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'Rethinking Radical Flank Theory: South Africa'

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Rethinking Radical Flank Theory: South Africa

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Abstract: *Chenoweth and Stephan (2011) found that nonviolent resistance movements since 1900 have twice the success rate of violent movements in achieving their objectives. Schock and Chenoweth (2012) furthermore show that nonviolent resistance movements with a violent radical flank have a lower success rate than nonviolent movements without a violent radical flank. This contradicts the analysis of the African National Congress of how Apartheid was defeated. The ANC believes both armed struggle and nonviolent resistance were effective and complementary. After listening to voices from the South African resistance, a tweak of Schock and Chenoweth is advanced. Nonviolent resistance should not cultivate the creation of violent radical flanks; if violent radical flanks exist, however, nonviolent leaders should be reluctant to cast them out of resistance coalitions. Indeed, like Nelson Mandela in the 1980s, nonviolent oppositions may do best to resist tyranny with willingness to invoke the spectre of violent spoilers.*

Keywords: *nonviolence, South Africa, radical flank*

Rethinking Radical Flank Theory: South Africa

John Braithwaite¹

Chenoweth and Stephan (2011) found that nonviolent resistance movements since 1900 have twice the success rate of violent movements in achieving their objectives. Schock and Chenoweth (2012) furthermore show that nonviolent resistance movements with a violent radical flank have a lower success rate than nonviolent movements without a violent radical flank. This contradicts the analysis of the African National Congress of how Apartheid was defeated. The ANC believes both armed struggle and nonviolent resistance were effective and complementary. After listening to voices from the South African resistance, a tweak of Schock and Chenoweth is advanced. Nonviolent resistance should not cultivate the creation of violent radical flanks; if violent radical flanks exist, however, nonviolent leaders should be reluctant to cast them out of resistance coalitions. Indeed, like Nelson Mandela in the 1980s, nonviolent oppositions may do best to resist tyranny with willingness to invoke the spectre of violent spoilers.

The structure of this paper is first to explore the concept of radical flank theory, distinguishing violent and nonviolent radical wings of resistance movements and their effects on the success and failure of resistance. The next section drills down into the history of the nonviolent and violent phases of the struggle against Apartheid in South Africa to illuminate the complexity in the phasing of these dilemmas of political choice that Nelson Mandela and other leaders faced. Then we drill deeper by considering views on the efficacy of armed struggle against Apartheid from the top of the ANC, from minority analyses within the ANC, from the National Party elite and finally from civil society. This leads to the conclusion that Nelson Mandela may never have become President of South Africa, civil war might continue today, had Mandela renounced the armed struggle. Hence, it is concluded that the normative ideal should be to support the most nonviolent leader who has a serious chance of success in resisting tyranny. For South Africa that was Nelson Mandela.

A Radical Flank: Asset or Liability?

Any group that pursues a just objective can be aided by another that is more radical in its demands toward that same objective. Social movement scholars refer to this as a radical flank effect:

[T]he existence of radicals makes moderate groups in the movement more attractive negotiating partners to the movement opponents. Radicalness provides strong incentives to the state to get to the bargaining table with the moderates in order to avoid dealing with the radicals. In addition,

¹ Thanks to the Australian Research Council for funding this fieldwork and to Clifford Shearing and other generous hosts at the University of Cape Town during the work for wise counsel and hospitality.

financial support flowing to moderate groups in the movement increases dramatically in the presence of radicals (McAdam 1992, cited in Gupta 2002:3).

Consider the 'reasonable' environmental group that is invited inside the walls of state or corporate power to negotiate a policy response to an environmental problem. It can be aided by a radical green group hurling criticism of these cosy negotiations from outside the walls. This puts the more moderate group in a position to argue that if you cannot find a solution to the problem that will satisfy us, you will have to deal with them. Indeed we will join them in their campaign against you. This radical flank dynamic is not just something advocacy groups fortuitously exploit. They often conspire productively with a group that has a more radical constituency than their own to put themselves under pressure so they can move the middle ground in the direction of a better deal in the eyes of both sets of constituents. This author has engaged productive hard-cop-soft-cop conspiracies of just that sort as a consumer movement leader and environmental advocate in Australia.

The same hard-cop-soft-cop dynamics of course apply to groups that pursue unjust objectives. When objectives are just, however, the normative point is that renunciation of a hard cop by a soft cop, refusal to invoke hard cops in useful ways, or to conspire with them to increase pressure, would serve a just cause poorly. Erica Chenoweth and Kurt Schock's recent research, however, casts serious doubt on the radical flank hypothesis when the flank is violent. First, however, we must consider the more basic finding of Erica Chenoweth and Maria Stephan (2011) that nonviolent civil resistance is more effective in achieving its objectives than violent resistance movements. Chenoweth and Stephan studied 323 resistance movements operating 1900-2006. All were movements with maximalist objectives like regime change. The success rate of groups that used a violent strategy of resistance was 26 per cent; for resistance that was predominantly nonviolent, it was 53 per cent. Other research has found terrorism enjoys an even lower success rate, achieving its policy objectives in only 7 per cent of its campaigns (Abrahms 2006; see also Cronin 2009).

The two main factors that drove the success of nonviolence, according to this data, was that nonviolence was most effective when it could attract very large numbers of participants onto the streets and in to the ranks of resistance campaigns (Chenoweth and Stephan 2011:34-41) and when this in turn persuaded the security forces to withdraw support for the regime. The latter condition for the effectiveness of nonviolence occurs if the military and police defections are large-scale (Chenoweth and Stephan 2011: 48). Their data also show that nonviolent campaigns with high levels of citizen participation are much more likely than violent resistance to attract international diplomatic support. Moreover, when resistance movements achieve their objectives by nonviolent means, the successor regime is more likely to be democratic and peaceful compared to cases where regimes change through armed struggle (Chenoweth and Stephan 2011:218).

In subsequent work, Schock and Chenoweth (2012) found that of the nonviolent campaigns in this large dataset, those that were accompanied by contemporaneous violent movements had a lower success rate of 46 per cent compared to nonviolent campaigns without a violent radical flank, with a 60 per cent success rate. The reason for this revealed by their data is that a violent radical flank reduces

popular participation in nonviolent resistance (by about half). And we have seen that the level of participation is the key predictor of success. Many of us have experienced that feeling of reluctance about participating in a demonstration when we have reason to fear that elements in the movement are determined to encourage a violent confrontation. Peter Gelderloos (2007) argues that this reflects cowardice in the face of the experience of history that a healthy violent vanguard is needed to shake a regime. The Schock and Chenoweth data suggest the more comforting view for 'respectable' nonviolent majorities of citizenries that their intuition that violence is more often counterproductive than productive could be right.

Erica Chenoweth herself has responded in an interesting way to the methodological concern that there is a risk of selection bias in comparing uprisings with and without armed wings because 'the decision to take up arms might often be an act of desperation in cases where nonviolent action is already failing' (Jay Ulfelder 2011).

We try to get at this in two ways. Statistically, we try to look at the conditions under which the movements emerge to instrument for whether they were predisposed to fail, and then account for this instrument to explain the onset of radical flanks. So far, there's no discernable effect. Second, and more preferably in my view, is just drilling down into the cases to see what the causal sequence was, etc. There may be some cases where radical flanks emerged during periods where the nonviolence campaign was gaining little ground and leaders within the nonviolent movement were becoming introspective about the utility of nonviolence versus violence (the ANC in South Africa is a good example), but in general, armed wings tended to emerge before nonviolent conflict had truly run its course. Libya is a good example . . . (Chenoweth and Stephan 2011).

Because South Africa is a well researched example that I have been able to complement with 39 strategic interviews of my own in 2012-13, this article takes Chenoweth's advice of drilling down into a strategic case to try to better understand the causal role violence is seen by key players to be playing and not playing. I conclude from this that South Africa is both a case where violent resistance grew because nonviolence was failing, but also one where nonviolence later rose again because hope was abandoned that violence could prevail in overthrowing apartheid. Nelson Mandela travelled both these journeys of disillusionment with both tools of struggle. Beyond this methodological question, drilling down to understand the drivers of success reveals bigger complexities of strategic choice that are instructive for those who struggle against injustice. An n of 1 struggle reveals more than quantitative scholars suppose. This is because in one long history there are many turning points of a struggle that succeed and fail, many campaigns in many places at many moments along the way that are counterproductive or productive, delivering a large number of degrees of freedom internal to a qualitatively diagnosed n of 1.

Learning from South Africa's Journey

South Africa, like Timor-Leste, the Philippines and other conflicts of the late twentieth century, is a case of a liberation movement that had progressively more success after 1976 when it gradually shifted the weight of its resistance from armed struggle to networked nonviolent struggle. In Chenoweth and Stephan's study the Philippines is correctly counted as a case that sees several unsuccessful violent campaigns since World War II against an authoritarian central government and two successful nonviolent people power campaigns that ousted Marcos in 1986 and Estrada in 2001. Timor-Leste is also counted, again correctly our research group would argue (Braithwaite et al 2012), as a success where the resistance achieved its objectives, but only when it shifted its strategy to nonviolence (following failed armed resistance). I will argue that a more critical perspective is warranted on how South Africa is coded in the Chenoweth and Stephan data.

The African National Congress (ANC), including Nelson Mandela, concluded after the Sharpeville massacre in 1960, in which 69 black protestors were gunned down, that the ANC's decades of nonviolent struggle had not worked and was being met by relentless state violence. It may have been working much more than the ANC and its breakaway group, the Pan Africanist Congress (which organized the Sharpeville protest) realized at the time. In the months after Sharpeville there was a collapse in confidence among international investors in South Africa. 'By May 1961 gold and foreign exchange reserves had fallen from the January 1960 figure of R312 million to less than R153 million, and a severe balance of payments crisis was averted only by raising the bank rate and imposing import and foreign exchange controls' (Spence 1965: 47). The Chenoweth and Stephan (2011:233) data set coded the Defiance Campaign of the 1950s as a 'failure', which it was in the sense that Apartheid became more deeply entrenched in the 1950s. Yet the resistance to Apartheid also became more deeply entrenched in that decade. The Defiance Campaign has been credited with growing the ANC membership from 7,000 at the start to 100,000 by its end (Zunes 1999:161). In the same period we saw the Black Sash protests of predominantly middle class white women, the march of 20,000 mostly black women to Pretoria in 1956 to protest against extension of the pass laws to women, the Congress Alliance of trade unions and many other organizations beyond the ANC that declared the Freedom Charter, and ANC leader Chief Albert Luthuli securing the international recognition of a Nobel Peace Prize. One might interpret the Defiance Campaign as a magnificently successful foundation for a nonviolent struggle that ultimately prevailed in the long run of South African history.

ANC's alliance partner to this day, the South African Communist Party, was the first mover to create an armed force after discussions with the Chinese Communist Party, including meetings with Deng Xiaoping and Chairman Mao Zedong in 1960 (Ellis 2012: 13), and then securing funding from the Soviet Union. Later, China switched its support to the Pan Africanist Congress and the Soviets continued as funders of the ANC and the South African Communist Party. Mandela himself was almost certainly a member of the Communist Party at that time (Ellis 2012: 29-22; Plaut and Holden 2012: 9, 15). ANC Youth League figure Mandela came to lead the armed wing, *Umkhonto we Sizwe* (MK), and made it the centerpiece of the ANC struggle. ANC president, Chief Albert Luthuli, who stayed in that position until his death in 1967, continued to advocate only nonviolent struggle, which resulted in his being sidelined as out of touch with the tools of struggle of that age. Ironically, Luthuli was cut off from participating in the Johannesburg debates that the new generation of ANC leaders, Mandela, Walter

Sisulu, Oliver Tambo and others were indulging about the move to armed struggle. This was because the government miscalculated in restricting Luthuli from leaving his home town. Armed struggle seemed to the new brigade of leaders of the 1960s the only path left.

Similarly, when the Pan Africanist Congress (PAC) was formed in 1959, 'no provision was made in its operational structures for the establishment of a military wing.' (PAC submission to South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission in Henkeman 2012: 73). That happened immediately after Sharpeville. Trotskyist Baruch Hirson wrote in his memoirs of that time, 'we could see the possibility of one of these movements [advocating armed struggle] outstripping everyone else, leaving people like us behind' so across the left 'the only way to prevent our eclipse was to seize the moment' (Ellis 2012: 19). Stephen Ellis (2012: 284) concurs with this analysis that 'Had significant figures within the ANC not opted for violent struggle at that time, it is most likely that their organization would have been eclipsed by the PAC' (Ellis 2012: 284). The South African left widely bought into Moscow's analysis of the time that decolonization would be a forerunner for the collapse of capitalism, a view that drew inspiration from Castro's recent seizure of power in Cuba in 1959 (Ellis 2012: 37). On Ellis's account, had the ANC not gone with this analysis it would not have received the Soviet financial support that was its lifeblood until the 1980s (Ellis 2012: 286).

From 1960 until the rise of a new black trade union activism and the Black Consciousness Movement in the 1970s under the leadership of university students, particularly Steve Biko, resistance to Apartheid was at its most quiescent. Resistance during the 16 years between Sharpeville and the 1976 Soweto youth uprising was at its lowest effectiveness of the entire apartheid era in putting the South African state under pressure. Since Sharpeville, people had been afraid to indulge mass resistance on the street. Instead, they put their trust in the armed struggle. That changed in 1976: 'People on the street were willing to sacrifice their lives. Once that was the situation, the regime had lost. 1976 caught everyone by surprise including the ANC leadership in exile' (church leader and Black Consciousness student activist of 1970s, interview 081224).

Even when resistance did begin to surge again from the mid-70s, the ANC was not altogether central to the resurgence. Black Consciousness and trade union leaders, who were not ANC members at that time, who did not use armed struggle as a strategy, were much more central. That does not mean we can easily draw a causal connection between the move to armed struggle by the ANC and a decline in its political relevance compared to the vibrancy in the 1950s of the ANC's Defiance Campaign. Then the shift back to nonviolence led by the students and trade unionists in the 1970s was associated with the rise of a new potency of the resistance. It is possible to support an inference about the ultimate efficacy of nonviolence, but to remain agnostic on whether Mandela and the ANC's shift to armed struggle from 1961 was a tactical mistake. Nevertheless, we must note the historical sequence of growth of resistance during the nonviolent Defiance Campaign, decline of resistance in the first 16 years of shift to armed struggle, and resurgence of resistance with the rise of Black Consciousness as a movement that eschewed armed struggle in favour of resistance in educational institutions and local communities. This sequence is consistent with Chenoweth and Stephan's (2011: 51) result that 'when regimes crack down violently [as in South Africa from 1960], reliance on a nonviolent strategy

increases the probability of campaign success by about 22 percent.’ We will see that South Africa can illuminate the complexities of choice between purely nonviolent struggle and hybrid violent-nonviolent struggle, especially when we compare it to other strategic cases.

In the 39 interviews of key South African players from the decades after 1961 for this research, there was formidable consensus that 1961 until the mid-70s was the least effective period of the struggle against apartheid. Some of them saw a causal connection with the move to armed struggle in 1961, such as a trade union leader who said: ‘Open opposition came to full fruition in the 1980s. I believe that could have happened in the 1960s’ (interview 081218). This is not an uncommon view among civil society activists against apartheid inside South Africa from the 1970s to the 90s. Some well placed leaders on the National Party side of the conflict also agreed strongly with this; others did not; others were unsure. ANC leaders from the period were strongly and sometimes aggressively of the view that the armed struggle was both inevitable and effective in the contribution it made to victory. Some even imagined ANC military victories that had turned the tide when these had not really occurred (as others have noted (Adam and Moodley, 1993: 46; Ellis 2012)). The next section explores this spectrum of views on the efficacy of armed resistance in South Africa. Then we use these data to suggest some qualifications to the Schock and Chenoweth radical flank conclusions.

It is difficult to make sense of the contradictory narratives that different sides always create about a protracted struggle. In the case of the ANC, its leadership tended to want to portray itself to its South African black constituency as victors, valorizing the armed struggle; to the international audience it portrayed itself as a peace loving victim of aggression (Ellis 2007: 286). On the other hand, ANC military commander Chris Hani accused the National Party of having a not dissimilar ‘twin track’ strategy of being the Nobel Prize winning peacemaker that President de Klerk was for the international audience, while the National Party at the same time placated its hawks by destabilizing black politics through death squads and other violent tactics to which the leadership was at best willfully blind (Ellis 2007: 286). De Klerk belatedly did seek to bring the security sector, the violent ‘third force’ his government had created and the Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP) under control before they unraveled South Africa into total chaos in 1992. His Chief of Staff, Dave Steward, in commenting on a draft of this paper pointed out that ‘It is a great mistake to imagine that presidents know what is going on in their security apparatuses’.² There is rarely any purity of nonviolence. In South Africa even the most nonviolent of mass protests led from the front by figures like Archbishop Tutu almost always had some violence on their fringes. Nonviolent consumer and rent boycotts sometimes had necklacing for those who broke them (a tire filled with gasoline ignited around the body).³ Strikes were contaminated with violence against strikebreakers.

² In addition he said: ‘The ‘National Party’ *qua* National Party did not make decisions regarding strategy. This was the responsibility of the Cabinet and organs such as the State Security Council. The Government - under FW de Klerk did not adopt or implement a “two track” strategy. It later emerged from discoveries made by the Goldstone Commission - which FW de Klerk appointed and consistently supported - that elements of the security forces were involved in clandestine and provocative actions. However, these were against the express instructions of President De Klerk and were often aimed at undermining the negotiation policy to which he had committed his presidency.’

³ South African police count 406 deaths from necklacing between September 1984 and December 1989 (Ellis 2012: 213).

We now flesh out the dilemmas of violence and nonviolence by considering in turn views from the top of the ANC, from minority analyses within the ANC, from the National Party elite and finally from civil society.

Views from Atop the ANC

On the occasion of Nelson Mandela's 94th birthday, Brendan Boyle wrote in *The Times Johannesburg* that Mandela's 'political genius has been to know how to play each moment in the history he has helped to write. That, I believe, is the best lesson we can take from his 67 years of active service to South Africa. He has dared to be different people in different times' (19 July 2012). Perhaps this is the right lesson. One of the key negotiators on the South African government side who met with Mandela for dozens of negotiating sessions during the final years of his imprisonment affirmed that Mandela had been committed to a nonviolent resolution for a long time. Mandela pleaded, however, with government negotiators that they not ask him to renounce the armed struggle.⁴ This was not a concession he could make for his release, for elections, for legalizing the ANC. So what was going on in the great man's thinking as he was firmly re-converted to nonviolent struggle, to a peaceful resolution, yet insisted that he not be asked to renounce armed struggle?⁵

Oliver Tambo, President of ANC while Mandela was in prison, experienced in exile a rather similar trajectory in his thinking to that of Mandela. Oliver Tambo died in 1993, but I interviewed his son, Dali Tambo, twice in 2012. Dali Tambo was an important ANC leader during the long international sanctions phase of the nonviolent struggle as founder of Artists Against Apartheid and lived with his father in exile.⁶

Dali Tambo believed the variety of international sanctions – sporting, artistic, financial – worked in gradually increasing pressure. But he argued that an important reason they worked was that ANC

⁴ From my notes of that 2012 interview: 'Mandela would say to him that the armed struggle is psychologically almost the only weapon we have. He would say do not make us weak by asking us to give it up. That will make it harder to reach an agreement. [My informant] seemed to have accepted this partly because he really didn't have any fear of their military capability.'

⁵ Foreign Minister Pik Botha explained this issue in the negotiations at the time in this way:

We questioned Nelson Mandela extensively about his views on violence. The ANC, he said, had for many years operated as a nonviolent organisation and had been forced into armed struggle only because it became the unavoidable response to the violence of apartheid. He stressed that violence could never be an ultimate solution and that the nature of human relationships required negotiation. He was not in a position to renounce the use of violence as a condition of his release, and we recognised that in the circumstances currently prevailing in South Africa it would be unreasonable to expect that of him or anyone else.

(All quotes from Pik Botha in this paper are from a database of background resources collected for the three volume, *From Verwoerd to Mandela: South African Diplomats Remember*, edited by Pieter Wolvaardt, Tom Wheeler and Werne Scholtz (2010). This quote is from p. 19 of the Pik Botha files. My thanks to Tom Wheeler for kindly providing this invaluable research resource).

⁶ Because the Peacebuilding Compared project, of which this paper is a part, interviews key players in transitional justice contexts where they can occasionally be at risk of criminal charges, our ANU Research Ethics approval requires anonymous interviews that do not name informants. It also allows an exceptions process where informants agree to be on the record on negotiated terms that were entered into with Dali Tambo and four other informants who are on the record in this article.

exiles were able to say to activists and diplomats in the west: 'unless you help us we will have no choice but to return to armed struggle' as the main front. From the other side, Tambo argued, many in the international solidarity movement understood that 'We know you have to fight. This work will make it harder for them to slaughter you in large numbers when you do.'

Like his father, Dali Tambo firmly rejects the view that the shift to armed struggle in 1961 was a mistake. He contends that Gandhi's nonviolence was only effective in India because the British knew that the next step in resistance would be mass violence, whether Gandhi liked it or not. This violence would have overwhelmed the Raj because of the sheer numbers that would have joined the Quit India movement. For Dali Tambo, as in India, the ANC's armed struggle was theorized as a spectre in the background that made it possible for the nonviolent aspects of the struggle to succeed.

Armed struggle was also a tool that was instrumental in building mass participation in resistance within South Africa (and without). He argued that black South Africans' humanity was challenged on a real level every day. The ANC aim was to cultivate an ethic of sacrifice, to establish 'popular bases in the mind and on the ground'.⁷ He argued that when young people were persuaded to fire on apartheid's troops, people saw with their own eyes that resistance was alive. And when repression was inflicted back on the community where the shooting occurred, more young people were recruited to the ANC as a result of the oppression. Hence when growing numbers of young people were killed in guerilla attacks on police stations during the uprising of 1984-86, their funerals became mass protests and mass education events where ANC flags were waived and pictures of Mandela displayed. The armed struggle was about 'Emboldening the spirit of the people that you can fight back' (Tambo interview). Then what became important was to build mass nonviolent resistance so people did not feel alone in the struggle. Once together in mass demonstrations, 'toi-toi-ing and singing'⁸, people felt invulnerable.

The ANC strategy of forming the United Democratic Front in 1983 to broaden participation, including white participation, in the struggle beyond people who would never join the ANC enabled massed resistance on the streets, in strikes and much more: 'It [UDF] could do what we couldn't do. Essentially it was a social force of the ANC' (Tambo interview). 575 civil society organizations were represented at the UDF founding conference in August 1983; hundreds more joined later. A foundation for the formation of the UDF was laid by 'the phenomenal growth of township associational life [since 1979 that enabled]. . . a national political movement that reached down organizationally into practically every black community, and that had links with virtually any significant functionally organized social group' (Price 1991:178). The UDF articulated a culture of liberation that 'imbued local struggles with a larger meaning, giving participants the sense that their local actions contributed to the complete liberation of South Africa, not just to decreasing rents or bus fares, or removing some corrupt collaborator from his position as town councilor' (Price 1991:180). The 1984-86 insurrection that the UDF led with underground ANC support differed from the 1976 Soweto uprising in being more geographically widespread. While both uprisings were largely led by youth, 1984-86 diffused opposition across the

⁷ All quotes in this section of the paper (unless otherwise indicated) are from two interviews with Dali Tambo in Johannesburg, July 2012.

⁸ Part of the point here is that toi-toi-ing in a nonviolent protest manifests the hybridity between armed and nonviolent struggle because it was a collective song-dance used in guerilla warfare training.

age spectrum, engaging older householders in rent strikes, consumer boycotts of white businesses and a sharp escalation of political strikes. This allowed residents of black townships to accomplish Oliver Tambo's objective of 'ungovernability' by driving the police and the state out of their communities.

On the Dali Tambo account, which was widely shared by the ANC leadership group and in other ANC interviews I conducted (see also Turok 2010), the shift to armed struggle was not a mistake because success depended on the integration of strategy among four pillars: (1) an underground movement; (2) an armed movement; (3) a political movement mobilizing international solidarity; (4) a Mass movement. One of the most prominent women leaders in the history of the ANC said:

Every one of these pillars had to be escalated. None could be analysed in isolation. The regime had a total strategy and we had a total response... after the Rubicon speech (by PW Botha in 1985) Oliver Tambo had just taken the decision to escalate the armed struggle. I said the two are not inconsistent. They did not understand that we had a connected up strategy. Decisions were made by a Revolutionary Council. Different people had different roles in carrying out different parts of the four pillars. But they were connected into a coherent organization and strategy (Johannesburg interview 081215).

Oliver Tambo is on the record supporting negotiations, but opposing negotiations where the ANC would be 'stripped of its weapons of struggle' (Sparks 1996: 123). Mandela only suspended the armed struggle on 7 August 1990, three months after a pact, the Groote Schuur Minute, was agreed by the ANC and de Klerk.

Causing black defections from the police, intelligence and military services was also in the view of Dali Tambo a not unimportant benefit of the armed struggle in building pressure on the state. Thousands of wealthy whites leaving the country with their capital also built pressure. So did sabotage that caused a certain (limited) amount of disruption, contributing to the economic crisis. An interviewed MK (ANC's armed wing) commander described one of their successful operations as infiltrating a nuclear power plant with ANC scientists and planting a bomb to destroy a generator, building morale by proving there was no security system they could not penetrate. It proved 'ungovernability' nicely because the state could not cover it up when the power supply was affected. But this commander argued that MK operatives killed only 300 targets inside South Africa during the struggle (mostly after 1985). They rejected proposals to plant bombs in white universities because white supporters would be hurt. Another practical example this MK officer gave of one pillar supporting another was that 'if there was a mass protest there would be four people with guns, so if people were fired upon by the police they could fire back' (Interview 081216 Cape Town). He saw their work in MK as creating a hurting stalemate of sorts: 'Oliver Tambo said " We are not strong enough to overthrow them and they are not strong enough to defeat us."'

The ANC philosophy differed from prominent and unsuccessful armed resistance movements of the same era such as the Tamil Tigers (LTTE) in Sri Lanka. The ANC had a comparable commitment to attacking security forces, but a more formidable resolve to avoid attacks on civilians. The ANC signed

up to the Geneva Convention, something Dali Tambo argued that the apartheid state did not do.⁹ Inside the ANC there was opposition from cadres who argued that black civilians were being targeted and that the ANC would take fewer losses if it targeted white civilians rather than armed security forces: 'Why should we risk our lives to avoid white casualties?' Dali Tambo used an interview he had done with President Jacob Zuma to illustrate the way Tambo's father and the other ANC leaders instructed the younger generation that 'The best soldier is a politically educated soldier'. Zuma explained that as a young man he and his friends aspired to have maximum impact in putting white society under pressure by killing whites 'with pangas [machetes]'. ANC leaders went to them and said 'We will educate you how to be effective as a soldier'. This meant effectiveness in making the soldier's contribution to the strategic integration of violence and nonviolence that wins international and white South African hearts and minds. Tambo argued that for the ANC leaders it was a constant struggle to educate angry young fighters why they should not implement their ideas about planting nail bombs in rugby stadiums; the day would come when it would be necessary to make peace with their white oppressors.

Variations on this ANC theme

Many Black Consciousness leaders, trade union leaders and UDF leaders who did not start out in the ANC became ANC members or rallied around it and the unifying leadership of Tambo and Mandela as the ANC political strategy became less militarized. My next informant became an ANC member of parliament after decades of distinguished contributions to the struggle as a student leader and trade unionist (081242 Pretoria interview). His view was that the ANC was not much of a force nationally after Mandela and most ANC leaders were arrested who did not flee with Tambo into exile. He saw the trade unions as the most important font of resistance in the decades from 1961. He viewed the Black Consciousness Movement as also becoming more important than the ANC. Then most of the Black Consciousness leaders were detained around 1977 and those who survived mostly decided to join the ANC perhaps because its international linkages gave it more sustainability. This informant would even say the unions were dismissive of the ANC in this period for not being effectively active inside the country. A widespread view in the ANC from 1961 until 1986 was that while the ANC needed a political strategy and a military strategy, it was the step-by-step escalation of armed insurrection that in time would result in the revolutionary overthrow of the apartheid regime.

This ANC informant agreed with Dali Tambo and with the interpretation of most historians that the UDF was established under the guiding hand of the ANC leadership. It was designed as a network with many nodes that would be hard to shut top-down like predecessor resistance organizations. UDF was not totally controlled by the ANC, but could not have worked without the ANC's political support and organizational resources. Being comprised of more than 700 NGOs that had an existence independent

⁹John Dugard (1997) reports that the South African Government signed up to the 1949 Geneva Conventions, but refused to sign the 1977 Additional Protocols, which meant that members of the ANC were treated as ordinary criminals and not accorded prisoner of war status. Furthermore, Dugard notes that: "There was strong evidence to support claims that the South African Defence Force failed to comply with its obligations under the Geneva Conventions of 1949. Certainly the Defence Force made little, if any, attempt to educate its members about the constraints on military action contained in the Conventions." (Dugard 1997: 86).

of the ANC, the UDF was broader than the ANC and had more mass traction than the ANC. It was to the ANC's great credit that it took that risk of losing control of the resistance. This leader who embraced the ANC as a result of this inclusiveness of its new widened constituency in the 1980s agreed with Dali Tambo that there had been no choice but to take the path of armed struggle after the ANC leadership was killed, imprisoned, or escaped to exile and banned as a party from operating openly.

The mistake was in involving the whole leadership in armed struggle after Sharpeville. Some of them should have been held apart from that, should have been allowed to stay inside South Africa even if they were banned and could not play much of a role for the moment (Pretoria ANC and union leader interview 081242).

He argued that other resistance movements, such as SWAPO in Namibia, which was a kind of ANC clone (Sparks 1996), had managed to better hedge its bets in the 1960s and 70s than the ANC. He was critical of the fact that most ANC leaders in the trade union movement and most women's ANC leaders were arrested and neutralized in prison or in other ways because of their involvement in activities in support of the armed struggle. This is why he believes it took a non-ANC movement that was totally disconnected from the armed struggle, the Black Consciousness movement, to renew leadership.

His analysis was that the only point at which the struggle got close to a revolution was 1985-86, but even then they were never very close. Yet the armed struggle helped create pressure for a deal with de Klerk that could work. This deal was that 'if you give up political power there is not going to be a dramatic change in your economic situation.' (interview 081242). De Klerk believed he had negotiated a more secure economic future for white elites in return for sharing political power. From the ANC side, this leader felt that the ANC was never capable of achieving a better deal than this. A deal that would enable any quick progress toward economic equality proved a step too far. One reason why this was so, and also a reason why a total embrace of nonviolence by the ANC would have been a serious error, was that the ultra right was strong militarily, much more so than the ANC in his view. And the white extremists had better military training than the ANC. The state could have easily fought on for 20 years without ever losing to the ANC, in his view, even if its constituency would have become poorer from the struggle. De Klerk had to be worried about being outflanked politically and militarily by the extreme right.¹⁰ In turn, the ANC had to worry about this happening to its negotiating partner.

Conversely, de Klerk had to worry about his negotiating partner, the ANC, being outflanked by elements in the PAC and AZAPO who embraced ethnic cleansing sentiments of 'one settler one bullet' and a much stronger commitment to violence. A worry for de Klerk was that he would do a deal with ANC and then more violent factions than the ANC would start killing whites after the Nationals had lost control of the security apparatus. This is why it was telling that former Broederbond figure Willie

¹⁰ De Klerk Chief of Staff Dave Steward disagreed in his comments: 'FW de Klerk was never seriously concerned about being outflanked politically and militarily by the extreme right wing. He successfully challenged the right wing in the March 1992 referendum - in which he received 69% of the white vote.'

Esterhuysen (2012: 159) reports that in one of their 1988 meetings, the ANC's Thabo Mbeki drew him aside and said, 'Have you noticed that there is a decrease in violent actions in South Africa? It was a direct command from Lusaka [the ANC leadership]. We are regaining control. Please convey that to Pretoria.' Mbeki was the lead voice of ANC moderation on prioritizing a political settlement. Esterhuysen said 'I realized: the two of us needed each other.' Actions of black extremists, Esterhuysen believed, would empower violent ultra-right white extremists. Michael Young¹¹ of Consolidated Goldfields was also sensitive to these risks; he said that one reason Jacob Zuma was brought into the talks once trust had been achieved within the core group of negotiators was that the military side and the hardliners, as well as the political leaders like Mbeki and Tambo, had to embrace the peace deal. Young also saw a need to engage future leaders like Zuma with the perspective that South Africa needed 5-7 per cent growth to soak up its labour market growth; it could only accomplish this by reversing foreign disinvestment in the South African economy. One could see the talks as having an economic hidden curriculum of educating ANC leaders in the realities of investment climates, though Young objects there was no conscious intent to hide such a curriculum.

De Klerk foolishly, destructively for South Africa, also played off the Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP) led by Chief Buthelezi against the ANC in an attempt to divide and rule the black political leadership.¹² There were actually a multiplicity of competitors to what became the unifying force of Mandela and the ANC. Many of these alternative fonts of black power were more committed to violent extremism than Mandela and Tambo. They might have seized centre stage, in the view of this union leader and ANC interviewee, had the ANC appeared weak to them by renouncing armed struggle. This is perhaps the context that allows us to understand why Mandela pleaded with his National Party negotiating counterparts that they not demand his renunciation of armed struggle even as Mandela believed the era was over when political progress could be made through military means. And this is the context that helps us to understand why the National Party government would acquiesce in his request.

This informant felt that both sides in the negotiations had reasonable worries in these regards because PAC rallies in 1992 and 1993 were often bigger than ANC rallies and non-ANC parties were mounting terror attacks against white civilians. Indeed for the whole period from 1959 to 1993 the PAC was a credible competitor to the ANC at many levels, with China and many African governments also favouring the PAC over the ANC (Ellis 2012: 41). On his analysis, what caused de Klerk to do a deal was the growing wave of rallying around the outstanding leadership of Mandela by the masses that had been mobilized by the UDF, the unions and the Communist Party and the international support for Mandela. That was then followed by miniscule votes for the non-ANC parties in the 1994 elections,

¹¹ Like Esterhuysen, Michael Young agreed to his comments being on the record, asking that we record his view that the participants in the Mellis Park talks he mediated were 'brave guys who took risks and it is a tribute to them.'

¹² De Klerk Chief of Staff, Dave Steward disagreed: 'Again, there is absolutely no truth in this statement. When revelations were made during the Inkathagate scandal that elements in the Security Forces were continuing to give clandestine assistance to the IFP - against President De Klerk's instructions - he immediately took effective remedial action to put a stop to such activities and to review all secret projects through the appointment of the Kahn Committee. Continuing violence between the IFP and the ANC was a serious threat to the negotiating process on which De Klerk had staked his presidency. There is no logical reason why he should ever have supported it.'

especially in rural South Africa away from the urban grassroots of the other black resistance parties. When AZAPO and the PAC could not turn out a credible vote in the transition election, they entered political oblivion, but not until then. By choosing to fall in behind Mandela, in contrast, the Communist Party continued to remain a more formidable force behind the government than any contemporary communist party in any democracy.

The bottom line of this leader's take on the relationship between the politics of violence and nonviolence is that the ANC did not move far enough fast enough to increase the prominence of nonviolent struggle. In the end, however, it got the balance right enough to achieve the best it ever could have realistically hoped to achieve. But the ANC would have lost the day had it totally abandoned armed struggle until multiracial elections were guaranteed.

Interesting variations on these basic themes were provided by other resistance informants. One former Black Consciousness student leader and former AZAPO member agreed that nonviolence did most of the work of winning the struggle. Yet he saw no alternative to armed struggle. He made the point that Soviet support during the Cold War sustained the ANC. In return for that support, the Soviets expected/demanded armed struggle (interview 081233 Cape Town).

A white head of a regional Peace Committee of the early 1990s wondered 'if no bombs had been going off, white South Africa might have been happy to keep going with apartheid' (Johannesburg interview 081232). This was a common view and not far from the view that some claim Mandela had throughout. Mandela put it this way: 'the aim of a people's war was not to "win", but gradually through a process of attrition to bring the government to a realization that we could not be defeated and the government could not win' (quoted in Ellis 2012: 284). The Mandela analysis might cause us to give less weight to the Chenoweth and Stephan (2011) results and more weight to the Lyall and Wilson (2009) study which concluded that 75 per cent of violent insurgencies since 1976 succeeded. The big difference between the Lyall and Wilson results and Chenoweth and Stephan can be almost totally explained by the fact that the former count cases that were stalemates as successes for insurgencies; 48 per cent of the cases in the Lyall and Wilson data were stalemates.

Analyses of the ANC's Interlocutors

Multinational Miners, the Broederbond, the National Intelligence Service

Willie Esterhuysen also saw the shift of Soviet pressure from war to peace as decisive. He felt Thabo Mbeki was more crucial to the outcome than Mandela because it was Mbeki who understood first the changes that were under way in the 1980s in the Soviet Union and 'was able to outflank and outwit his own hawks' (Cape Town Interview 081230). Peace in Angola, where the ANC had bases, was a critical step, with a trilateral peace agreement between Angola, South Africa and Cuba, signed in December 1988.

Yet Willie Esterhuysen agreed with his ANC adversaries that a settlement was only possible because both sides feared a 'scorched earth outcome' where whoever picked up the pieces in South Africa might have few pieces to pick up. He said his side and the ANC negotiators spoke openly to each other about their shared fears of a scorched earth outcome, a fear constituted by the spectre of armed violence. At the same time, he utterly rejected the view a PAC leader expressed to him that had there been 'more blood on the streets', the resistance would have won a better settlement, which was less of an economic sell-out. In contrast, the Broederbond view was had there been more blood on the streets there would have been no containing of the ultra-right militias and the hawks of the National Party, who would have returned the state to the military option, the torture, the tyranny. So Esterhuysen's interesting account of Mbeki and Mandela as leaders is that they were the leaders who delivered peace because they could prevent this blood on the street from not only the armed wing of the ANC but also from the PAC, AZAPO and the IFP.

Willie Esterhuysen was a university professor and prominent member of the Broederbond until he resigned in 1987 so he could be independent in the peace negotiations. The Broederbond was an influential Afrikaner organization, a think tank that had conceived the idea of apartheid and much of its architecture. Esterhuysen was a critical early mover among the Afrikaans elite to engage in second track peace talks with the ANC (Esterhuysen 2012: 21). Mediator Michael Young believes he was the key mediator on the Afrikaner side. Esterhuysen argues that the worries of companies like Consolidated Goldfields and Anglo American about the deteriorating conditions of capital formation in South Africa persuaded them to approach the intellectual leadership of the Broederbond as they initiated second track talks with ANC leaders that by 1987¹³ included Oliver Tambo, Thabo Mbeki and Jacob Zuma. Michael Young of Consolidated Goldfields was approached by Oliver Tambo to act as a bridge after the journalist Anthony Sampson had invited Young with many other business leaders in London to a meeting to hear the perspective of the ANC leadership. International business leaders, including George Soros, Standard Bank Chairman Lord Barber, RioTinto's Sir Alistair Frame and Evelyn de Rothschild ultimately attended the London track two talks funded by Consolidated Goldfields. Anglo American Chairman Gavin Relly had made an early move on this dialogue in talks with the ANC leadership group in Lusaka in September 1985. Broederbond chairman, Pieter de Lange, who had led his organization to the more liberal position that Esterhuysen and others were able to build upon, had his first informal meeting with Thabo Mbeki in 1986.

At the same time as the secret Consolidated Goldfields diplomacy that was led by Michael Young, who had been an advisor to former British Conservative Party Prime Ministers, front stage IDASA (Institute for a Democratic Alternative in South Africa) talks were led by Frederik Van Zyl Slabbert and Alex Boraine in Dakar, Senegal between the ANC and 61 white South African leaders. Van Zyl Slabbert and a few others had also been meeting with the ANC backstage in Lusaka since 1984 (Esterhuysen 2012:

¹³ Later, there were other important public dialogues between whites and the ANC leadership. For example in July 1989 the Five Freedoms Forum, which was an anti-apartheid organization that was not affiliated with the United Democratic Front took 115 respected South Africans, including white business leaders, for talks with leaders of the still banned ANC in Lusaka. The Five Freedoms Forum played a useful role in broadening opposition to apartheid in the white community, as the middle class white women of Black Sash and other such organizations had done in previous decades.

36). According to Esterhuysen (2012: 33), the South African National Intelligence Service (NIS) under Niel Barnard was also quietly ahead of the business-led developments, and had been preparing papers on step-by-step peace negotiations with Mandela since 1984. My own interviews, including with senior members of the NIS of that time, confirmed this. NIS did not keep President PW Botha fully informed of the way it was keeping the door open to talks about talks with Mandela from 1984. Likewise the Foreign Service had an approach of keeping the door open for the politicians to walk through when they were ready for reconciliation with the ANC (and therefore with the international community (Foreign Service interviews; see also Wolvaardt et al (2010)). The first of 48 meetings Niel Barnard had with Mandela (greatly facilitated by his Deputy at NIS Mike Louw) occurred in Pollsmoor Prison in 1988, though the first meetings with Mandela were by Minister for Justice, Police and Prisons Henrik Jacobus Coetsee (Sparks 1996). Government insiders from that time had different views on how helpful the front stage IDASA talks were, while overwhelmingly agreeing that the secret talks with a tiny number of top ANC leaders around Mandela (such as Walter Sisulu) and Tambo (notably Mbeki) were more important. As mediator Michael Young from Consolidated Goldfields put it: 'The political class anywhere in the world plays to the gallery on short-term issues', and 'play to their respective constituencies' so a secret process is needed for a long term transformation. In a secret process where no one is playing to the gallery, he remarked that it is also possible 'to get them to start to behave as South Africans together'.

One former top NIS official said: 'An intelligence service if run properly is in the best position to guarantee a secret process.' After PW Botha began to walk through the door NIS and his Foreign Service had opened for him, he began saying to NIS, 'When am I going to be able to inform Cabinet?' The reply he got was 'Even if you threaten to hang Pik Botha [the Foreign Minister] from the highest tree . . . he is going to say to his friends at the *Washington Post* or *New York Times* "We are talking to Mandela. Hurrah. Just as I have been advocating we should do for so long."' FW de Klerk did not know of the dozens of structured talks NIS had co-ordinated with Mandela and the other ANC leaders until he became President, though he knew of the Broederbond talks because his brother participated in their later rounds. Knowledge of the intelligence-led talks emboldened de Klerk to walk through those doors in a dramatic way.

NIS head Niel Barnard in fact had his finger on the pulse of both the prison talks with Mandela and the business and Broederbond talks from the beginning. He approached Willie Esterhuysen to inform him of what was happening at the latter talks so he could pass on relevant aspects of their progress to President PW Botha. Esterhuysen agreed on condition that Thabo Mbeki agreed, which he did because he was pleased to have this deniable indirect communication channel to the President via Esterhuysen and Barnard (Sparks 1996: 78; Harvey 2001). In turn, Mandela's lawyer George Bizos kept Oliver Tambo informed of Mandela's talks with Barnard, closing the loop across a round robin of two sets of indirect proximity talks. Mandela received more limited feedback on how the talks with the exiles were going. To Mandela's great credit, he achieved a winning negotiated outcome while Barnard not only knew in detail what the exiled ANC leaders were saying to Esterhuysen; he also knew from NIS bugging what the ANC leaders were saying to one another in their private conversations.

Michael Young, the Consolidated Goldfields mediator, believed Barnard was at first trying to play a game of divide and rule between the NIS-led talks with Mandela and the talks Young was convening with the exiled leadership. This was also the deep fear of the ANC leaders in exile, that Mandela might be drugged and pushed into a deal that marginalized Tambo and Mbeki as terrorist communist allies. If this was an option Barnard kept open early on, he abandoned it in favour of a full and genuine national reconciliation.

De Klerk's National Party Inner Circle

I did not succeed in securing a sit down interview with President FW de Klerk himself. He referred me to Dave Steward, de Klerk's Chief of Staff from his time as President (currently executive director of the FW de Klerk Foundation) who was interviewed. Subsequently I spoke briefly with de Klerk at the dinner of a conference at which we both spoke to check a few of the things Steward had asserted on his behalf. I also interviewed the Defence Minister in the de Klerk government, Roelf Meyer. Key players interviewed agreed that Meyer stood alongside Barnard and Louw of NIS and Fanie Van der Merwe, head of the Department of Justice, as important negotiators of the peace on the government side. This was particularly because of Roelf Meyer's negotiations with Cyril Ramaphosa when the multi-party talks of the Convention for a Democratic South Africa collapsed in the face of escalating violence in 1992. It complemented the vital Peace Accord 'brokered by faith, business and civil society, [which] was the major peace intervention when South Africa was on the verge of more blood on the streets' (Willie Esterhuysen email 28 June, 2013). The views of the National Party inner circle are mainly illustrated with quotes from the Meyer and Steward interviews, but also with quotes from Foreign Minister Pik Botha and the analysis of de Klerk himself as expressed in his autobiography (De Klerk 1998).

Both these key interview informants saw value in retrospect in the IDASA dialogues, without seeing that kind of public dialogue as a viable path to the kind of secret settlement that was ultimately achieved. They saw the secret negotiations as overwhelmingly the main game. Even though President PW Botha (and FW de Klerk when his brother first informed him of them) took a dim view of the secret talks initially, then a posture of cautious endorsement that left open the option of disowning them, before they ultimately embraced them, the secret dialogues of the business leaders, the Broederbond and the NIS were all highly valued in retrospect. The entire National Party leadership came to believe that these talks did indeed open doors that de Klerk should walk through.

They did not see the ANC as posing any serious military threat to the state. Dave Steward said the 1986 State of Emergency was effective in breaking what had been until then a general belief among the ANC that a stage-by-stage revolutionary overthrow of the government was possible or inevitable. Terror tactics by the ANC, particularly necklacing of suspected black informers, were seen on the National Party side as setting back the ANC cause in terms of international support and white support domestically, and even some support from middle class blacks.

On the other hand, state violence after it declared a State of Emergency in July 1985, and a second more savage one in June 1986, alienated support for it from these same international and national constituencies (Price 1991: 250). Secret hit squads assassinated many leaders of the uprising; 34,000 were detained (Beinart 2001: 265; Ellis 2007). IFP violence in the 1990s even more decisively destroyed IFP's international standing and its viability as a power-sharing partner with the National Party for future electoral competition with the ANC. Consistent with the Chenoweth and Stephan (2011) findings, for all the major parties – the ANC, IFP, the National Party, the white extremist radical flank of the National Party – their moments of high profile embrace of violent tactics such as assassinations were the moments they decisively lost political ground, while their bold moves toward nonviolent political negotiations were when they won international (and ultimately national) legitimacy and three Nobel Peace Prizes.

Steward rejected the view of Broederbond leaders that fear of a military scorched earth motivated the peace process, even if fear of an economic scorched earth did. Until 1989, the National Party ethos was similar to that evident in Israel-Palestine today – ANC violence must attract escalation in retaliatory state violence. Foreign Minister from 1977-1994 Pik Botha put it this way:

Whenever bomb attacks were launched, landmines triggered, and innocents died, throughout the country there was only one reaction: 'exterminate the vermin'. Go and read the editorial comment in *Rapport*, *Die Burger*, *Die Volksblad*, *Die Vaderland*, *Die Transvaler* and *Die Beeld*. Go and read the articles of Dawie in *Die Burger*, Pollux in *Rapport* and Lood se Praatjies in *Beeld*. Go and read even the opinion pages in the *Sunday Times* and some other English-speaking newspapers about the murders that were being perpetrated by ANC terrorists on innocent civilians. There was a broad sweep of unanimity: 'eliminate the vermin'.

The Police and Defence Force budgets were approved in parliament after long discussions of members insisting that the terrorists had to be destroyed, that the Communists had to be stopped with force and violence. No guidelines were laid down as to which methods needed to be used. The only rule was that they had to be destroyed: that they had to be eliminated. How were the police and the army supposed to handle these calls and demands? How were they to interpret them?¹⁴

While Roelf Meyer in his interview was unsure whether it was a tactical mistake of the ANC to move to armed struggle from 1961, given the limited choices they then faced, Steward was firmly of the view that it was a mistake and de Klerk himself confirmed that Steward spoke for him in expressing that view. De Klerk believes the ANC would have made more progress more quickly than it did after 1960 by persisting with nonviolent resistance. The progress that he thinks would have moved faster was winning over majority white South African opinion to the view 69 per cent of the white electorate expressed in de Klerk's referendum of March 17, 1992 (which Steward and Meyer saw as a bold and brilliant de Klerk contribution). The referendum result pulled the rug out from under the reactionary right and their armed wings when the white electorate voted for Constitutional transformation.

¹⁴ P. 46 from Pik Botha files in the archives cited at note 3.

The National Party was an elected government, albeit of a whites only electorate. White electors by the mid-1980s were finding it distasteful to live in a society of constant oppression, torture and assassination by the security forces. There was discomfort at being constantly surrounded by violence. Growing numbers of young white men were resisting conscription to fight wars in the front line states and many of their families were supporting them. Professor R. Green (quoted in Baines 2008: 216) concluded that the official death rate among white soldiers in South Africa's border wars of the 1970s and 80s, expressed as a proportion of all white South Africans, was three times that of US losses in Vietnam, though the opposition never reached the level of opposition to the Vietnam war in the United States. In my interviews, including those with National Party figures, it was clear that international travel was affecting middle class white South Africans. Some were leaving the country; many craved a new South Africa that would win international acceptance as a country that rejected racism and was liberal. The all-white congregations of the Dutch Reformed Mission Church, which had been such a bulwark of apartheid, were also increasingly under the influence of reforming, nonviolent anti-apartheid church leaders. UDF leader Alan Boesak was elected President of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches in 1982. In 1986 the Dutch Reformed Mission Church adopted (after some modifications) the Belhar Confession against discrimination. Pik Botha put poetically the seismic shift in white attitudes this way. It is quoted at length because it shows how progressives like Pik Botha and Mandela were able together to forge a shared new narrative of the history of oppression in South Africa:

The turning point in the negotiations of 1990-1994 was the National Party's acknowledgement that its policy was inhuman and repugnant and the ANC's acknowledgement that the continuation of violence would devastate the country. And together we realised that we needed each other in order to enable all our people to progress . . .

We South Africans have forefathers with a history of wars, crushings and oppression. . . Like the other peoples of Africa and the world, the Afrikaner has also yearned for freedom, security, and the right to govern ourselves. The Afrikaner people embarked on the Great Trek, choosing to embrace the dangers and uncertainties of pioneer life and the freedom it promised, rather than submit to imperial domination. They fought for that freedom through numerous battles against overwhelming odds, at a time when Africa was being colonized. During the Anglo-Boer War they captured the imagination of the world, defending their freedom against the mightiest colonial power of the day, in what became Africa's first liberation war. The Afrikaner became Africa's first liberation movement.

They lost that war. They paid a heavy price. The Afrikaner dreamt of a republic in which he could be free and independent and secure; where their nationalism and aspirations could find full expression, and where they could determine their own future. Their poets expressed their visions and fears, their shortcomings and hopes, in their own language. They clustered themselves around their poverty, their language, their churches, their schools and their farms. The dream of their own republic was realized in 1961. The emotional yearning of their people had finally brought forth a sovereign state they could call their own Republic. Their dream

became a nightmare because apartheid was embedded in the foundation. The denial of human rights to their black compatriots robbed the dream of all morality. The inevitability of economic integration completed the demolition.

In a painful sense the whites became apartheid's victims, the Afrikaner more so than anybody else. We who had fought so hard, and paid such a terrible price for our own freedom, failed to realize that we could not truly be free until every South African could share that freedom with us. In addition, it became clear that the continuation of apartheid would plunge our country into devastation. This realization, which had grown over the years in some of the ranks of the NP, firmly took root on 15 August 1989 when FW de Klerk was sworn in as Acting State President the day after PW Botha resigned.

The National Party government's and the ANC's first historical meeting took place between 2 and 4 May 1990 at Groote Schuur. To this day I remain deeply impressed by Mandela's opening address. He displayed a remarkably thorough knowledge of the history of the Afrikaner, referring to the pain and sorrow of the Anglo-Boer war: 28 000 women and children who died in concentration camps. Boer soldiers returning to graves and ruined farms. The ensuing poverty of the Afrikaner and his harrowing feeling of having been wronged. The enormous suffering of the Afrikaner he could understand. But, what he could not understand, he said, was why the Afrikaner when he started recovering from his devastation, why he didn't reach out to his fellow black South Africans who were equally impoverished, degraded and subjugated. Mandela delivered this statement without rancour or enmity. This came from a man who had experienced suffering in prison for 27 years. He posed a question to us which has haunted me ever since.¹⁵

A defence budget that was spiraling out of control was a factor in the bedrock analysis of the National Party elite, which was that they could tough it out militarily with the ANC, but only at massive cost to the South African economy. In the 1980s defence expenditure became 17-20 per cent of the budget, up from 6 per cent in 1960 (Beinart 2001: 263). Dave Steward did not see defence expenditure as a pressure on the government, questioning the foregoing figures, and did not see sanctions as effective. Like Foreign Service officers I interviewed, he felt that the state and South African business had put in place very effective regimes to circumvent sanctions (such as persuading oil tanker owners to fill out false declarations that directed sanctions enforcement against those who complied with the sanctions regime!). Sanctions were greatly feared in anticipation, yet the economic cost was fairly modest in the event. There were even cases of South African firms seizing opportunities to buy out disinvesting international firms at bargain prices, snapping up rights to continue selling their brands in South Africa. Steward saw sanctions as politically counterproductive in that they led to stronger political support for the isolationist forces of the right in the National Party. The Apartheid regime was not monolithic: 'Boycotts strengthened the hearing that reactionaries got on our side of politics'. Steward's analysis is that it is hard for sanctions to be effective with regimes that see themselves as facing an existential threat.

¹⁵ P. 46, 48 from Pik Botha files in the archives cited at note 3.

International pressure was important, nevertheless. Senior National Party leaders wanted to see South Africa normalize its relationship with the rest of the world, particularly because that would improve the investment climate. Chase Manhattan Bank declined to roll over South African loans in 1985. This important moment was less a sanction than a business judgment that political risk made South Africa an unattractive destination for lending. Many other banks followed this lead, endangering job creation (Adam and Moodley 1993: 55). As Adam and Moodley (1993: 55) put it, 'Hardly any public utterance by a business executive failed to point to a political settlement and a climate of optimism as preconditions for economic growth.' Former state power brokers of that era also joked in interviews that they had truly wanted to beat Australia at cricket and rugby again.

More fundamentally, the de Klerk cabinet came to the view that apartheid was economically unsustainable in the long run for reasons that were internal and deeply structural. They came to believe the country had faced an acute shortage of skilled labour since the late 1970s (combined with an oversupply of unskilled labour). In reality, this had been a critical problem for much longer, with apartheid laws creating many different obstacles to the majority of the population acquiring the labour market skills the economy needed. There was no choice but to radically expand education and training to the black population if South Africa was to build a modern competitive economy.

Universities, not great universities, but not bad universities were established in black homelands. In 1980 there were 29,000 black matriculants and 49,000 white ones. By 1994 the black number was over 200,000 and the white number 60,000. All this in turn shaped white attitudes (Dave Steward interview 081213, 2012).

Along with higher wages to go with higher skills, the economy needed more demand creation from spending by the black majority. Businesses understood this when they refused demands by some whites to stem the influx of black shoppers into white towns (Deegan 2001: 44). These were the terms in which the National Party leadership interpreted why economic growth rates in the 1980s averaged less than a third of the average for the first three decades of apartheid (a more sustained decline than other nations experienced in the 1980s). So for internal as well as global economic reasons, the National Party leadership during the 1980s acquired a policy preference for dismantling apartheid, or much of it.

We need each other to bring an end to the violence. We need each other in order to govern this country successfully in a way that will attract investments and trade. We need each other in order to provide better education, housing and medical facilities for our lesser developed communities and the disadvantaged in our country. In short, we need each other in order to survive, to make progress and to prosper. Yes, we need each other to ensure and sustain democracy in this country (Pik Botha, p. 88, archives cited at note 3).

But 'there was fear of chaos' (Steward interview). There was particular fear of the South African Communist Party alliance with the ANC. Steward and de Klerk believed the alliance subscribed to a classic two-phase revolutionary theory; national liberation would allow a communist vanguard into the

citadel to move on to establish a communist society. This indeed was the analysis that South African Communist Party leaders had adopted from Lenin in the 1960s via their visits to the Soviet Union. The Communists in the ANC had persuaded most of the ANC leadership to this analysis (Ellis 2012).¹⁶ Defence Minister Roelf Meyer pointed out that Mandela had a worry about his enemy's control of the citadel that paralleled the National Party's fears. The ANC

feared a coup and underestimated the professionalism of the Defence leadership in this regard. I took over Defence with the job of persuading them to go with the transition. The chief was absolutely professional and agreed when I said that he and his people would make the military decisions but I would set the political direction. He agreed he would follow my political directions (Meyer interview).

The National Party worry was that communists would turn the security forces against National Party loyalists and wealthy white South Africans more broadly. 'The world was shouting at white South Africa to get off the tiger. But we were worried if we did that we would be eaten' (Steward interview).

Perestroika in the Soviet Union reduced this fear. National Party leaders also perceived this as greatly reducing the South African Communist Party grip on the ANC. Now when Mbeki and Mandela said they were social democrats, ministers believed they meant it. Now when they said that they did not want to win through military means, because their former funder was no longer pushing them along the path of armed struggle, at least Mbeki and Mandela were believed on this score. The Soviet change of policy of calling for a peaceful settlement in Angola and Namibia, and the withdrawal of Cuban troops from the region, that came to pass in a reasonably peaceful fashion, was also important to reducing de Klerk's fear of being eaten if whites dismounted the apartheid tiger. 'If SWAPO had won militarily [in Namibia] there would have been no 1990' (Steward interview). Foreign Minister Pik Botha put it this way:

In the case of Mozambique, we signed the Nkomati Accord in 1984, which marginally stabilised that front. The ANC regarded it as a serious setback. But in Angola the war continued and escalated. And in South Africa, too, the tension and conflict grew. It became clear to me that we must end the war in Angola in order to deal with the situation in South Africa. In December 1988, South Africa, Cuba and Angola signed a trilateral agreement that provided for the independence of Namibia and the withdrawal of Cuban troops. This led immediately to a

¹⁶ Now we know there had been a two-step turn away from this classic Leninist revolutionary position by the South African Communist Party itself, and as a result by those large elements of the ANC influenced by their analysis. In 1978, Oliver Tambo, Joe Slovo and other ANC leaders visited Vietnam. Slovo, the ANC's senior strategist, was greatly influenced by the counsel of the legendary leader of Vietnam's anti-colonial struggle against France, General Giap, that political struggle should be the basis of armed struggle and not vice versa. Slovo wrote that the ANC had been heading 'ass backward' with a 'militarist illusion'. From then on 'armed propaganda' was to be spectacular sabotage attacks that would attract political supporters; it did not need thousands of recruits; it needed 'a constant supply of heroes to show it was in business' (Ellis 2012: 123, 287). The second step was progressive conversion of Slovo and most elements of the leadership to the belief after 1986 that military prospects of victory were hopeless but that there was enough international support to give a negotiated settlement a chance of success.

reduction of the tension and conflict in southern Africa which opened the way for the release of Mandela and the beginning of negotiations with the ANC on a new constitutional dispensation for South Africa (Pik Botha, p. 45, archives cited at footnote 3).

De Klerk also took heart from Namibia in a different way. While their former enemy, SWAPO, won the post-conflict election, in barely six months SWAPO support fell from over 70 per cent to 55 per cent thanks to covert funding of opposition parties, funding covert media organizations, funding gangs that intimidated voters and other covert measures (Ellis 2007: 283). The polls available to de Klerk in 1989 indicated much lower ANC support than 70 per cent. In a protracted transition, some National Party strategists believed the Namibia tactics could be even more effective in South Africa. Some influential ministers and de Klerk believed that a right-of-centre alliance might be led by the National Party with support from IFP, disaffected homeland leaders, and other minor parties to push the ANC vote below 50 per cent (Sparks 1996: 125; Ellis 2007: 283). De Klerk hoped his own bold peacemaking and bringing the ANC's socialism into the open might switch international support and domestic white liberal support from the ANC to him (Sparks 1996: 125). Dave Steward disagreed with this, arguing de Klerk had no illusions that around 30 per cent of the vote was the best he could hope for.

De Klerk looked critically at the failed gradualist path PW Botha had taken in the face of the above realities. Steward felt that Botha's 1979 'adapt or die' policy of doing the easy bits of dismantling apartheid first showed that PW Botha 'was not I think a student of de Tocqueville'. This was a reference to de Tocqueville's assessment that 'The most dangerous moment for a bad government is when it begins to reform' (de Tocqueville 1856: 214). President Botha had as early as 1979 (the year white rule was overthrown in Rhodesia by Robert Mugabe) warned the National Party that apartheid was a 'recipe for permanent conflict' and that 'the only alternative to revolution' was change (Price 1991: 28). As in Mbeki's Tocquevillian analysis (Esterhuysen 2012), PW Botha failed to see that gradually dripping out reforms accelerated revolutionary momentum. Consumer boycotts and rent strikes put the weakening economy under more pressure. By September 1986 an estimated 60 per cent of the black population was not paying rent (Zunes 1999: 156). Most importantly, unionization of black workers had taken off, with 6,000 shop stewards, mostly under 30 years of age, becoming a new generation of worker activists. Strikes doubled in 1980, doubling again by 1982 (Price 1991: 162). So De Klerk, as one of the conservatives of the National Party, was able to harness the pent up pressure in his caucus for transformational change. His inner leadership circle sees his great contribution (beyond the white referendum) as putting everything on the table at the outset in February, 1990. It was a complete transformational package because he did not want to be seen to be worn down step by step.

The Uses of Spoilers

We might reflect on these interviews to say that Mandela used the spectre of the PAC and AZAPO as spoilers to strengthen his hand in pushing back unreasonable negotiating demands (including the renunciation of the armed struggle) from the government. Conversely, the lead South African state negotiators used the spectre of the superior capacity for violence (compared to the ANC) of the ultra-

right militias that were rampant during the death throes of apartheid to push back untenable demands from the ANC (such as nationalization of the commanding heights of the economy). Without the spoilers we might question whether a peace deal that could have proved sustainable would have been negotiated. Contrary to Schock and Chenoweth, we might say that the violent radical flanks of both the right and the left made a contribution to ensuring that pragmatists occupying the middle ground reached a deal.

This is not a unique situation. In the Bougainville peace process at the end of a long civil war in Papua New Guinea, the majority faction of the Bougainville Revolutionary Army (BRA) who wanted peace used the spectre of Francis Ona's spoiler faction. The BRA peacemakers would strengthen their negotiating position by pointing to the risk of support flowing back to Ona as an armed spoiler (Regan 2010: 49-50).

Is there then anything we might say about a general theory of peacebuilding that is informed by this? One general observation might be that a commitment to nonviolence that is so total as to eschew using the leverage that violent spoilers can deliver can undermine the possibility of a nonviolent resolution. This need not undermine certain other general claims of the theory of nonviolence – including the empirically grounded claims of Chenoweth and Stephan that nonviolent struggle has a higher success rate than armed struggle and that use of violence to secure victory increases the risk that violence, militarism and authoritarianism will cascade across the politics of the successor regime (see also Braithwaite and D'Costa, 2012). This can leave in tact the counsel attributed to Mahatma Gandhi to 'be the change you wish to see in the world'.¹⁷

Spoilers are more often harnessed by violent political projects than by nonviolent ones. This is a critical point in the analysis of this paper. If the forces of violence are effectively harnessing spoilers and the forces of nonviolence are not, the forces of violence have a structural advantage in contests for power. The struggle for racial justice in South Africa was one profound incubus of the theory of nonviolence. Yet none of the most instructive figures of its nonviolent struggle were pacifists. Mandela may have been a deft practitioner of nonviolence, but he was no pacifist. Nobel Peace Prize winner Desmond Tutu is also on the record on various occasions that he was not a pacifist. Indeed Gandhi, who ran his first Satyagraha campaigns in South Africa, supported military victory over Germany and Japan in World War II and supported the deployment of Indian troops to push back the incursion of Pakistani fighters who sought to use armed force to overthrow Indian rule in Kashmir in 1947. The ethics of Gandhi, Tutu and Mandela¹⁸ were presumptively nonviolent, while being open to working in harness with radical flanks, which used violence.

¹⁷ Though this is a slick bumper sticker version of what Gandhi actually said. See <http://www.elephantjournal.com/2011/08/be-the-change-you-wish-to-see-in-the-world-not-gandhi/>: Viewed 25 June 2013.

¹⁸ For Mandela, this at least became more true over time. Early in the struggle Mandela may have shared the South African Communist Party analysis that a revolutionary armed struggle could ultimately overthrow the apartheid government. He was always, however, more a pragmatic nationalist than an ideological Marxist, and always took nonviolent politics seriously.

Imagine the counterfactual of a Mandela who renounced armed struggle as part of a peace deal that saw him released from prison. He might have lost the legitimacy of his leadership even within the ANC as a result, disintegrating the peace and the ANC. Successor leadership of the struggle might have come from a PAC or AZAPO that delivered escalating civil war across Southern Africa to this day. Imagining that counterfactual might help us to imagine a better normative theory. This could be that one does best to support political parties and leaders that are the most presumptively nonviolent in comparison to all the parties that have a realistic prospect of advancing justice in a particular context of struggle against extreme oppression. The ANC was that party in South Africa during the late apartheid era. Nelson Mandela was that leader.

Tweaking Schock and Chenoweth

Consistent with Chenoweth and Stephan and Schock and Chenoweth, this drill down into the South African case inside their data finds that strategy shifts to nonviolence were generally productive; shifts to armed struggle were generally counterproductive. However, at every turn from 1960 right up to the Meyer-Ramaphosa negotiations of 1992, radical flanks of both the right and left had large followings precisely because they were the hard-headed proponents of violence. Nonviolent negotiators of the middle ground, most particularly Mandela, Mbeki and de Klerk, had good reason to fear being stripped of their leadership if they had gone too far in denunciation of their radical flanks. Both sides therefore never flinched from homage to their armed wings. Both sides used the spectre of their armed wings to push the other to be more conciliatory. Both sides responded to these appeals, because at least to some degree, leaders on both sides feared that between them their armed wings could deliver a scorched earth to their beloved land.

In response to this experience of a flawed, pragmatic yet inspiring peace with improved justice, six propositions are advanced as possible lessons:

1. Because the evidence suggests that nonviolent resistance to tyranny is generally more effective than armed struggle, national and international solidarity networks should presumptively pour their support toward the nonviolent elements of resistance struggles.
2. Because a violent radical flank depletes mass mobilization and regime defections, solidarity networks should not hedge by providing support mainly to nonviolent mainstream resistance combined with lesser support for a violent flank.
3. Nonviolent movements to resist tyranny should cultivate nonviolent radical flanks that make more extreme demands to reduce tyranny. This nonviolent spoiling can shift the middle ground in negotiations that thereby go further toward dismantling tyranny.
4. When tyranny is confronted, the historical fact often remains that violent radical flanks exist. When they exist in desperate conditions, nonviolent leaders like Nelson Mandela have less legitimacy in the eyes of some followers than advocates of violence. The important objective is that the most nonviolent leader who has a serious chance of success prevails at the leadership of the resistance. Sometimes that will require that nonviolent leaders like Mandela and Tutu

refuse to renounce armed struggle, decline to denounce their violent radical flanks. Cultivating unity in a broad based coalition of resistance also argues for this.¹⁹

5. When a violent radical flank exists, nonviolent leaders are negligent if they do not strengthen their negotiation position by deploying the spectre of their violent radical flank as the alternative if the moderates walk out.
6. In summary, nonviolent resistance leaders and their international supporters
 - (a) Should cultivate the creation of radical flanks;
 - (b) Should not cultivate the creation of violent radical flanks;
 - (c) If violent radical flanks exist in spite of their opposition to them, they must be reluctant to cast them out of resistance coalitions;
 - (d) If violent radical flanks exist, moderates should serve the purposes of nonviolence and resistance to tyranny by willingness to invoke the spectre of violent spoilers.

¹⁹ This is what Desmond Tutu's South African Council of Churches did. A former executive director of the Council commented on the philosophy of many anti-apartheid Christian pacifists at that time: 'Though we understood that one can reach the point where violence is an option, so to do one was not a pacifist. There was no judgment on those who used violence, but their choice was for nonviolence'. (interview 081224).

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