mail, 20 November 1975.
32. Ibid.
33. The Star, 14 November 1975.
34. Ibid.; see also the Rand Daily Mail, 20 November 1975.
35. See, for example, the Rand Daily Mail and The Star, 17 November 1975.
36. For critical editorials, see for instance The Star on November 15, 18, 19 and 29. The Rand Daily Mail carried similar editorials at this time. Amongst Opposition spokesmen quoted by the Rand Daily Mail in news reports was Mr Derick de Villiers, MP, who said: "It's hard to understand how the best advantage of the Defence Force can be served by suppressing information which is freely available outside South Africa when that suppression gives the impression that South Africa has something to hide." (RDM, 20 November 1979).

37. The Star, 28 November 1975.
38. Rand Daily Mail, 29 November 1975.
39. The Star, 28 November 1975.

40. _Rand Daily Mail_, 18 December 1975.
41. Ibid.
42. _Strategic Survey, 1975_, p.36.
43. Ibid.
44. _Hansard_, Assembly debates, 26 January 1976, col. 48.
45. _Hansard_, Assembly debates, 30 January 1976, col. 368.
46. "Brug 14", a one-hour SABC-TV programme in Afrikaans, was screened on 29 April, 1976.
47. For a slightly abbreviated version of the SADF statement, see _South African Panorama_ magazine, March 1977, pp. 6-7. News reports on the briefing were published on 3 and 4 February 1977.
48. The Moss articles, published in the _Sunday Telegraph_, were suppressed in South Africa until early in February when the SADF released its official account of the war to the local and foreign media. Moss was serialised in Argus group newspapers for a month from 4 February 1977.
49. _The Times_, 11 January 1977, reported the substance of the Cuban version of the war.
50. _The Times_, 11 January 1977.
51. _South African Panorama_, March 1977.
52. Hallett, op.cit., p.153.
53. _Rand Daily Mail_, 24 September 1975.
54. Hallet, op.cit., p.153.
55. Sunday Telegraph, 30 January 1976.
56. _The Star_, 1 September 1978.
57. _Rand Daily Mail_, 22 November 1975.
58. _Strategic Survey_, 1975, pp.34-36.
59. Defence Amendment Act No. 1 of 1976.
60. _Hansard_, Assembly debates, 26 January 1976, col. 60. The phrase was used by Mr Vause Raw.
61. Ibid., col. 26.
62. Ibid., col. 61.
63. Ibid., col. 53.
64. Ibid., 30 January, col. 374.
65. Ibid., col. 365.
66. Ibid., col. 374.
67. Ibid., col. 356.

68. The neo-Clausewitzian phrase "national will" occurs in a speech by Mr Botha at the University of Stellenbosch reprinted in the March 1976 edition of the SADF periodical, Paratus, under the heading "Facing up to Total War" (p.13). Inter alia, Mr Botha said: "The military effort has to be bolstered by a national will, as well as motivated activities on every other important level in order to give an answer to Communism."
69. Hansard, Assembly debates, 26 January, col. 62.
70. Daily Dispatch, 31 August.
71. Daily Dispatch, 1 September 1976, and The Times, 1 September 1976.
72. Interview with confidential source, author's notes.
73. The Star, 29 November 1975. See Appendix B.
74. Hansard, Assembly debates, 2 February 1976, col. 405.
75. The Star, 12 May 1976.
76. Hansard, Assembly debates, 26 January 1976, col. 25 ff. The Opposition's no-confidence motion made special reference, in clause (c), to the Government's "failure" to unite the races in a common loyalty.
77. On 23 December 1975 The Times reported that an (unnamed) black South African group had announced its support for the MPLA.
78. Rand Daily Mail, 20 November 1975.
79. See A Survey of Race Relations in South Africa, 1974 (SA Institute of Race Relations, Johannesburg), for details of the Frelimo rallies.
80. Interview with confidential source, author's notes.
81. Hansard, House of Assembly debates, 2 February 1976, col. 365.
82. Hansard, House of Assembly debates, 17 April 1978, col. 4852.
83. Information on this meeting was supplied to the author by Mr G G A Uys, general secretary of the Newspaper Press Union. At the meeting, which took place on 2 February 1976, the Minister of Defence expressed the view that in the prevailing circumstances the Agreement with the NPU was not working to his satisfaction. The background is given in Sections Two and Three.
84. Rand Daily Mail, 19 November 1975. The Minister's threat followed the appearance of blank spaces in the Rand Daily Mail. This subject is pursued in Section Three.

85. The improved press-military liaison was remarked upon by many of the journalists interviewed for this case study. Information about changes in the SADF press and public relations Directorate was supplied to the author by various sources in the press.

86. Information about the Defence Committee was supplied to the author by the NPU.

87. A list of accredited defence correspondents was pinned up in many newspapers offices throughout the country. A covering note from the Chief of the SADF, Admiral Biermann, dated 27 January 1976 said inter alia: "(I)nformation on military matters (will) in future be released to military correspondents only." However, editors and news editors could, as in the past, approach SADF spokesmen directly. See Section Two for details of accreditation.

88. The Directorate of Public Relations of the SADF refused to supply a copy of this book to the author.

89. Reviewed in Paratus, June 1978.

90. See, for instance, the Rand Daily Mail for 5 May 1978.

91. Sunday Times, 13 February 1977.

92. Eastern Province Herald, 24 August 1978.

93. "White Paper on Defence, 1977", p.3.

94. Ibid., pp.4-10, comprising a "General Review" of the national security situation and of factors which influence the security situation.

95. Ibid., Section IX: General Support - Public Relations, p.35.

96. "Speech by Lt Genl J R Dutton, SM, Chief of Staff Operations, (at) the opening of the annual NPU Congress in Umhlanga Rocks, 3 October 1977." (Duplicated paper).

97. General Dutton made these remarks in a context justifying the extension of training for citizen force conscripts to two years, a policy which, like control of the press, helped to ensure against "the destruction of all we hold dear."

98. See The Star: "Zambia Shelling Denied" (12 July 1976): "UN deplores SA 'attack'" (31 July 1976); Editorial: "These 'Saboteurs' Must be exposed (16 August, 1976); and "Sialola attack not authorised - envoys" (19 August 1976).

99. Rand Daily Mail, 8 May 1978.

100. Daily Dispatch, 10 May 1978.

101. See Die Afrikaner of October and November 1977.

102. See, for instance, the Sunday Times of 3 September 1979 whose front page lead was headlined: "Home!--Dramatic POW swap".

103. The ban on reports about the POWs went into effect on 27 February 1976 and was not lifted till the men were free. A Ministerial "request" (directive) was telexed to all newspapers via Sapa.

104. See, for example, the Sunday Times of 3 September 1978 and the Rand Daily Mail of 4 September 1978.

105. Interview with Henri Geyser of The Argus, author's notes.

106. Rand Daily Mail, 20 March 1979.

107. "The Press Out on a Limb", transcript of speech by Allister Sparks at the "Survival of the Press" Conference in Grahamstown, 5 October 1979.

FOOTNOTES TO SECTION TWO

1. Knightley, 1975, p.75.
2. Ibid., Chapter One. See also Furneaux, 1964, Chapter One.
3. Encyclopaedia Britannica, 1958, Vol. 16, p.725.
4. Aitken, 1971, p.2. Aitken's book is a full-scale study of official secrecy in Britain.
5. Wintour, 1972, p.156.
6. Ibid., p.164.
7. Wintour, op.cit., pp.159-60.
8. Pincher, 1968, p.40.
9. Ibid., p.41. See also Wintour, op.cit., pp.160-3.
10. Pincher, op.cit., describes several cases in which political figures and bureaucrats took advantage of the system. Further examples can be found in Aitken, op.cit.
11. Whitaker's Almanac 1979, p.53.
12. Colin Lovelace: "British Press censorship during the First World War", in: Boyce, Curran and Wingate, 1978, p.309
13. Ibid.
14. Ibid., p.319.
15. Ibid.
16. Knightley, op.cit., p.218.
17. Ibid.
18. Ibid., p.239.
19. Wintour, op.cit., p.154.
20. Mathews, 1978, p.228.
21. Defence Act No. 13 of 1912.
22. As far as can be established no-one was ever convicted in South Africa under the censorship clauses of the Defence Act of 1912. See: Pienaar & Cloete, undated, pp.104-108.
23. South African war correspondents in the main war theatres of the First World War were, like their counterparts in the British press, subject to the dictates of the Press Bureau. (See page 46.)
24. During 1914 there was a rebellion of some Afrikaners against Prime Minister General Louis Botha's decision to go to war against Germany on England's side. Again in the Second World War an anti-British nationalist spirit fuelled the semi-military Ossewabrandwag many of whose leaders were interned by the Smuts Government. For further details on both wars see Rene De Villiers: "Afrikaner Nationalism", in Wilson & Thompson, 1971, pp.326-423.

25. For details of black nationalist attitudes in both World Wars see Leo Kuper: "African Nationalism in South Africa, 1910-1964" in: Wilson & Thompson, op.cit., pp.424-475.

26. The Voluntary Agreement is reprinted in full, in Afrikaans, in Pienaar & Cloete, op.cit., pp.134-136. The author has been unable to obtain an English copy. Translations here are by the author. Reference to the Voluntary Agreement can be found in Lindsay Smith, 1947, p.56.

27. "It has been and remains the Union Government's earnest intention to avoid any form of compulsory censorship of newspapers. The Voluntary Agreement concerning censorship indicates the willingness of newspapers to work together with the Government under this policy." - Section 3 (1), In: Pienaar & Cloete, op.cit., p.135.

28. Obituaries from The Times, 1961-70: Dr Hendrik Verwoerd, pp.107-108.

29. Voluntary Agreement, Section 1(5) (d), in Pienaar & Cloete, op.cit., p.135.

30. Walshe, 1970, p.274. In a letter of reply to the ANC,Smut's private secretary wrote: "Your study is evidently a propagandist document intended to propagate the views of your Congress...The Prime Minister... does not agree with your interpretation of the Atlantic Charter and with your effort to stretch its meaning so as to make it apply to all sorts of African problems and conditions." (Ibid., p.274). See also: Leo Kuper: "African Nationalism in South Africa, 1910-1964" in Wilson & Thompson, op.cit., pp.453-455 for a discussion of black attitudes to the war.

31. The Star, 25 June 1940.

32. Kuper, op.cit., p.455.

33. See Ainslie, 1966, p.51, on the founding of Bantu World in 1931 by two whites who aimed to "guide" black political and commercial progress. By 1946 the Argus Company held a 16 per cent share. Full control of World passed into the hands of the Argus Company in the 1950's, confirming the general trend of ownership of the black press passing into white hands.

34. Roux, 1964, Chapter XXIV: "Africans and the Second World War", gives a full exposition of the position of moderate and radical blacks on the war. The African National Congress passed a resolution declaring that it stood by the decision of the Union Parliament in favour of a declaration of war on the British side. (p.305). After the Hitler-Stalin pact of 1939, black and white communists refused to support the war they had long advocated. However, when Hitler attacked Russia the communists - with the exception of Trotskyists - accepted the need for war. The Trotskyists urged that blacks should not take part in an imperialist war. Roux notes that during February 1944 the editors of the vernacular communist newspaper, Inkululeko (Freedom) discovered that a secret postal ban had been operating against them: papers were accepted by the Post Office but not delivered. The Deputy Chief Censor in Johannesburg, after lifting the ban, said the censorship had not been concerned with military considerations but with opinions concerning politics abroad. "It was made clear to Inkululeko representatives that the censorship considered that there should be discrimination between what could be printed in an African paper and what Europeans were allowed to read." (p.311).
35. Pienaar & Cloete, op.cit., section on "General Restrictions", pp.138-145.
36. Ibid., section on "Procedure", pp.136-138.
37. Ibid., section on "Casualties", pp.145-147.
38. Ibid., sections headed "General", pp.147-8, and "Regulations for War Correspondents", pp.148-156.
39. Ibid.
40. Information from war correspondent Carel Birkby, interviewed by the author.
41. Ibid.
42. Ibid.
43. Ibid.
44. Ibid.
45. Lindsay Smith, undated, p.32, reflects on "the ironic twist of fate that helped some sections of the Afrikaans press to sail on the tide of prosperity that followed South Africa's participation in the war when all the efforts of the bulk of this press was vehement in its opposition [sic] to South Africa's participation. During a period when the circulation and size of newspapers were drastically curtailed

English- and Afrikaans-speaking readers who were unable to obtain their usual newspapers turned readily to the Afrikaans press." Lindsay Smith adds, however, that the general effect was "beneficial" both in opening the public's mind to other views and in helping some "very desirable publications" to turn the corner financially.

46. Lindsay Smith, op.cit., Chapter Seven.
47. Ibid.
48. Ibid.
49. The Bureau's function as a "propaganda machine" met with favour in National Party eyes after the war. See page 62 below.
50. See Potter, 1975, pp.128-9 for background on the Nationalist concern for the country's image abroad. See also, Rhoodie, 1969.
51. The press history telescoped here has been more fully described by Potter, op.cit., Switzer, op.cit., and Ainslie, 1966.
52. See Mathews, 1978 and 1971; Stuart, 1977 (2nd ed.); Potter, 1976; Hepple, 1974; Pienaar & Cloete, undated; and Strydom & Van der Walt, 1971.
53. Mathews, 1978, p.138.
54. Mr B. Coetzee, <u>Hansard</u>, House of Assembly debates, 2 March 1962, col.1878 et seq.
55. Mr R B Durrant, <u>Hansard</u>, House of Assembly debates, 14 June 1962, col.7977 et seq.
56. Ibid., col.7976.
57. Ibid., col.8013.
58. <u>Hansard</u>, House of Assembly debates, 14 June 1962, col.8014 et seq.
59. Ibid., col.8015.
60. Ibid., col.8016.
61. <u>Hansard</u>, House of Assembly debates, 13 February 1956, col.1447 et seq.
62. Act No. 101 of 1969.
63. Section 3 (2) of the Official Secrets Act, No. 16 of 1956.
64. Mathews, op.cit., p.141.
65. Ibid., p.144.
66. Ibid., p.140.
67. Ibid., p.142.
68. Ibid., p.142.
69. Section 3 (2) (b) (ii) defines "security matter" as "any matter relating to the security of the Republic and includes any matter dealt with by or relating to the Bureau for State Security."

70. See Hepple, 1974, p.49-50 for a discussion of official secrecy and BOSS.
71. Ibid.
72. Ibid.
73. See Hepple, op.cit., p.50; and Mathews, 1979, p.142 for further details of this case.
74. Defence Act No. 44 of 1957.
75. Section 101.
76. Section 103.
77. Defence Amendment Act No. 85 of 1967.
78. Rand Daily Mail, quoting Mr Botha, 10 April 1967.
79. Hansard, House of Assembly debates, 2 June 1967, col.7165.
80. Ibid., cols 7165-6.
81. Hansard, House of Assembly debates, 8 June 1967, col.7422.
82. Ibid.
83. Ibid., col.7503.
84. Hansard, House of Assembly debates, 9 June 1967, col.7510.
85. Dagbreek, 4 June 1967.
86. See Die Burger, 3 June 1967.
87. The Star, 12 June 1967.
88. Hachten, 1971, p.259, mentions this case which occurred late in 1967.
89. For further information and discussion on the Press Council, see Adelman, Howard, Stuart and van Eeden, 1979; Giffard, 1975; and Potter, 1975.
89. Rand Daily Mail, 30 August 1972.
90. Hansard, House of Assembly, Questions, col. 72 and col. 328, 13 February 1973.
91. Ibid.
92. The Star, 31 August 1972.
93. Rand Daily Mail, 30 August 1972.
94. Rand Daily Mail editorial quoted by Giffard, op.cit. p.4.
95. The Star, for instance, was of the opinion that it was better for every newspaperman to be "judged, in the internationally accepted fashion, by his own profession and not by any government agent" and therefore regarded the Council and the Code as the best way to keep the Government's hands off the press. Giffard, op.cit., p.15.

96. Lindsay Smith wrote that an "immense industry" was at "the back of the established Press, at the back of the news service monopoly, at the back of the Newspaper Press Union" - the gold mining industry. (p.144-5.)

97. Potter, op.cit., Chapter 3.

98. For a history of the Newspaper Press Union, see Picton, 1972, Chapter 13: The Newspaper Press Union. The NPU was founded in Grahamstown in 1882.

99. Hansard, House of Assembly debates, 9 March 1967, col.2702-3.

100. Ibid.

101. NPU Circular No. 67/25, 18 April 1967.

102. Hansard, House of Assembly debates, June 1967, col.7509.

103. Author's interview.

104. "Translation of Agreement with the Minister of Defence, approved April 1969." Duplicated copy from NPU. See Appendix D.

105. NPU Circular No. 73/12, with copy of Agreement of 1969, and list of Department of Defence Appointments and Telephone Numbers.

106. Rand Daily Mail, 19 November 1975.

107. Rand Daily Mail, 28 November 1975.

108. Rand Daily Mail, 21 November 1975.

109. Letter from the Chief of the SADF to all media with accredited correspondents, 27 January 1976, containing a Register of Accredited Military Correspondents and Editors.

110. Uys interview, op.cit.

111. Stuart, 1978, p.135.

112. Uys interview, op.cit.

113. Author's interviews with editors Smith and Dahlmann.

114. Author's interview with Mr Des Erasmus, political correspondent and assistant editor of Die Suidwester.

115. On May 3 1976, Sapa relayed the following advice message: "The Minister of Defence wishes to advise that no reports on present or future SADF or security force operations or activities in the operational area, or any action arising therefrom, may be published except where publication thereof has been authorised by the Minister or under his authority. For the purposes of this notice the operational area is defined as the geographical areas of Kaokoland, Owambo, Kavango and the eastern and western Caprivi." On May 6 a second advice message followed. "In the spirit of the Agreement between the Minister of

Defence and the NPU the Minister makes the friendly request that his recent ban on any unauthorised reporting on SADF or security force operations in the operational area should be extended to include a ban on any reports of terrorist activities in that area, such as the public killing of a man in Owambo as reported on April 30, irrespective of the source of the information, except where publication thereof has been authorised by the Minister or given under his authority." According to a newspaper source, this second message became a "friendly request" after Sapa had queried the Minister's legal authority to impose a ban on all such news, which would include police news.

116. A circumstantial account will be found in the Advertiser of 23 June 1976.
117. Windhoek Advertiser, 24 June 1976.
118. Ibid.
119. Ibid, 25 June 1976.
120. Author's interview with Dahlmann.
121. Author's interview with Smith.
122. Author's interview with Erasmus.
123. SASJ letter to Kurt Dahlmann, 13 July 1976.
124. Information supplied to the author by NPU general secretary.
125. Defence Amendment Act, No. 1 of 1976.
126. Information from a confidential source interviewed by the author.
127. NPU memorandum: "Agreement between the Minister and the NPU", 4 March 1976.
128. Letter from the Minister of Defence to the NPU, 29 April 1976.
129. Report of the President, minutes of the annual congress of the NPU, Windhoek, 14 September 1976.
130. The author was told this by Mr H A L Miller, Chairman of the Argus Company.
131. Sapa note to all editors, news editors and military correspondents, 1 June 1976.
132. Letter of 2 November 1976.
133. The Journalist, May 1979.
134. Ibid.
135. See The Sunday Times and the Rand Daily Mail for the week beginning 25 November 1979.

136. Rand Daily Mail, 6 December 1979.

137. Rand Daily Mail, 8 December 1979.

138. Rand Daily Mail, 7 December 1979.

139. Ibid.

140. Die Burger, 6 December 1979.

FOOTNOTES TO SECTION THREE

1. Letter dated 4 August 1978.
2. See Tunstall, 1970, Chapters 1 and 2.
3. The author's impressions are based on a cursory reading of the Rhodesia Herald (Salisbury) in selected editions for the seven months from August 1975 to February 1976. Angolan war news appears to have been heavily controlled.
4. Sunday Express, 17 September 1978.
5. Eastern Province Herald, 9 January 1976.
6. Author's interview with Mr G G A Uys, general secretary of the NPU.
7. Ibid.
8. Register of Accredited Military Correspondents and Editors, January 1976. See Section Two for background.
9. For summaries of gatekeeper concepts and research see: Dimmick, 1979 and 1974; and Donohue, Tichenor & Olien, 1972.
10. White, 1950, pp.383-90.
11. Dimmick, 1979, p.204.
12. McQuail, 1969, pp.64-67.
13. Ibid., p.64.
14. McQuail, ibid., quoting Gieber, p.178.
15. See also Nimmo, 1964, for a later study of newsgathering in Washington.
16. See Sigal 1973, especially Chapters 3 and 4.
17. Tunstall, op.cit.
18. Tunstall, 1971, p.209.
19. Braestrup, 1978, p.11.
20. Cohen and Young, 1973, pp.18-19.
21. Author's interview with Carel Birkby.
22. Knightley, 1975, p.390. et seq.
23. Zeman, 1964, p.159.
24. Paratus, May 1977.
25. Paratus, March 1976.
26. Giliomee, 1979, In: Adam & Giliomee, pp.253-257.
27. Schrieber, 1976.
28. Giliomee, op.cit., p.254.
29. Rand Daily Mail, 29 November 1975.
30. Rand Daily Mail, 2 December 1975.
31. Beeld, 18 November 1975.
32. Cape Times, 26 November 1975.

33. Rand Daily Mail, 18 November 1979.
34. Zeman, 1964, p.177.
35. Rand Daily Mail, 18 December 1975.
36. Qualter, 1962, pp.55-101.
37. Singletary, 1978, pp.727-732.
38. Orwant & Ullmann, 1974, pp.463-469.
39. Paratus, August 1977.
40. Author's interview with source on Die Transvaler.
41. Chibnall, 1977, pp.171-175.
42. Breed, 1955, pp.277-84.
43. Sigal, 1973, Chapter 4. Writing on the "journalist's creed", Sigal observes that "the conventions of objective reporting, more than defenses for the newsman's autonomy, provide standards that satisfy his own doubts, even while failing to solve the insoluble. They permit him to make news without worrying about what it is or what it means. The newsman's dilemma is not unlike Hamlet's, who, before taking his revenge, wanted to be certain about the identity of his father's slayer. Gradually realising that Claudius might die of old age before he attained the requisite certainty, Hamlet sees a vision of his dead father which impels him to act. Ideologies are the ghosts, coupling a simplification of reality with an emotional stimulus to action, that force men to act in uncertainty. So it is with the journalist's creed." (pp.92-3).
44. Dimmick, 1979, pp.203-22.
45. Cohen & Young, op.cit., pp.15-21.
46. Sigal, op.cit., p.69.
47. Chibnall, op.cit., pp.221-222.
48. Ibid., p.177.
49. Aitken, 1971, pp.222-3.
50. Dimmick, 1973.
51. This ceased to be the case after Mr Botha became Prime Minister, when he resigned his directorship and instructed all other Cabinet Ministers with press interests to do the same.

52. Venter's books include The Terror Fighters, The Silent War, and Vorster's Africa. The latter had a chapter on the Angolan war, which Venter's publishers insisted be submitted to the military authorities for vetting. "Astonishingly enough," Venter wrote to the author, "the entire chapter was passed by senior Defence Headquarters personnel with only two minor changes - one of them dealing with the name of an officer still involved in sensitive ongoing operations. I have since gathered that the chapter in question was viewed with considerable alarm by security and political authorities, including, among others, General van den Bergh (the head of BOSS). He, I was told later, was heard to comment that I had been 'unauthorised' in disclosing sensitive and 'privileged' information. Frankly, this is bullshit, since every piece of information gathered by me on Angola came as a result of me sticking my neck out and nearly losing it on several occasions. Much of what I published came as a consequence of my joining the FNLA army (ELNA) to get my story and then pulling out when I had it. I did the same under considerably greater pressure in Luanda with an extremely radical element disposing of their adversaries with little or no formality." Venter's wartime front-line experiences made him unique amongst South African defence correspondents.

53. Steenkamp's Adeus Angola (1976) was a soldier's tale without battles, place names or precise dates and details of campaign movements. Still, it was the first book on the war to appear in South Africa and sold very well. It was cleared by the SADF with very few cuts and one emendation. Steenkamp told the author that the military censor in one place wrote in the margin: "You are drawing a false conclusion for which there is no justification". He gave the facts and Steenkamp rewrote the paragraph accordingly. Pretoria took about a fortnight to vet the manuscript and return it. "They knew me from my work and they knew I was discreet, and they were very quick about it." After the book was published "a lot of the blokes in my regiment read it and said they were happy with the accuracy of it; what they liked about it was that it gave a pretty good idea of our experiences."

54. Rumours that Winter was a BOSS or police Special Branch agent did the rounds amongst journalists long before Winter himself confessed to have been an informer for BOSS, in statements he made to British newspapers during 1979. Winter fled South Africa during the Information scandal when General Hendrik van den Bergh, head of BOSS, lost his job. When the author attempted to interview Winter for this study, the journalist spent an equal amount of time trying to question the author.

55. Goren, Cohen & Caspi, 1975, pp.199-206. This survey of 108 reporters showed interesting differences in attitudes of resident and visiting correspondents. The former felt they were sometimes neglected and discriminated against - a parallel with South African defence correspondents' allegations after the Angolan war. However, 100 per cent of the Israeli correspondents approved of censorship. Only 74 per cent of visiting correspondents said they would justify censorship.
56. Rand Daily Mail, 22 November 1975.
57. Ibid.
58. Rand Daily Mail, 10 December 1975.
59. Rand Daily Mail, 6 February 1976.
60. Rand Daily Mail, 20 October 1975. Other facts came out much later. According to the official South African war history, and to Sunday Telegraph writer Robert Moss, the Zulu and Foxbat battle groups had been formed early in October, and on 14 October Zulu crossed the border to fight a series of engagements. See SA Panorama, March 1977; and The Star, 4 February 1977 et.seq.
61. See Comment and Opinion (a weekly survey of the South African press and radio), Vol 1, No. 31, 30 August 1974, for details of the allegations, the Government's response, and media reactions. See also Keesing's Contemporary Archives, 4 - 10 November 1974, p.26792.
62. Rand Daily Mail, 19 September 1973.
63. Revised Code of Conduct, Section 4 (a) (i) and (ii) said the standards applying to South African newspapers should exact them to avoid "subjects that may cause enmity or give offence in racial, ethnic, religious or cultural matters" in the Republic; and should not "detrimentally affect the peace and good order, the safety and defence of the Republic and its people". The amended Constitution of the Press Council, Section 3 (f) (iv) empowered the Council to impose a fine not exceeding R10 000 upon the proprietor of a publication judged to have infringed the Code. See Adelman, Howard, Stuart and Van Eeden, 1979, pp.64-71.
64. Rand Daily Mail, 6 October 1971.
65. Ibid, 7 October 1971.
66. Keesing's Contemporary Archives, op.cit.
67. Rand Daily Mail, 7 October 1971.

68. *Rapport*, 25 August 1974.
69. *The Star*, 21 August 1974.
70. *The Argus*, 22 August 1974.
71. *The Star*, 18 November 1975.
72. *Rand Daily Mail*, 19 November 1975.
73. *Cape Times*, 17 November 1975.
74. *Rand Daily Mail*, 18 November 1975.
75. *The Star*, 3 February 1977.
76. *Rand Daily Mail*, 19 November 1975.
77. Ibid.
78. *Cape Times*, 29 November 1979.
79. *The Star*, 29 November 1975.
80. *Die Transvaler*, 29 November 1975.
81. *Rand Daily Mail*, *Die Vaderland*, 2 December 1975.
82. *Rand Daily Mail*, 5 December 1975.
83. *Rand Daily Mail*, 18 December 1975.

FOOTNOTES TO THE POSTSCRIPT

1. The original text of the Steyn Commission report was not available to the author at the time of writing and he was obliged to rely on newspaper reports which were, however, extensive. All references are to the Cape Times of 15 April, 1980.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid.
5. Quoted in Rivers, Peterson & Jensen, 1971, p.77.
6. See Wright, 2nd. edition, 1965, pp. 257-272: "Integration and Disintegration" and "Dictatorship and Democracy"; and also pp.1012-1042: "Social Integration and War". Wright's immense work of scholarship repeatedly returns to the question whether democracies are capable of responding efficiently to the menace of totalitarian powers.
7. See Merrill, 1974, pp. 64-65, in which he puts the following view: "Does press freedom belong to the press or to the people? Briefly, the answer is that press freedom is the press' freedom; it belongs to the press... (But) when we think of the press being free we really mean that persons connected with the press are free; therefore, we can talk of press freedom belonging to people - to some people in the institution of journalism... (Press) freedom is related to, or restricted to, people...but only those who might be considered press people." This is a contentious view, certainly, but it is not the author's purpose here to dispute it - rather, Merrill's phrase has been adopted to refer to the press gatekeepers who control newspaper content. Their freedom is subject to the control of media managers and to the pressures of the larger society.
8. Tom Wicker: "The Greening of the Press", in Columbia Journalism Review, May/June 1971, pp. 7-12.
9. See Hobhouse, L.T. - The Metaphysical Theory of the State (London: Allen & Unwin, 1938). Hobhouse takes issue with the Clausewitzian doctrine that the state's will is the general or real will of the people: "Too often it is not the state as a whole which sets definite ends before itself. In the normal development of peace-time, and for that matter even in the concentrated purpose of wartime, there are many sections within the state which have

each for itself a general will, far more properly so called because much more clearly conscious and united than any will which permeates the state as a whole. The actual institutions of society have in large measure been determined by class conflicts, struggles of churches, racial wars, and everywhere there are the marks of the struggles. If and in so far as there is any meaning in the term 'general will' at all, there are many general wills within the state, and too often the institutions of society are just the result of the victory, resting not on logic but on superior organisation, which one of these wills has attained (power) over others... (The) institutions of society are not the outcome of a unitary will but of the clash of wills, in which the selfishness and generally the bad in human nature is constantly operative, intermingled with but not always overcome by the better elements." (p.82). Stripped of its overtly moralistic elements, this argument reflects an understanding that conflicts of interest characterise social relations, and that these are not overcome but simply disguised by the appeal to common loyalties and consensual values. The national will is, in fact, the reified will of the dominant groups.

10. Sunday Times, 4 May 1980.
11. Poulantzas, 1974, p.72.
12. Rand Daily Mail, 2 May 1980.
13. Eastern Province Herald, 24 March 1980.
14. Finer, 1962, p.5.

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