

**A South African Diary:  
Contested Identity, My Family - Our Story**

**Part F:**

**1975 - 1986**

Compiled by:

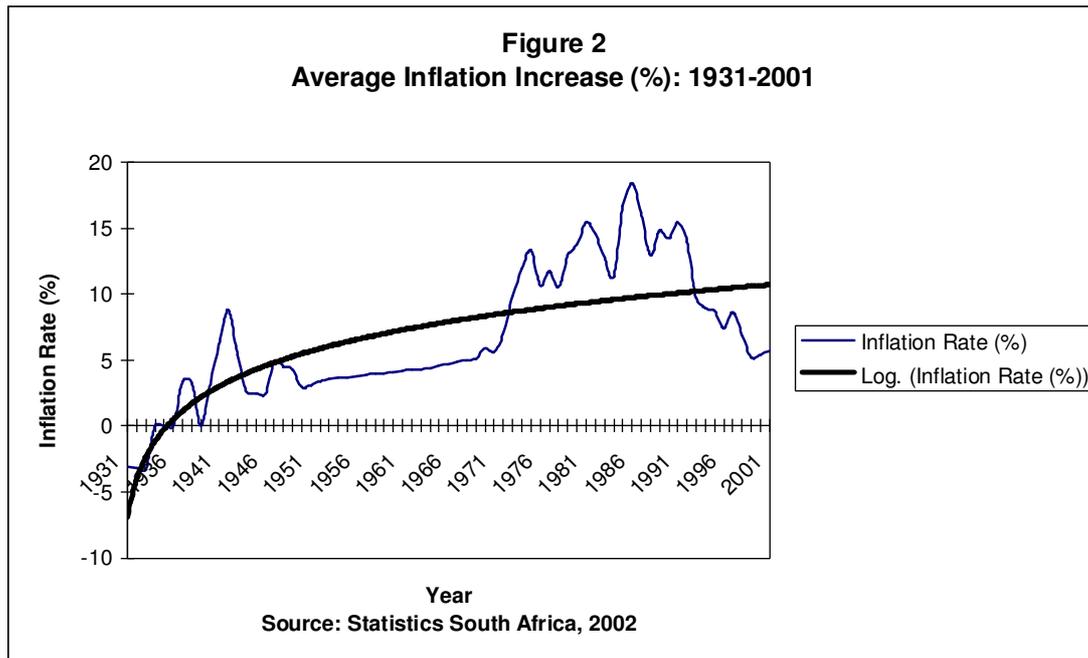
**Dr. Anthony Turton**  
tony@anthonyturton.com

**Caution in the use and interpretation of these data**

This document consists of events data presented in chronological order. It is designed to give the reader an insight into the complex drivers at work over time, by showing how many events were occurring simultaneously. It is also designed to guide future research by serious scholars, who would verify all data independently as a matter of sound scholarship and never accept this as being valid in its own right. Read together, they indicate a trend, whereas read in isolation, they become sterile facts devoid of much meaning. Given that they are “facts”, their origin is generally not cited, as a fact belongs to nobody. On occasion where an interpretation is made, then the commentator’s name is cited as appropriate. Where similar information is shown for different dates, it is because some confusion exists on the exact detail of that event, so the reader must use caution when interpreting it, because a “fact” is something over which no alternate interpretation can be given. These events data are considered by the author to be relevant, based on his professional experience as a trained researcher. **Own judgement must be used at all times. All users are urged to verify these data independently.** The individual selection of data also represents the author’s bias, so **the dataset must not be regarded as being complete.** The reader is strongly urged to do additional research before drawing conclusions, using this dataset merely as a guide of some known events. Images used in this document are from the public domain, unless otherwise noted, so copyright is not being claimed by the author. Andrew Charles Turton, my younger brother, is thanked for his work in sourcing the Turton genealogical data used in this text.

## 1975

1975 The **Portuguese Coup** changes the regional balance of power significantly. This draws South Africa into Mozambique and Angola, and the whole Southern African region becomes a theatre of the **Cold War**. ZIPRA move their forces from Mozambique into Rhodesia and the war becomes un-winnable from a Rhodesian perspective from this point onwards. In Angola, the MPLA become the Government as the **War of Liberation** leads to an indecisive conclusion. The MPLA decides to provide military support to **PLAN**, the armed wing of SWAPO. **Operation Savannah** is launched into Angola, significantly with Eland AFV's boosting the effectiveness of the three flying columns (**Foxbat, Orange & Zulu**). The long economic boom or period of the Midas touch ends and inflation starts to become a driver of instability in its own right (see Turton, 2009).



**Inflation trends in South Africa track political instability (Turton *et al.*, 2004:74). During periods when inflation is above average there are periods of acute political conflict (1938 – 1945 and 1975 – 1994). Periods of below average inflation coincide with relative stability. The “Midas Touch” or “Long Economic Boom” period is visible as a below average inflation period from the early 1950’s to 1975. (Source: Turton, 2009).**

1975 The **First Angolan Civil War** starts (to 1991). This sees Cuban soldiers being deployed into Southern Africa, which in turn escalates the local conflict as a theatre of the **Cold War** (See Turner, 1998).

1975 The total number of deaths in the SADF this year reported by Arm of Service is as follows: Army – 45 of which 19 are KIA; Air Force – 13 (none KIA); Navy – 3 (none KIA). During this year a total of 17 Honorus Crux medals are awarded for bravery (Stiff, in Ramsden, 2009).

1975 SADF (Eastern Province Command and 6 SAI) engage in **Exercise Spansaam**, which is a conventional warfare training event (Volker, 2010:372).

1975 Colonel Jan Breytenbach becomes the founding Officer Commanding **32 Battalion**, a position he holds until 1977 (Nortje, 2003:76).

1975 SWAPO establishes its first military training base in Zambia for the armed wing **PLAN** (Nortje, 2003:5).

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- 1975 **PLAN** attacks five SADF military bases in one day in order to announce their arrival as a military force. These are located at Ohauwanga, Epinga, Onambutu, Olufandenga & Oshikango (Volker, 2010:747). The commanders of the Epinga attack are Emmanuel Naivela, Kalunga kOndjafa & Kalola ?? (Volker, 2020:745).
- 1975 **SADF SF** (1-Para) launch a parachute assault at Luiana in S.E. Angola. Units used are 1 Platoon, A Company 1-Para (Volker, 2010:323).
- 1975 The **Mozambican Insurgency** starts (to 1992).
- 1975 Cuba becomes involved in Angola. By the time they leave in 1991, around 2,700 Cubans will have been killed in combat operations against South Africa and her surrogates.
- 1975 Breyten Breytenbach is captured during a bungled clandestine visit to South Africa. He is sentenced to 9 years imprisonment and loses all credibility in **Liberation Movement** circles when he makes a public apology for his “foolish” behaviour (Welsh, 2000:488).
- 1975 Military Intelligence Division (MID) of the SADF launch **Project Meulsteun** (Millstone) in conjunction with the CSIR and the South African Communications Security Agency (SACSA). The objective is the development of a sophisticated cryptographic capability. The exact date is not know but it is roughly at this time. The outcome is highly successful (Volker, 2010:637).
- 1/75 The **CIA** start to give covert support to the FNLA, ignoring UNITA. This prompts the USSR to step up support to the MPLA, which feeds into the **Cold War** dynamics already at play in the Southern African region.
- 5/1/75 A **Trilateral Accord** is signed in Angola between the MPLA, FNLA and the Portuguese Government to pave the way for negotiations on the transition of power in an independent Angola.
- 15/1/75 The **Alvor Accord** is signed in Portugal, which allows for elections in Angola and the establishment of a Constituent Assembly in October 1975. This calls for the establishment of an Angolan Defence Force to which each of the signatories would commit troops.
- 15/1/75 The **Alvor Agreement** between the Portuguese, FNLA, MPLA and UNITA creates a temporary peace, but instability is triggered when the MPLA is plunged into a leadership struggle between Agostinho Neto and Daniel Chipenda. This culminates when Chipenda leaves the MPLA, taking 2,000 well trained soldiers with him (Nortje, 2003:2).
- 22/1/75 The ZANLA dissidents under the command of Thomas Nhari (see 11/74 and 9/12/74) are tried by a ZANU tribunal headed by Herbert Chitepo and they are sentenced to death, thus ending what is known in ZANU circles as the **Nhari Rebellion**.
- 31/1/75 The **Transitional Government of Angola** is inaugurated.
- 2/75 During a number of skirmishes in Luanda, MPLA troops drive out loyalists of Chipenda’s “Easter Rebellion MPLA”, who go on to join up with the FNLA.
- 2/75 The Government of Lesotho attacks the South African Détente initiative, actively lobbying countries that are apparently sympathetic to South African diplomatic approaches, to rethink their position. This ups the ante between SA and Lesotho.
- 13/2/75 The MPLA launch a military attack against the Chipenda faction, killing 20 soldiers and driving the rest out of Luanda. Chipenda takes this faction and links up with the FNLA, becoming Deputy Secretary General of that movement (Nortje, 2003:2).

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28/2/75 An FNLA delegation approaches the South African embassy in London requesting support for weapons. They ask for 40 – 50 medium calibre artillery pieces plus ammunition (Nortje, 2003:3). **Note:** Photo by the author shows some of this materiel that is later captured and is now on display in Luanda at the Museu Central das Forças Armadas in Luanda.



3/75 The MPLA requests support from Cuba at a meeting held in Congo-Brazzaville. The Cubans respond initially by sending out instructors, who start to churn out soldiers at the rate of 2,000 a month by July the same year. This escalates the **Cold War** dynamics already at play in the region.

3/75 FNLA soldiers attack the MPLA in Luanda, as well as in Caxito.

3/75 Chipenda of the FNLA meets with senior officers of the SADF at Rundu. During this meeting Chipenda promises support for the SADF in operations against SWAPO in return for both funding and weapons. The deployment of 3,000 FNLA troops at Serpa Pinto, Ninda, **Cuito Cuanavale** and Luena, places them in control of southern Angola. This joint declaration of war against communist-forces makes the FNLA the first allies of the SADF (Nortje, 2003:4).

3/75 In an offensive lasting from 3/75 to 7/75, the FNLA field 15,000 troops against the MPLA's 6,000 and UNITA's 1,000. This makes the FNLA the dominant force at the time (Nortje, 2003:4). (**Note:** This balance of force must be understood by the reader because it plays a role in decision-making in Pretoria at this time of great instability and political uncertainty).

16/3/75 Herbert Chitepo tells Kenneth Kaunda that he fears for his life. Thirty-six hours later he is killed by a bomb blast in his car. Josiah Tongogara flees to Mozambique where he is later captured and tried for this assassination.

4/75 The American forces in Saigon are given a humiliating lesson when they are forced unceremoniously out of Vietnam. This sets the global scene for subsequent American threat perceptions in Africa during the **Cold War**.

4/75 Cuban forces enter Angola as perceived Russian proxies. This feeds into the American threat perception heightened by their defeat in Vietnam. **Cold War** dynamics are given a boost as a result of this as Southern Africa is set to become a theatre of the **Cold War** that gets hot (see Turton, 2008).

4/75 President Kenneth Kaunda of Zambia raises his concern about the scale of Soviet military support in Angola during a meeting held with President Gerald Ford and Secretary of State Henry Kissinger in Washington, USA. Kaunda suggests that the USA should consider giving more support to both FNLA and UNITA. This escalates the **Cold War** dynamics already at play in the region.

16/4/75 FRELIMO puts a few hundred political dissidents on public display to discourage dissent in the country. Amnesty International later goes on to investigate the ultimate fate of these people, many who are never heard of again.

28/4/75 Heavy fighting occurs in Luanda between the FNLA and MPLA leaving around 700 dead.

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- 29/4/75 The Israeli Embassy in Fox Street is laid siege by David Protter. The Reconnaissance Commando is called in but major problems arise from confusion regarding the chain of command. 2 **Reconnaissance Commando** fire shots unnecessarily escalating the crisis, which is eventually resolved when General Hendrik van der Bergh of BOSS is given overall command by the Prime Minister. This raises tensions between BOSS and SF and illustrates the need to develop a specific capability for this type of situation.
- 5/75 The Portuguese Army is unable to stem heavy fighting between FNLA and MPLA in Cuanza Norte, Malanje and Cabinda (Nortje, 2003:4).
- 30/5/75 This is the final date given by the UN Security Council for South Africa to end all of its existing policies in South-West Africa (Namibia) so as to allow that state to become independent.
- 6/75 Intelligence reports from Luanda suggest around 6,000 people had been killed in various skirmishes. Various foreign embassies start to withdraw their personnel in response to the deteriorating security situation in Angola.
- 6/75 A delegation of Portuguese businessmen meets with John Vorster, requesting South African intervention in Angola to prevent the slide into anarchy. Vorster vacillates as more intelligence is gathered on the *bona fides* of the delegation.
- 6/75 **Operation Polo** sees SAAF aircrew being posted to Rhodesia with the intention of bolstering the limited offensive capability of the Rhodesian Air Force.
- 16/6/75 A meeting is held in Kenya in an attempt to get MPLA, FNLA and UNITA to reconcile their differences.
- 21/6/75 The **Nakuru Peace Pact** is signed by the MPLA, FNLA and UNITA. This event fails to stop fighting on the ground in Angola and skirmishes continue.
- 26/6/75 **PLAN** engages in a major battle at the Omakutu village in Angola. The commander is Aluteni Ashipala Naita (Volker, 2010:745).
- 7/75 The Portuguese Army is withdrawn from the **Ruacana Hydropower Scheme** at **Calueque**, leaving the engineering crews fearful of their lives as UNITA and FNLA soldiers take over their positions.
- 7/75 The FNLA ask South Africa for assistance in late July.
- 8/7/75 Odinga Odinga, the FNLA Commander in the Cuando Cubango province of Angola, asks the SADF for assistance in the fighting taking place with the MPLA. He promises the deployment of his 300-strong garrison based at Mpupa against SWAPO. He informs Brigadier Dawie Schoeman, **OC 1 Military Area**, that the MPLA is slowly driving the FNLA out of their strongholds in southern Angola (see 5/8/75) (Nortje, 2003:4).
- 9/7/75 The MPLA and FNLA have another skirmish in Luanda.
- 12/7/75 The MPLA gain the upper hand in Luanda when they destroy the FNLA garrison, driving Holden Roberto's forces into a defensive position at São Pedro da Barra (Nortje, 2003:4).
- 18/7/75 An FNLA counter-offensive in Luanda sees heavy fighting with the MPLA in Salazar, Malanje, Henrique de Carvalho and Sá da Bandeira (Nortje, 2003:4).
- 20/7/75 The MPLA evict FNLA from Luanda after a series of bloody skirmishes. This raises concerns within UNITA that they will also be targeted. UNITA request a guarantee of safe passage and a convoy of around 160 – 200 trucks departs from Luanda. This convoy is later ambushed in Dondo and the entire group is massacred, leaving less than 20 survivors. This

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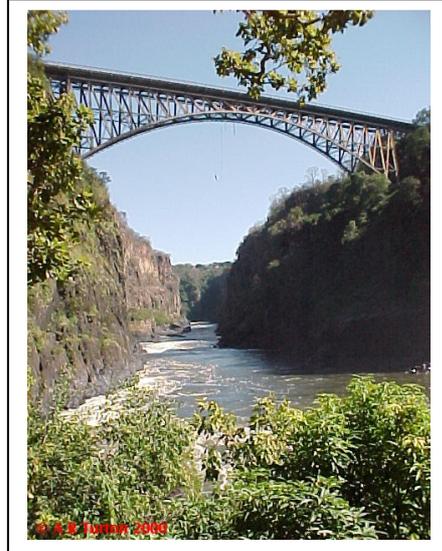
sends a signal that peace is improbable given the absence of any form of tolerance for “the enemy”. The die is thus cast for full-scale war in Angola.

- 24/7/75 The FNLA recapture the town of Caxito 60-km north of Luanda, but they fail to regain control of Luanda. The MPLA is now better armed, trained and organized than the FNLA and the balance of force shifts in their favour from this time as they systematically capture the towns of Lobito, Benguela, Moçâmedes, Pereira D’Eca and Luso. This places them in a strong position to launch future attacks against UNITA (Nortje, 2003:4).
- 8/75 A convoy of around 4,000 refugees makes its way from Angola to Oshakati in SWA.
- 8/75 By the end of August, the MPLA is in control of 11 of the 16 district capitals (Nortje, 2003:9).
- 1/8/75 UNITA formally declares war on the MPLA (Nortje, 2003:2) (see also 21/8/75 for an alternative date).
- 5/8/75 Brigadier Dawie Schoeman, OC **1 Military Area** despatches Commandant Philip du Preez to Pretoria with a request that the weapons requested by the FNLA (see 8/7/75) be urgently despatched to Mpupa (Nortje, 2003:4).
- 8/8/75 A UNITA soldier fails to allow a South African engineer to visit the **Ruacana Hydropower Scheme**. Ten other South African engineers are held against their will. This raises alarm bells in South Africa.
- 10/8/75 SADF occupies **Calueque** in order to protect SA interests in the **Ruacana Hydropower Scheme** in the face of the deteriorating security situation.
- 10/8/75 **SADF SF** (1-Para) engage in a border skirmish at Ruacana in Southern Angola. Units involved are 1 Platoon, A Company 1-Para (Volker, 2010:323).
- 16/8/75 The Portuguese High Commissioner in Angola makes a public statement that in view of the deteriorating security situation he is assuming executive control in an attempt to arrest the onset of anarchy.
- 20/8/75 Tiny Rowland of LONRHO facilitates a meeting between the **CIA** (John Stockwell) and Jonas Savimbi at Silva Porto. This meeting is pivotal because it enables Stockwell to assess UNITA and leads to future **CIA** support, which had not been planned until then, with the **CIA** favouring FNLA instead.
- 21/8/75 UNITA officially declares war on the MPLA (see also 1/8/75 for an alternative date).
- 21/8/75 UNITA allies itself with FNLA against the MPLA (Nortje, 2003:8).
- 21/8/75 **SADF SF** (1-Para) engage in a border skirmish at Santa Clara. Units involved are C Company, 1-Para (Volker, 2010:323).
- 22/8/75 **SADF SF** (1-Para) launch **Operation Sausage**, in support of 2-SAI, with the objective of clearing a 20-km wide strip north of the SAW/Angolan border of SWAPO insurgents. The area of operations includes Namacunde, Oihole, Ohaido and Pereira d’Eça. SF units involved are C Company, 1-Para under the overall command of Brigadier Dawie Schoeman (Volker, 2010:323). This operation ends on 29/8/75.

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- 25/8/75 Kenneth Kaunda of Zambia meets John Vorster of South Africa on the Victoria Falls Bridge after a lengthy build-up to this Détente initiative. The photo shows the rather dramatic setting of the Victoria Falls Bridge.
- 26/8/75 During **Operation Sausage**, a major offensive is launched from TAC HQ at Etale by Brigadier Dawie Schoeman. The results are 45-55 MPLA KIA, 1 SADF KIA, 1 SADF wounded, 54 MPLA POW (Volker, 2010:323). This operation ends on 29/8/75.
- 28/8/75 **Operational Order 8/75** is signed by the South African Minister of Defence PW Botha after he completes a fact-finding tour of the Operational Area (see 5/8/75). This authorizes support to the FNLA to halt the advance of the MPLA, which is seen as a precursor of a full-scale conventional attack against South West Africa (Nortje, 2003:5).
- 29/8/75 Commandant Jan Breytenbach of **SADF SF** sets out developing a training program for the FNLA (Nortje, 2003:8).
- 29/8/75 **Operation Sausage** run by **SADF SF** (1-Para), in support of 2-SAI, comes to an end (Volker, 2010:323).
- 30/8/75 Commandant Jan Breytenbach flies to Mpupa in Angola in a Piper Aztec piloted by Major Coen Upton, Pelisa (brother-in-law of Daniel Chipenda) and an Italian who had a game farm near Mpupa. The objective of this trip is to determine what SADF support is needed for the FNLA (Nortje, 2003:13).
- 9/75 Ivory Coast relays a message to John Vorster requesting SA military intervention in Angola. This is significant because Vorster's Détente initiative is designed to engage moderate African states so this request is taken seriously.
- 9/75 **Operation Focus** launched by **SADF SF** (A, B, C & D Coy, 1-Para) in 6/73, comes to an end. This is initially a COIN operation in the Caprivi Strip in support of 1 Military Area with the target shifting from PLAN to FAPLA over time (Volker, 2010:323).
- 3/9/75 Commandant Jan Breytenbach despatches a report to Brigadier Jannie Geldenhuys, Director Operations at SA Army HQ, stating that the FNLA will not attain their desired objectives with training alone. Breytenbach recommends the deployment of SADF leader group personnel to assist with command and control and also logistical support (Nortje, 2003:9).
- 15/9/75 Commandant Jan Breytenbach, accompanied by a group of SADF instructors, makes a journey by road to Mpupa to deliver the first logistical support to the FNLA (Nortje, 2003:14). Sgt Danny Roxo is made a Platoon Commander in Charlie Company.
- 24/9/75 The first **SADF SF** personnel arrive in Silvo Porto on a training mission.
- 24/9/75 The SADF approves a four-phased plan to support both the FNLA and UNITA that becomes known as **Operation Savannah**. Leading this is **Task Force Zulu**, made up of a battalion of Bushmen soldiers from the Caprivi and 1,000 FNLA troops. This is broken down into **Alpha Group** that is commanded by Commandant Delville Linford and **Bravo Group** under the direct command of Breytenbach (Nortje, 2003:9). Phase 1 is assistance to FNLA to regain control of areas already held by FAPLA. Phase 2 requires gaining control of south-eastern Angola by capturing the towns of Sa Da Bandeira and Moçâmedes. Phase 3 is centred on the capture of Benguela, Lobito and Novo Redondo. Phase 4 is the final push against the MPLA



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(Nortje, 2003:17). This fighting formation goes on to cover 3,159-km of Angolan territory in 33 days, during which 14 full-scale battles and 21 skirmishes occur, leaving 210 known enemy dead, 96 wounded and 56 POW (Nortje, 2003:10).

10/75 **Operation Savannah** is launched as a “pre-emptive initiative to prevent an MPLA/Cuban takeover in Angola”, and in “support of UNITA and the FNLA”. **Task Force Zulu** is responsible for SW Angola; **Combat Group Foxtrot** is responsible for Central Angola; and **Combat Group X-ray** is responsible for Eastern Angola. Other forces include UNITA, FNLA and **SADF SF** (1-Para, 2-Para). During the evolution of **Operation Savannah** the various combat units progress to Luanda and then withdraw because of the lack of support from the USA. This operation ends in 3/76 (Volker, 2010:323).

10/75 Law 21 is promulgated in Mozambique creating SNASP (*Servicio Nacional de Seguranca Popular*), the Mozambican Security Service. This is modelled along the Soviet lines of the KGB that sees the intelligence service as an extension of the Communist Party, there to serve the needs of that party as it consolidates power.

10/75 **PLAN** engages in a battle in the Efitu area in Angola. The commander is Nadenga Hamutenya Zulu (Volker, 2010:745).

10/75 A combat force of 1,500 troops is despatched from Havana in Cuba to boost the ranks of Agostinho Neto’s urban-based Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA) (Nortje, 2003:1).

10/75 Approximately half of the FNLA troops stationed at Mpupa are sent to Serpa Pinto where a second training camp has been established by Commandant Jan Breytenbach (Nortje, 2003:15).

2/10/75 **Battlegroup Foxtat** is formed using UNITA forces being supported by SADF instructors and a few French Panhard armoured cars. **Note:** Photo by the author shows two French Panhard AFV’s that are later captured and are now on display at the Museu Central das Forças Armadas in Luanda. These are not from the SADF forces in **Operation Savannah** and most likely come from the FNLA.



2/10/75 Operators from **SADF SF** (1-Recce) train **Bravo Group**, which is part of **Task Force Zulu** in **Operation Savannah**.

5/10/75 **Battlegroup Foxtat** engages the MPLA between Lobito and Nova Lisboa.

13/10/75 A SAAF airlift begins to fly in SADF Eland armoured cars using C-130 Hercules transport aircraft. This lasts until 20 October by which time six troops (24 Eland’s) plus their crews and support have been mobilized. L/Cpl Lennie Rogers is part of this deployment. He later takes his own life after the sale of Hlabisa Farms in 1987.

14/10/75 At 14:00 **Battlegroup Alpha** sets off from Rundu. Simultaneously **Battlegroup Bravo** sets off from Calai on the Angolan side of the border (Nortje, 2003:18).

15/10/75 **Battlegroup Bravo** arrives in Caiundo in preparation for their assault on Pereira D’Eca, which is to be taken from the north to disguise the SADF involvement (Nortje, 2003:18).

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- 15/10/75 **Operation Savannah** is launched. **Task Force Zulu** comprising the Alpha and Bravo Group crosses the border in support of **Battlegroup Foxbat** that is already engaged along the coast line.
- 16/10/75 **Task Force Zulu** reaches Serpa Pinto (later to become Menongue).
- 17/10/75 **Battlegroup Bravo** turns south ready for the assault on Pereira D'Eca (Nortje, 2003:18).
- 18/10/75 **Task Force Zulu** reaches Cuvelai where UNITA become embroiled in a battle with FNLA. This highlights the complexity of South Africa's role as an ally to both UNITA and FNLA.
- 19/10/75 Elements of **Task Force Zulu** have a skirmish near Mupa after which they engage a more heavily armed force near Evale.
- 19/10/75 **Task Force Zulu** advances *via* Nehone to within 5-km of their objective – Pereira D'Eca. They move into position in preparation for the assault. **Battlegroup Alpha** is tasked to attack the south of the objective, despatching a force to secure the road to Santa Clara, with a small stopper group tasked to keep the road open to Forte Roçadas (later to be known as Xangongo). **Battlegroup Bravo** is tasked to take the north of the town, securing the airfield (Nortje, 2003:20).
- 19/10/75 A group of soldiers from **2 SA Infantry Battalion**, under the command of Commandant Boy du Toit, launch a successful assault on Forte Roçadas. Nortje (2003:22) claims that the assault on Forte Roçadas was not authorized at the time. (**Note:** This assault is likely to have come from **Calueque**, given that the SADF were stationed there at the time, with a squadron of Eland AFV's and a group of 81-mm mortars forming a combat team. This seems more likely given that when Breytenbach reports to Brigadier Schoeman that Forte Roçadas was already in SADF hands, he orders Commandant du Toit's force to attach itself to **Task Force Zulu**. This incident gives some insight into the fluidity of the battlefield at that time).
- 20/10/75 **Task Force Zulu** captures the town of Pereira de Eça (later to become Ngiva). They then move on to Fort Roçadas in support of forces that had moved up from **Calueque** (**Task Force Orange**). An additional two troops of Eland AFV's (8 armoured cars) joins **Task Force Zulu** coming by road.
- 21/10/75 **Task Force Zulu** moves through Humbe and Cahama with little fighting.
- 21/10/75 **Battlegroup Alpha** is ordered to veer off the axis of advance near João de Almeida to clear the towns and villages west of the main road. At 13:00 they make contact, and by 15:00 **Task Force Zulu** is in control of João de Almeida. During this time FAPLA is preparing its defences at Sá Da Bandeira (Nortje, 2003:23).
- 22/10/75 **Task Force Zulu** engages MPLA forces near João de Almeida (later to become Chibia) *en route* to Sá da Bandeira (later to become Lubango).
- 23/10/75 As **Battlegroup Bravo** moves out of João de Almeida, they leave Sgt. Danny Roxo behind to protect the rear of **Task Force Zulu** (Nortje, 2003:23).
- 23/10/75 Having lost the element of surprise, **Task Force Zulu** engages in a series of fierce fire fights as they encounter ambush after ambush along their axis of advance. This sees **Task Force Zulu** working for the first time as a well oiled combat unit, with their arsenal being boosted after capturing two 82-mm recoilless guns with ammunition, and a single tube 122-mm rocket launcher with five projectiles. This is the first time that this weaponry has been seen by the SADF. On reaching the outskirts of Sá da Bandeira, Task Force Bravo is spread out, with infantry being supported by Eland AFV's (Nortje, 2003:24). (**Note:** Cpl. Lennie Rogers is in this force and later speaks in great detail of this to the author).

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- 23/10/75 Fierce fighting sees **Task Force Zulu** capture Sá da Bandeira. This is used as a brief replenishment post to enable the various combat teams to rearm and carry out necessary repairs to their vehicles.
- 24/10/75 During the morning **Battlegroup Bravo** attacks the former Portuguese infantry base, where they discover massive caches of ammunition, uniforms, weapons, boots and seven serviceable aircraft. These are issued to the soldiers of **Task Force Zulu** (Nortje, 2003:26).
- 24/10/75 The Red Chinese instructors that arrived in Kinshasa in August 1974 are withdrawn in response to an **OAU** request to foreign governments not to escalate tensions.
- 25/10/75 Intelligence reports are received stating that a number of MIG-21 fighter aircraft are about to be deployed into Angola.
- 25/10/75 Fighting breaks out between FNLA and UNITA as **Task Force Zulu** approaches Moçamedes, giving FAPLA the opportunity to defend the town by placing some artillery covering the approach (Nortje, 2003:26).
- 27/10/75 **Task Force Zulu** makes for Moçamedes (later to become Port Namibe). A Portuguese frigate with a company of paratroopers on board decides not to engage and weighs anchor from Moçamedes harbour.
- 27/10/75 **Task Force Zulu** assault the town of Moçamedes in a pincer movement. **Battlegroup Bravo** attacks down the mountains through Vila da Arriaga, cutting telephone lines as they advance. **Battlegroup Alpha** advance *via* Humpata. In a skirmish 9 FAPLA are KIA and 8 are captured, including Commandante Xieta who had played a key role in the battle for Sá da Bandeira (Nortje, 2003:26).
- 28/10/75 **Task Force Zulu** is involved in a skirmish with FAPLA outside Moçamedes, but the town is captured after fierce pockets of resistance are cleared. FAPLA HQ again yields a significant haul of firearms, ammunition and clothing. When securing the harbour a massive haul of new trucks and earth moving equipment is discovered. This is all captured and **Task Force Zulu** replenishes and repairs its equipment before advancing again (Nortje, 2003:27).
- 30/10/75 **Alpha Group** of **Task Force Zulu** engages MPLA near Cacula.
- 31/10/75 **Alpha Group** make for Quilenges engaging MPLA forces in small skirmishes.
- 31/10/75 **Battlegroup Bravo** commences its advance once again by leaving the captured town of Moçamedes *en route* for Nova Lisboa (Nortje, 2003:27).
- 11/75 A 6 man team from **SADF SF** (1-Recce) under the command of Capt. H Venter, along with **Battlegroup Bravo**, attack and destroy power lines between Dondo and Catofe near Luanda. The team is compromised so the operation is aborted (Volker, 2010:568).
- 11/75 A 5 man team from **SADF SF** (1-Recce) under the command of Capt. H. Venter, along with one Portuguese guide, do a reconnaissance of the area 200 km north of Cuangar to locate SWAPO bases. None are found so the operation ends (Volker, 2010:568).
- 11/75 A 5 man team from **SADF SF** (1-Recce) under the command of Capt. H. Venter, do a reconnaissance of the area around Bombogandu, Coutado, Mucusso and Dirico to locate SWAPO bases. None are found so the operation ends (Volker, 2010:568).
- 2/11/75 Heavy fighting takes place at Catengue (Nortje, 2003:28).
- 3/11/75 The American Consulate in Luanda is closed in anticipation of the coming anarchy.

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- 4/11/75 As **Task Force Zulu** nears the town of Caimbambo, they are warned that a FAPLA ambush lies ahead. As Major Toon Slabbert goes to investigate in his commandeered yellow vehicle, he is surprised when he is greeted with enthusiasm by a FAPLA Commandante who mistakes the flying column for a Cuban unit. Before discovering their mistake FAPLA is engaged and neutralized (Nortje, 2003:27-28).
- 4/11/75 In heavy fighting around Catengue two SADF soldiers are wounded by friendly fire when an Eland 90 shoots a Land Rover by mistake, reducing the leader group element of the 81-mm mortar group substantially (Nortje, 2003:31).
- 4/11/75 FAPLA launch **Operation Carlota** with the support from Cuba, against UNITA, the FNLA and SADF. This starts off with the **Second Liberation War** in 11/75 and lasts until 25/3/91. It involves a total of 35,000 Cuban troops being deployed into Angola by the end of 1976. Over the life span of **Operation Carlota** a total of 300,000 Cuban troops are deployed with a known loss of 2,077 (Volker, 2010:748).
- 5/11/75 **Battlegroup Bravo** returns to Catengue and immediately starts their advance on Benguela to maximize the advantage arising from the chaos of the battlefield (Nortje, 2003:31).
- 5/11/75 Fidel Castro meets with senior MPLA members in Cuba. A decision is made to provide direct military assistance and **Operation Carlota** is launched. (See Gleijeses, 1997).
- 6/11/75 Benguela falls to **Task Force Zulu** (Nortje, 2003:33) with FAPLA evacuating before the main element had arrived. At this time 140-mm G2 artillery pieces are made available to neutralize the BM 21's.
- 11/11/75 The Portuguese High Commissioner grants independence to Angola despite there being no legitimate authority to accept this independence. This ends four centuries of Portuguese rule in Angola. Shortly afterwards Agostinho Neto proclaims the MPLA as the legitimate government with himself as President. Jonas Savimbi declares a union between UNITA and FNLA as the new government. The Portuguese withdraw in some disgrace leaving chaos behind. The **Angolan Civil War** starts. (See Turner, 1998).
- 12/11/75 Elements of **Task Force Zulu** are ambushed at the Quicombo River but fight their way through taking casualties.
- 13/11/75 **Task Force Zulu's Bravo Group** captures Novo Redondo.
- 16/11/75 With Novo Redondo secured, FAPLA is driven north of the Queve River (Nortje, 2003:33). This becomes the northern-most advance for **Task Force Zulu**.
- 19/11/75 **Task Force Zulu** is ordered to advance to the central front in order to reinforce **Battlegroup Foxbat** around Cela and Santa Comba after they had been forced to withdraw from Ebo in disarray. As **Task Force Zulu** advances to Cela, **Battlegroup Foxbat** is also racing to the safety of the town. In the confusion civilian trucks carrying FNLA troops become detached from the main fighting force and are later found awash with blood. Commandant Breytenbach identifies these men as being from Charlie Company that he had left behind in Moçâmedes under the command of Captain Jock Harris. They had lost their lives in a Cuban ambush, with this being the largest loss of life for **Task Force Zulu** to date (Nortje, 2003:33-34). With the withdrawal from Ebo, a change in command is ordered and Colonel Blackie Swart replaces Van Heerden as Officer Commanding **Task Force Zulu**. Reinforcements arrive in the form of SADF infantry, 140-mm artillery and a squadron of Eland armoured cars (Nortje, 2003:34).
- 25/11/75 A SAAF Cessna spotter is shot down near Ebo in central Angola killing Lt. KA Williamson, Lt. E. Thompson and Capt. DJ Taljaard.

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27/11/75 The CIA abandons South African intelligence operators and a small force of military advisors working with the FNLA to the north of Luanda, despite an agreement to provide a safe exit if the need arose. This results in mistrust between the South African intelligence community and the CIA despite the good professional relations that had existed until then. The South Africans are extracted in an emergency operation launched by the SAS *President Steyn*. This withdrawal is caused by the collapse of FNLA resistance in the north and leaves two SADF 25-pounder artillery pieces behind. The author later locates a captured gun in Luanda during 2005, but this is not the same type of artillery (see photo).



27/11/75 Due to heavy fire from BM 21's hindering the advance, Commandant Breytenbach is ordered to send out a patrol to determine if the bridge needed to cross a major river is still intact. This bridge is under a piece of tactical high ground known as **Top Hat**. During the reconnaissance, it is determined that FAPLA is dug in on **Top Hat** and Sgt. Danny Roxo's platoon is engaged through a heavy barrage of fire. Roxo distinguishes himself when under heavy fire he does a solo reconnaissance of the bridge, establishing that it has been demolished. Roxo kills 11 enemy soldiers including 4 Cubans during this engagement, which is the first skirmish that becomes known as the **Battle for Bridge 14** (Nortje, 2003:36).

12/75 While doing a reconnaissance of a FAPLA Brigade HQ at Catofe, near the Nhia River and **Bridge 14**, an 8 man team from **SADF SF** (1-Recce) under the command of Capt. H. Venter, run into an enemy patrol and engage in a firefight. W.O. Conradie is wounded and Sgt. Wannenburg is KIA. Both are awarded the **Honorus Crux** for this action (Volker, 2010:568).

2/12/75 As a result of heavy artillery fire from the FAPLA forces, the SADF cannot move forward. A decision is taken to insert a SF team onto **Top Hat** in order to direct artillery fire. This task is given to Cpl. Andre Diedericks (SADF SF) and a squad of 15 FNLA soldiers. While infiltrating onto target all but one of the FNLA soldiers desert, leaving only Cpl. Diedericks and an asthmatic FNLA old soldier named S. Ngonga. This two-man team establishes a forward OP and despite having no experience at directing artillery fire, commences with this task to devastating effect over the next four days. This action turns the tide of battle, specifically relieving pressure on **Bridge 14** and Cpl. Diedericks earns the Honorus Crux for this action (Diedericks, 2007:32-34). This experience becomes the foundation for later SADF SF Small Teams, which is later led by Major Andre Diedericks to great effect.

5/12/75 **Battlegroup Bravo** is replaced by UNITA soldiers, allowing for the battle weary FNLA troops to be withdrawn for rest and regrouping (Nortje, 2003:37).

7/12/75 During an engagement at Ebo, Sgt Wannies Wannenburg of the **SADF SF** is KIA. WO 2 Kernaas Conradie earns the Honorus Crux for his actions during the engagement.

8/12/75 **Battlegroup Bravo** starts its long journey south by road in 12 vehicles, dropping off FNLA soldiers *en route* with instructions to report to mustering camps at Calai, Cuangar, Villa Nova da Armada and Mpupa by mid-January 1976. With that **Battlegroup Bravo** ceases to exist as a fighting force, but many lessons have been learned (Nortje, 2003:37).

9/12/75 The **Battle for Bridge 14** involves an Eland troop and a SF unit tasked to capture and hold some tactical high ground known as **Top Hat**.

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- 12/12/75 **Battlegroup Foxbat**, sent to support the remnants of **Task Force Zulu (Battlegroup Bravo)** having disengaged – see 8/12/75), engages an infantry battalion 1,000 strong, including many Cubans. This is the decisive element of the **Battle for Bridge 14**, leaving 400 FAPLA dead, including Commandant Raul Diaz Argüelles, Commander of the **Cuban Expeditionary Force**. SADF casualties include 4 KIA, among them Sgt. Danny Roxo (see 2/9/76), who single-handedly kills 11 men, 4 being Cubans (Nortje, 2003:10). Other formations sent to support **Task Force Zulu** in the execution of **Operation Savannah** are named **Battlegroup Orange** and **Battlegroup X-Ray**.
- 17/12/75 During **Operation Savannah**, a 9 man team from **SADF SF (2-Recce)** is deployed along the Cunene River tasked to look for SWAPO bases. This operation lasts until 27 December and is the first Citizen Force Recce operational parachute deployment (Volker, 2010:568).
- 19/12/75 The US Senate approves the **Clark Amendment** preventing further US aid to UNITA.
- 25/12/75 Gen. Constand Viljoen informs the leaders of FNLA and UNITA that the SADF would be withdrawing its forces from 3/1/76.

### 1976

- 1976 The total number of deaths in the SADF this year reported by Arm of Service is as follows: Army – 78 of which 23 are KIA; Air Force – 13 of which 3 are KIA; Navy – none KIA. During this year a total of 24 Honorus Crux medals are awarded for bravery (Stiff, in Ramsden, 2009).
- 1976 Germany and Britain give a large sum of development aid to Lesotho in an attempt to reduce its dependence on South Africa. This isolates SA further and increases tension in the region focussing security force attention on Lesotho as a possible safe rear base for **MK** guerrillas.
- 1976 The Democratic Party seizes control of the American Government again as Gerald Ford gives the presidential election to Jimmy Carter. Prime Minister Vorster visits the USA after Carter has been installed in office and announces that South Africa will relinquish South-West Africa (Namibia) by 31/12/1978 (Welsh, 2000:469).
- 1976 Zambia allows military bases to be established on its soil for **PLAN** and **MK** fighters. This attracts the attention of the SADF and cross-border raids become a necessity from this time onwards. In effect this leads to the establishment of a free-fire zone all along the border between South-West Africa (Namibia) and Angola / Zambia.
- 1976 SWAPO sends 80 cadres from **PLAN** for advanced sabotage training in Cuba (Nortje, 2003:5). This strengthens the Cuban connection and reinforces the Southern African region as a theatre for the **Cold War**.
- 1976 **SADF SF (1-Recce)** is attached to the **Selous Scouts**, operating out of Rusape, in order to improve the SADF operational capabilities.
- 1976 **PLAN** attacks the SADF military base at Epinga. (Volker, 2010:747).
- 1976 **PLAN** engages in a battle in the Omakolo area. The commander is Noah Tuhadeleni Kahumba (Volker, 2010:745).
- 1976 **PLAN** engages in a battle in the Okahenge area. The commander is Kalunga kOndjafa (Volker, 2010:745).
- 1976 **PLAN** engages in a battle in the Omanyele area. The commanders are Shakoloka & Nandjeni (Volker, 2010:745).

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- 1976 **PLAN** engages in a battle in the Uukete area. The commander is Kakongo (Volker, 2010:745).
- 1976 **PLAN** engages in a battle in the Omundaungilo area. The commander is unknown (Volker, 2010:745). (See also 1978).
- 1976 **PLAN** engages in a battle in the Onainghundudu area. The commander is Nehale Shikongo Pondo (Volker, 2010:745). (See also 1978).
- 1976 **PLAN** engages in the first battle in the Okongo area. The commanders are Nehale Shikongo Pondo, Mawila and Kaoloa (Volker, 2010:745). (See also 1979).
- 1976 **PLAN** engages in the first battle in the Oshandi area. The commanders are unknown (Volker, 2010:745). (See also 1978).
- 1976 **PLAN** engages in a battle in the Onegongo area. The commanders are Shikoko & Denga (Volker, 2010:745). (See also 1979).
- 1976 **PLAN** engages in a battle in the Epangwe area. The commanders are Mawila & Shikoko (Volker, 2010:745).
- 1976 **PLAN** engages in a battle in the Onamahoka area. The commanders are Mawila & Denga (Volker, 2010:745).
- 1976 **PLAN** engages in a battle in the Omakutu area. The commanders are Pondo & Haufiku wa Mweendi (Volker, 2010:745).
- 1976 **PLAN** engages in a battle in the Onkombwena area. The commander is Shikoko (Shikoka??) (Volker, 2010:745).
- 1976 **PLAN** engages in a battle in the Oshimbanda area. The commanders are Pondo, Shikoko & Denga (Volker, 2010:745).
- 1976 **PLAN** engages in a battle in the Onhunda area. The commander is Mukolokolo (Volker, 2010:745).
- 1976 **PLAN** engages in a battle in the Ohauwanga area. The commander is unknown and the date might be 1977 (Volker, 2010:745).
- 1976 **PLAN** engages in a battle in the Onaimbungu area. The commanders are Max Nekongo & Mengela (Volker, 2010:746).
- 1976 **PLAN** engages in a battle in the Ondjayana area. The commanders are Mhanda yaMhanda & Niilo Taapopi Kambwa (Volker, 2010:746).
- 1976 **PLAN** engages in a battle in the Otofima area. The commander is Mhanda yaMhanda (Volker, 2010:746).
- 1976 **PLAN** engages in a battle in the Onamishe area. The commander is Pondo (Volker, 2010:746).
- 1976 Towards the end of the year former members of **Battlegroup Bravo** are trained in pseudo-operations at Dodge City and then tasked to infiltrate SWAPO structures in Owamboland (Nortje, 2003:44).
- 1976 Elements of **Task Force Zulu** become **32 Battalion** and they engage in their first operation against SWAPO on Angolan soil known as **Operation Cobra** (Nortje, 2003:11).

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- 1976 **Operation Cobra** is launched to clear up suspected SWAPO bases at Chana Hangadima, 10- 15 km north of Beacon 28.5. The unit involved is **SADF SF** (2-Recce) working with Bravo Group under the command of Cmdt. S. Van der Spuy (Volker, 2010:568).
- 1976 Eight members of **32 Battalion** are killed in action (Nortje, 2003:286).
- 1976 Two teams of 15 operators from **SADF SF** (1-Recce), working in close coordination with the **SAAF**, attack a SWAPO base on the road between Xangongo and Ngiva. The operation is partially successful (Volker, 2010:568).
- 1976 ZANLA develops a strategic plan that seeks to infiltrate armed forces into Matabeleland and to sever Rhodesian rail links to South Africa. This raises the tactical significance of Pafuri, which is where the borders of South Africa, Rhodesia and Mozambique are linked.
- 1976 A group of 9 activists are sentenced to 8 years imprisonment for associating with Steve Biko and the Black Consciousness Movement (Welsh, 2000:476).
- 3/1/76 The scheduled SADF withdrawal from Angola is postponed because of uncertainties around an **OUA** vote that is pending.
- 21/1/76 A group of 90 ZIPA guerrillas infiltrate from Mozambique into Rhodesia, at a point south of Nyamapanda. ZIPA is a combined force of ZANLA and ZIPRA, formed after an agreement reached to unite the Liberation Movement on 12/11/75.
- 22/1/76 The guerrillas who had crossed from Mozambique are brought to contact, with the killing of 4 and the capture of 1, who reveals under interrogation that there is a simultaneous three-pronged infiltration into Rhodesia. This triggers **Operation Thrasher**.
- 23/1/76 The SADF commences its withdrawal from Angola in an orderly and systematic manner.
- 27/1/76 The US House of Representatives give their support to the **Clark Amendment**.
- 2/76 **Operation Thrasher** is launched in the **Rhodesian Bush War** covering the Eastern Highlands. This is in response to the opening of the second front caused by withdrawal of Portuguese forces from Mozambique.
- 2/76 The OAU and UN both recognize the MPLA as the legitimate government in Angola (Nortje, 2003:39).
- 5/2/76 The flood of Angolan refugees is so large that orders are given by Brigadier Ben De Wet Roos, Officer Commanding **2 Military Area**, that **101 Task Force** must relocate the mainly FNLA supporters to Savate in Angola (Nortje, 2003:40).
- 10/2/76 FAPLA re-occupy Lobito and Benguela after SADF troops withdraw.
- 11/2/76 FAPLA re-occupies Sá da Bandeira after SADF troops withdraw.
- 16/2/76 A well organized FNLA battalion reports to Colonel Breytenbach having fought their way south (Nortje, 2003:40).
- 24/2/76 Colonel Breytenbach despatches a report to General Constand Viljoen proposing the deployment of a friendly guerrilla force in southern Angola, intending to use the remnants of **Battlegroup Bravo** that had reported for duty (see 8/12/75) (Nortje, 2003:41).
- 26/2/76 A signal arrives from **101 Task Force** Administrative Headquarters authorizing logistical support by Colonel Breytenbach for 1,000 men (Nortje, 2003:41).

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- 1/3/76 Orders are given to establish a SF capability to deploy small teams into operational areas from the sea. This falls under the initial command of Maj. Malcolm Kinghorn.
- 3/3/76 The Mozambican Government announce the closure of the border crossing to Rhodesia, effectively declaring war, but without a formal declaration to this end.
- 14/3/76 Angolan MIG-21's down the aircraft belonging to President Mobutu.
- 22/3/76 Colonel Breytenbach is authorized to relocate trained members of **Battlegroup Bravo** from Mpupa to a new base called Pica Pau (woodpecker) in the western Caprivi Strip (Nortje, 2003:41).
- 27/3/76 SADF withdraws its forces from Angola after **Operation Savannah** is a success, but fails to gain US support in public. This demoralizes SADF troops, some of whom are in sight of Luanda, the Angolan capital city. The USA is regarded with deep suspicion from this time onwards, because **CIA** support had been promised but failed to materialize. Americans are simply not trusted any more so they limit their own potential impact in the region for decades to come.
- 27/3/76 Elements of **Battlegroup Bravo** from **Operation Savannah**, move to a new base called Pica Pau (Portuguese for woodpecker), becoming the founding elements of **32 Battalion** (Nortje, 2003:41). (See 29/8/77 for the official founding of the unit).
- 30/3/76 Major Rose orders all former FNLA soldiers that had seen action in **Operation Savannah** as **Battlegroup Bravo** to remove their official insignia and badges of rank (Nortje, 2003:43).
- 4/76 A mass infiltration of around 500 guerrillas infiltrate into the Eastern Highlands of Rhodesia from Mozambique.
- 4/4/76 Colonel Breytenbach submits a formal motivation for the creation of a new unit out of remnants of the former **Battlegroup Bravo**. He notes that FNLA has collapsed as a coherent entity so the identity of those soldiers needs to be transferred to a new entity loyal to South Africa (Nortje, 2003:43).
- 5/76 **Operation Repulse** is launched in the **Rhodesian Bush War** covering the South-East of the country as the balance of power shifts.
- 5/76 An SADF infantry patrol in the **Caprivi Strip** is ambushed with heavy casualties. The overwhelming firepower of the ambushers leaves three dead soldiers that cannot be retrieved by their own unit. **SADF SF** is sent in to retrieve the bodies of the dead soldiers and the ensuing follow-up indicates that **PLAN** is using an island in the Cuando River to support their operations.
- 5/76 A team of 20 operators from **SADF SF** (1-Recce) under the command of Major **Joe Verster**, is deployed to recover the bodies from the landmine incident in the Katima Mulilo area of the **Caprivi Strip**. The bodies are recovered but the follow-up operation is unsuccessful (Volker, 2010:568).
- 5/5/76 A propaganda radio station known as *Voz da Africa Libre* (Voice of Free Africa) is established at Gwelo in the Eastern Highlands of Rhodesia, in order to support rising dissent towards FRELIMO inside Mozambique.
- 18/5/76 Colonel Breytenbach is formally appointed as Officer Commanding **Bravo Group** in terms of Command Directive No. 15/76 issued by **101 Task Force**. **Bravo Group** consists primarily of soldiers that had seen action during **Operation Savannah** as **Battlegroup Bravo** in **Task Force Zulu** (Nortje, 2003:44).

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- 6/76 A second large group of 300 guerrillas is infiltrated into the south-east Lowveld areas of Rhodesia. It is now evident that the second front in Mozambique is becoming a major infiltration route.
- 6/76 Rhodesian SF (**Selous Scouts**) attack the ZANLA base at Mapai inside Mozambique, code-named **Operation Long John**.
- 6/76 **PLAN** engages in a battle in the Omhuulu area. The commander is Peter Shidume (Volker, 2010:745).
- 16/6/76 The **Soweto Riots** leave 575 dead, but exact estimates vary. This launches a new phase of the **Armed Struggle** inside South Africa.
- 25/6/76 **Operation Long John** is launched against a ZANLA base at Mapai and a staging post at Chicualacuala in Mozambique. Two SF members are lost – WO2 Jannie Nel is KIA and Lt Dale Collett is paralysed permanently as a result of a bullet wound.
- 7/76 A major ZANLA military base is located on the Nyadzonya River in Mozambique with an estimated strength in excess of 800.
- 7/76 **SADF SF** (2-Para, **32 Battalion**) engage in area operations in Southern Angola. This lasts until 9/76 (Volker, 2010:323).
- 8/76 **Operation Tangent** is launched in the **Rhodesian Bush War** covering the border with Botswana.
- 8/76 **SADF SF** raid a SWAPO base in Zambia at Shatotwa. Around 200 SWAPO fighters are killed when they are unable to escape from the base due to bad design.
- 8/76 A **SADF SF** (1-Recce) raid, under the overall command of Major John Moore, consisting of a 5 man reconnaissance team under the command of Capt. Charl Naude; a 25 man assault team under the command of Capt. Hannes Venter; and a stopper team under the command of Capt. Connie van Wyk, attack two **PLAN** bases at Shatotwa, Zambia. The raid is successful with the destruction of West Camp (190 KIA) and the East Camp also destroyed with 15 KIA. One SADF SF operator is wounded in this action (Volker, 2010:569).
- 9/8/76 **Operation Eland** is launched by Rhodesian SF (Selous Scouts) to neutralize the ZANLA base on the Nyadzonya River in Mozambique. This is a daring raid in which the strike force dresses up like FRELIMO soldiers and enters the base during a formal parade with a massive ZANLA force assembled in one place. They are mercilessly engaged by ground fire and later intercepts reveal that 1,028 guerrillas are killed, 309 wounded in hospital with 1,000 missing (see Geldenhuys, 2007:113). Civilian casualties cause tension with South Africa where John Vorster is engaged in Détente, so **Operation Polo** is ended.
- 23/8/76 In an engagement between **SADF SF** and FAPLA near Coutado do Mucusso in southern Angola, a number of SADF operators are killed in action. This includes Sgt. Danny Roxo (see 12/12/75 and 2/9/76), who fought with distinction in Mozambique and in Angola during **Operation Savannah**.
- 2/9/76 Sgt. Danny Roxo, known as the White Devil by FRELIMO and a Honorus Crux winner, is killed in action in Angola while serving with **Battlegroup Bravo** (see 12/12/75). Nortje (2003:86) makes reference to Roxo as being a member of **32 Battalion**, which had not been officially formed at this time (see 29/8/77).
- 24/9/76 Senior officers in the Rhodesian Armed Forces are briefed by General Peter Walls that they should expect an announcement from Ian Smith regarding what is called “capitulation” by some (Geldenhuys, 2007:114) (the loss of USA and South African support). In reality the **Rhodesian Bush War** is now technically unwinnable since the opening of the second front

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in Mozambique, but most of the Rhodesian officers had not yet accepted this hard cold reality. The RhAF is informed of the decision to end **Operation Polo** and withdraw the SAAF pilots, which devastates their morale because it reduces their combat capacity considerably.

- 10/76 André Matangaidze escapes from the FRELIMO detention camp Massacaze where he makes his way to the safety of Rhodesia.
- 10/76 FAPLA occupy their southern-most bases on the Okavango River at Katuitui and Cuangar. **PLAN** infiltrations into SWA escalate after this occupation.
- 24/10/76 An SADF team of senior officer's travel to Rhodesia tasked to do a strategic assessment of the security situation.
- 26/10/76 Transkei becomes an "independent" Homeland. Kaiser Matanzima becomes Prime Minister with TNIP as the ruling party.
- 26/10/76 SADF (Eastern Province Command and 6 SAI) engage in **Operation Umtata**, which is assistance to the Transkei Independence activities (Volker, 2010:372).
- 30/10/76 Rhodesian SF launch **Operation Mardon** into Mozambique. This short, sharp deep-penetration operation lasting four days, attacks ZANLA targets at Massangena, Maxaila, Jorge do Limpopo and Chigamane; and FRELIMO targets in the Tete Province.
- 25/12/76 The **Rhodesian Central Intelligence Organization (CIO)** gives official support to RENAMO. Some scholars say this is the date that RENAMO was officially founded, but in reality it had been running before this, but not as a well organized military machine. The CIO selects André Matangaidze as the future commander.
- 31/12/76 A 14 man team under the command of Sgt. Johan Bert Dixon is launched by **SADF SF (1-Recce & 32 Battalion)** close to the SWA/Angolan border to neutralize a SWAPO forward base. The operation is successful but Cpl. G.A. Lawrie is KIA and Sgt. Kriek Kruger and three others are wounded (Volker, 2010:569).

### 1977

- 1977 A UN Arms Embargo is imposed on South Africa. This forces her to start developing alternative supplies of weapons and materiel including local production.
- 1977 Fifteen members of **32 Battalion** are killed in action (Nortje, 2003:286).
- 1977 The total number of deaths in the SADF this year reported by Arm of Service is as follows: Army – 101 of which 39 are KIA; Air Force – 11 of which 1 is KIA; Navy – 1 (none KIA). During this year a total of 4 Honorus Crux medals are awarded for bravery (Stiff, in Ramsden, 2009).
- 1977 Colonel Jan Breytenbach, the founding Officer Commanding **32 Battalion** since 1975 hands over command to Commandant Gert Nel (Nortje, 2003:76).
- 1977 Masses of disaffected Black South Africans migrate across the borders to join the **Armed Struggle** due to increased police repression after the **Soweto Riots**. Refugee processing centres are established in Lesotho, Botswana and Swaziland for the purpose of channelling people into the ANC. These refugee centres become legitimate targets because they are recruiting grounds for **MK** and **APLA** cadres.
- 1977 **MK** activity inside South Africa increases. The first victim of this is Solomon Mahlangu, and **MK** operative that is captured, tried and given the death sentence. He later goes on to

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become a hero of the struggle with a school in Tanzania being named after him, known in intelligence circles as SOMAFCO (Solomon Mahlangu Freedom College).

- 1977 **SADF SF** (1-Para) attacks an insurgent base at Naulila in Angola (Volker, 2010:324).
- 1977 **PLAN** attacks the SADF military base at Onhumba. (Volker, 2010:747).
- 1977 **PLAN** engages in a battle in the Oshingundu area. The commander is Kalola (Volker, 2010:745).
- 1977 **PLAN** engages in a battle in the Olupale area. The commander is Shikuma sha Kamati (Volker, 2010:745).
- 1977 **PLAN** engages in a battle in the Eendadi area. The commander is unknown (Volker, 2010:745).
- 1977 **PLAN** engages in a battle in the Elundu area. The commanders are Zulu & Lunganda (Volker, 2010:745).
- 1977 **PLAN** engages in a battle in the Eenhana area. The commander is unknown (Volker, 2010:746). **Note:** This date is also listed as possibly being 1978 so it needs verification.
- 1977 **PLAN** engages in a battle in the Omhedi area. The commanders are Ndendja & Masipa (Volker, 2010:746).
- 1977 **PLAN** engages in a battle in the Onanghwe area. The commander is Kapanya (Volker, 2010:746).
- 1977 **PLAN** engages in a battle in the Okanghudi area. The commander is Mbulunganga (Volker, 2010:746).
- 1977 **PLAN** engages in a battle in the Ondui area. The commander is Shikoko (Volker, 2010:746).
- 1977 **PLAN** engages in a battle in the Oushini area. The commander is Nangolo dhOmundongwa (Volker, 2010:746).
- 1977 **PLAN** engages in a battle in the Oshali area. The commander is Nangolo (Volker, 2010:746).
- 1977 **PLAN** engages in a battle in the Okapuka area. The commander is Nangolo (Volker, 2010:746).
- 1977 **PLAN** engages in a battle in the Omutwe wOnghandi area. The commander is Nangolo (Volker, 2010:746).
- 1977 **PLAN** engages in a battle in the Omutwe wOmhendi area. The commanders are Muumbi Hangala & Hollo (Volker, 2010:746).
- 1977 **PLAN** engages in a battle in the Oshinota area. The commanders are John Pandeni Ndafongwe & Namuhiga (Volker, 2010:746).
- 1977 **PLAN** engages in a battle in the Okamenga area. The commanders are Lazarus Hamutele & Phillip Nambuli Alweendo (Volker, 2010:746).
- 1977 In a General Election in South Africa, the Nationalist Party wins 134 seats out of 164. The United Party loses credibility and the Progressive Federal Party becomes the official opposition with 17 seats.

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- 1977 The Defence White Paper is published. This becomes part of the **Total National Strategy**. National Service (conscription) is extended for all white males from 12 months followed by a series of three military camps, to 24 months followed by a minimum of 10 years camps alternating between a 30 day training camp and a 120 day operational camp.
- 1977 The **Constellation of Southern African States (CONSAS)** is mooted, embracing all states south of the Zambezi, united by a non-aggression pact and enjoying a common economic market.
- 1977 KwaZulu is given powers over its own police force.
- 1977 From December 1976 to December 1977, soldiers from **Bravo Group**, later known as **32 Battalion** (see 29/8/77) account for 187 enemy KIA in exchange for 12 of their own KIA and 66 wounded (Nortje, 2003:50).
- 1977 **SADF SF** (1-Recce & **32 Battalion**), working with elements of UNITA, attack a FAPLA garrison at Calai, just north of Rundu. The operation is a success (Volker, 2010:569).
- 1/77 **PLAN** attacks the SADF military base at Onuno (Volker, 2010:747).
- 1/77 **PLAN** attacks the SADF military base at Onambutu (Volker, 2010:747).
- 1/77 **PLAN** attacks the SADF military base at Onamageg (Volker, 2010:747).
- 1/77 **PLAN** attacks the SADF military base at Ebunduo (Volker, 2010:747).
- 1/1/77 In a skirmish with SWAPO, Cpl. G. Lawrie, a SF operator, is killed in action.
- 8/1/77 **Bravo Group** is upgraded to a battalion group because of its growing size, and is set to become **32 Battalion** (see 29/8/77) (Nortje, 2003:47).
- 11/1/77 **PLAN** attacks the SADF military base at Singalamwe. This is the second attack on the same base (see 4/1974) (Volker, 2010:747).
- 2/77 The **Southern African Catholic Bishops' Conference** urges the Government to make alternative arrangements for conscientious objectors.
- 17/2/77 **PLAN** attacks the SADF military base at Andara. (Volker, 2010:747).
- 21/2/77 **PLAN** attacks the SADF military base at Grootfontein where they target the Commando base (in South Africa the Commando's are not combat soldiers, being used defensively instead, much like a home guard. The word Commando derives from the Boer concept of "Kommando", which is about self-protection when needed and is the root for the word "Commando" now recognized as being crack special force soldiers elsewhere in the world). (Volker, 2010:747).
- 26/2/77 **PLAN** attacks the SADF military base at Onampenga. (Volker, 2010:747).
- 3/77 **Operation Grapple** is launched in the **Rhodesian Bush War** to protect the midlands of the country.
- 4/77 **PLAN** engages in a battle in the Omolombo area. The commander is Max Nekongo (Volker, 2010:746).
- 4/77 **PLAN** engages in a battle in the Okankolo area. The commanders are Max Nekongo & Ndafongwe (Volker, 2010:746). **Note:** An alternative date is given as 3/77 so this needs verification.

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- 4/77 A decision is made to deploy a permanent SADF Liaison Officer to assist UNITA. This evolves into what becomes known as **Operation Silver** that continues until 1983.
- 4/77 **Operation Silver** is launched. This involves ongoing assistance to UNITA. **SADF SF** (I-Recce) places a liaison officer (Capt. Hannes Venter) with UNITA HQ. This operation continues until 1983, when it is followed up by Operation DISA. The SADF SF liaison officer changes in 1978 to Major Bert Sachse (Volker, 2010:569).
- 4/77 The Auditor General starts an audit of **Operation Senekal**. This leads to the **Info Scandal**.
- 15/4/77 **PLAN** attacks the SADF military base at Okanghudi for the first time. The second attack takes place on 8/4/86 (Volker, 2010:747).
- 10/6/77 **PLAN** attacks the SADF military base at M'pacha. (Volker, 2010:747).
- 7/77 The United Party disintegrates and ceases to be a significant player in South Africa.
- 29/8/77 The Minister of Defence approves the establishment of **32 Battalion**, details of which are sent through in a signal from **101 Task Force** Logistical Section (Nortje, 2003:50). (See 27/3/76 for details of the unofficial founding of the unit out of elements of **Battlegroup Bravo** from **Task Force Zulu** in **Operation Savannah** and 27/6/88 for details of their last operational engagement in Angola).
- 9/77 Steve Biko is killed in detention.
- 10/77 The **Selous Scouts** hand over operational responsibility to the Rhodesian SAS for securing ZANLA infiltration routes from the Gaza Province of Mozambique. The Rhodesian SAS lack the manpower to execute this task, given the vastness of the area, and the sheer weight of numbers (ZANLA and FRELIMO) pitted against them.
- 24/10/77 **PLAN** attacks the SADF military base at Omhalapapa (Volker, 2010:747).
- 25/10/77 A South African four-man reconnaissance team makes a HALO deployment north of Eheki, under the command of Capt. Connie van Wyk.
- 25/10/77 **Operation Kropduif** is launched against a **PLAN** base located at Chana Eheki 1 & 2 (25 km north of Beacon 25.5 and east of Melanje) and Chana Golf (Nutalala) containing 180 guerrilla fighters. The reconnaissance team is compromised early in the operation on 25/10/77, but this does not preclude a successful outcome. Two teams of 10 operators are from **SADF SF** (1-Recce; 2-Recce) under the command of Major Hennie Blaauw, with the 2IC being Capt. Hannes Venter; and 32 Battalion. Also included in the operation is 101 Task Force and 301 Air Command, the latter under the command of Kmdt. **Joe Verster**. This operation lasts until 29/10/77 (Volker, 2010:569).
- 27/10/77 A major skirmish occurs inside Angola when a small group of **SADF SF** engage a larger than anticipated SWAPO force. This takes place near Eheki and leaves a number of SF killed and wounded, highlighting command and control problems when being deployed on special operations.
- 28/10/77 During **Operation Kropduif**, the **Battle of Eheki** (Heque) takes place (Volker, 2010:569).
- 29/10/77 The **Battle of Eheki** winds down as **Operation Kropduif** comes to an end with the final tally being 60 **PLAN** KIA and 6 **SADF SF** KIA (Volker, 2010:569). Many lessons are learned from this action.
- 11/77 The South African Government adopts the **Total National Strategy** approach as the official security doctrine. This has a threat perception based on notions of a “**Total Onslaught**” with the **Cold War** as a strategic backdrop and South Africa, Israel and Taiwan seen as pivotal

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states in this global balance of power (see Frankel, 1984, Geldenhuys, 1984 and Turton, 2003).

- 23/11/77 **Operation Dingo** is launched by Rhodesian security forces against ZANLA bases around Chimoio in Mozambique, killing around 2,000 guerrillas.
- 24/11/77 **PLAN** attacks the SADF military base at Omhalapapa for the second time (see 24/10/77) (Volker, 2010:747).
- 12/77 **Selous Scouts** launch an assault on various bridges inside Mozambique between Dombe and Espungabera to cut off logistic lines to FRELIMO.
- 12/77 A force of fifty operators from 1-Recce in Durban is deployed to Rhodesia, where they form D Squadron SAS. This provides valuable reinforcement to the embattled Rhodesian security forces and gives South Africa a springboard into Mozambique from where it is anticipated that ANC infiltrations will also occur into South Africa. D Squadron SAS is based at Buffalo Range.
- 22/12/77 **PLAN** engages in a battle in the Omushai wa Kashonga area. The commanders are Hollo & Kambatutu (Volker, 2010:746).

### 1978

- 1978 As part of **Operation Silver** a team of **SADF SF** operators start to train UNITA soldiers.
- 1978 The **SADF SF** (1-Recce) liaison officer to UNITA under **Operation Silver** is changed from Capt. Hannes Venter to Major. Bert Sachse (Volker, 2010:569).
- 1978 Fifteen members of **32 Battalion** are killed in action (Nortje, 2003:286).
- 1978 The total number of deaths in the SADF this year reported by Arm of Service is as follows: Army – 113 of which 61 are KIA; Air Force – 8 of which 3 are KIA; Navy – 1 (none KIA). During this year a total of 14 **Honus Crux** medals are awarded for bravery (Stiff, in Ramsden, 2009).
- 1978 Commandant Gert Nel, the second Officer Commanding **32 Battalion** since 1977, responsible for consolidating that unit as a significant fighting force, hands over command to Commandant Deon Ferreira (Nortje, 2003:76).
- 1978 As the **Rhodesian Bush War** escalates with increased ZIPRA engagements throughout the year, Rhodesian SF become strained due to manpower shortages, allowing **SADF SF** (4-Recce) to enter the Zambian theatre of operations around Lake Kariba.
- 1978 **Operation Acrobat** is launched. This involves **SADF SF** (1-Recce becoming D Sqn SAS) support to Rhodesian security forces, deployed into the Gaza Province of Mozambique to harass ZANLA and FRELIMO forces. This is called the Russian Front (Volker, 2010:570).
- 1978 A group of senior **MK** officers, including Joe Slovo (**MK** Chief of Staff) and Joe Modise (**MK** Commander), travel to Vietnam to consult with General Giap. The advice given is for **MK** to develop a coherent strategy. This later becomes known as 'Armed Propaganda' with three phases to it: the Year of the Spear (1979) commemorating the centenary of the Zulu victory over the British at Isandlwana (see details of the **Battle of Isandlwana**, 22/1/1879); the Year of the Charter (1980) to popularize the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Freedom Charter; and the Year of the Youth (1981) to commemorate the 5<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Soweto Uprising. These would lay the foundation for a subsequent **Peoples War**. **Note:** This lays the foundation for the forthcoming **Civil War** (see 5/84, 1985, 7/10/85, 10/12/87, 1988, 7/90, 9/90, 12/90, 17/5/91, 26/9/92, 2/8/93, 9/93, 2/12/93, 29/1/94, 2/94, 3/94 and 12/3/94).

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- 1978 A Cuban delegation pays an official visit to Lesotho.
- 1978 Joint military operations (**Operation Acrobat**) between **SADF SF** (4-Recce as D Sqn SAS under the command of Lt Corrie Meerholz) and Rhodesian SF (SAS under the command of Lt. Mac Macintosh) take place on Lake Kariba at Binga and Ruzirikuru Bay where a high powered Zambian boat (the Black Fish) is destroyed. The first attacks are against the Sinazongwe and Chipepo harbours, followed by the destruction of the Black Fish (Volker, 2010:570).
- 1978 As the **Rhodesian Bush War** comes to an end, **MK** again makes an appearance in Matabeleland where they are deployed to assist ZIPRA (ZAPU) in its internal power struggle against ZANLA (ZANU). This is their first appearance in Rhodesia since being neutralized in 1967 during **Operation Nickel** (see **Luthuli Detachment** in 1967).
- 1978 **PLAN** engages in a second battle in the Omundaungilo area. The commander is unknown (Volker, 2010:745). (See also 1976).
- 1978 **PLAN** engages in the second battle in the Oshandi area. The commanders are unknown (Volker, 2010:745). (See also 1976).
- 1978 **PLAN** engages in a battle in the Onamhaladi area. The commander is Luganda (Volker, 2010:746).
- 1978 **PLAN** engages in a battle in the Ekoka area. The commanders are Denga & Mzee waAngala (Volker, 2010:746).
- 1978 **PLAN** engages in a battle in the Onghumbi area. The commander is Limbandungila (Volker, 2010:746).
- 1978 **PLAN** engages in a battle in the Omhito area. The commanders are Nangolo & George Kaxuhwena (Volker, 2010:746).
- 1978 **PLAN** engages in a battle in the Ohakatheya area. The commanders are Nangolo & George Kaxuhwena (Volker, 2010:746).
- 1978 **PLAN** engages in a battle in the Omhalapapa area. The commander is Namibi Samwel (Volker, 2010:746).
- 1978 **PLAN** engages in a battle in the Ngwenzi area. The commander is Denga (Volker, 2010:747).
- 1978 SWAPO now has a functional military structure in place as **PLAN** comes of age (Nortje, 2003:5). **Note:** This is not entirely true as they have been engaged in a number of actions before this date, so what is meant is that the engagement is now of such a nature that **32 Battalion** is taking it seriously.
- 1978 The **Quail Commission of Enquiry** is tasked with doing a feasibility study of political independence of the Ciskei.
- 1978 Prime Minister Kaiser Matanzima of Transkei breaks diplomatic relations with South Africa (the only country that recognizes the Transkei) over land disputes in the Griqualand East area. This leads to the cancellation of a non-aggression pact between SA and Transkei.
- 4/1/78 Lance Corporals Mennicke and de Wilzem become the first South African KIA's in D Squadron SAS.
- 28/1/78 Lt. "Kokkie" du Toit, a 1-Recce operator in D Squadron SAS, is killed in action near Mapai in Mozambique. This is the brother of Capt. Wynand du Toit, captured on 21/5/85.

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- 2/78 The Auditor General makes public the report on **Operation Senekal**. The **Info Scandal** takes on new energy as this report is debated in public.
- 3/78 A large airborne assault is launched from Rhodesia to attack ZIPRA forces based at Kavalamanja. This represents an escalation in ZIPRA activities into Rhodesia from Zambia.
- 3/78 **PLAN** attacks the SADF military base at Elundu. This is the first of many (see 30/10/80; 8/3/97 & 5/9/87) (Volker, 2010:747). Volker (2010:744) lists the date as being 2/78.
- 3/78 **PLAN** attacks the SADF military base at Etomba. (Volker, 2010:747).
- 4/78 Gen. Magnus Malan leads a team of senior SADF officers on a liaison visit to Rhodesia. At a meeting with their Rhodesian counterparts, they announce South African intentions to escalate UNITA activities in Angola and they state that South Africa will stay in SWA/Namibia for ten more years. These prophetic words coincide with the **Battle of Cuito Cuanavale** in 1988. Discussed at this meeting is the strategic risk of future ANC infiltrations into South Africa from Mozambique. (**Note:** An element of the mythology in **Liberation Movement** circles is that the SADF is defeated at the **Battle of Cuito Cuanavale**. This does not stand up to rigorous scrutiny when facts such as these are placed in the public arena. If the SADF was beaten, which then forced the withdrawal in 1988, then why would there be plans at such an early stage to actually withdraw well before the battle? – see Mills & Williams, 2006)
- 4/78 **MK** infiltrate into Bophuthatswana from Botswana where they are intercepted in a fierce fire fight.
- 20/4/78 A decision is made by SADF high command to create a specialized airborne operational entity in the Citizen Force capable of providing a balanced all-arms airborne combat capability as needed. This results in the establishment of **44 Parachute Brigade**, located at Orange Free State Command alongside the old Tempe Airfield in Bloemfontein. Brig. M.J. Du Plessis, OC Free State Command, is tasked to coordinate the creation of this unit with Col. J.D. Breytenbach, founding commander of 1-Para, **32 Battalion** and Reconnaissance Commando as his Parachute Staff Officer (Volker, 2010:313). **Note:** Within a month of this event **44 Parachute Brigade** is deployed for the largest ever airborne assault since WW II – **Operation Reindeer** – the attack on Cassinga (see 14/5/78). This gives an indication of just how capable the SADF is at this time to make major management decisions and still deliver. It also speaks volumes of the leadership skills in particular of Col. Jan Breytenbach, who becomes a legend in SADF SF.
- 25/4/78 The **Western Contact Group** proposes the SADF's withdrawal from SWA as an element of eventual Namibian independence. This leaves South Africa with a dilemma, because **PLAN** would merely escalate their operations in anticipation of this eventuality.
- 5/78 The **South African Liberation Support Committee (SALSCOM)** starts to distribute a publication called *Omkeer* (About Turn) urging SADF soldiers to defect. This offers financial support to those wishing to dodge the draft.
- 14/5/78 **Operation Reindeer** is described as follows by Volker (2010:313): “The organization of the [B]rigade did not get very far, as less than a month later, on the 14<sup>th</sup> of May 1978, the operational situation required the execution of South Africa's first large scale airborne assault, **Operation Reindeer**. Prior to this, parachute operations by **1 Parachute Battalion** had been rare, consisting mostly of platoon, or sometimes company size. This time the operation called for an assault on a SWAPO base some 200 km's inside Angola by 320 paratroopers. ... Companies from both **2** and **3 Parachute Battalion** [Citizen Force units] were mobilized, and these were supplemented by a rifle platoon as well as mortar and anti-tank elements from **1 Parachute Battalion** [National Service unit]. This composite force of a battalion minus, commanded by Col Breytenbach, carried out the first-light parachute

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assault on the SWAPO base code-named “Moscow” at Cassinga. Closely supported throughout by the South African Air Force, the operation inflicted heavy loss on the enemy, with only four paratroopers lost in the action. Col Breytenbach himself was lightly wounded during this heated action, and the composite battalion was forced to execute a “hot extraction” by helicopter troopships when Angolan tanks counter-attacked. Paratrooper initiative and perseverance turned a nasty situation into a successful operation in which the objective was achieved. .. Nevertheless, a few things went awry during the operation, and certain deficiencies and shortcomings were identified: among other things, the need to have more than just infantry for such an operation, as well as the need for a fully staffed and experienced headquarters. The importance of forming a parachute brigade had been clearly demonstrated”. **Note:** Col Breytenbach, already a legend from **Operation Savannah**, endeared himself at this stage to his men as a fighting commander when, after being wounded and being chased around by battlefield medics wanting to insert a drip into him, he swatted them off like nuisance flies, preferring to command his fighting men from the front. Such is the stuff from which legends are made and so Col Breytenbach became a military leader deeply respected by all fighting soldiers at that time. This is why his involvement in the **Battle of Mmabatho** on 8/3/94 was so critical.

4/5/78 **Operation Reindeer** becomes the first major external SADF operation into Angola after **Operation Savannah**. There are three tactical targets for Reindeer. Cassinga is a tactical support base to SWAPO about 250-km into Angola code-named Moscow. This is attacked

by **44 Parachute Brigade**, accounting for more than 600 **PLAN** killed for the loss of 4 dead and 11 wounded. This is the largest single parachute deployment by South African's since the Second World War. SWAPO's Vietnam Base is 25-km inside Angola (near Cheteguera) and is attacked by an armoured combat team from **2 SAI**, knocking out some Russian armour with SAAF close air support. A series of SWAPO bases north of Beacons 26-30 are attacked by **32**



**Battalion**. (Photo of paratroopers being deployed into battle courtesy of Lt. Paul Oberholster, a **Pathfinder** and Great-Great- Grandson of Veldt Cornet Piet Oberholster, a **Second Anglo-Boer War** veteran and **Bittereinder**).

4/5/78 **SADF SF** (44 Parachute Brigade composite including 1-Para, 2-Para & 3-Para), supported by the SAAF, launch **Operation Reindeer** in Angola. The target is the **PLAN** base known as Moscow, located at Cassinga 250-km north of the cutline. This is the largest post-WWII parachute operation, resulting in the destruction of Cassinga, including 600 enemy KIA and 200 enemy POW, with a loss of only 3 SADF SF KIA, 1 MIA and 11 wounded (Volker, 2010:324).

25/5/78 **Operation Sceptic** targets what is given the code name of the Smokeshell complex in the Cunene Province of Angola.

6/78 **Operation Splinter** is launched in the **Rhodesian Bush War** to protect the Lake Kariba area.

6/78 The SADF formulate a plan to provide a safe haven to Rhodesian SF in the event of a collapse of Rhodesia and a bloody retaliation against those soldiers and their families.

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- 6/78 André Matangaidze offers to lead the first band of formally trained RENAMO soldiers (known at the time as MNR), from their base at Odzi in the Eastern Highlands of Rhodesia, back into Mozambique. This results in the first offensive raid on the FRELIMO detention centre at Sacuzi. The raid is successful and from that moment onwards RENAMO becomes a force to be reckoned with in Mozambique. After this raid, Matangaidze becomes the senior commander of MNR, known to his troops as Commander André.
- 8/6/78 SWAPO commanders meet at Cinzebela to discuss the SADF attack on Cassinga during **Operation Reindeer** (4/5/78). They decide to escalate the war by attacking Katima Mulilo.
- 23/6/78 **PLAN** attacks the SADF military base at Katima Mulilo for the first time (**Operation Revenge**) (see 13/8/78; 18/8/78). (Volker, 2010:747).
- 21/7/78 Martin Dolincheck, an NIS officer working in the Durban Regional Office, reports a planned *coup d'état* in Seychelles noting Mike Hoare as the leader.
- 24/7/78 The DG of NIS instructs Martin Dolincheck that under no circumstances is the NIS to become involved in the planned Seychelles *coup d'état*. (See 25/11/81, 9/2/83 and 1997 for details of the aftermath of this decision).
- 8/78 State President Nico Diedericks dies, creating an opportunity for the embattled BJ Vorster to become President.
- 13/8/78 The SADF base at Wenela is subjected to a heavy mortar bombardment by SWAPO with the support of the Zambian National Defence Force (ZNDF).
- 13/8/78 **PLAN** attacks the SADF military base at Katima Mulilo for the second time (see 23/6/78; 18/8/78). This is **Operation Revenge** with the ZNDF in retaliation against **Operation Reindeer** – Cassinga – on 4/5/78 (Volker, 2010:747).
- 17/8/78 Increased SWAPO presence is detected near Mpacha. This consists of two companies being supported by a range of weapons including heavy machineguns, rockets and mortars.
- 18/8/78 Katima Mulilo is subjected to a barrage of 122-mm rocket fire, killing 10 and wounding as many more SADF soldiers.
- 18/8/78 **PLAN** attacks the SADF military base at Katima Mulilo for the third time (see 23/6/78; 13/8/78). This is **Operation Revenge** with the ZNDF in retaliation against **Operation Reindeer** – Cassinga – on 4/5/78. Ten SADF are KIA and 10 wounded after a 122 mm rocket attack (Volker, 2010:747).
- 19/8/78 **SADF SF** (5-Recce) under the overall command of Major Bert Sachse, with the ground commander being Capt Corrie Meerholz, launch a series of reprisal raids against SWAPO along the Cuando River in South West Zambia. The combat team is first dropped 40 km off course on the Cubango River, but is later extracted and reinserted near Sinanga Ferry on the Cuando River. This operation lasts until 27/8/78 when the Sinanga Ferry is destroyed (Volker, 2010:569).
- 23/8/78 **PLAN** engages in a battle in the Katima Mulilo area as part of **Operation Revenge** for the attack on Cassinga. The commanders are Ehrenfried Jeoba Baby & Ronga Andima (Volker, 2010:746).
- 23/8/78 **Operation Safron** is initiated in response to SWAPO shelling of the SADF Katima Mulilo base. Two combat teams are deployed, Alpha and Bravo. Eland AFV's play a prominent role in this action and **PLAN** bases are destroyed rendering them ineffective for future operational use. A SF unit destroys the ferry at Sinanga on the Cuando River inside Zambia when it is found to be transporting SWAPO men and materiel to the front line.

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- 25/8/78 **SADF SF** (1-Para) engage in a skirmish during a follow-up on the Katima Mulilo attack (**Operation Revenge**). This engagement lasts until 27/8/78 (Volker, 2010:324).
- 27/8/78 **SADF SF** (5-Recce) under the overall command of Major Bert Sachse, with the ground commander being Capt Corrie Meerholz, destroy the Sinanga Ferry on the Cuando River as part of their reprisal raid started on 19/8/78 (Volker, 2010:569).
- 27/8/78 **Operation Safron** ends with SADF troops returning to base. The SA Government is summonsed to explain its actions in the UN.
- 27/8/78 See reference by Volker (2010:324) to **Operation Safron (Safraan)** on 7/3/79, which seems to be out of sequence.
- 9/78 PW Botha is elected by the National Party Caucus as the new leader. He steps into the power vacuum created by the **Info Scandal** and the demise of BJ Vorster.
- 9/78 A team of 1 Recce operators attached to D Squadron SAS, is compromised in southern Mozambique, resulting in a furious escape and evasion with a well coordinated FRELIMO team in hot pursuit.
- 3/9/78 ZIPRA shoot down **Air Rhodesia Flight RH 825** (Hunyani) with 48 passengers on board using a SAM-7 Strela 2 rocket (see [http://www.absoluteastronomy.com/topics/Strela\\_2](http://www.absoluteastronomy.com/topics/Strela_2)). Eighteen people survive the crash, but 10 are murdered on the ground, mostly by being bayoneted, by ZIPRA forces anxious to make their presence felt in the dying phases of the **Rhodesian Bush War**. This is the first terror incident of its kind in the region and it sends shock waves throughout society (Nell, 2010). (See 12/2/79 and 26/2/79). **Note:** This not a legitimate act of war.
- 20/9/78 John Vorster resigns as Prime Minister of South Africa, ending the period of Détente and opening the door to the Hawks in Pretoria under PW Botha.
- 20/9/78 John Vorster resigns, while simultaneously **Operation Snoopy** is launched in Rhodesia. This involves the Rhodesian Air Force, the Rhodesian SAS and D Sqn SAS (20 Recce operators from **SADF SF** under the command of Capt. Connie van Wyk). The target is a ZANLA base in Chimoio Circle 96 km east of the border (Volker, 2010:570).
- 20/9/78 **Operation Snoopy** is launched by Rhodesian SF, assisted by D Squadron SAS, against ZANLA bases around Chimoio in Mozambique.
- 21/9/78 Sgt H.G. Mac van der Merwe from **SADF SF** (1-Recce) is KIA during the attack on the ZANLA base at Chimoio (**Operation Snoopy**) (Volker, 2010:570).
- 24/9/78 **Operation Snoopy** ends successfully (Volker, 2010:570).
- 10/78 The Rhodesian Air Force takes over Zambian air space while two ZIPRA targets are engaged – Freedom Camp at Westlands Farm near Lusaka and Mkushi Base.
- 10/78 C Squadron SAS engage and destroy a convoy of Russian vehicles in Zambia killing around 50 ZIPRA guerrilla fighters *en route* to Rhodesia.
- 10/78 As part of **Operation Acrobat**, SADF SF reinforces the Rhodesian SAS in an ambush against a ZIPRA column at the Deka River mouth near Choma, Zambia. The SADF officer is Lt. Douw Steyn. The entire ZIPRA column is destroyed (Volker, 2010:570).
- 16/10/78 The Army Battle School (SADF) launches **Exercise Maremane I** at Lohattha involving 81 Armoured Brigade, Cape Field Artillery and others, which lasts until 10/11/78 (Volker, 2010:345).

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- 19/10/78 **Operation Gatling** is launched to neutralize a number of ZIPRA targets in Zambia. This leads to the now famous incident in which **Green Leader** contacts Lusaka Tower, informing them of the operation. Lusaka Tower leaves all air traffic control to the RhAF for the entire duration of the operation, including the granting of permission to a Kenya Airways pilot to land after the operation had been completed (see Geldenhuys, 2007:162-164).
- 30/10/78 The Rhodesian CIO launches the first attack on an economic target when they task an agent to fire on a Shell oil depot in Lusaka using an RPG. The ill-conceived attack fails, but escalates the war, by including economic targets such as oil storage depots in future.
- 11/78 ZANU develops a 'hit list' of people that are regarded as 'collaborators'.
- 11/78 A small team of **SADF SF** is redeployed from D Squadron SAS to assist C Squadron SAS based at Deka on Lake Kariba.
- 11/78 As part of **Operation Acrobat**, SADF SF under the command of Lt. Douw Steyn, supports the Rhodesian SAS in a mission to identify and neutralize crossing points on the south bank of the Zambezi River 20 km from Victoria Falls. Four boat loads of ZIPRA forces are engaged and destroyed (Volker, 2010:570).
- 11/78 A small team of **SADF SF** is used to assist the Rhodesian SAS with planning and logistical support of **Operation Milk Float**. Little is known about this operation, but it is thought to have involved a possible assassination of Robert Mugabe, based on intelligence gleaned from the interrogation of captured guerrilla fighters, which suggested that Mugabe was regularly in Maputo.
- 10/11/78 **Exercise Maremane I** at Lohattha involving 81 Armoured Brigade, Cape Field Artillery and others, comes to an end (Volker, 2010:345).
- 13/11/78 **Exercise Maremane II** at the Army Battle School at Lohattha involving Olienhout Brigade is cancelled due to a logistical problem (Volker, 2010:345).
- 12/78 The petrol depot in Salisbury is attacked by ZIPRA and left blazing for days. This is a major attack on a strategic target and shows that the Rhodesian liberation struggle is entering a new phase of internal operations aimed at a civilian population. Rhodesia shows its vulnerability for the first time.
- 12/78 Rhodesian SF attack ZIPRA bases in Zambia at Mboroma and Mulungushi.
- 12/78 **PLAN** attacks the SADF military base at Oshuuli (Volker, 2010:747).

### 1979

- 1979 The total number of deaths in the SADF this year reported by Arm of Service is as follows: Army – 88 of which 42 are KIA; Air Force – 14 of which none are KIA; Navy – 1 (none KIA). During this year a total of 15 **Honorus Crux** medals are awarded for bravery (Stiff, in Ramsden, 2009).
- 1979 South Africa tests its first nuclear weapon (Venter, 2008).
- 1979 A serious drought starts in South Africa. This lasts until 1986 and sees the accumulative natural flow of the Vaal River being reduced to 30% of the long-term average (Water Wheel – December 2008: pp 19-20). This causes serious economic hardship in the country. Part of this impacts Hlabisa Farms and thus places the author's own business at serious risk of failure. **Note:** It is this event that launches the author's career in water resource management, because it is here that he first realizes the strategic importance of water in a water-constrained economy (see Turton, 2003).

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- 1979 **PLAN** establishes a Special Operations Unit based at Lubango and Dongo. Their targets are the commercial farming areas of South West Africa (Nortje, 2003:7).
- 1979 **PLAN** engages in a battle in the Efitu area. The commanders are Patrick Iyambo Lunganda & Elia Nambahu (Volker, 2010:745).
- 1979 **PLAN** engages in the first battle in the Okongo area. The commanders are Nehale Shikongo Pondo, Mawila and Kaoloa (Volker, 2010:745). (See also 1976). **Note:** It is unlikely that the same three commanders were used on both operations, so this information needs to be verified.
- 1979 **PLAN** engages in a battle in the Onamhinda area. The commander is Kambindi Kanayeke (Volker, 2010:745).
- 1979 Buthelezi meets the ANC in London but refuses to become part of the **Armed Struggle**.
- 1979 Four members of **32 Battalion** are killed in action (Nortje, 2003:286).
- 1979 ZIPRA shoots down a second Air Rhodesia Viscount (Umnati) with a SAM 7 Strela 2 missile (see [http://www.absoluteastronomy.com/topics/Strela\\_2](http://www.absoluteastronomy.com/topics/Strela_2)), killing all 59 passengers on board. This attack on civilian targets heralds a new era in the **Armed Struggle** in Southern Africa where terrorism becomes the *modus operandi* of the various liberation movements (Nell, 2010). (See 3/9/78 and 26/2/79). **Note:** This is not a legitimate act of war.
- 1979 The **Rhodesian Bush War** or **Second War of Chimurenga** draws to an end. A poem is written by one of the soldiers named S.E. Lassman of Gath's Mine, Mashaba, which captures the sentiment among the battle-weary citizen-soldiers:

### Didn't Fight for Fun...

In World War One, when things were bad, and England needed men,  
We rallied to our country's flag – Rhodesians answered then.  
And many asked us as we went, "Whose battle do you fight?"  
"Our country needs us," we replied, and fought with all our might.  
And some came back, but hundreds not; but you must understand  
We didn't fight for fun, my lad, we fought to save our land.

Two decades past and once again the call to arms went out.  
Rhodesians answered as before – was ever there a doubt?  
Where did we go? Why everywhere. On land and air and sea,  
We fought in every battle, and we helped to set men free.  
And some came back, but thousands not; but you must understand  
We didn't fight for fun, my lad, we fought to save our land.

The years rolled by, and once again, the battle cry is made.  
This time Rhodesians fight alone – few come to our aid.  
Both young and old, both Black and White, we'll keep our country free  
And make it safe for everyone – not just for you and me.  
Yes, some will live, and some will not, but you must understand  
It isn't any fun, my lad, to fight to save our land.

- 1979 RENAMO starts to become a major element within Mozambique after it is weaned from Rhodesian SF control. The first RENAMO base inside Mozambique is established in the mountainous terrain at Gorongosa.
- 1979 The South African Government provides proof of **MK** activities in Botswana and requests the Botswana Government to take measures to prevent this from occurring in future.

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- 1979 **MK** raids inside South Africa include an attack on Police Stations in Booyens, Moroka and Orlando.
- 1979 Foreign Minister Pik Botha announces that the South African Government's vision for a **Constellation of Southern African States (CONSAS)** embraces the population south of the Zambezi and Cunene Rivers all joining forces to design a common approach to security, economic development and regional politics. This represents the carrot of development within the prevailing **Total Onslaught** threat perception. It is in this light that the subsequent economic development agreements, specifically those involving water resource management, should be interpreted. These are informed by a deep-seated belief in the South African **Hydraulic Mission**. (See Ashton *et al.*, 2005; Turton, 2003; 2008).
- 1979 A report is published declaring an ambitious hydraulic scheme that seeks to divert up to  $3,000 \times 10^6 \text{m}^3 \text{yr}^{-1}$  of water from the Zambezi, through the Thamalakane and Boteti Rivers in the lower Okavango basin downstream of the Delta, to be economically competitive with the **Tugela-Vaal Scheme**. This project, designed to abstract water from the Chobe River (a tributary of the Zambezi in close proximity to the Okavango Delta) and feed it down to South Africa, where it would account for 130% more than is currently available in the Vaal River basin at the time, becomes an element of the emerging **CONSAS** strategy.
- 1979 **Operation Brilliant** is launched by **SADF SF**. No further details are known (Volker, 2010:570).
- 1979 The main findings of the **Wiehahn Commission of Enquiry** into labour relations are translated into law. This changes the legal landscape by allowing organized black labour to engage in collective bargaining and strike action. This opens the door to the trade union movement to become the main vehicle for internal political activities, because of the banning of the various **Liberation Movements**.
- 1979 **Operation Amazon** is launched by **SADF SF** (4-Recce) but the exact date remains unclear and it might be later than 1979. The objective is the destruction of the oil storage depot in Lobito Harbour, designed to reduce the logistical support to FAPLA forces operating around Menongue. The operation was a success and credit was given to UNITA. This is followed by **Operation Kerslig** (see 30/11/81) (Volker, 2010:572).
- 1/79 **Operation Milk Float** is launched as a part of **Operation Acrobat**. This involves **SADF SF** (4-Recce) in support of Rhodesian SAS (under the command of Major Graham Wilson). The objective is the assassination of Robert Mugabe. The task assigned to 4-Recce is the extraction of the team by means of Zodiac inflatable dinghies to be collected by the South African Navy (Volker, 2010:570).
- 22/1/79 **Exercise Maremane III** at the Army Battle School at Lohattha involving 82 Mechanised Brigade is launched, lasting until 16/2/79 (Volker, 2010:345).
- 2/79 **Operation Milk Float** is launched. This is a joint operation between Rhodesian SAS and **SADF SF**. The target is Robert Mugabe who is thought to be in Maputo. The SADF inserts the team and provides logistical support, but the actual assassination is to be done by the SAS. The operation is aborted when it is determined that Robert Mugabe is not where he was expected to be.
- 12/2/79 ZIPRA shoots down **Air Rhodesia RH 827** carrying civilians on a routine flight from Kariba to Salisbury, killing all 59 passengers and crew on board. This is an escalation of the **Armed Struggle** and is the second act of its kind in rapid succession (see 3/9/78), thus suggesting a new phase of the war has opened. **Note:** This is an act of terrorism and not a legitimate act of war.
- 16/2/79 **Exercise Maremane III** at the Army Battle School at Lohattha involving 82 Mechanised Brigade comes to an end (Volker, 2010:345).

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- 26/2/79 In retaliation for the downing of **Air Rhodesia RH 827** by ZIPRA guerrillas on 12/2/79, the Rhodesian Air Force (RhAF) launches **Operation Vanity** by striking the ZIPRA base at Villa da Luso, close to the Benguela railway line in central Angola. The raid is a success with all aircraft returning safely to base.
- 3/79 A select group of **SADF SF** soldiers join the **Selous Scouts** for training at their base near Kariba called Wafa Wafa Wasara Wasara.
- 3/79 **PLAN** attacks the SADF military base at Ruacana for the first time (see 15/4/80 & 18/1/87) (Volker, 2010:747).
- 7/3/79 **SADF SF** (B & E Coy, 1-Para) supported by the SAAF, launch **Operation Safron (Safraan)**. The objective is listed by Volker (2010:324) as being “pre-emptive strikes against PLAN build-up” at “Sinjembele and Njinje forest in SW Zambia and SE Angola opposite the Caprivi Strip”. Volker notes that “during 4 phases the targets were successfully destroyed” and “SWAPO abandoned bases in Zambia”. He further notes that the operation ends on 12/3/79. **Note:** This is out of sequence with other known events associated with **Operation Safron** and **Operation Revenge** (see 23/8/78), so it is possible that this date incorrect. This needs verification as honest mistakes happen when dealing with masses of data. The rest of the information is reliable and can be accepted with confidence, knowing the general high quality of Volker’s work.
- 21/3/79 As part of **Operation Silver** a force of around 200 UNITA troops, with close support from a small team of **SADF SF** operators, attack a FAPLA garrison near Mupa on the Cuito River.
- 22/3/79 The **Selous Scouts** capture a ZIPRA Intelligence Officer by the name of Elliot Sibanda. He reveals Russian plans to provide ZIPRA with a conventional military capability consisting of five battalions of mechanized infantry and armoured formations. This is the first evidence of a tactical change from guerrilla warfare to conventional warfare in Rhodesia, which reflects the changing strategic landscape. This intelligence provides additional evidence that the various **Wars of Liberation** being fought in Southern Africa are localized theatres of the **Cold War**, because an element of this planned capability is the desire by the Russians to neutralize the Communist Chinese surrogates (ZANLA) in a post-Bush War Zimbabwe.
- 23/3/79 A well-planned seaborne SF raid, consisting of both Rhodesian and SADF units, attacks an oil storage facility in Beira, causing major economic disruption to Mozambique.
- 23/3/79 As part of **Operation Acrobat**, a joint force of **SADF SF** (4-Recce), Rhodesian SAS and RENAMO, launch a successful raid against the fuel depot at Beira/Munhava in Mozambique (Volker, 2010:570).
- 4/79 The GOC SF makes a decision to start a **Pseudo Operations Unit**. He appoints Major Neil Kriel from **Selous Scouts** to start what becomes known as **D40** and then **Project Barnacle** (see 1980 and 18/2/81). The unit is based at Renosterspruit Farm near Hartebeespoort Dam. According to Douglas Beveridge it is subsequently staffed by Trevor Floyd (formerly the RSM from 1-Recce), Gray Branfield, Darrel Watt, Danie Steyn (former Quartermaster from Selous Scouts), Danie Phaal, Phil Morgan and around 40 operators, two thirds of which are Black.
- 2/4/79 **Exercise Eagle Hill I** at the Army Battle School at Lohattha involving 72 Motorized Brigade and the Transvaal Horse Artillery (THA) is launched, lasting until 29/4/79 (Volker, 2010:345).
- 13/4/79 Rhodesian SF destroy the ferry at Kazangula after it is determined that it is being used to transport guerrilla fighters and materiel from Zambia into Botswana destined for Rhodesia.

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- 13/4/78 During **Operation Dinky**, a joint **SADF SF** (D Sqn SAS) and Rhodesian SAS (under the command of Capt. Peter Fritz), destroy the Kazangula Ferry on the Zambezi River at Kasane/Kazangula. This remains out of action for the rest of the Rhodesian Bush War (Volker, 2010:570).
- 29/4/79 **Exercise Eagle Hill I** at the Army Battle School at Lohatla involving 72 Motorized Brigade and the Transvaal Horse Artillery (THA) comes to an end (Volker, 2010:345).
- 5/79 The Lesotho Liberation Army (LLA) appears on the regional political scene, operating against the BCP, allegedly as the military wing of the BNP. Some believe that this is a pseudo-operation under the control of the **SADF SF**, but little credible evidence of this is forthcoming.
- 5/79 **Operation Latsa** is launched by SADF SF. This involves an undisclosed linkage to Reconnaissance Commando and SADF Military Intelligence. The objective is the creation of the Lesotho Liberation Army (LLA) as the armed wing of the Basutoland Congress Party (BCP) in order to counter the actions by Leabua Jonathan of the Basutoland National Party (BNP). Volker (2010:571) lists this as being “partially successful”.
- 3/5/79 Margaret Thatcher becomes Prime Minister in Britain.
- 17/5/79 Colonel Mike Hoare writes to the DG of **DONS**, Alec van Wyk, asking for a meeting to discuss the proposed Seychelles *coup d'état*. During the meeting, van Wyk agrees to discuss the planning in the **State Security Council**.
- 22/5/79 During a contact with **PLAN** in southern Angola, Capt. Van Wyk is killed in action, while Sgt. Kloosterziel and Sgt. Du Toit are wounded. In subsequent follow-up operations Sgt. Kloosterziel is killed in action.
- 22/5/79 During the reconnaissance of a SWAPO base in Southern Angola, a three man team from **SADF SF** (1-Recce) under the command of Capt Connie van Wyk, is ambushed in a Chana. Capt. Van Wyk and Sgt. Kloosterziel are both KIA, while Sgt. Nick du Toit is wounded and extracted by a helicopter from 3 Sqn SAAF (Volker, 2010:570).
- 27/5/79 Alec van Wyk informs Mike Hoare that the **State Security Council** had decided not to give support to the proposed Seychelles *coup d'état*.
- 6/79 **Koevoet** is created as a Special Operations unit active in the border area between SWA, Angola and Zambia. This is called **Ops-K** with their operational headquarters in Oshakati, also known as Zulu-Base, because of their radio callsign. They operate out of **Sector 10** into Angola up to Namacunde. (See Hooper, 1990 and Stiff, 1998).
- 6/79 Lt. Colonel Ron Reid-Daly is found guilty in a Court Martial and sentenced to a reprimand for an incident during an officer's function.
- 6/79 **SADF SF** (4-Recce) do their first close-in reconnaissance of the Cabinda Enclave, in order to do a tactical appreciation of possible future targets.
- 6/79 **SADF SF** (4-Recce) abort a reconnaissance mission to Malongo/Malembo in the Cabinda enclave after the submarine and Zodiac inflatable craft are detected by a new radar installation not previously known to exist (Volker, 2010:571).
- 7/79 **PLAN** engages in what they call the **Battle of Ondombe** in the Eastern Front of Zambia. The commander is Kamati kaShimuna (Volker, 2010:746). **Note:** An alternative date is listed as being 8/79 so this needs verification.
- 6/7/79 **SADF SF** (D Coy, 1-Para) launch **Operation Stoempot** (Steam Pot) with the objective of harassing and disrupting **PLAN** bases in SW Zambia. This lasts until 12/7/79 and is located

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around the Njinji forest in SW Zambia. During this operation 1 SADF KIA is recorded, but with “many guerrillas killed and bases destroyed”. This sets the foundation for many similar insertions by air, using a tactic known as a “parachute sweep”, enabling indirect approaches to targets, or harassment by company level combat teams, for extended periods of time (Volker, 2010:324). **Note:** This is a good example of the degree of experimentation then underway in the SADF, as tactics are being developed to counter the rapidly escalating threat.

9/7/79 **Exercise Eagle Hill II** at the Army Battle School at Lohatlha involving 71 Motorized Brigade is launched, lasting until 3/8/79 (Volker, 2010:345).

19/7/79 **SADF SF** (E Coy, 1-Para) launch **Operation Moonshine** in the Handabo area of Angola. This involves a parachute insertion for an assault on a **PLAN** base. The insertion is done at night some 10-15 km from the target. The force is then infiltrated on foot to attack at first light. The operation lasts until 23/7/79 (Volker, 2010:325).

31/7/79 **SADF SF** (E & F Coy, 1-Para) are inserted by air to form a stopper line during an assault by **32 Battalion** (Volker, 2010:325). The exact location of this operation is unknown, but it is in southern Angola.

1/8/79 A Commonwealth Conference takes place in Lusaka until 8 August during which the future of Zimbabwe is discussed. The Front Line States place pressure on Britain to recognize both ZANU and ZAPU.

27/8/79 **Exercise Blinkspies I (Shiny Spear)** at the Army Battle School at Lohatlha involving 81 Armoured Brigade is launched, lasting until 21/9/79 (Volker, 2010:345).

9/79 As part of **Operation Silver**, **SADF SF** help UNITA destroy a bridge at Menongue. (Photo of a bridge in proximity to Menongue across a tributary of the Okavango River destroyed by SADF SF courtesy of Dr. John Mendelsohn).



9/79 Fighting starts in Matabeleland and continues over a three month period to December, between ZANLA (with FRELIMO support) and ZIPRA (with MK support). Heavy fighting is reported during this time from Beit Bridge, Filabusi, Gwanda and Motopos. The SADF give air support in the form of **Operation Bowler**, which is based at Gwanda and forms the main support platform for **Fire Force Zulu**. (See Geldenhuys, 2007:183; and Wilkins, 2000).

9/79 **SADF SF** (1-Para) engage in a joint operation with Rhodesian SF, code named **Operation Storing (Stoppage)** by the SADF and **Operation Union** by the Rhodesians. The objective is general support to the Rhodesian SF then under growing pressure, in an area directly north of the Limpopo River. During the evolution of this operation, one company of paratroopers was parachuted across to assist the Rhodesians in a sweep through the dense bush, while a second company crossed the river on foot to establish a stopper line ((Volker, 2010:325).

9/79 **SADF SF** (D, E, F, G Coy & the Pathfinder Platoon of 1-Para; A Coy of 2-Para; B Coy of 3-Para) deploy as fire force support to the Rhodesian security forces during **Operation Bowler**. This lasts until 2/80 (Volker, 2010:324).

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- 2/9/79 **Operation Uric** is launched after intelligence assessments reveal that between April and July alone, 3,149 war deaths had occurred in Rhodesia, consisting of 1,808 guerrillas, 1,192 civilians (1,161 black and 31 white), with SF losses at 141 (Geldenhuis, 2007:178). This assessment reveals that a staggering 10,800 armed ZANLA guerrillas are currently operational inside Rhodesia, with a further 17,000 in the infiltration pipeline, of which around 50% would be inserted *via* the so-called Russian Front from Gaza Province in Mozambique. In addition to this recent captures indicated that 200 FRELIMO were operating inside Rhodesia. **Operation Uric** is thus designed to deal a decisive blow to the transport infrastructure needed to sustain these infiltrations. Five tactical bridges are targeted along with a pre-emptive strike against Mapai, Barragem and Maxaila. The entire RhAF is committed to this one operation (see Geldenhuis, 2007:178), as is a number of SADF SF elite specialists (see Diedericks, 2007:43). All five bridges are assaulted simultaneously by the SAS and prepared for demolition, which takes place at 16h30 dropping four (Barragem fails to fall). **Note:** **Operation Uric** is the Rhodesian name for this event, with **Operation Bootlace** denoting the SADF aspect.
- 2/9/79 The first serious deployment of SAAF combat aircraft after **Operation Polo** takes place in Zimbabwe/Rhodesia during **Operation Bootlace**. Significantly, SAAF Mirage and Buccaneer fighter aircraft are placed on alert to intercept MIG's from Tanzania if they became involved in the ground action. This represents a significant escalation of the Rhodesian conflict, threatening regional stability. South African SF (D Squadron SAS) is given three specific targets, all bridges over: the Changane River near Villa do Chibuto; near the Incomati River at Maximchopes; and at Choque. All of these targets are successfully destroyed.
- 5/9/79 A large scale attack is launched against ZANLA/FRELIMO 2 Brigade HQ at Mapai. This is called **Operation Bootlace** for the SADF element and **Operation Uric** for the Rhodesian element. Targets are allocated as follows: Bridge over the Changane River at Vila de Chibuto; Rail Bridge at Maximchopes Station; and the Road Bridge – D Sqn SAS (SADF SF). The area of operations is Mapai in Gaza Province, Mozambique, as well as Chigamane, Malvernia, Pafuri, Chicualacuala, Mpuzi, Combomune, Mabalane and Vila do Chibuto. Targets also included a Troposcatter base. The known command structure is as follows: Capt. Corrie Meerholz (D Sqn SAS); Major. Bert Sachse & Col. Jake Swart (Lynx Telstar); Capt. Dawie Fourie (SAAF); Rhodesian Forces (SAS, Rhodesian Air Force, Selous Scouts and RLI) (commander unknown). SADF SF (1 Para Bn) is on standby as a reserve force in South Africa. The operation is a success for the SADF SF elements (Volker, 2010:571).
- 6/9/79 A SAAF Puma helicopter (Number 164) under the command of Captain Paul Velleman transporting SF troops is shot down near Mapai during **Operation Bootlace**, killing the aircrew and all 11 soldiers on board. According to Geldenhuis (2007:179) this is, "the worst single military disaster of the **Bush War**". Geldenhuis reports the event as involving a Smersh SA 330 Puma from the SAAF and the KIA's as follows: Capt. Joey du Plooy, Capt. Charlie Small (the **Operation Uric** Demolitions Officers), Lt. Bruce Burns, Sgt. Michael Jones, Cpl Le Roy Duberley, Cpl Hugh Fry, Cpl Peter Fox, Tpr Jacobus Briel, Tpr J.M. Crow, Tpr Brian Enslin, Tpr Stephen King and Tpr David Prosser. This causes the South African Government to rethink its support to Rhodesia. **Note:** My source reports this event as involving Capt Paul Velleman whereas Geldenhuis reports it as involving Capt Joey du Plooy. It is possible that there were two events that have become confused due to the secrecy of the mission and lack of full public reporting.
- 7/9/79 **Operation Bootlace II** is an attack on the Mabalane Prison in Mozambique. The task is given to **SADF SF** (D Sqn SAS) under the command of Capt. Hannes Venter, but it is cancelled (Volker, 2010:571). This is a result of the downing of the SAAF Puma the previous day and the sudden loss of appetite for risk by the South African political leadership. The reason for the prison attack was to free potential **RENAMO** supporters and thus build their effective strength as a surrogate force.
- 10/9/79 The SADF SF component of **Operation Bootlace** returns to their base at the Durban Bluff.

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- 10/9/79 The **Lancaster House Conference** starts under the chairmanship of Lord Carrington, seeking consensus on Rhodesia's post-**Chimurenga** future.
- 10/9/79 All 1-Recce operators are withdrawn from **Operation Bootlace**, which is regarded by General Walls as the first tactical repulse of Rhodesian forces on external operations during the entire Bush War.
- 18/9/79 Two dredgers are sunk in Beira harbour by a combined **SADF SF** (4-Recce) and Rhodesian SAS team, in an attempt to close the harbour to shipping, and thus raise the stakes for Mozambican support to ZANLA and **MK**.
- 18/9/79 As part of **Operation Acrobat**, a joint **SADF SF** (4-Recce as D Sqn SAS) and Rhodesian SAS launch a sabotage mission against the Beira Harbour. The targets are: Two dredgers (Pungué & Matola); the dry dock; the ZANLA warehouse and armoury at the docks; and the main telephone exchange. The two dredgers are successfully destroyed but actions against the other targets are aborted (Volker, 2010:571).
- 21/9/79 **Exercise Blinkspies I (Shiny Spear)** at the Army Battle School at Lohattha involving 81 Armoured Brigade comes to an end (Volker, 2010:345).
- 1/10/79 **Exercise Eagle Hill III** at the Army Battle School at Lohattha involving 7<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division is launched, lasting until 26/10/79 (Volker, 2010:345).
- 8/10/79 Rhodesian SF destroy a bridge over the Chambeshi River in Zambia during **Operation Cheese**.
- 11/10/79 **SADF SF** (E Coy, 1-Para) is inserted by air at Okatale Kongwe, some 50-km north of the cutline, to act as a stopper group for a **32 Battalion** operation against **PLAN**. This is known as **Operation Kurktrekker (Cork Puller)** and the outcome is recorded as being successful (Volker, 2010:325).
- 17/10/79 The RENAMO leader Andre Matangaidze is killed in action during a raid on Vila Paiva de Andrade.
- 18/10/79 Afonso Dhlakama becomes the RENAMO leader at a ceremony in their Gorongozo base.
- 26/10/79 **Exercise Eagle Hill III** at the Army Battle School at Lohattha involving 7<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division comes to an end (Volker, 2010:345).
- 27/10/79 **SADF SF** launches a raid to destroy the bridge over the Cunene River at Xangongo, because it is being used to re-supply SWAPO fighters, but the raid is aborted. A similar raid on the pontoon bridge at Menongue, designed to occur simultaneously, is also aborted.
- 27/10/79 **SADF SF** (1-Recce) launch a series of operations against infrastructure designed to deny SWAPO logistical support. These targets include the pontoon bridge between Caiundo and Menongue (allocated to Major Bert Sachse and his team); the river bridge at Xangongo (allocated to Capt. Hannes Venter and his team); the Sierra de Leba Pass (allocated to Capt. Koos Verwey & Gert Eksteen); and the Humbai train tunnel (allocated to Lt. Frans van Wyk and Capt. Daan van Zyl and their respective teams). The first two targets are aborted but the third is successful and the fourth is partially successful (Volker, 2010:572).
- 28/10/79 **SADF SF** destroy various infrastructural targets in the Serra de Leba Pass as part of a larger operation designed to sever SWAPO logistical links to the coast. This includes a number of bridges and a railway tunnel.

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- 11/79 Rhodesian SF launch **Operation Manacle** to destroy strategic transport infrastructure in Mozambique capable of supporting ZANLA infiltrations. A bridge over the Zambezi near Tete is one of the targets.
- 11/79 Key transport infrastructure is destroyed in Zambia in a final attempt to stem the flow of ZIPRA forces into Rhodesia. A total of nine bridges are destroyed in Zambia during this operation, with **SADF SF** being directly involved with five of these. This is the last significant deployment of **SADF SF** in the Rhodesian theatre of operations.
- 11/79 Growing pressure mounts on Rhodesia to cease all military operations.
- 11/79 Lt. Colonel Ron Reid-Daly resigns from the Rhodesian Army and launches a legal action against senior members of the Rhodesian Government and Armed Forces. Allegations are made by Military Intelligence that the **Selous Scouts** are engaged in gun running and ivory poaching. **Note:** This unit started off with a very proud history (see Reid-Daly, 1982), but after it disbanded, elements of this unit became involved in a range of criminal activity across the region (see 6/79, 7/80, 3/4/83, 1984, 1/87, 29/3/87, 31/3/87 and 3/4/87; also refer to **D40** that evolves over time into **Project Barnacle** and the **Citizens Cooperation Bureau (CCB)** – see 4/79, 1980, 8/80, 13/11/80, 12/12/80, 29/1/81, 18/2/81, 16/8/81, 1982, 5/82, 8/82, 14/2/83, 1/11/85, 31/3/86, 4/8/86, 20/5/86 and 13/8/86).
- 11/79 **SADF SF** (1-Recce) launch a second attempt to destroy the bridge over the Cunene River at Xangongo (see 27/10/79). The team is under the command of Capt. Hannes Venter and the operation is again aborted (Volker, 2010:572).
- 11/79 **Operation Dice** is launched as a joint operation between **SADF SF** (1-Recce) and the Rhodesian SF (SAS). The objective is the destruction of a number of bridges in Zambia in order to prevent a conventional invasion of Rhodesia by ZANLA. The commander of the **SADF SF** is Major Bert Sachse and he has a team of 25 operators. The operation is successful with the destruction of 5 of the 9 bridges originally targeted (Volker, 2010:572).
- 11/79 A **SADF SF** (1-Recce) team under the command of Capt. Corrie Meerholz, supported by three Troops from **31 Battalion** and an element from UNITA, attempt to destroy a bridge in Angola. The radio operator is Vossie Vorster and the mission is aborted, allegedly because of “treachery” by the UNITA commander (Volker, 2010:572).
- 11/79 **SADF SF** engage in **Operation Whirlwind** in SW Zambia. Little is known of this operation and is listed only as “late 1979 – early 1980” (Volker: 2010:324). **Note:** This is probably part of **Operation Bowler** as the dates and units involved are consistent, so the most probable date is given here as being 11/79, but this needs to be verified.
- 11/79 **SADF SF** (A, B, D & F Coy, 1-Para; A Coy, 2-Para) launch **Operation Carrot** in the Tsumeb, Otavi and Otjiwarongo areas of SWA. This is described as being a COIN operation in a follow up to deep penetration operations by **PLAN**. No exact date is given, being listed only as “1979-1981” (Volker, 2010:325).
- 5/11/79 **Exercise Blinkspies II (Shiny Spear)** at the Army Battle School at Lohattha involving 8<sup>th</sup> Armoured Division and Olienhout Brigade is launched, lasting until 30/11/79 (Volker, 2010:345).
- 5/11/79 **SADF SF** (A & G Coy 1-Para) in support of the Rhodesian Regiment, engage in a parachute sweep during **Operation Bowler**. This lasts until 10/11/79 (Volker, 2010:324).
- 30/11/79 **Exercise Blinkspies II (Shiny Spear)** at the Army Battle School at Lohattha involving 8<sup>th</sup> Armoured Division and Olienhout Brigade comes to an end (Volker, 2010:345).
- 12/79 **PLAN** engages in a battle in the Omulondo area. The commander is Nangolo dhOmundonga (Volker, 2010:745).

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- 1/12/79 RENAMO launch their final attack on Espungabera with the full support on the Rhodesian Security Forces (mostly SAS). This is the last major action in the **Rhodesian Bush War** or **Second War of Chimurenga**.
- 10/12/79 **PLAN** attacks the SADF military base at Onyuulaye (Volker, 2010:747).
- 11/12/79 Lord Soames travels to Rhodesia to establish his future office as British Governor during the transition period to majority rule, commensurate with the near-final outcome of the Lancaster House Conference.

### 1980

- 1980 The **Total National Strategy** approach seeks to destabilize Soviet-backed forces in the region. RENAMO becomes a key vehicle for this strategy from a South African perspective given the loss of Rhodesian support.
- 1980 MID (SADF) launch **Operation Drama** at a date defined only as during the 1980s with the objective of covert destabilization of the Frontline States. This includes **SADF SF** (Volker, 2010:637). **Note:** Volker includes NIS as a partner, but this operation was never known to the author while operating out of NIS during the last quarter of the 1980s and into the 1990s. From the author's personal experience there was no close cooperation between NIS and MID on the ground, so this is unlikely, but needs independent verification by the reader.
- 1980 A study entitled *Co-operative Water Resources Development in Southern Africa – Report No. 5/80* of the Hydrological Research Unit at the University of Witwatersrand, finds that as much as 7% of the Zambezi River Mean Annual Runoff (MAR) at Katima Mulilo ( $95 \text{ m}^3\text{s}^{-1}$ ) could be diverted to South Africa, without having to develop storage facilities on the Zambezi River itself. This is evidence that the water, economic development and state security nexus within the emerging **Total Onslaught** paradigm is becoming stronger, with augmentation plans becoming increasingly sophisticated and ambitious. This feeds into the **CONSAS** thinking at the time (see Turton, 2003).
- 1980 SADF (Eastern Province Command and 6 SAI) engage in **Operation Rain**, which is support to the Transkei during a regional drought that lasts until 1981 (Volker, 2010:372).
- 1980 With the independence of Zimbabwe, **APLA** begin to operate from there into South Africa. Robert Mugabe is sympathetic to the PAC as it is ideologically aligned to his own thinking about the rejection of racial integration or whites having legitimate rights. Military and other support comes from China. Later on General Holomisa of the Transkei turns a blind eye to their activities (Volker, 2010:766).
- 1980 **SADF SF** (A, B, D & F Coy, 1-Para; A Coy, 2-Para) continue with **Operation Carrot** in the Tsumeb, Otavi and Otjiwarongo areas of SWA. This is described as being a COIN operation in a follow up to deep penetration operations by **PLAN**. No exact date is given, being listed only as “1979-1981” (Volker, 2010:325).
- 1980 **SADF SF** (A, E, F & G Coy, 1-Para) launch **Operation Loodvoet** (Lead Foot) in the Mutuanjamba area of southern Angola. This is a search and destroy mission with no further details on record (Volker, 2010:326).
- 1980 **PLAN** engages in a battle in the Ohamutwa area. The commander is Shilula Uudjombala (Volker, 2010:746).
- 1980 **PLAN** engages in a battle in the Ohamutwe (??) area. The commander is Mukolo (Volker, 2010:746). **Note:** Spelling is as retrieved from Volker and needs verification against the previous entry, which has a similar name but a different commander.

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- 1980 Given the close liaison between **PLAN** and FAPLA forces in southern Angola, the lines between these two military forces start to blur, causing confusion in the ranks of **32 Battalion** that has orders not to engage FAPLA (Nortje, 2003:9).
- 1980 Thirty one members of **32 Battalion** are killed in action, making this the worst year in terms of casualties for that particular unit in its entire history (Nortje, 2003:286).
- 1980 The total number of deaths in the SADF this year reported by Arm of Service is as follows: Army – 166 of which 108 are KIA; Air Force – 12 of which none are KIA; Navy – none. During this year a total of 6 **Honorus Crux** medals are awarded for bravery (Stiff, in Ramsden, 2009).
- 1980 UNITA consolidates its position in the south of Angola. It attacks and captures Mavinga, giving it access to an air support link from Zaire. Mavinga becomes important again when FAPLA tries to recapture it from **Cuito Cuanavale** in various actions during 3/81, 5/81 and 7/82.
- 1980 An operation known only as **Murphy's War** is planned for early 1980's. This involves a pseudo-truck column by **SADF SF (1-Recce)** under the command of Major John Murphy (hence the nickname of the operation) tasked to destroy the bridge over the Cunene at Xangongo. This is the third attempt at the same objective. The operation is aborted after it is discovered that the Red Cross use the bridge (Volker, 2010:572). **Note:** The author records similar movements by the Red Cross in the same area of operations in Chapter 5 of *Shaking Hands with Billy*. Pages 111 and 529 show the bridge after destruction (Turton, 2010). (See 23/8/81 for a photo of this bridge, and 27/10/79 and 11/79 for details of earlier attempts to destroy this bridge).
- 1980 Rhodesian Security Force Head Quarters develops **Operation Quartz** as a possible counter to an election victory by ZANU/ZANLA. This planning is in essence for a *coup d'état* against such a government. The SADF provides materiel for **Operation Quartz**, including Russian T-55 tanks and South African manufactured Eland-90 AFVs. A sub-set of this is **Operation Hectic** that targets Robert Mugabe for assassination.
- 1980 Former members of **Selous Scouts** travel to South Africa after they are unofficially disbanded in April and become 7-Recce, based at Renosterspruit Farm near the Hartebeespoort Dam. This has already been through a transition phase as **D40**, from which **Project Barnacle** was spawned. Barnacle is a special external operational capability focusing on urban targets in Botswana, Zimbabwe and Zambia using the **Selous Scouts** tried and trusted pseudo operations experience. Many war crimes are subsequently committed by this notorious (in the author's view shameful) unit. (See 4/79, 1980, 8/80, 13/11/80, 12/12/80, 29/1/81, 18/2/81, 16/8/81, 1982, 5/82, 8/82, 14/2/83, 1/11/85, 31/3/86, 4/8/86, 20/5/86 and 13/8/86). **Note:** Geldenhuys (2007:111) also has a dim view of the integrity of the Selous Scouts.
- 1980 An assassination attempt on Chris Hani in Lesotho fails.
- 1980 **MK** attacks inside South Africa escalate with a total of 19 recorded incidents, mostly the sabotage of low value targets, over the year.
- 1980 The Angolan economy is reported to earn around 90% of its foreign revenue from oil, mostly being pumped from the Cabinda enclave. This raises the oil industry as a potential target, because the revenues sustain the capacity of the Angolan government to wage war and support SWAPO and ANC guerrilla forces.
- 1980 **SADF SF (D40)** experiments with one of the first significant Small Teams tactics by launching **Operation Interrupt**. This consists of a 36 day insertion of a two-man team under the command of Capt Andre Diedericks with Cpl. Neves Matias as the second man tasked with the reconnaissance and later forward air control of a strike against a SWAPO

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mechanised training camp situated on the outskirts of Lubango (formerly Sa da Bandeira) (see Diedericks, 2007:55 – 6; Coetzee, 2007; and Volker, 2010:572).

- 1980 **SADF SF (D40)** launch **Operation Winter** under the command of Major Mike Curtin (former Selous Scouts) to recruit skills from overseas and generally revive Rhodesian networks still intact after the transition in that country (Volker, 2010:572).
- 1980 **SADF SF** launch **Operation Stingel** in Mozambique to assist RENAMO in various actions against FRELIMO in the wake of the Rhodesian security force collapse (Volker, 2010:573).
- 1980 **SADF SF (A & G Coy, 1-Para)** launch **Operation Hamer** into southern Angola. This is described as a search and destroy mission with no further details being known (Volker, 2010:326).
- 1/80 **MK** attack the Soekmekaar Police Station. Three guerrillas are captured - Ncinbithi Lubisi, Petrus Mashingo and Naphtali Manana - and later sentenced to death for this action.
- 17/1/80 **Exercise Blinkspies III (Shiny Spear)** at the Army Battle School at Lohattha involving 82 Mechanized Brigade is launched, lasting until 15/2/80 (Volker, 2010:345).
- 25/1/80 A three-man **MK** team takes hostages in the Nedbank branch in Silverton. The Police Task Force retakes the bank but civilian casualties occur. This is a propaganda victory for the ANC, but a tactical defeat for **MK**. **Note:** It is an open question whether the taking of civilian hostages in a commercial bank is a legitimate act of war or an act of terrorism. Opinion on this issue is polarized in contemporary South Africa, where the mythology of the **Armed Struggle** portrays all acts of armed aggression as being legitimate, by virtue of the fact that they were aimed at the liberation of a people oppressed by Apartheid (see also the **Magoos Bar** bombing on 14/6/86). The reader can decide for themselves.
- 27/1/80 The CIO attempt to assassinate Robert Mugabe using a car bomb when he is scheduled to fly from Maputo Airport as part of **Operation Hectic**. The operation fails.
- 27/1/80 **SADF SF** works with Rhodesian SF as part of **Operation Quartz** to assassinate Robert Mugabe by means of a car bomb. This is called **Operation Hectic** in the Rhodesian security forces, but it fails after being compromised by Danny Stannard of the CIO (Volker, 2010:572).
- 2/80 **SADF SF (1 Battalion of 44 Parachute Brigade)** plan **Operation Melba**. This is a planned attack on Assembly Point Juliet located 50-km north of the South African border in Rhodesia in support of Rhodesian SF. The objective is to ensure a victory by Bishop Abel Muzorewa. In the end Muzorewa loses the election to Robert Mugabe's ZANU-PF so the plan is aborted (Volker, 2010:325).
- 8/2/80 **SADF SF (E Coy, 1-Para; 2-Para)** launch **Operation Lemon** in the Handabo and Huambong area of southern Angola. This involves a helicopter insertion for purposes of a hot pursuit follow-up (Volker, 2010:325).
- 10/2/80 The Rhodesian SAS attempt to assassinate Robert Mugabe in the Fort Victoria area as part of **Operation Hectic**. The operation fails.
- 11/2/80 The **Quail Commission of Enquiry** into the possibility of independence for the Ciskei presents its findings. The report is overwhelmingly negative about the feasibility of such an eventuality.
- 15/2/80 **Exercise Blinkspies III (Shiny Spear)** at the Army Battle School at Lohattha involving 82 Mechanized Brigade comes to an end (Volker, 2010:345).

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- 24/2/80 A meeting is held between Ken Flower (CIO) and Gen. Peter Walls and Mozambican officials regarding the developments in Rhodesia.
- 3/80 The non-aggression pact between SA and Transkei is re-instated.
- 2/3/80 Rhodesian SAS plan to shoot down a passenger jet coming in from Mozambique with Robert Mugabe on board as part of **Operation Hectic**. The operation fails.
- 4/3/80 The Rhodesian election is declared free and fair with ZANU as the majority winner.
- 10/3/80 **Exercise Ditsem I** at the Army Battle School at Lohattha involving 72 Motorized Brigade is launched, lasting until 28/3/80 (Volker, 2010:345). **Note:** This formation has been on constant operational duty (not known from when) up to this point according to Volker. This gives an indication of the escalation of the conflict across the region.
- 17/3/80 **PLAN** attacks the SADF military base at Onayena (Volker, 2010:747).
- 20/3/80 **PLAN** attacks the SADF military base at Ontumba (Volker, 2010:747).
- 4/80 The **Southern African Development Coordinating Conference (SADCC)** is established as a regional counter-measure to **CONSAS**, which had been mooted by South Africa since 1974 (see 1979). **SADCC** becomes known as the “counter-constellation” because of its opposition to **CONSAS**.
- 4/80 **PLAN** engages in a battle in the Ohamukoka area. The commander is Katengela (Volker, 2010:746).
- 4/80 Youths in KwaZulu join a nation-wide school boycott, placing pressure on Buthelezi’s Cabinet.
- 4/4/80 Elections in Zimbabwe return Robert Mugabe to power. He immediately throws his weight behind the creation of **SADCC** as a way of undermining South African aspirations under the banner of **CONSAS**.
- 4/4/80 Rhodesian forces waiting for the signal to launch **Operation Quartz** become concerned about their future safety when the operation is abandoned. The **Selous Scouts** withdraw to their base at the Andre Rabie Barracks near Darwendale and effectively decide to disband in the near future. The 22-SAS decide, almost unanimously, to relocate to South Africa as a complete unit.
- 5/4/80 RENAMO forces still in Zimbabwe are hastily flown out to South Africa where they are housed at Phalaborwa in a base on the Letaba River known as Impala Ranch.
- 14/4/80 **Exercise Applause II** at the Army Battle School at Lohattha involving 82 Mechanized Brigade and 84 Motorized Brigade is launched, lasting until 2/5/80 (Volker, 2010:346). **Note:** **Exercise Applause I** was cancelled for reasons unknown.
- 15/4/80 **PLAN** attacks the SADF military base at Ruacana for the second time (see 4/79 & 18/1/87) (Volker, 2010:747).
- 17/4/80 The Zimbabwe National Army (ZNA) issues an order to **Selous Scouts** forbidding them to wear the insignia of the unit, which effectively ceases to exist officially from this moment on. Some operators depart for South Africa where they later form the nucleus of 7-Recce.
- 1/5/80 The South African Government signs an *Agreement with Reference to the Understanding Reached between the Governments of the RSA and the Kingdom of Swaziland in Respect of a Servitude to be Granted by Swaziland to SA for the Inundation of 3,800 acres (1,540 hectares) in Swaziland by the Pongolapoort Dam*. **Note:** This dam is built with the apparent

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intention of denying the water to Mozambique, because at the time of writing, the water resources have not yet been adequately utilized and the Pongolapoort Dam is regarded as somewhat of a white elephant, having been the subject of many international reviews, including the **World Commission on Dams** in 2000 (see Breen *et al.*, 1998). The **National Water Resources Strategy** of 2004 identifies this dam as a potential source of future water for the South African hinterland. The author is of the opinion that this is an example of using water as a weapon of war. During construction, the dam is fraught with technical problems, including structural weaknesses where the concrete arch joins the valley wall. The photo shows the Pongolapoort Dam at full supply level.



- 2/5/80 **Exercise Applause II** at the Army Battle School at Lohattha involving 82 Mechanized Brigade and 84 Motorized Brigade comes to an end (Volker, 2010:346). **Note:** **Exercise Applause I** was cancelled for reasons unknown.
- 25/5/80 **SADF SF** (A, B, C, D, E & F Coy, 1-Para) in support of **61 Battle Group** and supported by the SAAF, engage in **Operation Sceptic** at Chifufua, south-central Angola, some 100-km north of the cutline. Initially this is a targeted raid on the SWAPO **Smokeshell** Complex, by motorised and mechanized forces, but it develops into an extended operation as more weapon caches are discovered and the extent of the **Smokeshell** facility is made known. This is the first serious clash with FAPLA and mechanised units of **PLAN**. SWAPO loses its forward operational base, with around 380 PLAN KIA, as well as massive losses of materiel captured or destroyed by the SADF. The SADF losses are 17 KIA (Volker, 2010:326).
- 26/5/80 **Exercise Ditseem II** at the Army Battle School at Lohattha involving 72 Motorized Brigade and the THA is launched, lasting until 24/6/80 (Volker, 2010:345).
- 6/80 FRELIMO launch an offensive against RENAMO and capture key bases at Gorongoza and Siatonga.
- 1/6/80 An **MK** Special Operations Unit, known as the **Solomon Mahlangu Squad**, attacks four high-value targets inside South Africa simultaneously. These include the SASOL oil refinery, demonstrating a military sophistication hitherto unknown.
- 3/6/80 **SADF SF** (F Coy, 1-Para) support **Koevoet** in an offensive operation in southern Angola. This lasts until 4/6/80 (Volker, 2010:325).
- 3/6/80 **Operation Sceptic** escalates from a conventional mechanised and motorized attack when the **SADF SF** (1-Para) is inserted due to operational circumstances (Volker, 2010:326).
- 4/6/80 **Operation Sceptic** sees the withdrawal of **SADF SF** (1-Para) after their task has been done, leaving the mechanised and motorized operation to continue as originally planned (Volker, 2010:326). **Note:** This gives an insight into the tactical response capability of the SADF at the time, given that **SADF SF** could be mobilized at relatively short notice.
- 9/6/80 **PLAN** engages in a battle at **Smokeshell** in the Chifufua and Omulola areas of Angola. The commander is Phillip Nambuli Alweendo (Volker, 2010:746). **Note:** **Smokeshell** is the name of a SWAPO complex in Angola (see **Operation Sceptic** 25/5/78).
- 24/6/80 **Exercise Ditseem II** at the Army Battle School at Lohattha involving 72 Motorized Brigade and the THA comes to an end (Volker, 2010:345).

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- 30/6/80 **Operation Sceptic** comes to an end. SWAPO loses its forward operational base, with around 380 PLAN KIA, as well as massive losses of materiel captured or destroyed by the SADF. The SADF losses are 17 KIA. The **SADF SF** (1-Para) involvement is between 3-4/6/80 (Volker, 2010:326).
- 7/80 As a result of the SASOL raid, a contract is given to a company Security Specialists International (Pty) Ltd. This is owned by Capt. Ant White, formerly of the **Selous Scouts**. Lt. Col. Ron Reid-Daly joins this company.
- 7/80 Oliver Tambo announces that Buthelezi's IFP movement has emerged as an enemy of the people.
- 7/80 The Zimbabwe Government announces that it is downgrading the South African Embassy in Harare to the status of Trade Mission.
- 2/7/80 **Exercise Applause III** at the Army Battle School at Lohattha involving 8<sup>th</sup> Armoured Division is launched, lasting until 31/7/80 (Volker, 2010:346).
- 28/7/80 Russian intelligence officer Alexi Kozlov is arrested in South Africa. Interrogation reveals support by the Russians to the ANC, providing additional evidence that the local war of liberation is but a sub-theatre of the **Cold War**.
- 30/7/80 **SADF SF** (B Coy, 1-Para) launch **Operation Klipkop** (Rock Head) against the Chitado transit point, **PLAN TAC HQ** and supply depot located in Kaokoland 50-km east of Ruacana. This is in response to a **PLAN** mortar bombardment of Ruacana. The operation is much smaller than **Operation Sceptic**, but with all tactical objectives being met, yielding 25 PLAN KIA, with an unknown number taken POW and the destruction of a SWAPO and MPLA base. The operation ends on 1/8/80 (Volker, 2010:326).
- 31/7/80 **Exercise Applause III** at the Army Battle School at Lohattha involving 8<sup>th</sup> Armoured Division comes to an end (Volker, 2010:346).
- 8/80 A meeting takes place at Peka Bridge between PW Botha and Leabua Jonathan, where amongst other agenda items, the activities of the LLA are discussed between the two Prime Ministers. LLA actions drop off.
- 8/80 The GOC SF approves of **Operation Dual**, to be run by **Project Barnacle**. **Operation Dual** is the targeted killing of individuals in a way that cannot be traced back to the SADF and dumping their remains in the sea out of a Piper Seneca that had been procured for this purpose. No gunshots are used for the final killing, as that would leave evidence if the bodies were ever found, so **Project Coast** CBW concoctions are used instead. During 8/80 some **PLAN POW**'s that could not be 'turned' are murdered in this way. During an early evolution of **Operation Dual**, 3 victims had to be killed with hammers, because the sedatives failed. This prompted a rethink of the chemicals being used.
- 1/8/80 **Operation Klipkop** (Rock Head) ends, yielding 25 PLAN KIA, with an unknown number taken POW and the destruction of a SWAPO and MPLA base (Volker, 2010:326).
- 14/8/80 **Exercise Ditsem III** at the Army Battle School at Lohattha involving 71 Motorized Brigade is launched, lasting until 12/9/80 (Volker, 2010:345).
- 9/80 **PLAN** engages in a battle in the Oushini area. The commanders are Mhanda yaMhanda & Pius Joseph (Volker, 2010:746).
- 12/9/80 **Exercise Ditsem III** at the Army Battle School at Lohattha involving 71 Motorized Brigade comes to an end (Volker, 2010:345).

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- 10/80 **SADF SF** (G Coy, 1-Para) engage in **Operation Dorsland** (Thirst Land, possibly in recognition of the Dorsland Trek to the same area a century before) against the Iona signals base in the harsh desert mountains north of Marienfluss and the Cunene River in SW Angola. This involves a helicopter insertion from Ondangwa to Marienfluss, with further deployment 2 days later after a Recce unit confirms the target. The result is 27 PLAN KIA and the destruction of the base (Volker, 2010:326).
- 10/80 **SADF SF** (A & G Coy, 1-Para) engage in **Operation Butterfly** in support of **32 Battalion** against various **PLAN** bases in southern Angola. This involves the helicopter insertion of stopper groups as needed. The outcome is described as being successful (Volker, 2010:326).
- 18/9/80 **PLAN** attacks the SADF military base at Ongwediva for the first time (see 21/4/86) (Volker, 2010:748).
- 6/10/80 **Exercise Ditseem IV** at the Army Battle School at Lohatlha involving 7 Division is launched, lasting until 24/10/80 (Volker, 2010:345).
- 24/10/80 **Exercise Ditseem IV** at the Army Battle School at Lohatlha involving 7 Division comes to an end (Volker, 2010:345).
- 25/10/80 A meeting is held between DMI and RENAMO to discuss strategy.
- 10/11/80 **Exercise Applause IV** at the Army Battle School at Lohatlha involving 81 Armoured Brigade is launched, lasting until 3/12/80 (Volker, 2010:346).
- 13/11/80 **Operation Dual** kills 3 individuals, one being a **Project Barnacle** operative who had committed a security breach, by sedating them with chemicals and dumping their bodies out of a Piper Seneca into the Atlantic Ocean.
- 18/11/80 Afonso Dhlakama departs on a tour to France, Germany and Portugal in an attempt to drum up support for RENAMO. Papers captured by FRELIMO on 5/12/81 state that this trip is financed by the SADF.
- 12/80 RENAMO force levels are around 6,000 with about 2,000 in training.
- 3/12/80 **Exercise Applause IV** at the Army Battle School at Lohatlha involving 81 Armoured Brigade comes to an end (Volker, 2010:346).
- 4/12/80 A referendum is held in the Ciskei asking for a mandate for independence.
- 12/12/80 In a classified directive signed “Serfontein” the task of **Project Barnacle** is defined as operations that cannot be traced back to the SADF, including a range of covert actions such as chemical operations.

### 1981

- 1981 Nine members of **32 Battalion** are killed in action (Nortje, 2003:286).
- 1981 The total number of deaths in the SADF this year reported by Arm of Service is as follows: Army – 134 of which 59 are KIA; Air Force – 11 of which 2 are KIA; Navy – none; Medical Corps – 6 of which 2 are KIA. During this year a total of 20 **Honorus Crux** medals are awarded for bravery (Stiff, in Ramsden, 2009).
- 1981 **SADF SF** (A, B, D & F Coy, 1-Para; A Coy, 2-Para) continue with **Operation Carrot** in the Tsumeb, Otavi and Otjiwarongo areas of SWA. This is described as being a COIN operation in a follow up to deep penetration operations by **PLAN**. No exact date is given, being listed only as “1979-1981” (Volker, 2010:325).

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- 1981 **SADF SF** launch **Operation Makalani** (Volker, 2010:327). No further details are known.
- 1981 **SADF SF** (C Coy, 1-Para) launch **Operation Houtpaal (Wooden Pole)** at Cuamato in southern Angola (Volker, 2010:327). No further details are known.
- 1981 **SADF SF** (E Coy, 1-Para) launch **Operation Exerce** in the Cunene valley in southern Angola (Volker, 2010:327). This is described as an extended mopping up operation on foot, but no further details are known.
- 1981 A second assassination attempt on Chris Hani fails.
- 1981 SADF (Eastern Province Command and 6 SAI) complete **Operation Rain**, which is support to the Transkei during a regional drought that began in 1980 (Volker, 2010:372).
- 1981 **PLAN** engages in a battle in the Tchamutete (Tetchamutete) area of the North East Front in Southern Angola. This is known as the **Battle of RCHQ**. The commander is Martin Kapembe (Volker, 2010:746).
- 1981 The activities of the LLA escalate with 19 recorded incidents over the year.
- 1981 Flight Lt. Adriano Bomba defects from Mozambique by flying a MIG-17 into South African airspace and landing at a military base.
- 1981 Ronald Reagan becomes President of the USA, defeating Jimmy Carter. This opens up a new set of strategic relationships between South Africa and the USA.
- 1981 **SADF SF** launch **Operation Cat** tasked with the destruction of ANC HQ in Mozambique. The exact date and other details are not known. An electronic warfare (EW) mobile post was deployed during this operation responsible for electronic surveillance (Volker, 2010:573).
- 3/1/81 **SADF SF** (H Coy, 1-Para) engage in **Operation Zulu** in southern Angola. This is described as being area COIN operations with nothing more known (Volker, 2010:326).
- 29/1/81 **Operation Beanbag** is launched against **MK** targets based in three houses at Matola outside Maputo. One house is used by the **MK Police Machinery** to attack SAP targets, another by the **MK Sabotage Machinery** to attack tactical targets, and the third as an HQ facility. Intelligence is supplied by **Project Barnacle**. Joe Slovo is known to use the facility on occasion in his capacity as **MK** Chief of Staff, but he is not the primary target. This is the first offensive cross-border raid mounted by **SADF SF** out of South Africa, into neighbouring states, representing an escalation of hostilities. It is also the first offensive operation by 6-Recce made up mostly of former **Selous Scouts** members. Three operators are killed in action – Sgt. Ian Suttill, Sgt. Rob Hutchinson and Cpl. Jim Parks.
- 29/1/81 **Operation Beanbag** is launched by **SADF SF** (1-Recce and 6-Recce) with many former Rhodesian SAS members under the command of Colonel Garth Barrett. The operation takes place over two days ending on 30/1/81. The objective is the destruction of three **MK** strongholds at Matola 16 km inland from Maputo (Transit Facility, Sabotage Machinery/Matola Castle and Police Machinery). The operation is a success (Volker, 2010:573).
- 30/1/81 Corporal Trevor John Edwards, a British citizen and former soldier in the Rhodesian Army, deserts from **32 Battalion**, granting an interview to the Guardian in which he discloses that the **SADF** has a secret army known as the **Buffalo Soldiers**. This compromises the secrecy that had until then protected that unit from public scrutiny (Nortje, 2003:54 & 256).
- 2/81 RENAMO force levels are estimated to be around 10,000 trained fighters.

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- 2/81 **SADF SF** supported by SAAF launch **Operation Interrupt**, which is an attack on a SWAPO base south of Lubango in Angola. The target is the Jumbo Mechanised Training facility that was supposedly to have Sam Nujoma taking the salute at a formal parade of trainee soldiers. The operation failed because of vacillation at political level, which resulted in a delayed launch, compounded by an overshoot of the target by SAAF Buccaneers. Only 5 SWAPO were KIA (Volker, 2010:573). **Note:** This is a carbon copy of similar **Selous Scouts** operations in Mozambique and shows the extent to which skills transfer was having an influence on operational tactics.
- 2/81 **PLAN** attacks the SADF military base at Okalongo for the first time (see 29/3/86 & 16/8/86) (Volker, 2010:747).
- 18/2/81 Gen Fritz Loots issues a classified directive stipulating that **Project Barnacle** will be responsible for the elimination of ‘own forces’ who had become a threat to clandestine operations. **Note:** This is a significant turning point, because in essence it involves murder by the State, of operatives and soldiers who might be questioning orders. The author’s own personal dilemma, when he is later involved in sensitive Special Operations, must thus be interpreted in this light (see 29/7/86 for another example of this) (see Turton, 2006). In essence, **Project Barnacle** becomes prosecutor, judge and executioner with no checks and balances, from this moment on. This means that if an officer decides to follow their conscience and refuse to obey an order they regard as being illegal, then they could expect to be murdered by elements of the state security apparatus as a direct result. This is why so many claim they were “just following orders” when the **TRC** starts to hear cases (see 1995, 15/4/96, 31/10/96, 5/6/98 and 4/99). In short, this is a crime against humanity and indicates the extent of Hawkish paranoia in Pretoria. This also contextualizes the Hawks versus Doves dynamic at work in the country at this time (see Chapter 10 in Turton, 2006). **Project Barnacle** is now poised to commit a series of war crimes.
- 26/2/81 As a result of the negative publicity arising from the desertion of Cpl. Trevor John Edwards, (see 30/1/81), an interview is granted to Stephen Glover of the London Daily Telegraph at **32 Battalion HQ Buffalo Base**. He is also given access to an operational unit tracking SWAPO after they had attacked a SADF base two weeks earlier (Nortje, 2003:55).
- 3/81 **Project Coast**, under the command of Dr. Wouter Basson, is formally brought under the overall command of GOC SF.
- 3/81 **SADF SF** launch **Operation Interrupt** with the objective of disrupting SWAPO’s conventional training facilities at Jumbo south of Lubango in Angola. This operation fails, because a political decision is made not to proceed with the planned air strike, because Sam Nujoma is known to be in the **Jumbo Mechanised Training Base** at the time, and his potential death is considered to be an unnecessary escalation that would serve no tactical purpose.
- 3/81 FAPLA try to recapture Mavinga from their stronghold at **Cuito Cuanavale**, but are rebuffed by UNITA.
- 1/3/81 Two former **Selous Scouts** soldiers (Sgt. Peter McNielage and Sgt. Andy Balaam) start to work on a security contract in the Transkei.
- 3/3/81 President Ronald Reagan describes South Africa as “a friendly country, a wartime ally, and a country of strategic importance to the Free World” (Welsh, 2000:480).
- 9/3/81 Media reports from Mozambique indicate that an Army Captain by the name of Alcino Chivite has been arrested for supplying intelligence to the **CIA** operating out of the American Embassy in Maputo. This leads to the PNG expulsion of various US Embassy staff and the souring of relations between the USA and Mozambique.

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- 12/3/81 **Exercise Aggressor I** at the Army Battle School at Lohattha involving 73 Motorized Brigade is launched, lasting until 9/4/81 (Volker, 2010:346).
- 4/81 Under Secretary of State for Africa, Chester Crocker, makes an official visit to Mozambique to discuss the PNG incident, but relations between Mozambique and the USA remain strained over allegations of American complicity with South Africa in regional destabilization.
- 9/4/81 **Exercise Aggressor I** at the Army Battle School at Lohattha involving 73 Motorized Brigade comes to an end (Volker, 2010:346).
- 5/81 6-Recce disintegrates after the Commanding Officer resigns, taking with him a number of former SAS operators. The experiment to absorb an entire unit from another country has failed. Later analysts like Peter Stiff ascribe this failure to cultural differences between the SADF and Rhodesian SF units. (See Stiff, 1999; 2001).
- 5/81 FAPLA try to recapture Mavinga from their stronghold at **Cuito Cuanavale**, but are rebuffed by UNITA for the second time.
- 11/5/81 **Exercise Mamba I** at the Army Battle School at Lohattha involving 8<sup>th</sup> Division, 82 Mechanized Brigade and 84 Motorized Brigade is launched, lasting until 9/6/81 (Volker, 2010:346). Note: 84 Motorized Brigade deploys operationally as part of **Exercise Mamba II**.
- 6/81 **SADF SF** (D Coy, 1-Para) engage in **Operation Ceiling** in southern Angola. This is described as being a search and destroy mission against **PLAN** and FAPLA, yielding 60 **PLAN** KIA with no own force casualties. During the attack a FAPLA base is allegedly destroyed “by accident” with 9 FAPLA KIA (Volker, 2010:326).
- 9/6/81 **Exercise Mamba I** at the Army Battle School at Lohattha involving 8<sup>th</sup> Division, 82 Mechanized Brigade and 84 Motorized Brigade comes to an end (Volker, 2010:346). **Note:** 84 Motorized brigade deploys operationally as part of **Exercise Mamba II** indicating a blurring of the lines between an exercise and an operation at this time, when increased demands are being made of the SADF.
- 10/6/81 A contract is signed by George Matanzima of Transkei and Security Services International (Pty) Ltd, for the provision of a Special Forces capability in the Transkei.
- 7/81 Brigadier Keswa of the Transkei Defence Force is charged with attempted fraud.
- 7/81 **SADF SF** (D & H Coy, 1-Para) supporting SWATF and **32 Battalion** engage in **Operation Carnation** in southern Angola. Arising from the success of **Operation Sceptic**, SWAPO moves its bases closer to FAPLA for protection, so a number of small skirmishes occur in a strip less than 25-km north of the cutline. A number of foot and mobile search and destroy actions yield 225 **PLAN** KIA, but the success is limited by the fact that the SWAPO bases further north remain out of reach by order (Volker, 2010:326).
- 6/7/81 **Exercise Aggressor II** at the Army Battle School at Lohattha involving 72 Motorized Brigade is launched, lasting until 5/8/81 (Volker, 2010:346).
- 25/7/81 **Operation Dual** collects 4 victims at Lanseria Airport and after sedating them with **Project Coast** concoctions and dumps their naked bodies into the Atlantic Ocean off Namibia. **Note:** This is a war crime and cannot in any way be condoned as a legitimate act of war.
- 27/7/81 **Operation Dual** kills 3 SWAPO POW's after taking off from Lanseria Airport. **Note:** This is a war crime and cannot in any way be condoned as a legitimate act of war.

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- 31/7/81 **Operation Mixer** being run by SADF SF results in the assassination of Joe Gqabi, the ANC Chief Representative in Harare. Gqabi is succeeded by Mampane Mazimba.
- 5/8/81 **Exercise Aggressor II** at the Army Battle School at Lohatla involving 72 Motorized Brigade comes to an end (Volker, 2010:346).
- 8/8/81 A small team of **SADF SF** engage an armoured column consisting of Russian-made BTR and BRDM AFV's moving between Ngiva (Ongiva) and Xangongo. The convoy is destroyed but two SF operators are killed in action – L.Cpl. Miletta and Rfn. Makoena.
- 9/8/81 **SADF SF** (1-Recce & 5-Recce under the command of Capt Jake Jacobs) engage in a number of successful road ambushes between Ngiva and Xangongo as part of **Operation Carnation** (Ceiling) (Volker, 2010:573).
- 14/8/81 An **SADF SF** team is inserted by air into Angola with the objective of disrupting the movement of men and materiel along the Cahama Road north of Xangongo. L.Cpl. W. Spies is killed in this action.
- 14/8/81 **SADF SF** (1-Recce & 5-Recce under the command of Capt Corrie Meerholz) engage in a number of successful road ambushes between Ngiva and Xangongo as part of **Operation Carnation** (Ceiling) (Volker, 2010:573).
- 16/8/81 **Project Barnacle** operatives sabotage the Inkomo Barracks, former HQ to **Selous Scouts**. Geldenhuys (2007:198) notes that a heavy arsenal of 455 and 900 kg Air Force bombs were stored there, making the target legitimate.
- 19/8/81 The Foreign Ministers of Lesotho and South Africa meet to discuss joint concerns including LLA and ANC activities.
- 23/8/81 **SADF SF** (D, E & H Coy, 1-Para) including **61 Mechanised Battalion**, **32 Battalion** and SWATF, supported by the SAAF, collectively engage in **Operation Protea**. This consists of both motorized and mechanized assaults using three task forces against **PLAN** bases near Xangongo and Ngiva, all located close to FAPLA bases for protection. Ngiva is 40-km north of the cutline and Xangongo is 100-km west of Ngiva, the entire operation being confined to the east of the north-south line running through Ngiva. This is the largest SADF/SWATF operation before **Operation Askari**, as well as the first brigade level resistance by FAPLA. Both Xangongo and Ngiva are destroyed with the loss of around 1,000 **PLAN** and FAPLA KIA. Several Russian officers are KIA and a Russian WO is taken POW, with the loss of 10 SADF KIA. A total of 200 logistics vehicles are captured and many more are destroyed, so the operation is an overwhelming success (Volker, 2010:327).
- 23/8/81 **Operation Protea**, a conventional assault, is launched in support of **Operation Carnation** and **Operation Ceiling**, which are ongoing SF actions designed to disrupt logistical movement between Ngiva and Xangongo, after it is discovered that a force build-up has occurred in these two towns. **Operation Protea** consists of two Task Forces moving on each bank of the Cunene River. The first Task Force blocks Cuban and FAPLA intervention from Humbe, while the second attacks Xangongo on 24 August. They then move through Mongua, where they engage a blocking force and take Ngiva (Ngiva) on 26 August after two days of heavy



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fighting. **Operation Protea** becomes a watershed, because SADF holds Ngiva and Xangongo until the **Lusaka Accords** in 1984, using these as forward operational bases into Angola. (Photo showing battle damage to the bridge across the Cunene River at Xangongo taken by the author during combat operations after **Operation Protea**). (See reference to **Murphy's War** in early 1980, as well as 27/10/79 and 11/79 for details of previous attempts to destroy this bridge).

- 23/8/81 **Operation Protea** is launched and lasts until 10/9/81 (Volker, 2010:573).
- 24/8/81 **Exercise Mamba III** at the Army Battle School at Lohattha involving 81 Armoured Brigade and 84 Motorized Brigade is launched, lasting until 19/9/81 (Volker, 2010:346).
- 9/81 Two bombs are detonated in Lesotho, allegedly by the LLA.
- 9/81 A Military Intelligence operation confirms that the New York based **South African Military Refugees Aid Fund (SAMRAF)** is linked to **SALSCOM**, SWAPO and the ANC. The *raison d'être* of SAMRAF is to undermine the morale of the SADF.
- 9/81 **PLAN** engages in a battle in the Omasipa area of Angola. The commander is Kamati kaShihepo Mbolongodjo (Volker, 2010:746).
- 10/9/81 **Operation Protea** comes to an end. Ngiva is successfully captured but Cahama is not taken (Volker, 2010:573).
- 19/9/81 Colonel Mike Hoare meets with Gert Rothman of the NIS in the Elangeni Hotel to discuss the proposed Seychelles *coup d'état*. Materiel requirements are tabled. Rothman agrees to take these to the SSC for a decision.
- 19/9/81 **Exercise Mamba III** at the Army Battle School at Lohattha involving 81 Armoured Brigade comes to an end (Volker, 2010:346). **Note:** The fact that **Operation Protea** has happened concurrently indicates the growing capacity to mount large scale military offensives on multiple fronts at this time, but also suggests a growing demand on the national economy as manpower is increasingly drawn from the Active Citizen Force (ACF).
- 23/9/81 Jimmy Claassens of NIS informs Colonel Mike Hoare that the SSC has approved the Seychelles *coup d'état*, but informs him that the operation is to be run by the SADF on the decision by PW Botha in his capacity as Chairman of the SSC (see 6/10/81 and 25/11/81).
- 24/9/81 Colonel Mike Hoare meets with Brigadier's Daan Hamman and Knoetze at the ZANZA buildings in Proes Street, Pretoria. Materiel requirements are discussed.
- 10/81 The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Southern Africa adopts a motion that is ambivalent to the issue of conscientious objectors.
- 10/81 The LLA allegedly launch a mortar attack against a Security Force base in Lesotho.
- 10/81 Anton Rupert, a leading Afrikaner businessman, calls for a "Third Trek ... away from discrimination – towards participation in freedom by all population groups" (Welsh, 2000:484).
- 5/10/81 SADF (Eastern Province Command and 6 SAI) engage in **Operation Ciskei**, which is support to the Ciskei during its independence celebrations (Volker, 2010:372).
- 5/10/81 **Exercise Aggressor III** at the Army Battle School at Lohattha involving 7<sup>th</sup> Division and 71 Motorized Brigade is launched, lasting until 3/11/81 (Volker, 2010:346).

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- 6/10/81 A large cache of weapons is delivered by the SADF to Colonel Mike Hoare for which a receipt is signed. This later becomes evidence in a court case begun in Pietermaritzburg on 10/3/82.
- 8/10/81 Brigadier Daan Hamman informs Colonel Mike Hoare that interest in the proposed weapons importer is being shown by security officials in the Seychelles.
- 15/10/81 During **SADF SF** operations in Mozambique with RENAMO, 3 operators are killed in action. Peter Stiff later determines that these are Lt. Alan Gingles, Rfn. B. Michael and Rfn. F. Tombo. (See Stiff, 1999; 2001).
- 15/10/81 **SADF SF** (5-Recce) launch a sabotage mission in support of RENAMO. The operation is unsuccessful with 3 SADF SF KIA (Lt. Alan Gingles, former Selous Scouts; Rfn. B. Michael and Rfn. F. Tombo) and 1 RENAMO KIA (Volker, 2010:573).
- 31/10/81 An advance party of mercenaries enters the Seychelles with weapons concealed in their hand luggage. They successfully make it through customs and establish a safe house in a villa called Fairview in the small hamlet of La Misère.
- 11/81 **SADF SF** damage the bridge over the Pungwe River in Mozambique in an attempt to cut off oil and other logistical support to Zimbabwe. The bridge is out of operation until the rail portion is brought back into operation on 17/12/81. The road bridge remains out of service until a temporary military bridge is completed in mid 1982.
- 11/81 **SADF SF** (5-Recce) launch a sabotage operation 50 km east of Beira on the Mutare road. The objective is the destruction of a road and railway bridge which is executed successfully (Volker, 2010:573).
- 1/11/81 **Operation Daisy** is launched against Cheteguera, because it is discovered that elements had regrouped after the earlier **Operation Protea** raid.
- 1/11/81 **Operation Daisy** is launched using **SADF SF** (D & H Coy, 1-Para; 3-Para) in support of **61 Mechanised Battalion, 4-SAI** and SWATF, supported in turn by the SAAF. This is a follow-up operation arising from intelligence obtained during a series of earlier operations, located near Cheteguera 28-km north of the cutline. One objective is the neutralization of the **PLAN** Bambi complex located 170-km north of the cutline in the vicinity of Cheteguera, and a subsidiary base located at Ionde 120-km north of the cutline. This results in the deepest penetration into Angola since the **Angolan Civil War**. No contact is made with FAPLA ground forces, but an Angolan MIG 21 is shot down by a SAAF Mirage. The operation ends on 20/11/81 (Volker, 2010:327).
- 3/11/81 **Exercise Aggressor III** at the Army Battle School at Lohattha involving 7<sup>th</sup> Division and 71 Motorized Brigade comes to an end (Volker, 2010:346).
- 13/11/81 **SADF SF** destroy the buoys marking the entrance to Maputo harbour.
- 13/11/81 **SADF SF** (5-Recce under the command of Major Bert Sachse) with the support of the SA Navy, destroy 8 marker buoys in Beira harbour. The mission is a partial success with one of the 9 buoys remaining after the raid (Volker, 2010:573).
- 20/11/81 **Operation Daisy** comes to a successful end (Volker, 2010:327).
- 25/11/81 An attempted *coup d'état*, under the leadership of mercenary Colonel Mike Hoare, is foiled in the Seychelles when a customs officer checks the hand luggage of one mercenary, finding a concealed AK47. Weapons had been supplied by the SADF. This operation, typical of Hawkish planning under the **Total Onslaught** paradigm, is a fiasco and brings serious consequences for South Africa. Peter Stiff makes an unconvincing case, using flawed logic,

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that NIS is involved by virtue of the presence of Martin Dolincheck (see 24/7/78, 23/9/81, 6/10/81 and 9/2/83). (See Stiff, 1999; 2001).

- 30/11/81 **SADF SF** launch **Operation Kerslig** (Candlelight) after it is determined that FAPLA is providing logistical support to SWAPO. This operation centres on a raid into Luanda harbour where oil storage facilities are destroyed. Capt. A. de Kok is killed in action and Cpl. Kloppers and one other operator are seriously wounded. Four Honorus Crux medals are awarded for this action – Lt. F. Fourie, S.Sgt. J. Greef, Cpl. S. Fourie and Cpl. Kloppers.
- 30/11/81 **SADF SF** (1-Recce & 4-Recce under the command of Capt. A.T.P. de Kock) attack oil installations in Luanda harbour, Angola during **Operation Kerslig** (Candle Light). The raid is a success but Capt. De Kock and Cpl. Kloppies Kloppers are KIA. The Honorus Crux is awarded to Lt. Frans Fourie, S.Sgt. Jack Greef, Cpl. Sam Fourie for this action (Volker, 2010:573).
- 12/81 Ciskei becomes independent with Lennox Sebe as President.
- 5/12/81 FRELIMO soldiers find documents after an attack on RENAMO's base at Garagua, which give considerable details of covert SADF support to the movement (see **Operation Bush Talk** in Chapter 14 of Turton, 2006).
- 14/12/81 **PLAN** attacks the SADF military base at Okahala (Volker, 2010:748).
- 16/12/81 RENAMO forces attack the Beira – Mutare railway line, destroying it in three places, as part of **Operation Altar** being run by the SADF SF.

### 1982

- 1982 Eleven members of **32 Battalion** are killed in action (Nortje, 2003:286).
- 1982 The total number of deaths in the SADF this year reported by Arm of Service is as follows: Army – 152 of which 66 are KIA; Air Force – 21 of which 9 are KIA; Navy – 17 of which none are KIA; Medical Corps – none. During this year a total of 9 **Honorus Crux** medals are awarded for bravery (Stiff, in Ramsden, 2009).
- 1982 Commandant Deon Ferreira, the third Officer Commanding **32 Battalion** since 1979, responsible for developing that unit into a significant fighting force with an impressive history of success, hands over command to Commandant Eddie Viljoen (Nortje, 2003:76).
- 1982 With the **Rhodesian Bush War** over, a major influx of white foreigners of various nationalities into the SADF occurs (Nortje, 2003:57). (**Note:** They bring a variety of different skills and experiences with them, but they also bring baggage).
- 1982 SADF (Eastern Province Command and 6 SAI) launch **Operation Sprinkler**, which is support to the Transkei during a regional drought that began in 1980 (see **Operation Rain**) (Volker, 2010:372).
- 1982 SADF (Eastern Province Command and 6 SAI) launch **Operation Digestus**, which is aid to the Ciskei during a regional drought that began in 1980 (Volker, 2010:372).
- 1982 The **Provincial Synod of the Roman Catholic Church** adopts a motion supporting conscientious objectors.
- 1982 The reign of King Sobhuza II of Swaziland ends (see 1921).
- 1982 Chris Hani is promoted to Political Commissar and Deputy Commander of **MK**. He is transferred from Lesotho to Maputo to work closely with Joe Slovo in his capacity as **MK** Chief of Staff.

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- 1982 FW de Klerk is elected to the **Transvaal** National Party leadership. He serves in Botha's Cabinet until 1985.
- 1982 A **Southern African Defence Zone** is mooted by South Africa, being founded on a series of bilateral non-aggression treaties. This would embrace Namibia, Botswana, Swaziland and Zimbabwe to counter the presence of East German troops in Angola and Mozambique. This is another example of the **Total Onslaught** paradigm and the preference of legal agreements rather than direct military confrontation (see Turton, 1999; 2007; 2008).
- 1982 By the end of 1982, **Project Barnacle** is running into human resource constraints. Commentators like Peter Stiff lament the fact that this causes a "South Africanization" of the Unit (Stiff, 2001:117), suggesting that only former Rhodesians had the real capacity to mount operations of the type that **Project Barnacle** had been involved with until then.
- 1982 **Operation Altar** is launched. This is the official support by the SADF to RENAMO, replacing the earlier **Operation Mila** and remains until 1984. The first hopper radio communications are used during this operation (Volker, 2010:574).
- 1982 **SADF SF** (elements of both 4 and 5-Recce) launch **Operation Force**, which is a long-range reconnaissance of a large road and railway bridge spanning the Pungwe River upstream of the port of Beira in the Sofala Province of Mozambique. This results in a 60-day strategic reconnaissance refining the **SADF SF** Small Teams tactics to a new level of sophistication. During this operation a distance of 450 km is covered on foot without detection by FRELIMO (see Diedericks, 2007:68-74).
- 1982 **SADF SF** (4-Recce, 5-Recce, **D40**) under the command of Lt. A. Diedericks, supported by RENAMO, launch **Operation Force** 80 km from the mouth of the Pungué River near Beira in Mozambique. A road bridge is destroyed while a railway bridge is rendered unusable because of structural damage (Volker, 2010:574).
- 1982 **SADF SF (D40)** under the command of Lt. A. Diedericks, launch a 1.5 month deep penetration small team operation between Menongue and Cuito Cuanavale in Angola. The operation was a failure because no aircraft were shot down, but many lessons were learned about small team operations that influenced future actions (Volker, 2010:574). **Note:** Indications are that **D40** is a temporary experimental unit into which former **Selous Scouts** had also been recruited. There is a cultural clash and with hindsight it appears as if Lt. Diedericks is uncomfortable with what is happening in **D40** so he does all he can to get transferred out.
- 1982 **PLAN** engages in what is known as the **Hot Pursuit Battle** in the Ombanja area. The commanders are Hollo Ulenga & Cornelius Mundjwa (Volker, 2010:746).
- 1982 SADF SF launch **Operation Wetwind** in Lesotho against MK targets. No more information is known (Volker, 2010:575).
- 1982 SADF SF launch **Operation Mountain** in Lesotho against MK targets. No more information is known (Volker, 2010:575).
- 1982 SADF SF launch **Operation Sprinkaan** in Botswana against MK targets. No more information is known (Volker, 2010:575).
- 2/82 **PLAN** attacks the SADF military base at Etoto (Volker, 2010:748).
- 1/2/82 **Exercise Panther I** at the Army Battle School at Lohattha involving 82 Mechanized Brigade is launched, lasting until 2/3/82 (Volker, 2010:346).

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- 2/3/82 **Exercise Panther I** at the Army Battle School at Lohattha involving 82 Mechanized Brigade comes to an end (Volker, 2010:346).
- 5/82 **Project Barnacle** operators raid the Zimbabwe Air Force base at Thornhill, Gweru.
- 5/82 The Minister of Defence announces in Parliament that 312 men are in detention for refusing to undertake military training. The issue of **Conscientious Objection** starts to become an issue from this point onwards.
- 5/1/82 Capt. Robinson and his Puma helicopter is shot down in southern Angola killing himself, his co-pilot Capt. J. Robinson, Lt. M. Earp and thirteen paratroops that are being ferried to a forward offensive position. Sgt Ken Dalgleish is one of those killed in this action. The photo shows Ken Dalgleish fishing with his family and friends at Mazeppa Bay in the Transkei shortly before he is KIA, shown courtesy of his father Bill Dalgleish (see Turton, 2006).



**Photo of Sgt. Ken Dalgleish taken while shark fishing at Mazeppa Bay, shortly before he was KIA in Angola on 5/1/82.**

- 5/1/82 Mercenaries captured during the abortive Seychelles *coup d'état* go on trial in Mahé, facing charges of treason, which carries the death penalty.
- 2/82 Neil Aggett, a labour activist, dies in custody. Steve Whitehead, a security policeman, is made the unwitting scapegoat and is wrongly stigmatized for life (see Labuschagne, 2002). Whitehead eventually joins NIS as a Counter Espionage officer and uninformed people assume that NIS is involved in the death of Aggett, by virtue of this career move.
- 2/82 **SADF SF (2-Recce)** despatch a training team to RENAMO as part of **Operation Altar**.
- 2/82 A secret non-aggression pact is signed between South Africa and Swaziland that seeks to reward Swaziland for not harbouring Liberation Movement guerrillas on its territory. This is known officially under the bland and uninformative name of *Agreement between South Africa and Swaziland*. This secret agreement is made public only in 3/84.
- 3/82 **SADF SF** launch **Operation Super** against SWAPO after locating a large infiltration route through the Cambeno Valley in southern Angola. The first skirmish sees 21 SWAPO fighters killed, but the reconnaissance team is compromised and almost over-run. They call for air support and reinforcements and in a second action on 13 March, more than 200 guerrillas are killed after they put up a spirited resistance.
- 3/82 **SADF SF (D Coy, 1-Para; 32 Battalion)** launch **Operation Super** at Iona in the Cambeno Valley, north of Kaokoland in SW Angola. The 1-Para objective is to provide support fire and stopper groups for the **32 Battalion** attack on the **PLAN** base at Iona. During the

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operation **32 Battalion** members are airlifted by helicopter. The outcome is described as a success with the destruction of the **PLAN** attempts to open a new front at Kaokoland (Volker, 2010:328).

- 10/3/82 **PLAN** attacks the SADF military base at Oshimpholo (Volker, 2010:748).
- 10/3/82 The trial of the Seychelles *coup d'état* mercenaries that returned to South Africa in a hijacked Air India aircraft starts in Pietermaritzburg. They are charged with hijacking a civilian airliner and not with planning a *coup*. Most are later found guilty and sentenced accordingly to prison terms.
- 13/3/82 The media gives coverage to the activities of **32 Battalion** in which it is reported that during **Operation Super**, 201 SWAPO were KIA with the loss of 3 members of the unit KIA (Nortje, 2003:58).
- 4/82 **SADF SF** (E & G Coy, 1-Para) launch **Operation Yahoo** in the Tsumeb, Grootfontein and Otavi areas of SWA. This is described as a series of COIN operations followed by deep penetration infiltrations. This lasted until 6/82 (Volker, 2010:328). **Note:** The fact that operations are taking place so far south of the Red Line indicates that **PLAN** is having an impact. Little of this was known at the time as these actions were out of the defined Sector 10 Operational Area, so they would have caused public concern.
- 13/4/81 **Operation Cambeno** involves the insertion of a team of operators from **SADF SF** (5-Recce) in the area around Iona in support of **Operation Super**. No more details of this operation are known (Volker, 2010:574).
- 13/3/82 **Operation Super** is launched to counter SWAPO attacks in White farming areas from Iona and Cambeno Valley to Opuwo and Outjo. The units deployed include 5-Recce (with TAC HQ at Marienfluss) under the command of Kmdt. Charl Naude, Koevoet (based at Opuwo), **32 Battalion** (TAC HQ at Ruacana) and the SAAF. The operation lasts two days ending 14/3/82 with 201 SWAPO KIA, 3 32 Battalion KIA and the awarding of five Honorus Cruxes (Volker, 2010:574).
- 14/3/82 **Operation Super** ends.
- 20/3/82 **MK** attacks an Administration Board office at Langa. Intelligence reports indicate that this attack is planned and supported from Lesotho. **Note:** This raises the security relevance of Lesotho which has a series of consequences for that country.
- 4/82 **PLAN** infiltrate a Special Operations Unit known as **Volcano** into Namibia, after regrouping from **Operation Protea**. This launches a six week intensive operation during which brutal fighting occurs under the banner of **Operation Phoenix**. Turner claims this is “**PLAN**’s last gasp” (see Turner, 1993), but this is not supported by facts on the ground as many more engagements still ensue, so they have a lot of fight left in them even if such claims are made. It certainly changes the operational landscape and creates a climate for considering alternatives in South Africa, which is started by NIS at about this time.
- 4/82 **SADF SF** (1-Recce; A, B, C & D Coy, 1-Para; A Coy, 2-Para; SWA Spes) supported by the SAAF launch the early phases of **Operation Meebos** west of Mupa in southern Angola. 1-Para & 2-Para are involved in this operation from 4/82 to 12/82, thus bracketing the conventional ground force operation that occurs between 22/7/82 and 13/8/82 (Volker, 2010:327).
- 1/4/82 Lt. Peter Waugh, a trained cavalry officer, makes the case for developing an equestrian reconnaissance wing within **32 Battalion** to improve response times (Nortje, 2003:58).
- 5/4/82 **PLAN** attacks the SADF military base at Outapi for the first time (see 9/6/87) (Volker, 2010:747).

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- 9/4/82 **Exercise Fortress I** at the Army Battle School at Lohattha involving 71 Motorized Brigade is launched, lasting until 15/5/82 (Volker, 2010:346).
- 24/4/82 **PLAN** attacks the SADF military base at Okahao for the first time (see 29/10/86 & 26/6/87) (Volker, 2010:747).
- 5/82 LLA activities escalate with the assassination of the Minister of Works, J Rampeta, and his security detail.
- 5/82 Youths stone the motorcade of President Sebe after a graduation ceremony at the University of Fort Hare.
- 5/82 A decision is made by Dr. Wouter Basson, OC 7-Medical Battalion, to change the chemicals used for **Operation Dual** murders from Scoline and Tubarine to Ketelaar.
- 1/5/82 **Brigadier Kat Liebenberg** takes over command of **SADF SF** and becomes a Major General on 1/9/82. **Note:** He is not a Special Forces soldier so the management of **SADF SF** from this moment onwards increasingly tends towards a gradual criminalization as unauthorized internal operations, mostly being conducted by **D40**, become the order of the day.
- 10/5/82 **PLAN** attacks the SADF military base at Nkurenkuru (Volker, 2010:748).
- 10/5/82 **Exercise Panther III** at the Army Battle School at Lohattha involving 8<sup>th</sup> Division and 84 Motorized Brigade is launched, lasting until 4/6/82 (Volker, 2010:346). **Note:** Exercise Panther II was cancelled for reasons unknown.
- 15/5/82 **Exercise Fortress I** at the Army Battle School at Lohattha involving 71 Motorized Brigade comes to an end (Volker, 2010:346). **Note:** This is the first exercise at Brigade level that runs concurrently with a similar exercise (**Exercise Panther III**), so it is an indication that the fighting capability of the SADF is now being tested as part of the preparation for a total war posture as part of the **Total National Strategy**.
- 6/82 **Operation Yahoo** launched in 4/82 in the Tsumeb, Grootfontein and Otavi areas of SWA, comes to an end (Volker, 2010:328). **Note:** The fact that operations are taking place so far south of the Red Line indicates that **PLAN** is having an impact. Little of this was known at the time as these actions were out of the defined Sector 10 Operational Area, so they would have caused public concern.
- 4/6/82 **MK** attacks the Presidents Council in Cape Town with a bomb, killing a journalist, Michael Younghusband. Intelligence reports note that this operation was planned and supported from Lesotho. **Note:** This raises the security relevance of Lesotho which has a series of consequences for that country.
- 4/6/82 **Exercise Panther III** at the Army Battle School at Lohattha involving 8<sup>th</sup> Division and 84 Motorized Brigade comes to an end (Volker, 2010:346). **Note:** Exercise Panther II was cancelled for reasons unknown.
- 15/6/82 **MK** sabotages the railway line at Mdantsane. Intelligence reports note that this was planned and supported from Lesotho. **Note:** This raises the security relevance of Lesotho which has a series of consequences for that country.
- 7/82 FAPLA try to recapture Mavinga from their stronghold at **Cuito Cuanavale**, but are rebuffed by UNITA for the third time.
- 7/82 The LLA launches an attack on the home of Leabua Jonathan.

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- 5/7/82 Four mercenaries captured in the abortive Seychelles *coup d'état* are sentenced to death, with one being given 20 years and another 10 years.
- 22/7/82 **SADF SF** (1-Recce, 1-Para Bn & 2-Para Bn) supported by the SAAF and SWA Spes launch **Operation Meebos** west of Mupa in Angola. The objective is the offensive occupation of territory and area operations against SWAPO command and control systems, including the Central and Eastern Front HQ at Mupa. During various search and destroy actions a total of 345 SWAPO are KIA with the destruction of the facilities at Mupa. There are a total of 29 SADF KIA, including 15 when an SAAF Puma is shot down (Volcker, 2010:574).
- 22/7/82 **SADF SF** (1-Recce; A, B, C & D Coy, 1-Para; A Coy, 2-Para; SWA Spes) supported by the SAAF launch **Operation Meebos** west of Mupa in southern Angola. This includes air attacks on **PLAN** command and control infrastructure including the Central and Eastern Front HQ at Mupa. The outcome is 345 PLAN KIA, the destruction of Mupa and 29 SADF KIA, including the loss of 15 paratroopers when a Puma helicopter is shot down (Volker, 2010:327). Volker notes that 1-Para & 2-Para are involved in this operation from 4/82 to 12/82, thus bracketing the conventional ground force operation that occurs between 22/7/82 and 13/8/82.
- 25/7/82 The effective operational capacity of the Zimbabwe Air Force is destroyed in a carefully planned and executed covert operation being run by **Project Barnacle** and executed at Thornhill Air Force base. This takes place after they receive a number of new aircraft from Britain. The loss of aircraft includes 7 Hawker Hunter FGA 9's, 1 British Aerospace Hawk Mk 60 and a Lynx. This factors out possible Zimbabwe Air Force support to **MK** operations inside South Africa.
- 28/7/82 **MK** attacks a police station at Port Elizabeth. Intelligence reports note that this operation was planned and supported from Lesotho. **Note:** This raises the security relevance of Lesotho which has a series of consequences for that country.
- 28/7/82 Sentence is passed in the Pietermaritzburg court hearing of the Seychelles *coup d'état* mercenaries. All are sentenced to prison with a few exceptions.
- 8/82 **SADF SF** assembles in Bloemfontein for training and a dry run of an operation against **MK** targets in Lesotho. The event is given the code name of **Operation Lebanta**, which is called off due to political sensitivities arising from simultaneous diplomatic initiatives (see 9/12/82).
- 8/82 Ruth First, wife of Joe Slovo, is killed by a parcel bomb in Maputo.
- 8/82 The founding commander of **Project Barnacle**, a Rhodesian former **Selous Scout** identified as Major Neil, resigns his commission and leaves the **SADF SF**.
- 8/82 Aircraft are sabotaged at the Thornhill Air Base in Zimbabwe, resulting in the arrest of the so-called Air Force Six. It later turns out that those arrested are innocent of the charge.
- 2/8/82 **Exercise Fortress II** at the Army Battle School at Lohatla involving 7<sup>th</sup> Division is launched, lasting until 27/8/82 (Volker, 2010:346).
- 9/8/82 During **Operation Meebos** Capt. John Twaddle and his Puma helicopter is shot down near Cuvelai, killing all including his co-pilot Lt. C.W. Pietersen and twelve paratroopers. The photo, taken by the author during later combat operations, shows the type of weapon that shot Capt. John Twaddle down, in this case being deployed as a defensive weapon (visible on the roof) to protect SADF combat forces operating out of Ngiva – see Turton (2010). This photo, taken from the author's AFV (23 Bravo), shows helicopters preparing to insert paratroopers into stopper group positions from the SADF forward operational base at Ngiva.

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- 13/8/82 **Operation Meebos** comes to an end (see 22/7/82) (Volcker, 2010:574).
- 27/8/82 **Exercise Fortress II** at the Army Battle School at Lohatla involving 7<sup>th</sup> Division comes to an end (Volker, 2010:346). **Note:** As with previous cases this exercise coincides with an external operation, indicating that national resources are being mobilized. See details of **Exercise Mamba III** and **Operation Protea**.
- 1/9/82 **Brigadier Kat Liebenberg** becomes a Major General in his capacity as GOC SF. **Note:** He is not a Special Forces soldier so the management of **SADF SF** from this moment onwards increasingly tends towards a gradual criminalization as unauthorized internal operations, mostly being conducted by **D40**, become the order of the day.
- 10/82 The **SADF Committee on Persons with Conscientious Objections to National Service** is established under the chairmanship of Brig. Naudé. This is tasked to make recommendations for incorporation into the proposed **Defence Amendment Act** of 1983.
- 1/10/82 Maj. Gen. Kat Liebenberg becomes GOC Special Forces on the retirement of Maj. Gen. Fritz Loots.
- 1/10/82 **Exercise Eland I** at the Army Battle School at Lohatla involving 8<sup>th</sup> Armoured Division is launched (Volker, 2010:346). **Note:** This date is given by Volker as being 1/10/83, but it seems to be incorrect as it is out of sequence. This is the most probable date but it needs to be verified.
- 11/82 **SADF SF** (B Coy, 1-Para), in support of Koevoet, launch **Operation Katlagter (Cat Laughter)** in southern Angola. This lasts until 12/82 and is described as being a search and destroy mission by vehicle (Volker, 2010:328).
- 12/11/82 **Exercise Quick Kill** is launched, to feed into **Exercise Fortress III** at the Army Battle School at Lohatla involving 72 Motorized Brigade, THA, Johannesburg Regiment, SA Irish Regiment, 1<sup>st</sup> Light Horse Regiment and Transvaal Scottish (Volker, 2010:346).
- 20/11/82 **Exercise Warmaker I** is launched, to feed into **Exercise Fortress III** at the Army Battle School at Lohatla involving 72 Motorized Brigade, THA, Johannesburg Regiment, SA Irish Regiment, 1<sup>st</sup> Light Horse Regiment and Transvaal Scottish (Volker, 2010:346).
- 22/11/82 **Exercise Warmaker II** is launched, to feed into **Exercise Fortress III** at the Army Battle School at Lohatla involving 72 Motorized Brigade, THA, Johannesburg Regiment, SA Irish Regiment, 1<sup>st</sup> Light Horse Regiment and Transvaal Scottish (Volker, 2010:346).

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- 12/82 **Operation Meebos** comes to an end (Volker, 2010:327).
- 12/82 **Operation Katlagter (Cat Laughter)** started in 11/82 comes to an end (Volker, 2010:328).
- 12/82 A meeting takes place between Mozambican and South African officials with a view to negotiating some form of non-aggression pact.
- 8/12/82 **Exercise Fortress III** at the Army Battle School at Lohattha involving 72 Motorized Brigade, THA, Johannesburg Regiment, SA Irish Regiment, 1<sup>st</sup> Light Horse Regiment and Transvaal Scottish is launched, lasting until 30/12/82 (Volker, 2010:346). **Note:** This takes on a new level of complexity and sophistication because it involves three sub-exercises: **Exercise Quick Kill** that started on 12/11/82; **Exercise Warmaker I** that started on 20/11/82; and **Exercise Warmaker II** that started on 22/11/82. This indicates that high command is now preparing for multiple operations on multiple fronts using all available military assets in the SADF as the **Total National Strategy** rolls out.
- 9/12/82 As a result of escalating guerrilla operations originating from Lesotho (see 20/3/82, 4/6/82, 15/6/82 and 28/7/82) the **SADF SF** launch **Operation Lebanta**, previously planned but put on ice (see 8/82), after new intelligence is received that **MK** intend to launch an operation inside SA to coincide with 16 December celebrations. **Operation Lebanta** targets 15 carefully selected safe houses and **MK** facilities for simultaneous attack at midnight. The Lesotho Defence Force is informed of this attack and instructed not to engage the SADF or else they too would be engaged. Not all LDF units get this signal, so some skirmishes occur. This necessitates the field commander to call for a possible air strike against Lesotho if need be. The raid is a success, with 42 killed (27 **MK** cadres), some weapons recovered and masses of documentary intelligence returned for analysis of **MK** movements, plans and strengths.
- 9/12/82 **SADF SF** (1-Recce, 5-Recce and **Project Barnacle**) (with 15 teams of up to 8 operators per team under the overall command of Kmdt. Charles ??) launch **Operation Lebanta**. The objective is the destruction of 15 ANC facilities in Maseru, Lesotho. The operation is a tactical success with 42 KIA including 29 South Africans of which 7 are women and children (Volker, 2010:574).
- 9/12/82 **SADF SF** attack an oil storage depot in Beira in which bulk fuel for Zimbabwe is kept. This causes major economic disruption in Zimbabwe.
- 9/12/82 **SADF SF** (1-Recce & 4-Recce) launch **Operation Katiso** in Beira, Mozambique. The objective is the destruction of fuel storage tanks needed to sustain the Zimbabwean economy. The operation is a success with 1.5 month fuel supply destroyed causing a major crisis for the Zimbabwe government (Volker, 2010:574).
- 30/12/82 **Exercise Fortress III** at the Army Battle School at Lohattha involving 72 Motorized Brigade, THA, Johannesburg Regiment, SA Irish Regiment, 1<sup>st</sup> Light Horse Regiment and Transvaal Scottish comes to an end (Volker, 2010:346). **Note:** This takes on a new level of complexity and sophistication because it involves three sub-exercises: **Exercise Quick Kill** that started on 12/11/82; **Exercise Warmaker I** that started on 20/11/82; and **Exercise Warmaker II** that started on 22/11/82. This indicates that high command is now preparing for multiple operations on multiple fronts using all available military assets in the SADF as the **Total National Strategy** rolls out.

### 1983

- 1983 Six members of **32 Battalion** are killed in action (Nortje, 2003:286).
- 1983 The total number of deaths in the SADF this year reported by Arm of Service is as follows: Army – 111 of which 67 are KIA; Air Force – 11 of which 5 are KIA; Navy – 3 of which 1

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is KIA; Medical Corps – 6 of which none are KIA. During this year a total of 9 **Honorus Crux** medals are awarded for bravery (Stiff, in Ramsden, 2009).

- 1983 The **Defence Amendment Act** of 1983 introduces four categories of conscientious objectors allowing alternative service where appropriate. This also establishes the **Board for Religious Objection**.
- 1983 The United Democratic Front (UDF) is launched. The spotlight falls on Rev. Alan Boesak as a charismatic leader. Welsh (2000:473) notes that the UDF were accused by Mangosuthu Buthelezi of waging a **Total Onslaught** against the IFP. Significantly, the UDF takes political power from the ANC and PAC, as it surges ahead as the mainstream of political opposition inside South Africa.
- 1983 SADF (Eastern Province Command and 6 SAI) launch **Operation Droë Bone (Dry Beans)**, which is support to the Transkei during a regional drought that began in 1980 (see **Operation Rain & Operation Sprinkler**) (Volker, 2010:372).
- 1983 The head of SNASP (*Servicio Nacional de Seguranca Popular*), Jorge da Costa, defects to South Africa, bringing with him intimate knowledge of the Mozambican tactical situation.
- 1983 RENAMO force levels are around 6,000 trained personnel in Mozambique engaged in a series of carefully planned operations with South African support. Agreement is reached that 300 soldiers will be selected for Special Force training in South Africa.
- 1983 **Operation Silver** (SADF support of UNITA) is renamed **Operation Disa** to take account of changing circumstances on the ground.
- 1983 **Operation Silver**, ongoing assistance to UNITA, is changed to **Operation Disa**. The **SADF SF** (1-Recce) liaison officer is Major Bert Sachse who has been posted to UNITA HQ since 1978 (Volker, 2010:569 & 575).
- 1983 By mid-1983, UNITA had extended its control over most of the area in Angola south of the Benguela railway line. In an attempt to gain control north of the line of rail, Cangoma, Cangumbe and Munhango had been captured.
- 1983 **SADF SF** start running successful pseudo operations against SWAPO in Kaokoland.
- 1983 The tactical gains arising from **Operation Protea** are being negated as FAPLA extends support once again to SWAPO. This support has shifted from Xangongo and Ngiva (Protea targets) to Cahama, Caiundo, Cuvelai and Mulondo. This causes a significant re-think of SADF strategy during 1983.
- 1983 The tactical landscape changes with the SAAF losing air superiority as a result of the deployment of Russian SAM-8 and SAM-9 batteries in Angola. In an aerial engagement, the SAAF shoot down two MIG's however, causing the combined Cuban/Angolan air-force not to fully exploit this tactical advantage.
- 1983 The US State Department exerts diplomatic pressure on President Samora Machel to consider a peace agreement with South Africa. This illustrates the preferred option of using non-aggression treaties to limit conflict rather than direct military intervention.
- 1983 The Government of South Africa signs an *Agreement between the Government of the Republic of South Africa and the Government of the Kingdom of Swaziland with Regard to Financial and Technical Assistance for the Construction of a Railway Link in the Kingdom of Swaziland*. This is consistent with the strategy of offering development projects as an incentive not to give support to guerrillas of the various liberation movements.
- 1983 Lennox Sebe is elected President of Ciskei for life by the National Assembly.

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- 1983 The **Korean 5<sup>th</sup> Brigade** (also known as Gukurahundi), operating under direct orders from President Robert Mugabe, massacre around 25,000 Matabele people over a period of five years. This is known as the **Matabele Massacre**, but little is written about it so it flies under the radar screen internationally. **Note:** This is a crime against humanity for which President Robert Mugabe will hopefully one day stand accountable in The Hague.
- 1983 **SADF SF (D40)** launches a strategic Small Teams action named **Operation Barrage**. The aim of the operation is to disrupt the movement of logistics along the Namibe – Lubango railway line in Angola. Two 2-man teams are inserted and begin their advance onto target. On day 34 of the operation, one team is compromised when a FAPLA soldier relieves himself at the place where Maj. Andre Diedericks is hiding. After seeing Diedericks the soldier shouts a warning and is shot, triggering a follow-up. The team goes to ground and hides, allowing the follow-up to pass them by and after a few days resume their mission once more. The two teams set a number of sophisticated charges into the ballast at various points on the railway line, each set with a time fuse designed to arm the device many days after the team has been uplifted. The devices, once armed, are triggered each time a strong electromagnetic field passes overhead. This enables the sustained destruction of a number of railway locomotives over a period of some weeks, bringing the movement of logistics to a total standstill, so the operation is regarded as being a success. The teams are uplifted after 72 days of unsupported operational duty in extremely hostile settings (see Diedericks, 2007: 78-88).
- 1983 A number of pseudo operations are launched by **SADF SF** over a 24 day period against SWAPO in the Kaokoland area of Namibia and southern Angola. There are various contacts with 7 SWAPO KIA and 2 POW (Volcker, 2010:575). **Note:** This is additional evidence of the influence of **Selous Scouts** tactical experiences on the **SADF SF**.
- 1/83 The **Committee on South African War Resisters (COSAWR)** says that it expects the number of conscientious objectors to rise.
- 1/83 **SADF SF (B Coy, 1-Para)** launch **Operation Kameel (Camel)** in southern Angola. No further details are known (Volker, 2010:328).
- 1/83 **SADF SF (1-Para)** launch **Operation Snoek** in southern Angola. No further details are known but it is described as being “area operations” (Volker, 2010:328).
- 2/83 **SADF SF (1-Para)** launch **Operation Dolfyn (Dolphin)** in southern Angola. No further details are known but it is described as being “area operations” (Volker, 2010:328).
- 9/2/83 PW Botha announces, in response to questions in Parliament by Frederik van Zyl Slabbert, that Martin Dolinchek was in the employment of NIS at the time of the Seychelles *coup d'état*, but that he was dismissed on 31/7/82 because of internal disciplinary hearings in connection with his unauthorized involvement with the attempted *coup*. Botha also notes that Dolinchek had reported the planned *coup d'état* on 21/7/78, but that the DG of NIS had instructed him on 24/7/78 that the NIS should not in any way be involved in the *coup d'état*. (See 25/11/81).
- 14/2/83 A Zimbabwean operator in **Project Barnacle** is murdered by **Operation Dual** because he is suspected of considering defection.
- 17/2/83 The South African Government signs an *Agreement between the Government of the Republic of South Africa, the Government of the Kingdom of Swaziland and the Government of the People's Republic of Mozambique Relative to the Establishment of a Tripartite Permanent Technical Committee*, for the management of the strategic water resources shared between the three countries. This is an example of diplomatic engagement in the context of a carrot of peaceful cooperation rather than the stick of military reprisal that was an integral part of the

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prevailing **Total Onslaught** paradigm. (See Turton, 2003; 2007; 2008 and Turton & Funke, 2008).

- 3/83 **SADF SF** launch **Operation Bristol** in Inhambane District, Mozambique. The objective is a series of sabotage missions to support RENAMO (Volcker, 2010:575).
- 3/83 The Black Sash accepts a motion calling for the end to military conscription. This is the birth of the **End Conscription Campaign (ECC)**.
- 11/3/83 **Turton Genealogy:** Anthony Richard Turton is awarded the Pro Patria Medal for operational service with 2 Light Horse Regiment, **81 Armoured Brigade**.
- 4/83 **PLAN** engages in what is known as the **Battle of Nderu River** in the Bule area of Angola. The commander is Paulus Raphael Mahomato (Volker, 2010:746).
- 4/83 **SADF SF** (D Coy, 1-Para) launch **Operation Robyn** in southern Angola. No further details are known (Volker, 2010:328).
- 3/4/83 The Transkei Public Accounts Committee hears evidence about the nature of the security services being offered to the Transkei Defence Force by Lt. Col. Ron Reid-Daly.
- 21/4/83 The Foreign Ministers of SA and Botswana meet to discuss the security situation in the region. A list of known ANC operatives living in Botswana is handed over, with a warning to withdraw Botswana Government support, or face the consequences.
- 5/83 A second meeting is held between Mozambican and South African officials seeking to negotiate a non-aggression pact.
- 2/5/83 **Exercise Eland II** at the Army Battle School at Lohattha involving 81 Armoured Brigade is launched, lasting until 22/6/83 (Volker, 2010:346). **Note:** The author is part of the this exercise as his unit was placed on operational standby as a result of the **Pretoria Car Bomb** detonated on 20/5/83 (Turton, 2010).
- 17/5/83 General Charles Sebe and his senior military advisor Maj. Gen. Taileffer Minnaar are arrested in the Ciskei.
- 20/5/83 **MK** detonates a large car bomb outside SAAF HQ in Church Street, killing the 2 guerrilla's planting the device and 17 other victims. The blast from the 40kg of high explosives is so violent that a piece of the pelvis of one of the guerrilla's is found embedded in the concrete façade of a building down the street from the site of the blast. This escalates the **Armed Struggle** and becomes a watershed event that changes the tactical landscape in the region. The event is perpetrated by an **MK Special Operations Unit** under the command of **Aboobaker Ismail**, with the full approval of **Joe Slovo** and Oliver Tambo. This is called **Bloody Friday**. **Note:** The author is later recruited into a Special Operations unit being assembled by the **CDCO** of NIS known as **K43** tasked with the responsibility of bringing the supreme planner of this act, out from the protection of exile, to stand trial in a court of law in South Africa, in an operation that is based on the Mossad's abduction of Adolf Eichmann (see Turton, 2006). (See 1/4/87 and 9/87).
- 23/5/83 SAAF launch an air strike on ANC safe houses in Maputo in retaliation for the car bombing of the SAAF Intelligence HQ in Pretoria on 20/5/83. This is known as **Operation Skerwe** and kills around 60 people. **Note:** This operation represents an escalation of the war and is in retaliation for the Pretoria car bomb detonated on 20/5/83.



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- 23/5/83 **Operation Skerwe** is a precision air strike by the SAAF on five ANC safe houses in Mozambique. These are located in Matola and Liberdade suburbs of Maputo and include Gubuza's House (Siphiwe Nyanda – Transvaal Urban Operations), September House (Glory Sebide – Transvaal Rural Operations), the Main Camp and two logistics houses. The raid consists of 15 Impala aircraft and it is partially successful with the death of 41 MK, 6 civilian and 17 FRELIMO soldiers, and a further 44 people wounded (Volker, 2010:575).
- 25/5/83 **Operation Mila** (also known elsewhere as **Operation Bristol** – see Geldenhuys, 2007:202) being run by the **SADF SF** inserts a small team, ostensible consisting of 5 RENAMO operators, into Mozambique along the line of rail between Beira and Zimbabwe. They succeed in destroying 93 locomotives, 250 rail cars and killing 150 railway workers. **Note:** Given the magnitude of this destruction it is unlikely that a five-man team would be solely responsible for this action.
- 22/6/83 **Exercise Eland II** at the Army Battle School at Lohattha involving 81 Armoured Brigade comes to an end (Volker, 2010:346).
- 7/83 **SADF SF** (5-Recce & **D40** under the command of Lt. A. Diedericks) launch **Operation Barrage** to disrupt the logistical rail supply between Namibe and Lubango. This takes 72 days in total with 2 months in planning and a further 2.5 months in execution. The operation is experimental and is great success (Volker, 2010:575).
- 8/8/83 **Exercise Turning Wheel I** at the Army Battle School at Lohattha involving 7<sup>th</sup> Division, 71 Motorized Brigade and 72 Motorized Brigade is launched, lasting until 26/8/83 (Volker, 2010:346).
- 26/8/83 **Exercise Turning Wheel I** at the Army Battle School at Lohattha involving 7<sup>th</sup> Division, 71 Motorized Brigade and 72 Motorized Brigade comes to an end (Volker, 2010:346).
- 9/83 FAPLA launch an initiative to recapture ground from UNITA in the south of Angola.
- 9/83 Parliament approves the **Tricameral Parliament** that excludes Blacks. The die is set for major confrontation.
- 28/9/83 **Exercise Eland IV** at the Army Battle School at Lohattha involving 8<sup>th</sup> Armoured Division and 84 Motorized Brigade is launched, lasting until 19/10/83 (Volker, 2010:346). **Note:** Exercise Eland III involved only a skeleton staff exercise for 8 Div personnel at Nelspruit.
- 10/83 After a bitter counter-offensive FAPLA recaptures Cangumbe and Cazombo from UNITA. In a separate action, UNITA capture Cafuno on the border with Zaire and try to capture Sumbe near Lobito.
- 1/10/83 **Exercise Eland I** at the Army Battle School at Lohattha involving 8<sup>th</sup> Armoured Division is launched (Volker, 2010:346). **Note:** This date seems to be incorrect as it is out of sequence. Possibly it should be 1/10/82?
- 10/10/83 Limpet mines detonate in local government offices in Warmbaths.
- 17/10/83 **SADF SF** (1-Recce & 4-Recce under command of Capt. Dan ??) raid the ANC offices located at 370 Mao Tse Tung Street (Rue Pereira d'Eça) in Maputo. This is known as **Operation Vine** and it is partially successful (Volker, 2010:575). The operation ends on 18/10/83.
- 18/10/83 **SADF SF** launch **Operation Vine** against an MK safe house and administrative centre in Maputo. This operation is complex and fails to meet its tactical objective, which is the capture of administrative files on guerrilla identities and movements, but succeeds in disrupting MK operations for a while.

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- 19/10/83 **Exercise Eland IV** at the Army Battle School at Lohattha involving 8<sup>th</sup> Armoured Division and 84 Motorized Brigade comes to an end (Volker, 2010:346).
- 28/10/83 **UN Security Council** 538 is vetoed by the USA. This is a blow to South Africa and is seen as evidence that American support is fickle. Resolution 538 calls for a linkage between Namibian independence and Cuban withdrawal from Angola. After the veto, the Russian Ambassador to the UN has a private meeting with the South African delegation and calls for SADF withdrawal from Angola, stating that they (USSR) will support Angola as much as is needed. This is additional evidence that the **Angolan Civil War** is a localized theatre of the **Cold War**, which in the absence of strong American support, would be won by the Russians. This feeds into the **Total Onslaught** mindset in Pretoria.
- 29/10/83 An IFP impi attacks a hostel at the University of Zululand after students protest the visit of Mangosuthu Buthelezi, killing 5 and injuring many more.
- 11/83 The South African Government signs the *Agreement Between the Republic of Botswana and the Government of the Republic of South Africa Relative to the Establishment of a Joint Permanent Technical Committee*. This is a manifestation of the South African **Hydraulic Mission** in the context of the **Total Onslaught** paradigm.
- 7/11/83 **Exercise Turning Wheel II** at the Army Battle School at Lohattha involving 72 Motorized Brigade is launched, lasting until 2/12/83 (Volker, 2010:346).
- 12/83 A meeting is held in Lisbon between Mozambican and South African officials with a view to finalizing a non-aggression treaty. This is followed up a few days later with a second meeting in Mbabane, Swaziland.
- 12/83 Heavy fighting erupts in Crossroads between the Residents Association of Oliver Memani and the Crossroads Executive Committee of Johnson Ngxobongwana.
- 12/83 **Operation Askari** is launched into Angola to counter **PLAN** infiltration attempts. Some high altitude sorties are flown by the SAAF on targets at Caiundo, Cahama, Cuvelai and Mulondo, despite the deployment of SAM-8 and SAM-9 air defence systems. One SAAF Impala is hit by a SAM-8 at Cuvelai and another is hit by a SAM-9 at Mulondo, but neither is shot from the sky and both make it back to Ondangwa.
- 12/83 **SADF SF** (B & D Coy, 1-Para) engage in **Operation Vlakvark (Warthog)** in southern Angola. The operation lasts until early 1984 with no further details known (Volker, 2010:328).
- 2/12/83 **Turton Genealogy**: Sgt. Anthony Richard Turton qualifies from the School of Engineers on Course Genie 8362: Mine Warfare. This course is about mines and booby traps currently being found in operational circumstances by the SADF.
- 2/12/83 **Exercise Turning Wheel II** at the Army Battle School at Lohattha involving 72 Motorized Brigade comes to an end (Volker, 2010:346).
- 6/12/83 SADF launch **Operation Askari** (Sevta), which is a conventional attack to disrupt logistical, command and control infrastructure, as well as to destroy the **PLAN HQ** near Lubango in Angola. The area of operations includes Caiundo in south central Angola, and **SADF SF** attacks west of the Cahama area and around Tetchamutete. Units involved include 4 mechanised battle groups of 500 men each from **61 Mechanised Battalion**, **82 Mechanised Brigade**, **4-SAI**, 1-Para and Recce (under the command of Major Jakes Jacobs). This operation sees the first use of SA-8 and SA-9 by FAPLA and is the largest military action before **Operation Modular**. Withdrawal is carried out during heavy rain but proceeds uneventfully (Volker, 2010:576).

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- 6/12/83 **SADF SF** (E Coy, 1-Para; **32 Battalion**) deployed into four mechanised combat groups of 500 men each, consisting of **61 Mechanized Battalion**, **82 Mechanized Brigade** and **4-SAI**, launch **Operation Askari** at targets around Caiundo in south central Angola. SAAF provide air cover. The objective is to disrupt logistics, command and control infrastructure while also destroying the **PLAN HQ** at Lubango. The combat force engages with FAPLA 11<sup>th</sup> Brigade, two Cuban battalions, **PLAN** and elements of the Angolan air force, so it is a significant conventional battle and sign of things to come (Volker, 2010:328). **Note:** This operation sees the first use SA-8 and SA-9 by FAPLA, which is also an indication of things to come as the SADF starts to lose air superiority over the Angolan battles pace and conventional warfare starts to increasingly become the norm
- 9/12/83 D-Day for **Operation Askari** as armoured columns cross the border into Angola with Cahama, Caiundo, Cuvelai and Mulondo as objectives. No significant air support is possible, because of the deployment of SAM-8 and SAM-9 anti-aircraft batteries. This is an important strategic threshold in the evolution of the war, because the SADF starts to lose air superiority at this time. In one engagement, a Ratel from **1-SAI Delta Coy** is lost killing 21 SADF national servicemen. This incident is related by Ramsden (2009:28) as follows: “Our total focus was on our Lieutenant as he recounted a story involving a platoon of Delta soldiers from his year of intake [1982]. During the operation [Askari], a Ratel armoured car had become bogged down in a minefield and sat there as a static target for an advancing Russian T-54 tank. The Ratel was bombarded with shell after shell, and stood no chance against the onslaught. Some were incinerated where they sat; others left desperate claw marks on the closed metal hatches in a failed attempt to escape. The Ratel driver apparently shrunk to half his body size due to the heat of the explosion. Five soldiers from 1 South African Infantry Battalion’s Delta Company had to be identified through dental records and ‘dog tags’. It was the battle’s worst single incident and a dark day for Delta and 1-SAI. ... We looked up at our Lieutenant as he fell silent, allowing the horror of the story to sink in. What the hell lies ahead for us?”
- 16/12/83 A skirmish between SWAPO and **32 Battalion** west of Cubango and south of the Bele River causes SWAPO heavy casualties.
- 16/12/83 **SADF SF** (Recce) supported by **61 Mechanised Battalion** launch **Operation Fox** as a sub-element to Operation Askari to eliminate SA-8 batteries located 2 km south west of Cahama along the road to Endiva (Volker, 2010:575).
- 31/12/83 **Operation Fox** is a partial success because of international pressure leading to the withdrawal of SADF units in that theatre of operations (Volker, 2010:575).

### 1984

- 1984 The **Board for Religious Objection**, established under the Defence Amendment Act of 1983, under the Chairmanship of Justice M.T. Steyn, receive 341 applications throughout the year, all except 4 of which are granted.
- 1984 The **Tricameral Parliament** is introduced. It inflames public opinion.
- 1984 ANC announces its intention to make the country ungovernable harnessing the political energy from the **Tricameral Parliament** debacle.
- 1984 Government declares a National **State of Emergency** in response.
- 1984 The **National Security Management System (NSMS)** is established.
- 1984 **SADF SF** (1-Para) engage in **Operation Palmiet** described only as urban COIN operations (Volker, 2010:328). **Note:** This is an indication that hardened frontline combat troops are now being redeployed from Angola and used in urban warfare for the first time.

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- 1984 Five members of **32 Battalion** are killed in action (Nortje, 2003:286).
- 1984 The total number of deaths in the SADF this year reported by Arm of Service is as follows: Army – 93 of which 25 are KIA; Air Force – 1 of which none are KIA; Navy – none; Medical Corps – 3 of which none are KIA. During this year a total of 4 **Honorus Crux** medals are awarded for bravery (Stiff, in Ramsden, 2009).
- 1984 The **Lusaka Accords** establish the **Joint Military Commission (JMC)** in Angola, effectively ending the need for cross border raids by SADF (for the time being).
- 1984 **Operation Altar** comes to an end (see 1982). This is the official support by the SADF to RENAMO. The first hopper radio communications are used during this operation (Volker, 2010:574).
- 1984 **Operation Mila** takes over from **Operation Altar** as the SADF continues to support RENAMO in Mozambique (Volker, 2010:576).
- 1984 The lull caused by the **Lusaka Accords** sees a massive build-up of Russian hardware, specifically MIG-23 and SU-22 fighters, Mi-25 Hind attack helicopters, and SAM-8 air defence systems. South Africa effectively loses air superiority over Angola at this time.
- 1984 The first CBW production starts in **Project Coast**, situated in a farmhouse at Roodeplaat.
- 1984 Amid growing tensions between the Ciskei and Transkei, President Kaiser Matanzima orders General Ron Reid-Daly to launch an attack on the Ciskei.
- 1984 Engineers and technicians doing preliminary studies on the Oxbow Scheme (later to become the **Lesotho Highlands Water Project**) withdraw from talks with Lesotho.
- 1984 At the Fourth **SADCC** Consultative Conference, the issue of water scarcity as an element of regional under-development is raised by President Kenneth Kaunda.
- 1984 Tension is growing within **D40** and Maj. Andre Diedericks asks Gen. **Kat Liebenberg** to transfer the Small Teams to 5 Recce, because he is uncomfortable with the increased urban nature of the operational work at **D40** (see Diedericks, 2007:92). This permission is granted. **Note:** This split is symptomatic of the concerns being raised by honourable officers of the calibre of Maj. Diedericks, and is a turning point in the criminalization of the **SADF SF** in the author's opinion, because once these officers of integrity move out of **D40**, all that is left are leaders of increasingly dubious moral fibre.
- 1/84 A meeting is held in Cape Town between Mozambican and South African officials with a view to finalizing details of a non-aggression pact between the two countries.
- 1/84 Frederik van Zyl Slabbert asks questions in parliament about a secret SSC decision to transfer land from KaNgwane and Ingwavuma to Swaziland as part of a non-aggression pact signed in secret in 2/82.
- 3/1/84 **Operation Askari** sees heavy fighting in the Caiundo area of the Okavango Basin. A strong force comprising FAPLA 11 Brigade, reinforced by Cubans, engage the SADF task force moving north-east of Cuvelai. Significantly, the SADF intention is to bypass Cuvelai, but the FAPLA brigade stationed there engage the raiding force and so a decision is made to neutralize Cuvelai. As a result of this SWAPO losses at Cuvelai number around 300 dead. Considerable hardware is captured by the SADF, including a SAM-9 missile system and eight T-65 tanks not previously seen in theatre. This is an ominous sign that the regional arms race is escalating and conventional war using heavy armour is increasingly likely.
- 3/1/84 The **Battle of Cuvelai** occurs as part of **Operation Askari** that results in 324 enemy KIA as well as 21 SADF KIA (Volker, 2010:576; 328).

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- 13/1/84 **Operation Askari** ends (Volker, 2010:576).
- 15/1/84 Most of **Operation Askari** forces withdraw across the border as a result of heavy international pressure, but some remain until 31/1/84.
- 27/1/84 Two teachers, Matthew Goniwe and Fort Calata, are dismissed from the Department of Education and Training (DET) as a result of their perceived political agitation. This initiates a student boycott that spreads throughout the Eastern Cape.
- 2/84 The **Lusaka Accords** are signed by South Africa and Angola establishing the Joint Monitoring Commission (JMC). This sees the SADF gradually withdrawing from Xangongo and Ngiva, which they had held continuously since **Operation Protea**. The photo shows an 80-mm mortar pit at Xangongo inside Forte Roçadas taken by the author during combat operations in the area. The soldiers are left to right, Tpr. Paul Roos (the author's gunner 23 Bravo) and Cpl. Bossie Bosman (gunner 23 Alpha).
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- 23/2/84 The **Gorongozo Papers** (captured on 28/8/85) report a meeting between CSI and Afonso Dhlakama in Pretoria. Allegedly discussed at that meeting are tactics for RENAMO to adopt in the changed strategic landscape caused by the forthcoming **Nkomati Peace Accords**. The CSI allegedly commit future SADF support to RENAMO, irrespective of what the **Nkomati Peace Accords** state. This is a classic example of the Hawks trumping the Doves in Pretoria. (See **Operation Bush Talk** in Chapter 14 of Turton, 2006).
- 3/84 The secret non-aggression pact signed by Swaziland and South Africa in 2/82 is made public.
- 15/3/84 The *Voz da Africa Livre* (Voice of Free Africa) goes off the air.
- 16/3/84 The **Nkomati Peace Accords** are signed by PW Botha and Samora Machel. These are known technically as the *Agreement of Non-Aggression and Good Neighbourliness between the Government of the Republic of South Africa and the Government of the People's Republic of Mozambique*. This is a non-aggression pact that agrees to non-support of either the ANC or RENAMO by the respective Governments. Hawks in the SADF do not believe this to be a guarantee that FRELIMO will relinquish its support to **MK**, so they have a contingency plan for this eventuality.
- 31/3/84 A 12-month detention order is served on Matthew Goniwe, Madoda Jacobs, Mbulelo Goniwe and Fort Calata as a result of spiralling student unrest in the Eastern Cape. Students riot at Lingelihle Township, with 81 people being charged with intimidation, public violence and arson as a result.
- 4/84 An attempt is launched to get the Security Forces of both South Africa and Botswana to cooperate with a view to preventing the ANC from operating out of Botswana into Bophuthatswana and South Africa.
- 4/84 The **ECC** establishes local committees in Cape Town, Durban and Johannesburg.

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- 4/84 The Western Synod of the Dutch Reformed Church declares that there is no biblical justification for Apartheid and urges its congregation to confess their participation with humility and sorrow (Welsh, 2000:485).
- 4/84 **SADF SF** (E Coy, 1-Para) engage in an un-named operation in Sector 10 in SWA in Owamboland. The objective is night time parachute deployment, known as lunar operations, to enforce curfew. This lasts until 6/84 (Volker, 2010:328). **Note:** The author describes one such operation when a curfew breaker was shot and killed (Turton, 2010).
- 5/84 FAPLA launches an offensive against UNITA in the vicinity on Cazombo and Lumbala. This is supported by MIG-23 and MI-24 aircraft. A second offensive is launched against Mavinga from **Cuito Cuanavale**.
- 5/84 FAPLA launch a major operation to take Mavinga and Jamba. According to Volker (2010:748) this is a total failure, with a major loss of equipment with no gains by FAPLA.
- 5/84 **SADF SF** (5-Recce) in support of UNITA launch **Operation Catamaran I** to destroy the Angolan air power in the Menongue area (Volker, 2010:576). **Note:** The CIA did not allow the SADF to have access to Stinger surface to air missiles because of the arms embargo, but these were given to UNITA, hence the combined operation. UNITA controlled the Stingers with varied success.
- 5/84 Mangosuthu Buthelezi makes a speech in the **KwaZulu Legislative Assembly**, calling for preparations for a day when brother will rise up and fight against brother. This is referring to the **Civil War** that is brewing between the ANC and the Zulu people (see the **Seven Day War** that starts on 25/3/90 - Nortje, 2003:261) (also see 7/8/85 and 9/8/85).
- 5/84 A paper is published by the Chief Engineer of the Rand Water Board (RWB) entitled *Total Water Strategy Needed for the Vaal Triangle: Meeting the Challenge of the Eighties*. This contextualizes the strategic need for the South African economic heartland to gain access to secure supplies of water. Listed in this document are IBT schemes such as the **Lesotho Highlands Water Project (LHWP)**, the Tugela-Vaal link and the mooted Okavango development. The need to gain access to the Okavango is referred to in the context of **CONSAS**, indicating the strategic relevance of water in terms of this overall policy. This is an example of the **Total Onslaught** threat perception at work. (See Blanchon, 2001; Blanchon & Turton, 2005, James, 1980, Turton, 2003; 2007 and Turton & Funke, 2008).
- 2/5/84 The South African Government signs an *Agreement between the Governments of the Republic of Portugal, the People's Republic of Mozambique and the Republic of South Africa Relative to the Cahora Bassa Project*. This is a follow up to the **Nkomati Peace Accords** (see 16/3/84) and illustrates the relevance of the **Cahora Bassa Project** as an element of the prevailing **Total Onslaught** paradigm. This seeks to offer a carrot of cooperation in development projects, rather than the stick of military reprisal. (See Turton, 2003; 2007; 2008 and Turton & Funke, 2008).
- 24/5/84 A consensus agreement is reached between the Security Forces of Botswana and South Africa not to allow their respective territory to be used for hostile acts against each other.
- 28/5/84 The Government of Mozambique (GoM) offers an amnesty to RENAMO guerrillas wishing to turn themselves in and ending hostilities.
- 29/5/84 The GoM amnesty is discussed with Evo Fernandez in his capacity as RENAMO's European Representative, but is rejected.
- 6/84 **SADF SF** (E Coy, 1-Para) end the un-named operation in Sector 10 in SWA in Owamboland started in 4/84. The objective is night time parachute deployment, known as lunar operations, to enforce curfew (Volker, 2010:328). **Note:** The author describes one such operation when a curfew breaker was shot and killed (Turton, 2010).

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- 6/84 Tension mounts in Crossroads after 12,000 residents sign a UDF declaration stating their refusal to move to Khayelitsha.
- 6/84 The ANC launch a protest action after the AZAPO Vice President in Natal (Imraan Moosa) is allowed to address a UN Conference on Apartheid.
- 16/6/84 The **Gorongozo Papers** (captured on 25/8/85) allege that Afonso Dhlakama sends a signal to **SADF SF** requesting logistical support because of shortages of ammunition and equipment.
- 30/6/84 Talks take place between South African and Mozambican officials where the amnesty is discussed. The GoM asks South Africa to keep the nearly 8,000 RENAMO fighters then in training, and employing them on the gold mines. That would see the GoM earning 50% of their salary in terms of an old agreement with the mining industry.
- 7/84 A secret meeting takes place between FRELIMO and RENAMO in Pretoria with a view to broker a peace agreement between them.
- 11/7/84 The Transkei Auditor General queries the financial affairs of Security Specialists International (Pty) Ltd.
- 12/7/84 **SADF SF** (4-Recce) attacks an oil pipeline in the Cabinda Enclave. This is a build-up for future operations designed to limit the capacity of the Angolan Government to wage war and support ANC and SWAPO fighters. As such it represents a significant escalation of the conflict.
- 12/7/84 **SADF SF** (4-Recce) sabotage an oil pipeline at Melongo/Malembo in the Cabinda Enclave. The operation is a success with the destruction of 200 metres of pipeline and the loss of around 42,000 gallons of crude oil (Volker, 2010:576). **Note:** The fact that an American oil company (Gulf Oil) experienced the loss, did not ingratiate the SADF to the American government.
- 15/7/84 **PLAN** attacks the SADF military base at Etongua (Volker, 2010:748).
- 20/7/84 The **Gorongozo Papers** (captured on 25/8/85) allege that RENAMO request a meeting between Evo Fernandes and the **SADF SF**.
- 26/7/84 **PLAN** attacks the SADF military base at Okankolo for the first time (see 13/4/87 & 22/4/88) (Volker, 2010:747).
- 8/84 **MK** attacks inside SA originating from Botswana escalate to the point that by 6/85 36 acts of sabotage are on record.
- 24/8/84 **Exercise Thunder Chariot** at the Army Battle School at Lohattha involving 7<sup>th</sup> Division, 71 Motorized Brigade, Cape Field Artillery, 72 Motorized Brigade, Transvaal Horse Artillery & 82 Mechanised Brigade is launched, lasting until 18/9/84 (Volker, 2010:346). **Note:** This is a complex exercise that also includes 4 Battle Group Exercises being conducted concurrently by 81 Armoured Brigade at Oshivelo, as the build-up of heavy armour continued in Angola. The Oshivelo-based force was placed on the so-called Red Line but held back as an armoured reserve in the event it might be needed to counter the Cuban force build-up in Angola. This is an early sign of what was to eventually become the **Battle of Cuito Cuanavale**.
- 9/84 The Vaal Triangle riots erupt. The SADF is deployed for the first time. **Operations Blatjang** and **Adamsvy** are launched. Peoples Courts are installed as angry youths try people for alleged complicity with the Security Forces and sentence them to death by “necklace”. This is a car tyre filled with petrol and hung around the neck of the victim before being ignited.

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One of the first of these victims is a woman by the name of Maki Skosana, who is beaten, stoned and has a bottle inserted into her vagina, before being necklaced. This event shocks society, because it represents a new level of violence not seen before in South Africa. **Note:** The author is redeployed from a tour of duty in Angola, into this theatre of operations, along with the rest of his unit – see Turton (2010). This becomes a turning point in the author's life, because of the level of violence witnessed, not seen before in military operations. For a description of this event see the short story entitled **Thousand Yard Stare** available online at <http://www.shakinghandswithbilly.com> or simply Google the title. This experience burns into his mind and he later goes on to note that there are similarities between this violence and the violence that occurs in the Khutsong area in 2004 (see Johnston & Bernstein, 2007); and the **Xenophobia** that erupts in South Africa in 2008 (see Johnston & Wolmarans, 2008; Sibanda, 2008 and Turton, 2008; 2009). When the author later makes this observation known in 2008, he is banned from presenting a scientific paper on this subject (see Turton, 2008; 2009). The personal impact of this extreme violence thus impacts the author's life for decades to come, eventually leading to the premature termination of a career at the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) in December 2008. It is probable that the violence is so extreme, that gate-keeping elites in society choose rather to deny its existence, by branding those who seek to learn from it as being non-scientific or having a hidden political agenda, as happens to the author in 2008/9.

- 9/84 The FAPLA offensive against UNITA peters out.
- 9/84 PW Botha becomes the first Executive President in South Africa.
- 6/9/84 The **Gorongozo Papers** (captured on 25/8/85) allege that a meeting took place between Gen. Magnus Malan (Minister of Defence), Gen. Kat Liebenberg (GOC SF) and Afonso Dhlakama at Gorongozo. Malan is alleged to have told Dhlakama not to trust Pik Botha (Minister of Foreign Affairs). This is evidence of **Total Onslaught** paranoia and the Hawk vs. Dove battle that is taking place in Pretoria at the time (see Chapter 10 of Turton, 2006).
- 17/9/84 The **Gorongozo Papers** (captured on 25/8/85) allege that the SADF bug Pik Botha's meetings with FRELIMO.
- 18/9/84 **Exercise Thunder Chariot** at the Army Battle School at Lohattha involving 7<sup>th</sup> Division, 71 Motorized Brigade, Cape Field Artillery, 72 Motorized Brigade, Transvaal Horse Artillery & 82 Mechanised Brigade comes to an end (Volker, 2010:346). **Note:** This is a complex exercise that also includes 4 Battle Group Exercises being conducted concurrently by **81 Armoured Brigade** at Oshivelo, as the build-up of heavy armour continued in Angola. The Oshivelo-based force was placed on the so-called Red Line but held back as an armoured reserve in the event it might be needed to counter the Cuban force build-up in Angola. This is an early sign of what was to eventually become the **Battle of Cuito Cuanavale**.
- 10/84 A secret meeting is again facilitated in Pretoria between FRELIMO and RENAMO with a view to brokering a peace agreement. This results in what becomes known as the **Pretoria Declaration**.
- 10/84 A six man team of **SADF SF** (5-Recce) under the command of Lt. A. Diedericks, along with a small UNITA unit and 1 member of the SAAF launch **Operation Catamaran II** to shoot down enemy aircraft along the Gimbe River between Menongue and Cuito Cuanavale in Angola. The operation takes place until 19/3/85 and results in the capture of a SAM-9 system mounted on a BRDM-2. A Dornier aircraft is also shot down killing a Cuban pilot and 4 passengers and enabling the payload to be captured (wages for the troops). A Russian MI 8/17 helicopter was also shot down (Volker, 2010:576).
- 1/10/84 Maj. Andre Diedericks and the rest of the **SADF SF** Small Teams are officially transferred from **D40** to **5 Recce** in Phalaborwa (Diedericks, 2007:92).

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- 7/10/84 **PLAN** attacks the SADF military base at Omungwelume for the first time (see 28/3/87; 14/6/87 & 19/6/87) (Volker, 2010:747).
- 11/10/84 The Portuguese Foreign Ministry gets wind of the FRELIMO/RENAMO talks and tries to trump them by inviting both parties to Lisbon. This infuriates South Africa.
- 12/10/84 The Portuguese Foreign Ministry rebuffs the South African Foreign Ministry when Minister Pik Botha requests a meeting with his counterpart in Lisbon.
- 16/10/84 **PLAN** attacks the SADF military base at Okanghundi (Volker, 2010:748).
- 30/10/84 Senior members of the South African and Botswana Security Forces meet to discuss the deteriorating security situation. The BDF delegation has no mandate from their Government, so no final binding agreement can be reached.
- 11/84 AZAPO criticize the UDF for not consulting with them when deciding on a stay away in Soweto.
- 11/84 **SADF SF** inserts a small specialized reconnaissance team into the Cabinda Enclave to conduct a detailed target analysis of oil storage facilities. This team is commanded by Capt. Wynand du Toit. The mission is a success. This becomes the foundation of **Operation Argon**.
- 11/84 **SADF SF** (53 Commando at **5 Recce**) inserts a 6-man team into Angola as part of **Operation Catamaran I**, tasked with doing a close-in reconnaissance and forward artillery control for a stand-off bombardment of the airfield at Menongue. The SF team is unable to reach the target on time but the bombardment succeeds. The team then breaks into smaller units and one stays behind under the command of Maj. Andre Diedericks, where they deploy with a small UNITA unit and successfully shoot down a number of aircraft flying between Menongue and Cuito Cuanavale. This is known as **Operation Catamaran II** and it is highly successful, downing *inter alia* a Soviet Antonov, on which 11 Russian advisors are flying, killing all on board. This operation is a success (Diedericks, 2007: 90-98).
- 11/84 **SADF SF** (4-Recce) inserts a 9 man team into the Cabinda Enclave to do a reconnaissance of oil installations. The commander is Capt. Wynand du Toit and his 2IC is Capt. Krubert Nel. The reconnaissance is successful (Volker, 2010:576). (See **Operation Argon** on 18/5/85).
- 12/84 Three unidentified victims that are about to be murdered by **Operation Dual** are used as guinea pigs to test CBW compounds at Dukuduku Military Base in Natal.
- 10/12/84 Matthew Goniwe, Madoda Jacobs, Mbulelo Goniwe and Fort Calata are released from detention after serving only 7 months of their 12-month sentence.
- 10/12/84 Ferdi Barnard, a West Rand-based narcotics policeman, is sentenced to 20 years imprisonment for the murder of two drug dealers. Barnard is released on 10/12/87 where he is taken into the employment of Special Forces under the banner of the **Citizens Cooperation Bureau (CCB)**.
- 14/12/84 The South African Foreign Minister writes to his counterpart in Botswana, warning him that retaliation will happen if Botswana does not stop providing succour to **MK** and **APLA** operatives, known to be operating from there into South Africa.

### 1985

- 1985 Fifteen members of **32 Battalion** are killed in action (Nortje, 2003:286).

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- 1985 The total number of deaths in the SADF this year reported by Arm of Service is as follows: Army – 73 of which 26 are KIA; Air Force – none; Navy – 3 of which none are KIA; Medical Corps – 5 of which 1 is KIA. During this year a total of 10 **Honorus Crux** medals are awarded for bravery (Stiff, in Ramsden, 2009).
- 1985 During this year, the following statistics are relevant to the SADF operating on the SWA/Namibia border with Angola: 52 contacts; 590 insurgents killed; 56 civilians killed; 179 civilians abducted; 170 anti-tank mines detonated; 147 anti-tank mines recovered; 284 anti-personnel mines recovered; 514 rifles captured; 1,006 rifle grenades captured; 512 hand grenades captured; 1,966 mortar bombs captured; and 88 SADF killed in total (Steenkamp, 1985; Ramsden, 2009:181-2).
- 1985 A study is published by Borchert & Kemp entitled *A Zambezi Aqueduct*. This gives details of potential water transfers from the Zambezi down to South Africa. This plan had been developed from earlier studies, with the most refined version consisting of a 1,116-km concrete structure feeding  $2,500 \times 10^6 \text{m}^3 \text{yr}^{-1}$  of water from the Zambezi/Chobe confluence through Botswana to a dam in South Africa, from where it would be reticulated to the Vaal River Supply Area. In terms of this planning, Botswana would have been supplied  $60 \times 10^6 \text{m}^3 \text{yr}^{-1}$  from this aqueduct.
- 1985 SADF (Eastern Province Command and 6 SAI) launch **Operation Poncho**, which is a COIN and riot control operation that lasts until 1987 (Volker, 2010:372).
- 1985 Julius Nyerere voluntarily relinquishes political power in Tanzania, setting the stage for future leaders to leave office in dignity.
- 1985 A total of 136 incidents are directly attributed to **MK** during 1985.
- 1985 **MK** launch **Operation Butterfly** with the objective of smuggling mid-ranking ANC cadres into South Africa. This operation fails because of effective interceptions (Volker, 2010:765).
- 1985 Gorbachev takes power in the USSR.
- 1985 The **ECC** establishes new branches in Grahamstown, Pietermaritzburg and Port Elizabeth.
- 1985 The ANC/SACP/COSATU Alliance identifies the IFP as “an enemy of the people”. This lays the foundation for the **Civil War** to come by invoking Zulu threat perceptions. (See reference to the **Seven Day War** that starts on 25/3/90 - Nortje, 2003:261).
- 1985 **SADF SF** (1-Para; 2-Para; 4-Para; 44-Para Brigade) launch **Operation Xenon** in Soweto, Port Elizabeth, Cape Town, Paarl and East London areas. This is described as urban COIN operations and lasts until 1987. Support elements for this operation are 44 Signals Unit, 44 Maintenance Unit and 37 Field Workshop (Volker, 2010:329). **Note:** This is an indication of the escalating level of internal unrest and violence necessitating battle hardened combat troops to be redeployed from Angola into the urban areas of South Africa.
- 1985 A four man team of **SADF SF** (4-Recce & 5-Recce) attempt to jump into theatre at Morogoro in Tanzania from a launch base at Nyika Plateau in Malawi in order to destroy the ANC NEC facilities. The operation is aborted due to the low cloud cover (Volker, 2010:577).
- 1985 This year is regarded in internally-focussed Security Force circles as being one characterized by deteriorating security inside South Africa, with many so-called Township areas being declared No-Go Areas as part of the UDF call to make SA “ungovernable”.
- 1985 **Operation Marion** is launched to give the IFP an offensive capacity against the ANC. Some 200 Zulu’s are trained in combat as a result. This is a modern version of the Afrikaner/Zulu

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- alliance that arose from the murder of **Piet Retief** and the massacre at Weenen (see 11/1839).
- 1985 Botswana becomes an important **MK** infiltration route so Security Force operations inside that country escalate accordingly.
- 1985 After the SADF withdraws from Ngiva and Xangongo in terms of the **Lusaka Accord**, FAPLA reinforce their defences, but in contravention of the agreement with South Africa, give renewed support to SWAPO. This sees an upsurge in SWAPO activities throughout the year.
- 1985 **Project Coast** (Chemical and Biological Warfare - CBW - Programme) becomes linked to 7-Medical Battalion based at Speskop under the command of Dr. Wouter Basson.
- 1985 Phillip Mijburgh, the nephew of General Magnus Malan, is appointed Managing Director of **Delta G Scientific**, a manufacturing front company for **Project Coast**. An incident occurs when Mijburgh and his wife visit friends of a senior **Delta G** executive for dinner and she steals personal belongings of the hostess. This matter is hushed up, but it suggests that not all is well with the leadership cadre of this operation.
- 1985 GOC SF issues an order to eliminate Peter Kalangula, a SWAPO sympathizer, by using a **Project Coast** CBW capability.
- 1/85 Senator **Edward Kennedy** visits the RSA as a guest of the UDF. AZAPO launch a series of protests to condemn his visit.
- 1/85 In response to T-54 and T 65 armour moving into Angola (see **Operation Askari** on 3/1/84) the SADF deploys Olifant tanks for the first time in **Sector 10** during **Operation Vuiswys**. The heavy Russian armour is monitored and is cause for concern, because it indicates an escalation in the regional arms race.
- 1/85 **SADF SF** (C Coy, 1-Para) launch **Operation Kapel (Chapel)** in southern Angola. No further details are known (Volker, 2010:329).
- 24/1/85 The South African Chief of Police (Gen. Johan Coetzee) meets with his Botswana counterparts (Simon Hirschfeldt), during which ANC activities in Botswana are discussed.
- 2/85 Violence breaks out in Crossroads during which 18 civilians are killed and 250 are injured. The SAP casualties are 6 injured and 28 vehicles damaged.
- 4/2/85 **Exercise Whippet** at the Army Battle School at Lohattha involving 72 Motorized Brigade is launched, lasting until 5/3/85 (Volker, 2010:346).
- 10/2/85 Nelson Mandela, having been offered conditional freedom by President P.W. Botha, writes a memorandum in response. "I cherish my own freedom dearly, but I care even more for your freedom. ... I am not less life-loving than you are. But I cannot sell my birthright, nor am I prepared to sell the birthright of the people to be free. ... Only free men can negotiate. Prisoners cannot enter into contracts. ... I cannot and will not give any undertaking at a time when I and you, the people, are not free" (Feinstein, 2007:12).
- 22/2/85 The South African and Botswana Foreign Minister's meet to discuss the ANC activities in Botswana. Shortly after this Oliver Tambo is monitored as he is called to a meeting with the Botswana Prime Minister.
- 3/85 **SADF SF** (5-Recce) launch **Operation Catamaran** that ends in May 1985. No further details are known (Volker, 2010:576).

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- 3/85 A couple is murdered on their farm near Swartdruggens by **MK** operatives based in Gaborone.
- 3/85 During unrest at Langa, near Uitenhage, 20 people are killed by police action.
- 5/3/85 **Exercise Whippet** at the Army Battle School at Lohattha involving 72 Motorized Brigade comes to an end (Volker, 2010:346).
- 28/3/85 A meeting of the **Eastern Province JMC** tables Matthew Goniwe's name for the first time. This meeting is chaired by Brig. Joffel van der Westhuizen, the mastermind of **Operation Katzen** and veteran of **Operation Savannah** where he had served with distinction in **Foxbat**.
- 29/3/85 A radio report is received that four villages have been razed to the ground by **SWAPO**, so a patrol from Platoon 3 Bravo Company **4 SAI** under the command of Lt. Bam is diverted from their routine deployment around Beacon 17 in the **Yati Strip**, to go and investigate. They cross 16 km into southern Angola, where they come across the first village confirming that 4 civilians have been murdered. They then proceed to the second kraal where they confirm that 5 civilians have been murdered. At the third kraal they confirm 12 civilians have been murdered. One soldier in this patrol later writes of this event as follows: "I took a step or two closer, and a stench as vile as I have ever encountered hit me like a gigantic wave, almost knocking me backwards. There was no mistaking what it was. It was the smell of death hanging over the charred remains of what was obviously the third kraal we were seeking. ... Nothing could have prepared us for this. Twelve Ovimbundu had been barbarically slaughtered. Blue flies buzzed in swarms over the bodies, which had been left unburied in the sweltering heat. An eerie calm hung over the gruesome scene. ... My legs felt weak and I felt goose bumps forming as I walked slowly through the sprawled bodies. I could not help thinking that at any moment one would come alive and grab my ankle and cling to it for protection. One was alone to the side. They were without shoes exposing their leathery cracked feet. Their clothing was torn, tattered and bloody. ... Forcing myself forward, I looked into their dead eyes, my hand shielding my mouth and nose from the smell of decaying flesh. A young girl's head had been stripped of flesh, probably by crows, exposing a skull that seemed to grin at me until I turned away to control my queasy stomach. It had a hole the size of a baseball smashed into it and flies buzzed in and out. Around the neck was a white-beaded necklace. ... A thin blue and white chequered cotton shirt was pulled up, exposing her belly and what looked like a dead snake coiled on it. It took me a few moments to realize that I was looking at her entrails that had spilled out, probably after a bayonet slash. Another wave of nausea swept over me, but I still couldn't tear my eyes away. Her long, thin legs were crossed in an elegant and relaxed fashion – in contrast to the upper half of her disfigured form. As I looked away a final sickening piece of mutilation caught my eye – one arm was missing at the elbow, the stump covered by her shirt. ... As we walked through the murder scene I could not help but notice Gouws standing alone 25 metres away, almost continually vomiting. Here was an Afrikaner who had seen much death and mutilation as a fireman before joining the army, yet even he didn't have the stomach to deal with such a murderous scene. ... I turned to the next body, my legs feeling heavy and my stomach was knotted. I tried to hold my breath as much as possible to avoid the dreadful smell. ... Next was a woman with a bone splintered like a twig protruding from the flesh of her arm. The other arm had been gnawed by scavenging dogs that had stripped it of its flesh. The humerus pointed upwards, while the bones of her lower arm lay alongside the body in the sand. ... An old crippled woman had a huge hole in the side of her head, obviously caused by an exiting bullet fired at point blank range. Pieces of her skull and brains hung from the hole, held together by her matted hair that was thick with dried blood. She had died while kneeling over another woman, probably her daughter, in a last desperate effort of motherly protection. ... Another woman had been slashed with a panga across her mouth, which had cut her face clean in two. Another's throat had been slit, almost decapitating her. ... The most heart-rending sight was two small children, probably less than five years old. Tears had dried in lines down the small faces. The shirt of one was badly bloodstained from where he had been shot in the back. There was a large hole in his neck where a bullet had

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exited. He was huddled on his dead mother's lap. The other child had died alone – shot down as he tried to flee the turmoil" (Ramsden, 2009:162 – 163).

- 24/4/85 Simon Skosana, the Chief Minister of the Bantustan KwaNdebele, announces that his "country" intends to take "independence" from South Africa in 1986. This sets a wave of political unrest in motion as anti-Apartheid forces mobilize to oppose this move.
- 26/4/85 Botswana police raid an ANC facility in Gaborone and seize weapons, explosives and ammunition.
- 5/85 **SADF SF** (5-Recce) finish **Operation Catamaran** that commenced on 3/85. No further details are known (Volker, 2010:576).
- 5/85 UDF supporters attack AZAPO supporters in the Eastern Cape, killing 4 and burning the homes of 33 AZAPO supporters.
- 1/5/85 Mampane Mazimba (ANC Chief Representative in Harare) dies in a motor car crash.
- 5/5/85 **PLAN** attacks the SADF military base at Epinga (Volker, 2010:747).
- 9/5/85 A memorial is unveiled at the new HQ of 4-Recce on the cliffs at Donkergat commemorating fallen comrades-in-arms.
- 12/5/85 Approval is given for **Operation Argon** to commence. This is a raid on the oil storage facilities in the Cabinda Enclave and is to be executed by 4-Recce under the command of Capt. Wynand du Toit, who did the earlier reconnaissance in 11/84.
- 16/5/85 The JMC is disbanded in Angola leaving FAPLA in control of Cunene Province.
- 18/5/85 A SADF Navy submarine takes up position off the Cabinda coastline with the **Operation Argon** team of nine operators on board.
- 18/5/85 **Operation Argon** is launched by **SADF SF** (4-Recce) by inserting a 10 man team into the Cabinda Enclave under the command of Capt. Wynand du Toit (Volker, 2010:576). **Note:** The operation is compromised and fails with the capture of Capt. Du Toit and the KIA of two operators after a fierce firefight. Du Toit's interrogation uses a cover story that the purpose of the reconnaissance was to determine if the ANC and/or SWAPO had a presence in Cabinda, but the actual mission is the destruction of oil facilities. The cover story buys time for the successful extraction of the rest of the team.
- 19/5/85 **Operation Catamaran II**, begun in 10/84, comes to an end (Volker, 2010:576).
- 20/5/85 The **Operation Argon** team is inserted by inflatable craft through the surf onto the beach according to plan.
- 21/5/85 The **Operation Argon** team is compromised after they select the incorrect lay-up point. In a vigorous fire fight, Capt. Du Toit is severely wounded and captured, with Cpl. Louis van Breda and Cpl. Roland Liebenberg being killed in action. The rest of the team escape and evade the enemy until they are extracted on 22/5/85. Sgt. Amilcar Quiroz assumes command of the extraction after the commander (Capt. Du Toit) and his 2IC (Capt. Krubert Nel) are captured and wounded respectively, and is later awarded the Honorus Crux for his actions.
- 22/5/85 Classes at Lingelihle High School are suspended for 2 days after student violence.
- 23/5/85 The **Eastern Province JMC** discusses the class boycotts in the Eastern Cape. The DET prefers the reinstatement of Goniwe as a way of defusing student tensions. Brig. Joffel van der Westhuizen (a Hawk) disagrees. A decision of the EPJMC is made to refer the matter to the **State Security Council**.

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- 24/5/85 Jaap Strijdom of DET meets with Matthew Goniwe to discuss the school boycotts and concludes that the best course of action is his (Goniwe's) reinstatement. Strijdom makes this recommendation to the **Geldenhuis Task Group**.
- 29/5/85 Capt. Wynand du Toit is displayed to the media in Luanda.
- 31/5/85 Minister Magnus Malan denies in Parliament that Capt. Du Toit was attacking oil installations, stating instead that an ANC safe house was the target.
- 6/85 The ANC hold the **Kabwe Conference** that develops the notion of a **People's War**. This lays the foundation for internal unrest and the final phase of the **Armed Struggle** begins. The road to **Civil War** has now firmly been embarked on (see the **Seven Day War** that starts on 25/3/90 as but one example of this - Nortje, 2003:261).
- 6/85 In the previous 12 months, 36 acts of sabotage have been committed inside SA by **MK** operatives working out of Botswana.
- 6/85 SADF launches simultaneous raids on ANC bases into Botswana, Zambia and Zimbabwe. The **Armed Struggle** heats up and spills over into neighbouring states.
- 6/85 The **ECC** holds a **Peace Festival** at Wits University that is attended by 1,000 people. Messages of support are presented from about 100 organizations.
- 6/6/85 During a meeting of the **Joint Security Action Committee** of the **State Security Council**, Jaap Strijdom of DET tables his recommendation that Matthew Goniwe be reinstated in an effort to attenuate violence in the Eastern Cape. The NIS is represented in the form of Mike Louw (a Dove) (see Turton, 2006). A decision is made to refer the matter to the **Geldenhuis Task Group** for a decision by 12/6/85.
- 7/6/85 During a meeting of the SADF Eastern Cape Command, the growing tension between AZAPO and UDF is discussed.
- 7/6/85 Brig. Joffel van der Westhuizen makes a phone call to Gen. van Rensburg of the **State Security Council** and they discuss ways of pre-empting the findings of the **Geldenhuis Task Group**. This conversation later becomes the subject of a series of legal actions because it leads to the drafting of a signal that refers to Matthew Goniwe, Mbulelo Goniwe and Fort Calata being "permanently removed from society". Stiff (2001:244) concludes that this is evidence that the SADF intend to "go it alone". The author offers this as evidence of the Hawks trumping the Doves yet again (see Chapter 10 of Turton, 2006).
- 11/6/85 The US Senate repeals the **Clark Amendment** blocking US assistance to UNITA.
- 12/6/85 The **Geldenhuis Task Group** submits its report recommending the reinstatement of Matthew Goniwe to Gen. van Rensburg of the **State Security Council**.
- 12/6/85 A small reconnaissance team crosses into Botswana *via* the border check point as part of the Advance Party of **Operation Plexi**.
- 13/6/85 Adam Stemmet writes a letter to Brig. Geldenhuis in his capacity as Chairman of the **Geldenhuis Task Group** informing him that Matthew Goniwe's reinstatement should be in line with normal DET policy and procedures.
- 14/6/85 The main force of **Operation Plexi** moves across the border in a sealed container to attack 10 designated ANC targets in Gaborone. The total force commitment for **Operation Plexi** is 13 teams of 63 operators from 1-Recce, 4-Recce and 5-Recce. This results in a massive haul of intelligence material and the destruction of a number of designated ANC facilities.

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- 14/6/85 **SADF SF** consisting of 5-Recce (63 operators), 4-Recce (4 operators) and **Barnacle** (15 operators) launch **Operation Plexi** to destroy a number of ANC targets in Gaborone, Botswana. The operation is a success with 14 ANC/MK KIA (including 3 women and a child) and wounding 6 (including a child and a Dutch woman) (Volker, 2010:577).
- 14/6/85 **Exercise Grand Slam** at the Army Battle School at Lohatla involving 84 Motorized Brigade is launched, lasting until 17/7/85 (Volker, 2010:346).
- 17/6/85 The **State Security Council** meets to consider the imposition of a **National State of Emergency**.
- 18/6/85 An internal DET memo confirms the **Geldenhuis Task Group** recommendation that Matthew Goniwe will be reinstated. This later becomes evidence in court. The author offers this as evidence of Dove sentiments on the way to moderate internal tensions. This also shows to what extent the **State Security Council** is actually running every aspect of South Africa at this time (see Frankel, 1984 and Geldenhuis, 1984).
- 18/6/85 **SADF SF** (5-Recce) launch **Operation Hunter** that takes place until 2/9/85, but nothing more is known of this action (Volker, 2010:577).
- 20/6/85 The **UN Security Council** unanimously condemns South African aggression in Cabinda. The South African Ambassador to the UN, Kurt von Schirnding, links the withdrawal of Cuban forces from Angola to the possible withdrawal of SADF forces from Namibia.
- 23/6/85 The ANC's **Second National Consultative Conference** in Kabwe, Zambia, decides to establish a **Department of Religious Affairs** in order to engage people of faith in the struggle. The issue of **Conscientious Objection** now becomes more prominent as an element of the **Armed Struggle**.
- 25/6/85 The SA Police draft a classified memo recommending that Matthew Goniwe be arrested and detained away from Craddock. This later becomes evidence in court. The author offers this as evidence of Hawk sentiments on the way to resolve internal tensions.
- 27/6/85 Matthew Goniwe, Fort Calata, Sicelo Mhlawuli and Sparrow Mkonto are travelling in a car over Olifantshoek Pass when they are intercepted by a Security Police contingent under the overall command of Col. Harold Snyman. The tactical commander is Capt. Sakkie van Zyl. This is the last time they are seen alive.
- 28/6/85 **Operation Boswilger** is launched into Cunene Province in Angola. (Photo showing the terrain in Cunene Province and a Casspir that has been destroyed by a mine courtesy of Lt. Paul Oberholster, Great-Great-Grandson of Veldt Cornet Piet Oberholster, a **Second Anglo-Boer War** veteran and **Bittereinder**).
- 29/6/85 The burnt bodies of Sparrow Mkonto and Sicelo Mhlawuli are found in the bushes outside Port Elizabeth.
- 30/6/85 The burnt and decomposing bodies of Matthew Goniwe and Fort Calata are found in bushes near St. Georges Strand and Bluewater Bay in Port Elizabeth.



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- 7/85 FAPLA launch **Operation Second Congress** (2-do Congresso do Partido), which is a major offensive against UNITA at Mavinga and Jamba. This lasts until 10/85 and involves FAPLA 5<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>, 13<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> Brigades, including a SWAPO Brigade and 5 MK Battalion. This operation progresses well and is only stopped on the outskirts of Mavinga by a concerted counter-offensive by the SADF and SAAF (**Operation Wallpaper**) (Volker, 2010:748).
- 7/85 A **State of Emergency** is declared in 36 Magisterial Districts giving wide powers to the combined Security Forces. Significantly, SADF units operating inside South Africa are given the same powers as the SAP, so the blurring between Police and Army responsibilities becomes more pronounced.
- 7/85 The **Chase Manhattan Bank** refuses to renew a loan of US\$10 million, plunging South Africa into financial crisis as other foreign investors become nervous.
- 9/7/85 Klaas de Jonge, a Dutch intelligence officer giving covert support to the ANC, escapes from detention and enters the safety of the Dutch Embassy in Pretoria. This triggers a significant counter-espionage operation, involving the intensive surveillance of the Embassy, including video and audio streams from inside the building, until his release as part of a prisoner exchange on 7/9/87 (see Turton, 2006).
- 9/7/85 Chief Mahlangu, a traditional leader in KwaNdebele, is sacked because of his reluctance to participate in the constitutional process leading to “independence” from South Africa.
- 17/7/85 **Exercise Grand Slam** at the Army Battle School at Lohatla involving 84 Motorized Brigade comes to an end (Volker, 2010:346).
- 8/85 During a spate of heavy civil unrest in the Eastern Cape, Gen. Magnus Malan and Minister Louis le Grange meet with Brig. Joffel van der Westhuizen in Port Elizabeth. Malan threatens to relieve van der Westhuizen of his command if the deteriorating security situation is not reversed. This threat sets the stage for the emergence of **Operation Katzen**.
- 8/85 Intelligence reports indicate that FAPLA has been given 30 MIG-23 fighters, 8 SU-22 fighters, 33 MI-24 attack helicopters, 69 MI-8 and MI-17 troop helicopters and a host of other Soviet hardware since 1/84. This build-up is regarded ominously in Pretoria.
- 8/85 Intelligence reports indicate that FAPLA is assembling 20 brigades for an assault against UNITA, including 5 battalions of **MK** guerrillas.
- 8/85 FAPLA launch an attack on Mavinga using 11 infantry brigades. In a pincer movement, fighting starts along the Lomba River. UNITA calls for SADF support, so **Operation Wallpaper** is launched with the deployment of **32 Battalion** supported by 127-mm Valkyrie rocket launchers. FAPLA's 17 and 25 Brigades are defeated with an estimated 1,100 soldiers killed, including 10 Russian and 56 Cuban officers, and 1,300 wounded. UNITA losses are around 1,500 dead or wounded. SAAF downs one MIG-23, a number of helicopters and an Antonov transport aircraft with a number of Russian officers on board.
- 1/8/85 UDF activist Victoria Mxenge is assassinated outside her Umlazi home.
- 5/8/85 Youths from AZASCO and COSAS call for a school boycott to protest the murder of Victoria Mxenge.
- 7/8/85 An IFP impi of around 300 warriors attacks mourners at the funeral of Victoria Mxenge, killing 17 and injuring many more. Tensions run high. (See 5/84 and also reference to the **Seven Day War** that starts on 25/3/90).
- 7/8/85 President PW Botha visits the Bantustan of KwaNdebele in a public display of support for its upcoming “independence” from South Africa. This adds new energy to the simmering unrest

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in KwaNdebele as tensions mount between the four traditional “Chief’s” who are scheduled to become constitutional players in the new “independent” state.

- 9/8/85 In heavy fighting an IFP impi of around 1,000 put rioters to the spear. At the end of the skirmish, 67 people are dead, 1,000 are injured and around 180 businesses have been destroyed. This polarizes Zulu society into two hostile camps – the IFP and the UDF/COSATU alliance. (See 5/84 and also reference to the **Seven Day War** that starts on 25/3/90).
- 27/8/85 All foreign currency trading is suspended as massive outflows of foreign capital result from the **State of Emergency** and the deteriorating internal security situation inside South Africa. South Africa is extremely vulnerable at this time and collapse is imminent. This mobilizes the Hawks. **Note:** This shows just how vulnerable South Africa is at this moment in time and all decisions taken by the security forces must be evaluated against this background.
- 28/8/85 The FPLM, with support from the ZNA, launch an airborne assault against RENAMO’s HQ at Gorongosa. This attack is successful and a stack of documents are captured. These later become known as the **Gorongosa Papers**. This incident is later recounted to the author when he is operating with RENAMO, where it is used as an example of the “godless” communist forces being defeated, because they do not respect the spirit medium that protects the sacred mountain (see Chapter 14 of Turton, 2006).
- 9/85 A meeting is held between the ANC and representatives of organized big business in an effort to explore potential common ground. Business is concerned about nationalization as defined by the **Freedom Charter**.
- 9/85 The Security Police detain 4 members of the **ECC** in the first action against that organization. They are detained for 11 days and released.
- 9/85 Papers that were captured by FRELIMO during an earlier attack on a RENAMO base (see 28/8/85), are published in the media under the banner of the **Gorongosa Papers**. These discredit South Africa by showing continued SADF support to RENAMO in contravention of the **Nkomati Peace Accords**. (See Chapter 14 of Turton, 2006).
- 9/85 **PLAN** engages in a battle in the Okapopa area in the vicinity of Onghumbi and Ombadja in Angola. The commander is Akudhenga Shiyagaya (Volker, 2010:746).
- 2/9/85 **SADF SF (5-Recce)** complete **Operation Hunter** that was launched on 18/6/85, but nothing more is known of this action (Volker, 2010:577).
- 12/9/85 Three National Service soldiers from **4 SAI** are captured by FRELIMO when they are found in Mozambique without any weapons. They are in Mozambique ostensibly to swim in the Shingwedzi River in a pool that has less crocodiles and hippos than on the South African side of the border, at a place frequently used by these soldiers for rest and recreation, but in contravention of Standard Operational Procedures. **Note:** This is purely an act of negligence on behalf of these soldiers, because they had no orders to be on Mozambique soil, and it is evident, after examining the context in which they were captured, that they came from a poorly disciplined unit of conscript soldiers with weak leadership and serious morale problems manifesting as the excessive use of marijuana and alcohol (see Ramsden, 2009:203 – 207). (See 23/9/85).
- 15/9/85 **Operation Egret** is launched into Angola in response to the JMC collapse and subsequent **PLAN** build-up.
- 16/9/85 President Samora Machel meets with Minister Pik Botha in Maputo to be briefed on the contents of the **Gorongosa Papers** (captured on 28/8/85). This revelation results in a **Presidential Commission of Enquiry** in South Africa.

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- 18/9/85 The **Presidential Commission of Enquiry** makes a public statement largely validating the **Gorongoza Papers**, but introducing uncertainty on specifics as alleged.
- 20/9/85 Adriaan Vlok announces that the **ECC** is a surrogate of the ANC.
- 23/9/85 The three SADF soldiers from **4 SAI** who were captured by FRELIMO on 12/9/85 are officially declared AWOL. At this stage they are being interrogated by Mozambique intelligence officers, probably from SNASP, but it is evident that they are of no great intelligence value given their marginal status as soldiers. Shortly after this the three are separated, with the leader, a Lance Corporal, being sent to a separate part of the Machava Prison, with both parties being informed that the others have been executed. This has serious psychological implications for the three soldiers, given that they are not in any way trained for this type of military eventuality; and that they were already not coping mentally with their role as ordinary infantry soldiers (making excessive use of alcohol and marijuana simply to get through a normal day in the life of a soldier). The Lance Corporal is then left in solitary confinement, manacled day and night, where he loses 20 kg of weight in the next three months (See Ramsden, 2009:285-303). (See 12/12/85)
- 10/85 **MK** infiltrates a team into Northern Transvaal from Zimbabwe.
- 10/85 The Commonwealth Conference held in Nassau focuses on South Africa. A decision is taken to despatch what is called the **Commonwealth Eminent Persons Group** (EPG) to investigate conditions inside South Africa and report back to the Commonwealth (see 2/86).
- 10/85 FAPLA's **Operation Second Congress** (2-do Congresso do Partido), launched in 7/85, comes to an end as a result of **Operation Wallpaper** (Volker, 2010:748).
- 7/10/85 In a public presentation in the Cape Town City Hall, Molly Blackburn refers to a growing militarization of South African society and refers to people in the Eastern Cape living in a state of **Civil War**.
- 11/10/85 **SADF SF** (5-Recce under the command of Lt. A. Diedericks) along with a small UNITA contingent, launch **Operation Cerberus** between Menongue and Cuito Cuanavale. The mission objective is to shoot down enemy aircraft. One Russian Antonov AN-12 is shot down with 28 FAPLA KIA including 11 Russians (Volker, 2010:577).
- 28/10/85 **SADF SF** (4-Para) launch **Operation Poncho** in the Port Elizabeth area. This is described as urban COIN operations and lasts until 29/11/85 (Volker, 2010:329). **Note:** This is an indication of the escalating level of internal unrest and violence necessitating battle hardened combat troops to be redeployed from Angola into the urban areas of South Africa.
- 11/85 A series of landmine incidents occur in the Messina and Weipe areas of the Northern Transvaal.
- 11/85 Zulu tensions mount as Pondo's from the Transkei are targeted after an alleged assault by a Pondo man on a Zulu woman near Malakazi. (See the discussion on the **Mfecane** in 1828 for a discussion of the relevance of this).
- 1/11/85 Maj. Gen. Kat Liebenberg becomes Chief of the Army, while Maj. Gen. Joep Joubert takes over as GOC SF. This initiates an evaluation of **Project Barnacle**, setting it up to become 3-Recce for a short period, before the need to conceal the direct military connection forces a name change to the **Citizens Cooperation Bureau (CCB)** in April 1986.
- 5/11/85 Pondo's fleeing Zulu wrath in Malakazi make their way to Umbogodweni south of Durban. (See the discussion on the **Mfecane** in 1828 for a discussion of the relevance of this).
- 25/11/85 Mangosuthu Buthelezi meets at Ulundi with the Director of Military Intelligence (Gen. Tienie Groenewald) to discuss the deteriorating security situation. **MK** plans to assassinate

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Buthelezi are tabled. Peter Stiff refers to Terence Tryone (incorrectly spelling his name as Tyrone) as being the **MK** operative allegedly tasked with this job (Stiff, 2001:160) (also see Turton, 2006).

- 27/11/85 A report to Magnus Malan recommends closer cooperation with Buthelezi.
- 28/11/85 The SSC decides that a security force must be established in KwaZulu and directs Magnus Malan, Chris Heunis and Louis le Grange to set this in motion.
- 29/11/85 **SADF SF** (4-Para) end **Operation Poncho** in the Port Elizabeth area. This is described as urban COIN operations and was started on 28/10/85 (Volker, 2010:329). **Note:** This is an indication of the escalating level of internal unrest and violence necessitating battle hardened combat troops to be redeployed from Angola into the urban areas of South Africa.
- 12/85 A series of landmine incidents occur in the Eastern Transvaal.
- 12/85 Crossroads has become a no-go area for the Security Forces. Heavy fighting occurs between the radicalized youth called the Comrades (UDF affiliates) and the so-called Fathers, an SAP-supported vigilante group. The Fathers take to wearing white cloths around their heads to be identifiable to the SAP and become known as the *Wit Doeke*.
- 12/85 **Operation Wallpaper** reduces FAPLA's military capability, but the focus of the war in Angola from a SADF perspective now turns to supporting UNITA, because it is clear that a major showdown is looming between these two armies. A heavy build up of materiel is reported by reconnaissance units in the field, most notably moving from Menongue to Cuito Cuanavale, with FAPLA 13<sup>th</sup> Brigade and 25<sup>th</sup> Brigade being the beneficiaries. This triggers operational planning in which **32 Battalion** would play a significant role (Nortje, 226).
- 12/85 As a result of persistent FAPLA losses, the Russians appoint General Konstantin Shaganovitch, a veteran of Afghanistan, as the Supreme Commander of all MPLA forces, including East German and Cuban commitments. Shaganovitch is supported by 950 Russian officers including General Mikhail Petrov. The Cuban contingent is expanded to 45,000 soldiers under the command of General Ramirez. This is additional proof that the regional conflict is a theatre of the **Cold War**.
- 12/85 **Operational Order No. 1/12/85** instructs **32 Battalion** to inflict maximum damage on FAPLA personnel and equipment in the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> Military Regions through combined MRL bombardments (Nortje, 2003:221). Main targets are designated as being the airfield at Menongue and Cuito Cuanavale. This is needed because all intelligence indications are that UNITA will not be able to withstand the sustained attack by FAPLA forces without assistance from South Africa. Charlie Company **32 Battalion** under the command of Eddie Viljoen is deployed to Menongue, with Capt Daan van der Merwe in command of Golf Company being deployed to Cuito Cuanavale.
- 12/85 The SSC formally warns neighbouring states that they would face retaliation if they continued harbouring armed cadres of the various Liberation Movements.
- 12/85 **SADF SF** (5-Recce) launch **Operation Abrasion** that ends in 2/86, but no details are known (Volker, 2010:577).
- 3/12/85 **SADF SF** (5-Recce under the command of Lt. A. Diedericks) along with a small UNITA contingent, end **Operation Cerberus** started on 11/10/85. The mission is a success with one Russian Antonov AN-12 shot down and 28 FAPLA KIA including 11 Russians (Volker, 2010:577).
- 12/12/85 The three soldiers from **4 SAI** that were captured by FRELIMO on 12/9/85, are reunited for the first time, as they are placed in a vehicle to be returned to South Africa (see 23/9/85). They are all in very bad physical and mental shape, having been in solitary confinement for

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the better part of three months and having believed that some of the original group had been executed. All three are emaciated, having lost about 20 kg of body weight each. They are taken to 1 Military Hospital in Voortrekker Hoogte where they are treated and debriefed (Ramsden, 2009:301).

- 15/12/85 Four MRL's are flown to Rundu from AFB Waterkloof in execution of **Operational Order 1/12/85**. This is to be code-named **Operation Jerry** with D-Day being set for 24/12/85. These MRL's are deployed into theatre from Rundu.
- 22/12/85 During an operational briefing arising from **Operation Jerry**, Major Holtzhausen of **32 Battalion** announces that he is unable to guarantee the accuracy of the MRL bombardment because the planning has been done on maps dating back to 1972. This results in a request by Colonel Viljoen to be equipped with the new SATNAV system that the SADF had just obtained (Nortje, 2003:223). A decision is made to send an ARMSCOR instructor to train the force in the use of this SARNAV system.
- 24/12/85 D-Day for the launch of **Operation Jerry**.
- 24/12/85 President PW Botha agrees to the **Commonwealth Eminent Persons Group** (EPG) visiting South Africa. Botha instructs his military commanders to stabilize the internal situation by the time the EPG arrives.
- 24/12/85 A Community Councillor (Siqaza) is killed by the Comrades in Crossroads.
- 25/12/85 **Operation Jerry** is delayed because the ARMSCOR instructor for the SATNAV has not yet arrived in theatre. Colonel Viljoen is angered so he phones Lt. Gen. Jannie Geldenhuys directly. At 11:00 a jet arrives at Rundu with the ARMSCOR SATNAV instructor on board. By 15:00 the same day, the **32 Battalion** MRL crews have been trained in SATNAV use and are ready for action (Nortje, 2003:223). The combat team moves out of Rundu under the guidance of UNITA Capt Veneno.
- 25/12/85 A violent skirmish takes place near Umbogodweni between a force of around 5,000 Zulu and Pondo combatants, leaving 60 dead and an unknown number injured. (See the discussion on the **Mfecane** in 1828 for a discussion of the cultural relevance of this).
- 30/12/85 The **32 Battalion** MRL combat team that left Rundu on 25/12/85 arrives in the UNITA base at Ponte Verde, ready to launch **Operation Jerry**. However, UNITA Major Handa, the officer designated to escort the Combat Team to Menongue is not to be found, delaying the operation by 24 hours. The delay sees one soldier come down with a kidney ailment, with another breaking the bones in his hand necessitating a helicopter Casevac. The helicopter rotor clips a tree during landing and is grounded until a repair crew can be brought in (Nortje, 2003:223). This gives an insight into the type of discipline and operational capability within the UNITA ranks at the time.
- 30/12/85 The *Wit Doeke* launch an attack on the Comrades in Crossroads. A hand grenade incident occurs injuring 5 of the rioters.

### 1986

- 1986 The serious drought that started in South Africa in 1979 comes to an end. This drought sees the accumulative natural flow of the Vaal River being reduced to 30% of the long-term average (Water Wheel – December 2008: pp 19-20). This causes serious economic hardship in the country. Part of this impacts Hlabisa Farms and thus places the author's own business at serious risk of failure (see Turton, 2006), thereby alerting him to the strategic importance of water at a high assurance of supply level in a water-constrained economy (Turton, 2003).
- 1986 No members of **32 Battalion** are killed in action, making this the quietest year in that unit's history (Nortje, 2003:286).

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- 1986 The total number of deaths in the SADF this year reported by Arm of Service is as follows: Army – 67 of which 12 are KIA; Air Force – 3 of which none are KIA; Navy – 1 of which none are KIA; Medical Corps – 1 of which none are KIA. During this year a total of 1 **Honorus Crux** medals are awarded for bravery (Stiff, in Ramsden, 2009).
- 1986 FAPLA launch a major operation manifest as a build up of logistics at **Cuito Cuanavale**. This is disrupted by UNITA through **Operation Chuva** and **Operation Alpha Centauri** (Volker, 2010:748).
- 1986 **32 Battalion** is transformed to a conventional unit when a squadron of Ratel 90 anti-tank AFV's, an anti-aircraft troop of 20-mm guns mounted on Ystervark vehicles and an artillery troop of Valkiri Multiple Rocket Launcher's (MRL's) are added (Nortje, 2003:64).
- 1986 The reign of King Mswati III begins in Swaziland.
- 1986 The year is characterized by a slide into national chaos, with PW Botha instructing the SADF to stabilize the situation by 12/86.
- 1986 **SADF SF** (1-Para; 2-Para; 4-Para; 44-Para Brigade) launch **Operation Pebble / Porcelain (Porcelain)** in the rural areas of the Northern Transvaal border with Zimbabwe and Botswana; and the Northern Natal border with Swaziland and Mozambique. This is described as rural COIN operations and lasts until 1989 (Volker, 2010:329). **Note:** This is an indication of the escalating level of internal unrest and violence necessitating battle hardened combat troops to be redeployed from Angola into the rural areas of South Africa, most notably as stopper groups for insurgents and the interception of weapons from the Front Line States. This is the tactical background for **Operation Bush Talk** (see 26/6/93) (Turton, 2010).
- 1986 SADF (Eastern Province Command and 6 SAI) launch **Operation Amber**, which is a COIN and riot control operation that lasts until 1987 (Volker, 2010:372).
- 1986 SADF (Eastern Province Command and 6 SAI) launch **Operation Quarry**, which is a COIN and riot control operation that lasts until 1987 (Volker, 2010:372).
- 1986 Attacks on IFP start in earnest.
- 1986 MID (SADF) launch **Operation Katzen** via the Directorate of Special Tasks (DST). This is listed as beginning in “early 1986 and ending in the 1990s”. The objective is described as being “covert action in the Eastern Cape, Ciskei and Transkei; possible merging of Transkei and Ciskei under George Matanzima as counter to ANC-UDF” (Volker, 2010:637).
- 1986 MID (SADF) launch **Operation Orpheus** in conjunction with the SAP and **SADF SF** with the objective of “neutralizing the ANC/UDF leadership at national level”. This operation ends in 1991 (Volker, 2010:637).
- 1986 Intelligence assessment not that a total of 230 incidents are directly attributed to **MK** during 1986.
- 1986 Afonso Dhlakama announces his intention of deploying RENAMO forces in Zimbabwe in retaliation for ZNA support to the FPLM in Mozambique.
- 1986 The **Coordinating Intelligence Committee (CIC)** is established under the chairmanship of the DG NIS, shifting some of the power of the Securocrats into the Dove camp (see Chapter 10 of Turton, 2006 for a discussion on the relevance of this).
- 1986 **Roodeplaat Research Laboratories (RRL)** are expanded into a CBW manufacturing facility under the umbrella of **Project Coast**.

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- 1986 The Urban Areas Act is promulgated, disbanding all forms of influx control. This opens the floodgates for legal reform, because the logic on which Apartheid is built is now unravelling.
- 1986 **SADF SF** (Longreach) launch **Operation Babushka**, which is the establishment of a conservative think tank in Washington D.C. named the **International Freedom Foundation** (IFF) with the objective of countering sanctions and gathering support for both South Africa and UNITA. This operation is a relative success (Volker, 2010:578).
- 1/86 AZAPO and the UDF reach a peace agreement in which they pledge support for the united struggle against the Apartheid state.
- 1/86 A small group of Pondo's attack a group of Zulu's on a train heading for Umbumbulu. (See the discussion on the **Mfecane** in 1828 for a discussion of the cultural relevance of this event).
- 1/86 The SADF issues a report tabling the security needs of KwaZulu. Central to this is the creation of an elite unit of highly trained Zulu's about 200 strong. The creation of this unit is given the code name of **Operation Marion**. **Note:** This is a threshold event as it unleashes a series of incidents that have a very high impact, including, but not limited to, the **Boipatong Massacre** (17/6/92), the **Trust Feed Massacre** (6/1/89), the **KwaMakutha Massacre** (20/1/87 and 1996) and the **Boipatong Massacre** (17/6/92). (Also see 16/4/86).
- 1/86 Given the growing tensions in KwaNdebele, Simon Skosana forms the **Mbokotho Vigilante Group**. Mbokotho means "the boulder that crushes" and is similar in name to the Counter Intelligence Wing of **MK**. The **Mbokotho Vigilante Group** starts to work closely with the SA Police in "restoring" law and order in KwaNdebele. (See reference to the **Mfecane** in 1816 for an understanding of the cultural significance of this choice of name and concept to restore law and order).
- 1/86 South Africa wants a security pact with Lesotho, but the latter is unwilling to sign, claiming they are not an aggressor nation. South Africa is increasingly concerned over the presence of Soviet, Chinese, North Korean and Cuban embassies in Maseru, believing them to be giving covert support to the liberation struggle. This fear arises after intensive covert intelligence operations designed to determine the exact threat posture of those embassies yields credible evidence to support this notion. Given the deteriorating security situation in South Africa, they close the borders and impose a blockade off all goods entering and leaving Lesotho. This places pressure on the Lesotho government (see 20/1/86 for the consequences of this event).
- 4/1/86 Alpha Company **32 Battalion** under command of Capt Fred Turner, having picked up the MRL's left at Mavinga at the end of **Operation Wallpaper**, deploys to **Cuito Cuanavale** in support of Capt van der Merwe, ready to launch **Operation Jerry**. By the night of 4/1/86 the combat team is in position at Mavinga and awaiting final orders to advance to battle. The final battle deployment consists of three groups: **Mexico** including Col Viljoen's command team, UNITA guides, 4 MRL's, 4 Samil's each carrying 100 rockets and Charlie Company; **Luengo** under command of Sgt. Maj. Dave du Toit, with the logistics element, recovery unit and mortar platoon; and **Verde** commanded by Sgt. Lindagu as the reserve element (Nortje, 2003:224).
- 6/1/86 **SADF-SF** destroy 9 FAPLA vehicles in an ambush between Cuatir and Luassinga, taking a prisoner.
- 7/1/86 The **Mexico** and **Luengo** groups of **Operation Jerry** are ordered to stop their advance to target 30 km south-west of Menongue, in anticipation of tactical intelligence to be obtained from a debriefing of the prisoner captured by **SADF-SF** the day before (Nortje, 2003:224).

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- 8/1/86 At **Cuito Cuanavale** a ripple of 96 rockets is fired at midnight initiating **Operation Jerry**. Meanwhile in the **Mexico Group**, the MRL crew is in place at 20:00, but due to technical problems the ripple is only launched onto target at Menongue at 22:30 (Nortje, 2003:224).
- 9/1/86 A second ripple of 96 rockets is fired at **Cuito Cuanavale** at 02:35 as part of **Operation Jerry**. This is met with a counter-bombardment of 13 D30 artillery shells from FAPLA. Radio intercepts indicate that considerable damage has been done to the airfield at Menongue and that 2 Russians had been killed. The group goes to ground during daylight, moving to a new firing position at 17:30, firing the third ripple of 96 rockets at 19:25. The fourth ripple is launched at midnight after which the group withdraws back to Buffalo Base (Nortje, 2003:224). Elsewhere in theatre the **Mexico Group** is ordered to disengage due to heavy vehicular activity close to their fire base. They move in darkness linking up with the **Verde Group** and withdraw along the Cuito River. This convoy is attacked by 4 helicopters deployed out of Menongue. UNITA HQ reports contact with a strong FAPLA armoured unit at the source of the Pengo River, 20 km from the **Mexico Group**'s lay-up. This forces **32 Battalion** to make a tactical withdrawal to Ponto Verde, because they are not equipped to deal with tanks. (Photo taken by the author shows the revetments used to protect the fighter aircraft at Menongue airport along with a mobile radar unit).
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- 12/1/86 As part of **Operation Jerry** Colonel Viljoen requests permission to attack the FAPLA forces based at Baixa Longa using the combined **32 Battalion** forces, as well as the SADF-SF group and Major Handa's UNITA Company. The battle planning is to deploy this force in groups made up as follows: **Dallas** consisting of 40 men and 16 vehicles including MRL's; **Verde** consisting of 20 men and 10 vehicles; **Carnation** consisting of 180 UNITA troops; **Abrasion** consisting of SADF-SF, 60 men and 8 vehicles; and **32 Battalion's** Recce Group supported by UNITA elements (Nortje, 2003:225).
- 14/1/86 The attack on Baixa Longa is not entirely successful because of heavy rain, and the absence of proper evacuation plans in the event of casualties. A ripple of 6 MRL's is fired at 22:05 at targets near the Pengo River, in order to allow civilians to escape **Operation Jerry**. A full ripple is fired at 22:10.
- 15/1/86 A final ripple of MRL's is fired at **Cuito Cuanavale** at 02:25, ending **Operation Jerry**.
- 20/1/86 Maj. General Justin Lekhanya overthrows Chief Leabua Jonathan of Lesotho in a military *coup d'état*. (See 1/86). **Note:** Some analysts later claim that this *coup d'état* is driven by South Africa's strategic need for water given the close proximity between this event and the signing of the **Lesotho Highlands Water Project** Treaty (24/10/86) (Blanchon, 2001; Homer-Dixon, 1994; Percival & Homer-Dixon, 1995; 1998; 2001), but this conclusion is not supported by the facts as presented here (Ashton *et al.*, 2005; Turton, 2003; 2007).
- 22/1/86 A Pondo is killed by a group of Zulus and set alight at Isipingo Railway Station. This causes a band of around 500 Pondo's to attack KwaMakutha. After a vigorous skirmish they are repulsed by the Zulu's. Pondo's, fearing Zulu reprisal, set their shacks alight and flee. The resulting fire destroys around 10,000 shacks, killing 42 and leaving some 40,000 people homeless. (See the discussion on the **Mfecane** in 1828 for a discussion of the cultural relevance of this event).
- 2/86 A faction of AZAPO breaks away to form the Azanian National Youth Unity (AZANYU).

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- 2/86 RENAMO recapture Gorongoza Base from the FPLM. This becomes legend within RENAMO, who allege that the victory is the result of the intervention of Spirit's, who were not respected by FRELIMO. The battle was later recounted to the author during **Operation Bush Talk** (see Chapter 14 in Turton, 2006).
- 2/86 UNITA expand operations in Angola, with actions around Ambaca, Damba, Camabatela and Wabu.
- 2/86 **SADF SF** (5-Recce) end **Operation Abrasion** launched in 12/85, but no details are known (Volker, 2010:577).
- 2/86 **SADF SF** launch a cross-border raid against ANC facilities located at Matola in Mozambique. The result is 12 KIA but no further details are known (Volker, 2010:577).
- 2/86 Dr. Frederik van Zyl Slabbert notes in Parliament that the administration of many townships in the Eastern Cape seems to have been taken over by the SADF.
- 2/86 The **Commonwealth Eminent Persons Group** (EPG) visits South Africa to assess the deteriorating political and security situation (see 10/85).
- 2/86 The **Mbokotho Vigilante Group** in KwaNdebele assists the Principle of Siyabuswa Primary School in "restoring" order.
- 2/86 MID (SADF) launch **Operation Marion** with the objective of providing "security support and VIP protection for the Inkatha Freedom Party in Natal and Zululand". It lasts until 6/89 and is described as being a "political failure but a military success" with 200 men trained (Volker, 2010:637).
- 12/2/86 An **MK** group infiltrating across the Limpopo River is brought to contact near Messina. Sgt. Ron Cook (5-Recce) is killed in action but the **MK** force is neutralized.
- 12/2/86 **SADF SF** (5-Recce) in support of SAP counter insurgency forces engage in follow up operations in the Messina area against 2 **MK** guerrillas who had infiltrated from Zimbabwe. The result is 1 **MK** KIA and Ron Cook (5-Recce) KIA (Volker, 2010:577).
- 25/2/86 **PLAN** attacks the SADF military base at Tsandi (Volker, 2010:747).
- 3/86 UNITA expand their operations by capturing Andrada and Maquela.
- 3/86 Chief Mahlangu in KwaNdebele survives an assassination attempt. The **Mbokotho Vigilante Group** is blamed for this action.
- 4/3/86 **Exercise Mighty Shield** at the Army Battle School at Lohattha involving 7<sup>th</sup> Division is launched, lasting until 22/5/86 (Volker, 2010:346). **Note:** The frequency of large scale exercises at Army Battle School is now decreasing as all operational units are deployed for combat duties and are thus not available for training purposes. This is subtle but important shift that began in 1985.
- 11/3/86 General Magnus Malan announces in Parliament that the SSC has established 12 **Joint Management Centres** (JMC's) under the chairmanship of senior SADF officers in order to stabilize the country.
- 17/3/86 **PLAN** attacks the SADF military base at Ombombo (Volker, 2010:747).
- 18/3/86 In execution of **Operation Gomma**, four reconnaissance teams are deployed from **32 Battalion** to do an assessment of the bridge as **Cuito Cuanavale** where FAPLA 1<sup>st</sup> Brigade is dug in (Nortje, 2003:226).

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- 23/3/86 **PLAN** attacks the SADF military base at Epalela (Volker, 2010:747).
- 27/3/86 **32 Battalion** has an official **Trooping of the Colour** during which the unit's colours are displayed in public for the first time in its history (Nortje, 2003:64).
- 29/3/86 **PLAN** attacks the SADF military base at Okalongo for the second time (see 2/81 & 16/8/86) (Volker, 2010:747).
- 31/3/86 A **Project Barnacle** operator by the name of Sgt Isaiah Moyo is arrested in Lusaka during an operation and subsequently charged with espionage. He is eventually pardoned on 7/4/91.
- 4/86 UNITA captures Mussera.
- 4/86 **SADF SF (5-Recce)** in support of UNITA launch **Operation Kenwood** and **Operation Herbal** in Angola. No further details are known (Volker, 2010:577).
- 4/86 Princess Nonhlanhla, sister of King Goodwill Zwelithini of KwaZulu and wife of Chief Mahlangu of KwaNdebele, survives a kidnapping attempt. The **Mbokotho Vigilante Group** is blamed for this action.
- 4/86 The Deputy Minister of Defence, Adriaan Vlok, announces that 13 Interdepartmental Committees have been established to streamline the management of security-related issues in the country. The securitization of South Africa is now deeply entrenched with the Hawks being firmly in control (see Frankel, 1984, Geldenhuys, 1984 and Turton & Bernhardt, 1998).
- 4/86 **Project Barnacle** is changed to the **Citizens Cooperation Bureau (CCB)** after an interim period of being called 3-Recce. This is done in order to create a cut-out between the military and the operational unit. Col. Joe Verster is given command of the **CCB**. He resigns his commission to break his connection with the military and thus deepen his cover. This reorganization is part of the rationalization of **Project Triplane**. The new chain of command is Maj. Gen. Joep Joubert (GOC SF), Col. Joe Verster, Col. Dawid Fourie and then the nine so-called "Regional Managers".
- 7/4/86 Chief Sabata Dalindyebo dies in exile in Lusaka. He is a cousin of Nelson Mandela and Paramount Chief of the Thembu Clan in the Transkei. His burial sparks off a series of events as Xhosa's call for his burial back in the Transkei. He is initially buried in Zambia but is later exhumed and re-buried in the Transkei on 1/10/89.
- 8/4/86 **PLAN** attacks the SADF military base at Okanghudi for the second time. The first attack took place on 15/4/77 (Volker, 2010:747).
- 11/4/86 **PLAN** attacks the SADF military base at Eembashu (Volker, 2010:748).
- 12/4/86 The FPLM again recapture Gorongosa Base from RENAMO. It remains under ZNA control until April 1993 when they withdraw after the cessation of all hostilities in Mozambique.
- 16/4/86 The first group of men selected for training under **Operation Marion** report to Durban's DF Malan Airport and are dispatched to the **Caprivi Strip** in SAAF C-130 Hercules aircraft (see 1/86).
- 19/4/86 **PLAN** attacks the SADF military base at Omafufu for the first time (see 6/10/88) (Volker, 2010:748).
- 21/4/86 **PLAN** attacks the SADF military base at Ongwediva for the second time (see 18/9/80) (Volker, 2010:748).

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- 1/5/86 A senior team of SADF officers hold a meeting with UNITA at Mavinga. The 1985 offensive is analysed and agreement is reached that the 1986 offensive is likely to be more robust.
- 6/5/86 **PLAN** attacks the SADF military base at Ohangwena for the first time (see 11/6/86; 12/3/87 & 23/1/88) (Volker, 2010:747).
- 7/5/86 The KwaNdebele Government announces it will take independence from South Africa on 11/12/86. This exacerbates simmering tensions in the area.
- 12/5/86 The KwaNdebele Royal Family calls an *Indaba* to discuss the constitutional developments in their country. Around 20,000 people attend. They oppose “independence” so tensions increase between pro- and anti-independence factions, setting the stage for heavy fighting. The **Mbokotho Vigilante Group** becomes heavily involved in regular clashes.
- 13/5/86 Heavy fighting breaks out in KwaNdebele as soldiers are deployed to restore order. The **Mbokotho Vigilante Group** is unleashed on the crowds with the support of the SA Police.
- 13/5/86 An order is given to **32 Battalion** to capture **Cuito Cuanavale** by 23/7/86, with the support of Western Air Command, **SADF SF** and UNITA. This becomes known as **Operation Southern Cross** (Nortje, 2003:227).
- 13/5/86 **SADF SF** (5-Recce, **32 Battalion**) launch **Operation Southern Cross** supported by Western Air Command (SAAF) and UNITA. The objective is the capture of **Cuito Cuanavale** but this is not achieved, so the operation becomes a two day artillery bombardment of the town with an inconclusive outcome (Volker, 2010:578).
- 14/5/86 A mob of around 25,000 people assemble in KwaNdebele. Fighting breaks out with the Government security forces and the **Mbokotho Vigilante Group**, lasting for two days. With massive loss of property due to fire, 12 people are killed and 54 activists are detained. In retaliation, hundreds of youths join a new movement called the KwaNdebele Youth Congress and the Moutse Youth Congress (**KWAYCO**). They mobilize against the **Mbokotho Vigilante Group** and running battles occur throughout KwaNdebele. Around 200 Village Committees are set up to oppose the forthcoming “independence”. **Civil War** is now a local reality for this area of South Africa.
- 18/5/86 Heavy fighting breaks out in Crossroads between the *Wit Doeke* and the Comrades, leaving 14 dead and 20,000 homeless. **Civil War** is now a local reality for this area of South Africa.
- 18/5/86 A small team of **SADF SF** (5-Recce) operators is inserted by helicopter into Zimbabwe as the start of **Operation Kodak**. This is a strike against two known ANC facilities in Harare, but timed to coincide with simultaneous strikes into Zambia and Botswana. Peter Stiff (1999; 2001) believes that **Operation Kodak** is deliberately designed to undermine the EPG visit to South Africa. The author does not concur with this assessment, because it is actually the ANC that uses the visit as an umbrella to escalate the **People’s War** (see 6/85), so this threat is simply neutralized.
- 18/5/86 **SADF SF** (5-Recce, Barnacle) supported by SAAF, launch three simultaneous cross border raids as **Operation Kodak**, which ends on 20/5/85. This is militarily a success but politically a disaster (Volker, 2010:577).
- 18/5/85 **SADF SF** (5-Recce & **D40** under the command of Major Andrew ??) supported by the SAAF launch **Operation Caudad** as an element of **Operation Kodak**. The targets are the ANC HQ facility at 16 Angwa Street (corner of Forbes Avenue) in Harare; and the ANC transit facility at 29 Eves Crescent, Ashdown Park, Harare. The operation is a success with both targets badly damaged or destroyed (Volker, 2010:577).

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- 19/5/86 An element of **Operation Kodak** is launched by **SADF SF** (5-Recce) using two teams of 12 operators each supported by the SAAF (2 Pumas, 2 Alouettes and 1 Cessna doing Telstar duty). The target is the Mogaditsane Hotel in Gaborone, Botswana. The operation is a success (Volker, 2010:578).
- 20/5/86 **Operation Kodak** is initiated with the simultaneous destruction of two ANC facilities in Harare (Stiff). The tactical intelligence from **Project Barnacle** is inaccurate in certain key areas, so the operation encounters some snags, but is successful. After these two targets are destroyed and the operators are safely back, an air-supported ground attack is launched against an ANC transit camp near Gaborone (Botswana); and an air strike is launched against two ANC facilities in Lusaka (Zambia).
- 20/5/86 **Operation Caudad** is launched by SADF SF under the command of Maj. Andre Diedericks (2007:101-105) designed to eliminate tactical ANC targets in Harare. **Note:** The operation becomes complex, because it is being commanded by two different centres (see **Operation Kodak**), becoming an example of the increased clumsiness of **D40 / Barnacle** and symptomatic of the gradual loss of control within elements of the **SADF SF**. Significantly this operation had been compromised by the **Zimbabwe Central Intelligence Organization (ZCIO)**, providing an example of how aggressive and effective they were starting to become, by penetrating the South African security force community (see Diedericks, 2007:104).
- 20/5/86 An element of **Operation Kodak** launched by the SAAF is an attack on an ANC facility (Operational Centre and Department of Information and Publicity) located at Makeni Plots, 15 km south west of Lusaka, Zambia. The operation is a success with damage to the building and 20 KIA, with a further 20 injured (Volker, 2010:578).
- 20/5/86 The EPG leaves South Africa in protest over South African aggression in Botswana, Zambia and Zimbabwe (**Operation Kodak**). **Note:** The EPG is not a neutral body, because it fails to recognize the armed aggression by the ANC, choosing to interpret this as the legitimate act of a **Liberation Movement**.
- 21/5/86 The Western Cape JMC sends a signal to the SSC confirming that the *Wit Doeke* had driven the Comrades from Crossroads.
- 22/5/86 The **UN Security Council** condemns South African aggression in Botswana, Zambia and Zimbabwe (**Operation Kodak**).
- 22/5/86 **Exercise Mighty Shield** at the Army Battle School at Lohattha involving 7<sup>th</sup> Division comes to an end (Volker, 2010:346). **Note:** The frequency of large scale exercises at Army Battle School is now decreasing as all operational units are deployed for combat duties and are thus not available for training purposes. This is subtle but important shift that began in 1985. Note also that this exercise is longer than the norm, because in effect it provides a mobile reserve and not simply a training exercise. This is an indication of the deteriorating security situation in South Africa at the time, with active operations taking place both externally and internally concurrently. The question now arises, what is the capacity of the national economy and Active Citizen Force (ACF) component of the SADF to sustain this level of military engagement?
- 25/5/86 **PLAN** attacks the SADF military base at Oshikango for the first time (see 12/3/87 & 27/7/88) (Volker, 2010:747).
- 25/5/86 The Cape Supreme Court issues an interdict against the *Wit Doeke* preventing them from attacking people or property in the KTC Squatter Camp.
- 27/5/86 The PFP calls on Government to declare Crossroads a disaster area. They also call for a **Commission of Enquiry** into the violence, specifically regarding allegations of SAP support to the *Wit Doeke*.

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- 29/5/86 A Clerical body issues a statement that the SAP had been supporting the *Wit Doeke* during the recent violence in Crossroads.
- 6/86 FAPLA, now under the command of General Shaganovitch, launch their new offensive against UNITA with a three-pronged attack. Eleven FAPLA Brigades push south from Luena and Cazombo, advancing on Cangumbe. Eight FAPLA Brigades advance east from **Cuito Cuanavale**, via the Benguela railway line, to Cangumbe. The third is a planned strike against Mavinga, but this is aborted due to fuel shortages arising from damage to fuel tankers in Port Namibe.
- 5/6/86 A **SADF SF** team (4-Recce) launches an attack on harbour facilities at Port Namibe in an attempt to disrupt FAPLA logistics for their forthcoming offensive against UNITA. One Cuban ship is sunk and 2 Russian ships are damaged. Bulk fuel storage facilities are also damaged.
- 5/6/86 **SADF SF** (4-Recce) assault a number of fuel storage tanks at Port Namibe, Angola. The operation is successful with the destruction of the tanks (Volker, 2010:578).
- 5/6/86 The South African Government signs the *Agreement Between the Republic of Botswana, the Government of the People's Republic of Mozambique, the Government of the Republic of South Africa and the Government of the Republic of Zimbabwe Relative to the Establishment of the Limpopo Basin Permanent Technical Committee*. This should be interpreted in light of the **National Security Management System (NSMS)** then in place (see 1984). This agreement fails because both Zimbabwe and Mozambique refuse to withdraw their support to the **Liberation Movements**, so the carrot of cooperation proves to be less attractive than anticipated (see 13/3/92) (see Turton, 2003; 2007).
- 9/6/86 Heavy fighting breaks out again between a force of around 8,000 Comrades and a force of around 2,000 *Wit Doeke* in Crossroads. At least 5 people are killed.
- 11/6/86 **PLAN** attacks the SADF military base at Ohangwena for the second time (see 6/5/86; 12/3/87 & 23/1/88) (Volker, 2010:747).
- 11/6/86 **PLAN** attacks the SADF military base at Okakwa for the first time (see 28/3/87) (Volker, 2010:747).
- 11/6/86 The *Wit Doeke* launch an attack against the KTC Squatter Camp, destroying three quarters of the shacks, leaving behind 20 dead and 30,000 people homeless. Bishop Desmond Tutu intervenes and tries to broker a cease-fire agreement. **Civil War** is now a local reality for this area of South Africa.
- 12/6/86 A **State of Emergency** is declared in response to the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the **Soweto Riots**.
- 13/6/86 Brig. Joffel van der Westhuizen presents a draft plan to “stabilize” the deteriorating security situation in the Eastern Cape (see 1858 and 1864 for details of the origin). This is dubbed **Operation Katzen** (“Kat” from Gen. Kat Liebenberg and “Zen” from van der Westhuizen). This breaks standard military procedures for the selection of operational code names and later becomes an element in a legal battle over the unintended consequences of this ill-considered action. This first draft is submitted under reference BEV OP/309/1/, which later becomes legal evidence in a court of law.
- 14/6/86 Robert Mac Bride detonates a bomb at **Magoos Bar** killing 3 and injuring 69. This is seen as an act of terror because of civilian casualties.
- 22/6/86 **PLAN** attacks the SADF military base at Oshakati (Sector 10 HQ) for the first time (see 9/1/88) (Volker, 2010:747).

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- 27/6/86 The **Nietverdiend Ten** are killed by the **CCB**. This operation becomes public knowledge during a TRC hearing held on the 31/10/96.
- 29/6/86 **PLAN** attacks the SADF military base at Eenhana for the first time (see 15/11/86 & 23/6/87) (Volker, 2010:747).
- 7/86 **Frontline Fellowship** sends a missionary delegation to Mozambique to document FRELIMO atrocities. This attracts the attention of Military Intelligence given the central issue of **Conscientious Objection**.
- 7/86 **SADF SF** (5-Recce) launch **Operation Langeraad** (also known as either **Zola** or **Dola**) in support of UNITA in Angola. No detail of this operation is known (Volker, 2010:578).
- 2/7/86 A group of religious leaders meet with Minister Chris Heunis to express their concerns at the spiralling violence in KwaNdebele.
- 4/7/86 Operational Signal 947/4 July 1986 cancels the planned night-time combined air and artillery barrage on **Cuito Cuanavale** in terms of **Operation Southern Cross**, ordering instead an exclusively artillery barrage using MRL's and G5. A 48 hour night time artillery battle ensues in which **Cuito Cuanavale** sustains heavy damage, but fails to achieve the desired outcome of total collapse. This triggers planning for **Operation Alpha Centauri** involving four rifle companies of **32 Battalion**, supported by mortar, anti-aircraft, anti-tank and assault pioneer platoons, a 120-mm mortar platoon from **61 Mechanised Battalion**, Pappa Battery MRL troop, a Ratel 90 anti-tank squadron, an Ystervark anti-aircraft platoon and 1,500 infantry from two battalions in UNITA (Nortje, 2003: 227).
- 5/7/86 The **Light Horse Regiment** and eleven other military units parade through the streets of Johannesburg in a display of force that is designed to restore public confidence (see 1914). These regiments are given the Freedom of the City. The author is one of the soldiers in this parade. The salute is taken by Adriaan Vlok.
- 9/7/86 The second draft of **Operation Katzen** is presented for approval. This seeks as an objective, the "permanent normalization of the Eastern Cape situation" (Stiff, 2001:195) by December 1987. Central to this ambitious plan is the "unification" of the Transkei and Ciskei into **Xhosaland** (see first reference to this concept in 1846), with moderate political leadership friendly to South Africa, supported by a military alliance called the **Eastern Cape Military Treaty Organization** (OMKVO). To achieve this, a paramilitary force called **Iliso Lomzi** (Eyes of the Nation) is to be created, similar to the **IFP** movement in KwaZulu. This is also referred to as the Xhosa Weerstand Beweeging (**Xhosa Resistance Movement**) (XWB) in some documentation, similar to the AWB. NIS is ambivalent to this planning so their support is tentative at best (see Stiff, 2001:202). **Note:** The NIS is busy positioning itself at this time, given its preliminary assessment of the possibility of a change in political leadership inside South Africa. It is also evident to the NIS that a full-scale **Civil War** is imminent, so an alternative solution is being sought (see Turton, 2006).
- 10/7/86 An **MK** team crossing the border from Botswana near Selibe Pikwe is ambushed and neutralized by the SADF.
- 10/7/86 **SADF SF** (5-Recce) under the command of Capt. Mike Horn ambush 6 MK insurgents in the Alldays area. The outcome is 5 MK KIA, 1 MK wounded. Capt. Mike Horn is also wounded (Volker, 2010:578).
- 15/7/86 An indefinite stay-away is launched in KwaNdebele to protest the actions of the **Mbokotho Vigilante Group**.
- 15/7/86 Mavinga becomes the operational support base for **Operation Alpha Centauri** (Nortje, 2003:227).

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- 18/7/86 The entire work force in KwaNdebele, including civil servants, goes on strike. Violence breaks out between the strikers and the **Mbokotho Vigilante Group** supported by the Security Forces, destroying around 70% of all business premises in a few days of fierce clashes. **Civil War** is now a local reality for this area of South Africa.
- 23/7/86 Nama Sebe makes a speech in Umtata announcing the formation of **Iliso Lonzi**.
- 29/7/86 Minister Piet Ntuli, a key figure in the **Mbokotho Vigilante Group** in KwaNdebele, is killed in a car bomb. In a TRC hearing on 5/6/98, it is established that this killing was done by the **CCB**, because Piet Ntuli had been identified as an ANC “double-agent” (Stiff, 2001:301). So the vigilante group served as a surrogate of the Apartheid State, and when it became too violent, that state killed a key figure that was allegedly profiting from that violence, citing an unsubstantiated reason (being an alleged double agent for the ANC). **Note:** This case study provides some insight into the often illogical dynamics at work at the time. It also serves to illustrate just how dangerous South Africa has become, including the inner workings of the Security Force machinery. This again raises the issue of fear amongst officers who choose to follow their conscience when given orders that they deem to be illegal or immoral (see 18/2/81 for an earlier example).
- 29/7/86 Heavy weapons are flown to Mavinga in support of **Operation Alpha Centauri**, including four MRL’s, two Ystervark systems and a BRDM SA 9 missile system. However, just as the assault is about to be launched as planned, new orders arrive from Pretoria changing the original planning, ordering the assault to proceed only with the UNITA forces under cover of **32 Battalion** artillery support (Nortje, 2003:227-228).
- 8/86 **32 Battalion**, with support from **SADF SF** (Recce) launch **Operation Chuva** in the area around **Cuito Cuanavale**. The objective is the disruption of the FAPLA build-up. Two Recce teams are attached to UNITA for liaison purposes (Volker, 2010:578).
- 4/8/86 In terms of the changed planning for **Operation Alpha Centauri** (see 29/7/1986), Col Viljoen establishes a tactical HQ on the banks of the Hube River 28-km east of **Cuito Cuanavale**. **32 Battalion** Bravo and Delta Companies are deployed with their artillery 60-km east of **Cuito Cuanavale**. Two platoons from Golf Company are deployed 17-km east of **Cuito Cuanavale**, while an engineer assault team is deployed to build a bridge across the Cuito River 7-km south of the Cuito Bridge. A small **32 Battalion** Bravo reconnaissance team is deployed 4-km south-east of the town (Nortje, 2003:228). With all units in place ready to launch the assault, another delay occurs as Jonas Savimbi decides to direct the assault himself. He fails to arrive for a week, placing the forward operational units at risk.
- 9/8/86 **Operation Alpha Centauri** is launched around **Cuito Cuanavale**. This operation assists UNITA in destroying FAPLA presence in the area and makes heavy use of artillery.
- 9/8/86 UNITA, with support from SADF, attack the air base at **Cuito Cuanavale** with G5 artillery, inflicting heavy damage due to accurate fire control by **SADF SF** in an OP overlooking the airfield.
- 12/8/86 The KwaNdebele Government announces the abandonment of “independence” plans.
- 13/8/86 Victor de Fonseca, an ex-Mozambican army recruit and a trained operator in **Project Barnacle**, is killed as part of **Operation Dual**, because he is deemed to be a security threat by the **CCB**.
- 13/8/86 An **SADF SF** (5-Recce) operator that is deemed to be a security risk is eliminated as part of **Operation Dual** by injecting Scoline and Tubarine into him, before dumping his naked body from an aircraft into the Indian Ocean just south of Mozambique. Stiff (2001:312) refers to this as the “killing machine kills on”.

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- 13/8/86 Col. Viljoen's tactical HQ moves forward to high ground 4-km south-east of **Cuito Cuanavale** as part of **Operation Alpha Centauri**. Viljoen deploys the G5's 30-km south-east of the target on the Hube River. He places the MRL's 14-km from the target. The assault is scheduled for 14/8/86 from 20:00 to 01:00 on 15/8/86 to be triggered by the planned UNITA attack, but this fails to happen (Nortje, 2003:228).
- 15/8/86 Col. Viljoen is deeply frustrated by the failure of UNITA to launch the planned assault against **Cuito Cuanavale** on 13/8/86, so he informs **32 Battalion** HQ at Rundu at 14:00 that he intends to withdraw his force, now in an exposed and vulnerable position, unless UNITA launches its assault by no later than nightfall on 15/8/86. An Operational Signal is received at 16:40 by Col. Viljoen, informing him that a FAPLA reconnaissance aircraft, manned by a Russian crew, had been despatched from Lubango to assist the MIG 23 and SU 22 aircraft already searching for his assault force. This causes Col. Viljoen to move his Forward Command Post (FCP) to a new position 4-km away (Nortje, 2003:228-229). This movement places his force at additional risk, because it can be seen from the air, but it is a lower risk than staying in the earlier positions that might have been compromised by the constant patrolling by the MIG 23 and SU 22 aircraft. It is under these difficult circumstances that the **Operation Alpha Centauri** assault is finally launched. A small team of **SADF SF** destroy the bridge over the Cuito River (Nortje, 2003:229). The lesson learned from this indicates that UNITA is unlikely to be able to withstand a sustained conventional assault by FAPLA.
- 15/8/86 FAPLA plans an offensive against Mavinga to destroy the **32 Battalion** logistics base that had been established there on 15/7/86, after restoring their damaged logistics line from Port Namibe. D-day is set for 15/8/86. This is thwarted with the artillery attack on **Cuito Cuanavale** on 9/8/86.
- 16/8/86 **PLAN** attacks the SADF military base at Okalongo for the third time (see 2/81 & 29/3/86) (Volker, 2010:747).
- 16/8/86 Radio intercepts, supported by visual reports from Brig. Renato, a senior UNITA officer now inside the town of **Cuito Cuanavale**, indicates that the artillery bombardment had destroyed the airfield, along with 6 radar stations, a fuel depot and an ammunition dump (which burned for three days). In addition to this, UNITA Stinger teams had shot down 3 MIG 23's, along with 9 PT 76 tanks that had been destroyed by various means (Nortje, 2003:229).
- 17/8/86 **Operation Alpha Centauri** winds down as **32 Battalion** withdraws all of the forward assault units under its command to Mavinga (Nortje, 2003:229).
- 25/8/86 Lawyers (Sangoni Partnership in Butterworth) send a formal letter to the Speaker of the Ciskei National Assembly, alerting him to financial corruption being perpetrated by Lennox Sebe. Stiff (2001:205) believes this to be part of **Operation Katzen**.
- 9/86 Intelligence reports indicate that due to the heavy fighting between FAPLA and UNITA in the east of Angola, SWAPO is building up a major infiltration force of around 300 guerrillas in the central area. **Operation Colosseum** is planned to neutralize this threat.
- 13/9/86 An alleged attempt by Ciskei Security Police to abduct Nama Sebe of **Iliso Lomzi** fails.
- 17/9/86 As a result of the concentration of virtually all UNITA forces around **Cuito Cuanavale**, a new FAPLA offensive from the north-east is anticipated, triggering **Operation Fullstop**. Maj. Peter Waugh's Reconnaissance Team from **32 Battalion**, along with 2 Unimogs and supplies for 60 days, is flown to Cago Coutinho in order to monitor FAPLA and UNITA activities (Nortje, 2003:229).
- 24/9/86 Maj. Gen. Kwane Sebe and Col. 'Bullet' Ngwanya, both of the Ciskei Defence Force (CDF) are abducted from a hotel in East London. Stiff (2001:206) believes this to be part of **Operation Katzen**. This abduction is illegal.

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- 24/9/86 Maj. Peter Waugh's Reconnaissance Team from **32 Battalion** reports that two full FAPLA brigades are deployed north and west of Cago Coutinho (**Operation Fullstop**). They report this to Jonas Savimbi on 29/9/86 (Nortje, 2003:229).
- 25/9/86 The Middledrift Prison is assaulted by an unidentified team and General Charles Sebe is released as part of **Operation Katzen**.
- 24/9/86 **Exercise Octavo** at the Army Battle School at Lohattha involving **81 Armoured Brigade** and the Transvaal Horse Artillery (THA) is launched, lasting until 20/10/86 (Volker, 2010:346). **Note:** The frequency of large scale exercises at Army Battle School is now decreasing as all operational units are deployed for combat duties and are thus not available for training purposes. This is subtle but important shift that began in 1985.
- 26/9/86 Maj. Gen. Kwane Sebe and Col. 'Bullet' Ngwanya are handed over to the Transkei Police as part of **Operation Katzen**. This is an illegal act.
- 29/9/86 Maj. Peter Waugh from **32 Battalion** reports the deployment of two full FAPLA brigades north and west of Cago Coutinho to Jonas Savimbi (**Operation Fullstop**) (Nortje, 2003:229).
- 30/9/86 Unidentified aircraft fly over the Ciskei and release thousands of pamphlets under the banner of **Iliso Lomzi**, stating that Nama Sebe is the head and attacking Lennox Sebe.
- 10/86 President Ronald Reagan's veto of the **Comprehensive Anti-Apartheid Act** is overturned by majorities in both Houses of Congress. This places increased pressure on South Africa.
- 2/10/86 Prime Minister George Matanzima of Transkei announces the "arrest" of 2 Ciskei officers for the attempt to kidnap Nama Sebe as part of **Operation Katzen**.
- 5/10/86 Rev. Wilson Xaba announces the desire to amalgamate the Transkei and Ciskei as part of **Operation Katzen** (see Stiff, 2001:211).
- 6/10/86 UNITA responds to the existence of two full FAPLA brigades north and west of Cago Coutinho by redeploying southwards (**Operation Fullstop**) (Nortje, 2003:229).
- 7/10/86 In a press interview, Nama Sebe claims that **Iliso Lomzi** is being run by professionals.
- 11/10/86 A second reconnaissance team under the command of Capt. Leon Myburgh from **32 Battalion** is deployed to support Maj. Peter Waugh's team at part of **Operation Fullstop** (Nortje, 2003:229).
- 16/10/86 Papers found in the wreckage of the TU-134 that crashed on 19/10/86 indicate that a meeting takes place in Maputo where plans are discussed to neutralize Malawi for their support of RENAMO. Zimbabwe rejects these papers as being forgeries designed to discredit them.
- 17/10/86 Pres. Lennox Sebe dissolves the Ciskei National Assembly in preparation for a national election on 19/11/86.
- 19/10/86 A Russian TU-134 with Mozambican President Samora Machel on board falls from the sky at Mbuzini, just inside South Africa. A team of **SADF SF** operators are close by, and are almost injured themselves, being forced to abort their mission because of this unplanned event. Given that all **SADF SF** operations are tightly coordinated, this suggests that the SADF are not responsible for the downing of the aircraft, as the popular press continues to suggest. **Note: Judge Cecil Margo** is commissioned to lead an enquiry into this event. See also the **Helderberg Disaster** (28/11/87 and 19/11/2000) for more information.
- 20/10/86 **Exercise Octavo** at the Army Battle School at Lohattha involving 81 Armoured Brigade and the Transvaal Horse Artillery (THA) comes to an end (Volker, 2010:346). **Note:** The

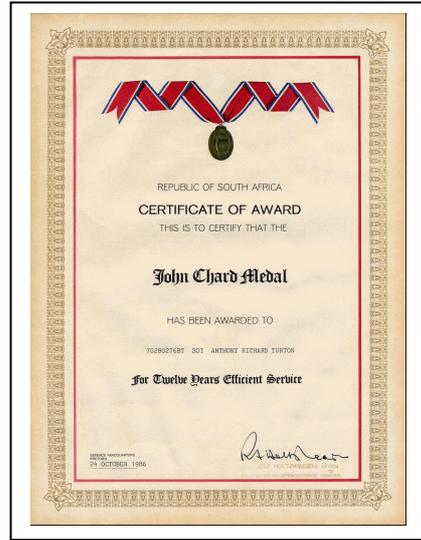
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frequency of large scale exercises at Army Battle School is now decreasing as all operational units are deployed for combat duties and are thus not available for training purposes. This is subtle but important shift that began in 1985.

24/10/86 **Turton Genealogy:** Sgt. Anthony Richard Turton is awarded the John Chard Medal.

24/10/86 An agreement is signed by South Africa and Lesotho to launch the **Lesotho Highlands Water Project**. Officially known as the *Treaty on the Lesotho Highlands Water Project between the Government of the Republic of South Africa and the Government of the Kingdom of Lesotho*, this is part of the **Total Onslaught** thinking that offers the carrot of cooperation as an incentive not to support guerrilla activities, supported by the stick of military reprisal if need be. It is also part of the prevailing **Hydraulic Mission**. This should be interpreted in light of the **National Security Management System (NSMS)** then in place (see 1984). This is followed up shortly afterwards with the *Exchange of Notes Regarding the Privileges and Immunities Accorded to Members of the Joint Permanent Technical Commission*. This is an indication of the strategic importance of the project because JPTC Commissioners are given diplomatic immunity as a result of this agreement.



29/10/86 **PLAN** attacks the SADF military base at Okahao for the second time (see 24/2/82 & 26/6/87) (Volker, 2010:747).

29/10/86 **SADF SF** (C Coy, 1-Para; 5-Recce) launch **Operation Colosseum** around Ngiva in southern Angola to neutralize the Eastern Front HQ of SWAPO. This lasts until 17/11/86 and yields 38 **PLAN KIA**, 1 **SADF SF KIA** and 6 wounded (Volker, 2010:329).

30/10/86 **PLAN** attacks the SADF military base at Elundu for the second time. (See 3/78; 8/3/97 & 5/9/87) (Volker, 2010:747).

11/86 The **CIA** gives support to UNITA. This is in the form of logistics and weapons, including Stinger surface to air missiles. This causes tension with the SADF, because the UN Arms Embargo means that the South African's may not be given access to the Stinger technology. This sours relationships already tense due to past **CIA** double-crossing during **Operation Savannah**.

11/86 Intelligence reports indicated the existence of a large weapons cache at Ngiva (Ongiva), for the use of SWAPO guerrillas that are planned for infiltration into Namibia, located at two sites. **SADF SF** (2-Recce) launches a short raid to destroy these caches, but only one is located and destroyed.

11/86 **SADF SF** (2-Recce) destroy a SWAPO arms cache located at Ngiva (Volker, 2010:578).

11/86 A **SADF SF** team is assembled at Oshivello for training as part of **Operation Colosseum**. The combat team resembles the Rhodesian Flying Column used successfully by **Selous Scouts** in Mozambique. It consists of 42 vehicles, mostly specialized, including Casspir MPV's with an array of heavy machineguns and 106-mm recoilless rifles.

1/11/86 UNITA, with support from two **32 Battalion** reconnaissance teams, halts the FAPLA advance north of Cago Coutinho. This action ends **Operation Fullstop** (Nortje, 2003:229).

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- 12/11/86 The flying column of **Operation Colosseum** crosses the border with the intended attack scheduled for the next day. The SWAPO base is located but the large force that is anticipated is not present. In various skirmishes, Cpl. M. Mashavave (5-Recce) and Cpl. Renken (5-Recce) are killed in action. A number of SWAPO fighters are killed, but not the 300 that were expected to be at the base.
- 12/11/86 **SADF SF** (5-Recce and 1 Para Bn) under the overall command of Col. James Hills, with operational command being under Major Buks Buys and intelligence and admin command being under Major Robbie Blake) launch **Operation Colosseum** against SWAPO bases. Cpl. Renken is KIA and one Casspir is destroyed but recovered (Volker, 2010:578).
- 15/11/86 **PLAN** attacks the SADF military base at Eenhana for the second time (see 29/6/86 & 23/6/87) (Volker, 2010:747).
- 17/11/86 **SADF SF** (C Coy, 1-Para; 5-Recce) end **Operation Colosseum** started on 29/10/86 with 38 **PLAN** KIA, 1 **SADF SF** KIA and 6 wounded (Volker, 2010:329).
- 19/11/86 Ciskei general elections are held.
- 22/11/86 The Ciskei Government announces that all Transkei citizens require valid travel documentation when visiting the Ciskei.
- 24/11/86 In a meeting to assess **Operation Katzen**, the SADF announce that the NIS will take over political actions and the handling of Lent Maqoma.
- 12/86 A **CCB** operative named Leslie Lesia delivers a case of poisoned beer to the USSR Embassy in Gaborone, Botswana. The beer comes from **Project Coast**. **Note:** This is not a legitimate act of war and is in fact a crime.
- 1/12/86 Dr. Fabian Ribiero and his wife Florence are killed by the **CCB** in **Operation [Project] Checkers**. This becomes public during the **Harms Commission of Enquiry**. **Note:** This is not a legitimate act of war and is in fact a crime.
- 11/12/86 In a meeting to assess **Operation Katzen**, the apparent reluctance of the NIS is discussed (see Stiff, 2001:221). Nowhere does Stiff record enthusiastic support from the NIS for this ill-conceived military adventure. **Note:** This is consistent with the author's own experience deep inside the NIS (see Chapter 10 of Turton, 2006). A different perspective is projected by Labuschagne (2002) in his book *On South Africa's Secret Service*.
- 18/12/86 **Operation Kakebeen** is launched to counter SWAPO's summer offensive. This involves a tactical deployment of 325 members from **32 Battalion** and 9 from UNITA, including an 81-mm mortar group, and anti-tank platoon and an anti-aircraft troop north-east of **Cassinga** (Nortje, 2003:230).
- 30/12/86 A series of explosions heralds the presence of SWAPO 8<sup>th</sup> Battalion in the area around Cassumbi, 10-km east of **Cassinga**. **Operation Kakebeen** confirms no SWAPO presence at **Cassinga** or Tetchamutete (Nortje, 2003:230).
- 30/12/86 An exchange of prisoners is conducted on the Kei River Bridge as part of **Operation Katzen**. This is designed to pave the way for Xhosa unification.
- 31/12/86 In violence around Uitenhage, a shop belonging to Kelman Befile is burned.

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(Note this was split in October 2011 from a larger file so the bibliography may not be fully aligned with the short time series of the current file. The bibliography was not disentangled at this time due to time constraints.)

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