



Zwartkop Location or Reserve) as well as townships located near such places as Hammarsdale (Mpumalanga township), Greytown (Nhlalakahle), Howick (Mpophomeni), Mooi River (Bruntville), and the areas of Hopewell, Mpolweni, Swayimani (near Wartburg), Impendhle, Bishopstowe, and Table Mountain.

The mayor of Pietermaritzburg has gone on record as requesting the police to stop associating township violence with Pietermaritzburg itself. He expressed concern that police unrest reports listed all Midlands incidents of political violence as being "near Pietermaritzburg", which, he felt, was "simply not true". "Several of the townships are far away from the city itself and the impression is given that the whole place, including Pietermaritzburg, is burning." (*Natal Witness*, 27 January 1988). He was both right and wrong. Most of the political violence has not taken place in the Pietermaritzburg borough, nor, indeed, in the black townships adjoining Pietermaritzburg. It has taken place in the black freehold area of Edendale and in the tribal area of Vulindlela, which stretches a good 40 kilometres to the west of Pietermaritzburg. He is wrong, however, in not seeing the events of the last year as being centred around Pietermaritzburg metropolitan area, for which estimates of the black population vary from an official 250,000 to an unofficial one of 750,000 in an area of over 374 square kilometres (*Daily News*, 11 February 1988). The number of violent events that took place in other Natal Midlands areas are comparatively low, with the exception of Hammarsdale (a place with its own deadly dynamic).

### **The Sources of Information**

The statistics used in this paper are based on information stored in a database on Political Violence in the Natal Midlands, maintained by the Centre for Adult Education at the University of Natal in Pietermaritzburg. The decision to collect this information was made because of the need to provide reliable data for academic researchers. A small grant was given for this work by the University of Natal Research Committee. Other resources, particularly computers, were provided by the Community Agency for Social Enquiry (CASE).

The data sources are mainly the following:

- \* newspaper reports (mainly from the Pietermaritzburg newspaper, the *Natal Witness*) of "unrest" (and which are normally based on the SAPA version of the official unrest report released in Pretoria each day) and of murder and public violence trials
- \* the South African Press Association (SAPA) version of the police unrest report
- \* accounts from witnesses and victims of political violence and their relatives that have been recorded by the Pietermaritzburg Agency for Christian Social Awareness (PACSA), an organization that had particularly good contact with township people
- \* other reports received from organizations and individuals in Pietermaritzburg, and particularly from the Detainees Support Committee (DESCOM), lawyers, trade unionists, clergy, and political activists
- \* affidavits placed before courts by lawyers on behalf of COSATU and other applicants in attempts (usually successful) to gain interim interdicts against Inkatha-linked vigilantes in the region.

## Bias

All sources have an element of bias. Any collecting of information involves selection of information. The real issue is whether one anticipates and corrects for bias, including one's own. Our experience has been that reports from the non-press sources of information listed above have been reliable and that cross-checking has provided evidence of their integrity. Most of the non-press sources are organizations or individuals sympathetic to (or at least not hostile to) the UDF/COSATU alliance, and the vacancy in sources is one for detailed Inkatha-gathered information.

Because of reliance on the SAPA and press versions of the Police Unrest Report for much information, it must be noted that, firstly, press articles based upon it are almost totally devoid of detail other than general area, the cause of death and the sex, and sometimes the age, of the victim. Secondly, press reports are not infrequently garbled, generally when the reporter or sub-editor has tried to summarize or provide a cumulative account; and, thirdly, when compared with independent accounts, events noted in the Police Unrest Report sometimes bear little resemblance to what, in our considered judgement, the evidence suggests really happened. A good example of this is the shooting of Simon and Smalridge Mthembu on 24 January 1988 by Inkatha vigilante Sichizo Zuma (or people with him). The Police unrest report of 25 January 1988 makes no mention of their being shot and wounded but incorrectly claims that one of the vigilantes (presumably Zuma) sustained serious injuries when struck on the head with a bush knife. The *Natal Witness* report of 26 January followed the story given in the police report. Without the evidence from affidavits in an application to the Supreme Court for an interdict, this inaccuracy might not have been revealed. The inadequacies of the Police unrest report are worse in relation to events other than deaths and serious injuries. As a police spokesman put it in the *Natal Witness* of 29 September 1987, "we obviously do not report on every stone-throwing because we do not want to give these people unnecessary publicity. We simply say it was between groups or factions." The lack of full information from the police led to the press being blamed for poor reporting. Mr Vitus Mvelase, a member of the Inkatha Central Committee, claimed that township residents were beginning to "hate" the press for not reporting on all township unrest. "The police are not telling you [the press] everything. A lot more is happening than is appearing in unrest reports, and people are beginning to hate you guys. The township residents, Inkatha, the UDF: we're all sick of the violence and the people are getting angry. I frequently have to explain to them what the emergency regulations are all about." (*Natal Witness*, 29 September 1987)

## What information is collected?

The statistics collected are on political violence and unrest. This raises the question of what is meant by "unrest". The very use of the term "unrest" is awkward, as it is commonly used by authoritarian regimes to describe the activities of their democratic opponents, provoked into resistance by oppression. In our recording we have adopted the following definition of unrest:

- \* all acts of political violence and intimidation that would generally be accepted as illegal in most societies, whether performed by the state, its supporters or its opponents, whether organized by groups and parties or by individuals. "Unrest" therefore includes illegal acts performed by the police and army (such as assaults, unjustified shootings, torture and collusion with civilians engaged in violence).
- \* acts clearly contrary to the Emergency regulations (such as "illegal gatherings").

## The Parties

This paper attempts to provide information on who is responsible for events of political violence and unrest. This is a difficult task, as the Police Unrest Reports give no indication of the affiliations of aggressors or their victims (nor their names, for that matter). Where information has been obtained on the initiators of violence and those affected by it, we have categorized the parties as follows:

- Inkatha:** this includes Inkatha members, supporters, vigilantes and UWUSA members and supporters, whether such groups or persons are within the official structures of Inkatha or not.
- UDF:** United Democratic Front supporters, including members of UDF-affiliated organizations, members and supporters of its ally, COSATU, and young "comrades", whether they are members of UDF affiliates or not. Basically this category represents the anti-Inkatha forces who are not adherents of the Black Consciousness Movement.
- BCM:** Black Consciousness Movement, including AZAPO (Azanian Peoples Organization), AZASM (Azanian Students Movement), AZANYU (Azanian National Youth Unity), and Forward Youth.
- Police:** this includes (and, where necessary, they are distinguished) the South African Police, the South African Police "special constables", popularly known as *kitskonstabels*, and the KwaZulu Police (who have jurisdiction in areas officially incorporated into KwaZulu).
- Radical Youth:** applied in cases where it is impossible to determine whether the persons involved are UDF comrades or Black Consciousness youth, or both.
- SADF:** soldiers of the South African Defence Force.
- Radical:** occasionally used as a collective term for the non-Inkatha groups - namely UDF, COSATU, and the Black Consciousness Movement. We do not, of course, accept the bizarre misinterpretations recently placed on the word by the spokesmen for various groups.

It must be stressed that allocating responsibility and determining the affiliation of victims is a difficult task, particularly because in many cases people have apparently been killed because of the affiliation of their children.

## **A Story of What Happened**

For people unfamiliar with the background to events in the Natal Midlands in recent years, the following account is provided with due warning as to the likelihood of some tendentiousness.

The region had until recently the reputation of being "peaceful". Soweto 1976 had little impact, and the response to the Vaal revolt of 1984 against rent increases and government-imposed local authorities was also limited - in Sobantu, the community council resigned, and in Ashdown attempts to establish a council in 1983 collapsed when only one candidate could be found. A factor in this "stability" was that civic associations had not developed (and even in 1988 this was still so in African areas).

However, 1984 did see the start of youth organizations affiliated to the United Democratic Front. Key ones were EDEYO, IYO, AYO and SOYO, the Edendale, Imbali, Ashdown and Sobantu Youth organizations, respectively. There was some conflict between UDF and Black Consciousness youth (AZASM and AZAYO) in Imbali in 1985 (that was a precursor to the fighting that broke out between the two groups in Sobantu in 1987), but it was initially defused by negotiations.

In mid-1985 the initiation of a civil association in Imbali was halted by severe intimidation, with its leader, Robert Duma, having his house petrol bombed. In August, Inkatha supporters threatened the Federal Theological Seminary and demanded that it be vacated. That some violence was directed against Inkatha followers is indicated by the petrol bombing of councillor Patrick Pakkies's house in April 1985.

In 1985 UWUSA was formed as the trade-union wing of Inkatha, and conflict between Inkatha and COSATU became inevitable. The local spark for this was the strike at BTR Sarmcol in Howick. The entire African work-force was dismissed. A stay-away on 18 July 1985 and a consumer boycott were organized on their behalf and were strongly opposed by Inkatha. This increased conflict, with some youths probably engaged in coercion to help enforce them. The finale was the bussing in of a large Inkatha group into Mpophomeni township in the evening in December 1986 that led, in the early hours of the morning, to the execution of three COSATU supporters. The inquest findings, delivered in March 1988, found that nine Inkatha members were responsible for the murders.

In 1985 and 1986 Inkatha leaders in Imbali had gathered around them a group of Inkatha youths and unemployed men who acted as a paramilitary group, or impi. A number of radical youth (and, in many cases, their families as well), both UDF and Black Consciousness supporters, were forced out of Imbali, and later from Ashdown. Some fled to Sobantu and others retreated into Edendale and Vulindlela. This exodus undoubtedly had a politicizing effect on many youths there, particularly in Vulindlela, where UDF youth organization was largely absent, and a number of new affiliates formed in mid-1987 (although they often came under immediate vigilante and Inkatha Youth Brigade attack).

In May and June there were reports of Inkatha recruiting drives in the region. Often these were facilitated by heavily armed groups being bussed into an area. Deaths began to rise, though slowly, in the period March to August, with an average of 13 a month. The UDF and COSATU have argued that these deaths were largely the result of Inkatha attacks meant to intimidate individuals and communities.

The UDF and COSATU claimed that 90 per cent of Pietermaritzburg workers responded to the call for a stay-away on 5 and 6 May 1987, in protest against the whites-only elections. That seemed to be a considerable defeat for Inkatha and Chief Buthelezi because the latter had urged his supporters to campaign against a stay-away. Inkatha placed a lot of the blame for the success of the stay-away on the Transport and General Workers Union, whose bus drivers, through striking, effectively made it impossible for many workers to get to work even if they had wanted to. Possibly direct consequences of this were the deaths of 12 TGWU members in following months, and bus stonings by Inkatha youths. Whether the call for the stay-away had been planned as a test of Inkatha strength or not, and there is no clear evidence that it was so seen by the UDF and COSATU, it certainly showed that Inkatha did not have clear dominance in the Pietermaritzburg region.

In September, the month of devastating floods that destroyed hundreds of houses in Edendale and Vulindlela, there were reports of a heavy Inkatha recruiting drive, backed by threats and coercion and, in some Vulindlela areas, a final date of 4 October for everybody to have joined. According to the UDF, this recruiting drive and associated violence were met with growing resistance. A possibly idealized picture is drawn of community defence groups being formed, assisted by the young UDF-supporting comrades.

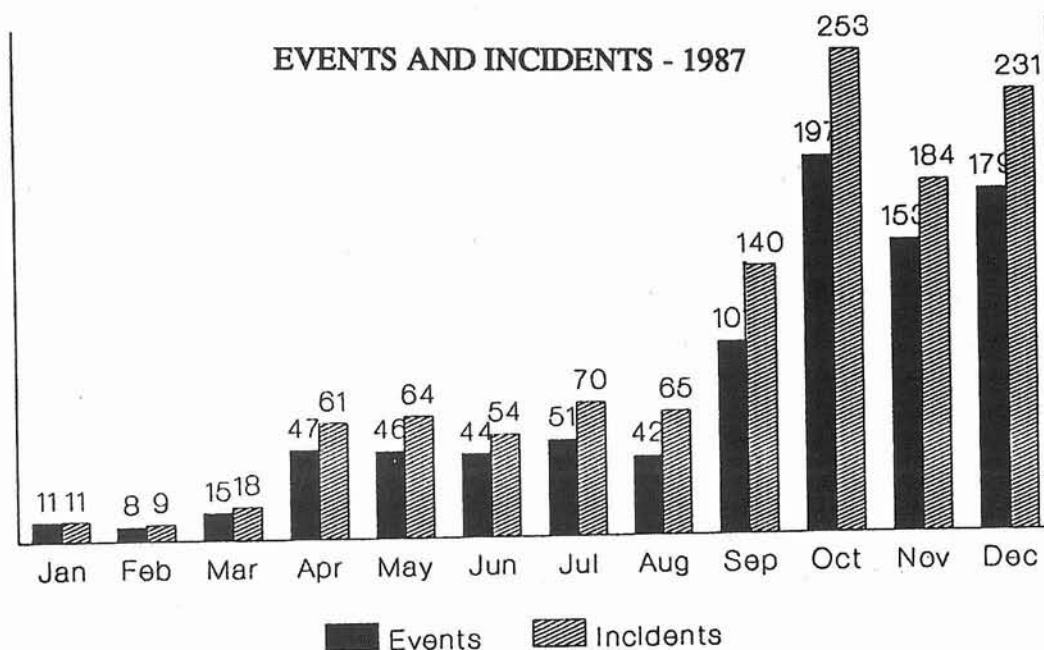
Horrifying levels of violence were reached in the months from September to January, details of which are given in the rest of this paper. Clearly associated with some of the violence is the element of revenge and the participation of criminal groups. Varying estimates have been made by some commentators of the extent to which poverty, unemployment and criminality fuelled the fighting that had started. Of note in this period are the large number of detentions of UDF and COSATU supporters in December, and the growing number of reports about key Inkatha leaders in the area, often titled "warlords" by their critics, who are alleged to have engaged in acts of violence on a large scale without any serious state action being taken against them. The only apparent attempts to halt their activities were the various interdicts brought against them by a legal team acting for COSATU.

The end of the year and the beginning of the new year were characterized by growing violence, attributed by the UDF and COSATU to an Inkatha counter-attack named "Operation Doom", or "Operation Clean up". However, after January, which ended with an Inkatha "invasion" of Ashdown, allegedly facilitated by the security forces, the deaths declined in number. This is partly accounted for by the heavy police reinforcements which were poured into the area at the end of the year and by the drafting in of 300 special constables ("kitskontsbels") in February (the latter creating new controversy as several appeared to be Inkatha supporters with records of engagement in previous acts of violence).

## Events and Incidents in 1987 and 1988

### Events and Incidents

The Centre for Adult Education database contains some 991 records for 1987 and over 500 for the first three months of 1988. Some of these records are statistical in nature or contain comments on the situation, but the bulk of the records each describe an event more or less synonymous with what the press and the Police unrest reports describe as "events" or "incidents". For statistical purposes, our summaries distinguish between events and incidents. Some events, because of their nature, contain one or more, or indeed a series, of incidents, such as a burning of a house followed by the murder of the household head and the stabbing of the other occupants, or may lump together what must have been several incidents (say, the burning of five houses). Hence more discrete incidents are tabulated in the tables and graphs below than there are records of events. Thus in 1987 there were 895 recorded events of political violence and unrest, incorporating some 1160 discrete incidents. The table and graphs on the next two pages give a detailed breakdown of events and incidents in 1987.



We have tried to be rigorous in weeding out duplicate reports and in identifying incidents that may not be unrest related. There may still be duplicate records and the occasional event that is not unrest related, but we think it extremely unlikely that these would form more than 7 per cent of the total.

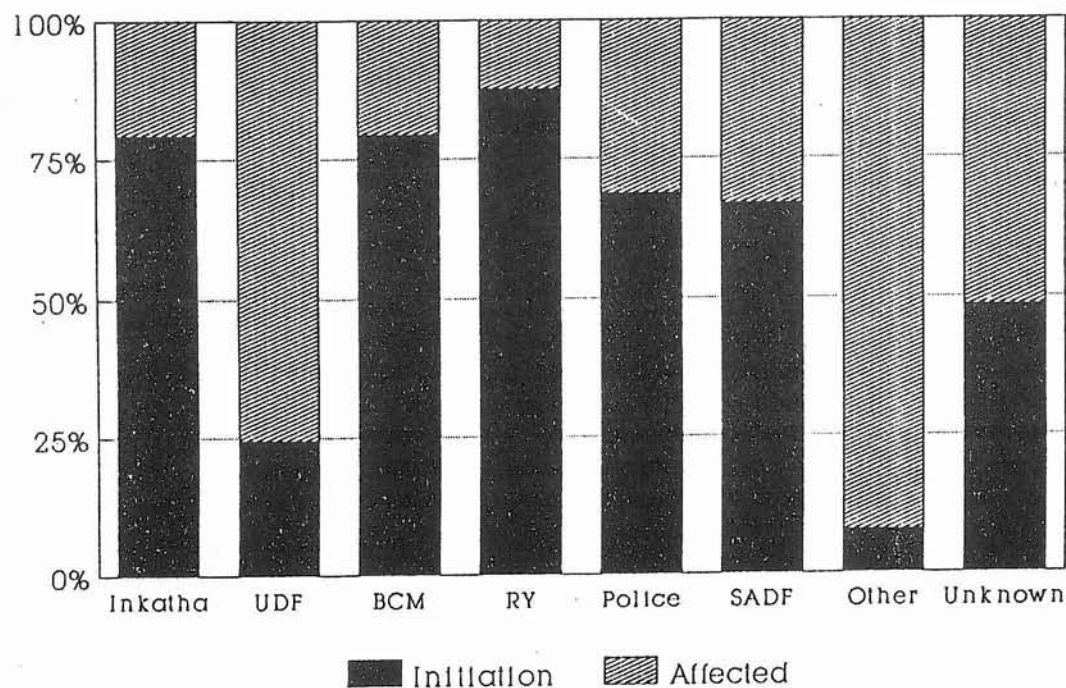
The initiators of the violence and the affiliations of their victims in the majority of the incidents remain unknown (594 incidents had unknown initiators and 632 had unknown victims). Where a judgement could be made of affiliations, the following picture emerges:

**PARTIES INITIATING AND AFFECTED BY INCIDENTS OF POLITICAL VIOLENCE  
IN 1987**

	Inkatha	UDF	BCM	RY	POL	SADF	Other	Unknown
Initiator	368	113	19	7	48	2	3	594
Affected	97	349	5	-	22	1	35	632

(Note: Police and SADF have been categorized only as initiators in what seems to be illegal or unwarranted acts. Violence carried out in performance of their legal duties has not been so categorized.)

The table above can be portrayed as a graph showing, for each party, the ratio between incidents in which it was aggressor and those in which it was victim.



EVENTS OF POLITICAL VIOLENCE AND UNREST IN THE NATAL MIDLANDS -  
1987

Month	Records (events)	Areas	Incidents	Affiliation				Initiator/affected			
				Inkatha	UDF	BCM	RY	POL	SADF	Other	Unknown
Jan	11	4	11	4	2	-	-	-	-	-	4
				4	3	-	-	-	-	-	3
Feb	8	3	9	7	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
				-	6	-	-	-	-	-	3
Mar	15	7	18	10	1	-	3	-	-	-	4
				1	10	-	-	1	-	1	4
Apr	47	7	61	32	9	3	1	-	-	1	15
				12	22	-	-	3	-	9	15
May	46	6	64	13	4	1	2	-	-	1	43
				4	14	-	-	5	-	4	35
Jun	44	7	54	27	5	2	-	1	-	-	19
				5	30	-	-	-	-	2	22
Jul	51	8	70	32	16	4	-	2	-	-	15
				12	32	-	-	-	-	3	22
Aug	42	7	65	43	3	1	1	1	-	-	16
				3	45	1	-	1	-	-	15
Sep	101	9	140	41	10	3	-	4	-	1	80
				8	36	-	-	3	-	7	86
Oct	197	10	253	91	24	3	-	7	-	-	127
				20	81	2	-	1	-	7	134
Nov	153	15	184	30	15	1	-	18	1	-	118
				11	26	2	-	2	1	1	138
Dec	180	12	231	38	24	1	-	15	1	-	151
				17	44	-	-	6	-	1	159
895		16	1160	368	113	19	7	48	2	3	594
				97	349	5	-	22	1	35	632

\* UDF - United Democratic Front and supporters  
 BCM - Black Consciousness Movement  
 RY - Radical youth, where uncertain whether supporters of UDF or BCM  
 POL - South African Police and KwaZulu Police  
 Other - includes mainly commerce, public transport and schools



A summary of our records shows that the following major types of political violence occurred in 1987.

**SUMMARY OF TYPES OF POLITICAL VIOLENCE IN 1987**

Type	Incidents	People affected
Deaths	321	397
Wounded	151	231+
Injured/burnt	90	160+
Assaults	40	52+
Torture	2	1
Arson	238	315
Stonings	83	119+
Attacks *	65	1092+ **
Abductions	15	18+
Rapes	4	9+
Collusion	5	8+
Intimidation	65	76+ many more
Robbery	21	24+
Hijackings	2	2
Gatherings	43	1094+

\* Attacks include all (generally vague) reports of shootings, battles, riots and confrontations where details on casualties, if any, are lacking.

\*\* Includes about 1000 people who took part in a riot in Hammarsdale.

In assessing the reliability of these figures it has to be acknowledged that, except for the deaths, they are incomplete. Unless an astounding 7 people are killed for every 3 wounded, the figures for all these types of violence must be underestimates.

The following provides details on some of these types of violence:

**Wounded**

There were 151 incidents in which over 231 people were wounded by bullets, assegais, pangas, bush knives, knives and other sharp implements. In terms of affiliation, over 35 Inkatha were wounded, 87 UDF, 1 BCM, 105 unknowns, and 2 KwaZulu police (shot by mistake in a gun battle between the SAP and KwaZulu police). That these figures are underestimates seems evident from local hospital records, in which it would appear that approximately 20 to 30 per cent of shot or stabbed victims taken to hospital die. Given the death toll of 397 people, many more than 231 people must have been wounded. At Edendale Hospital the number of people passing through its theatres with violent injuries increased by 80 per cent in the final month of 1987.

**Arson**

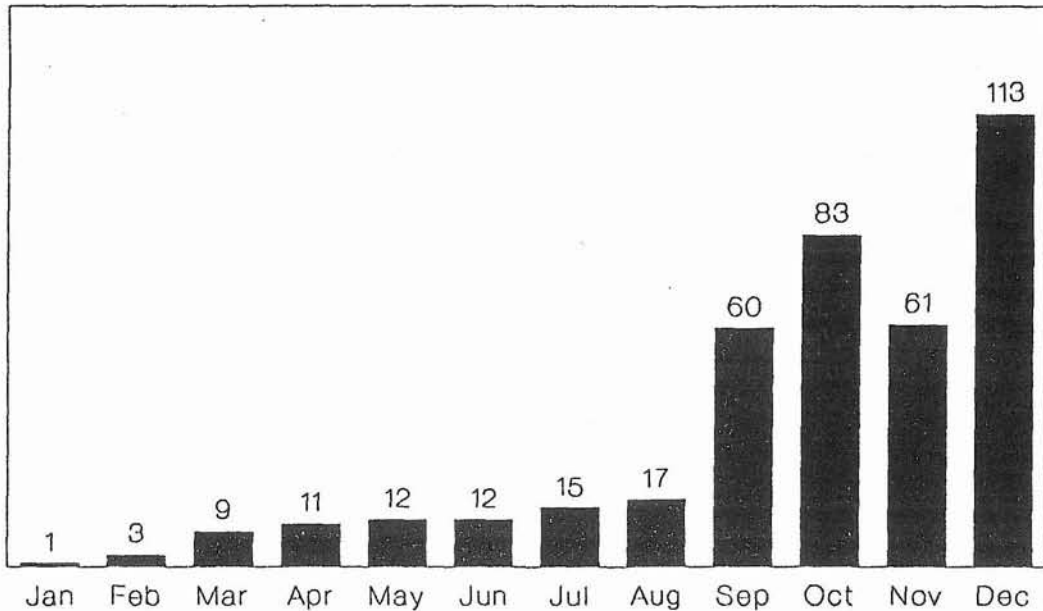
Arson and petrol bombing have been a feature of the violence in the region. Petrol and thatched houses make a deadly combination. Some 238 incidents in which 318 houses and vehicles were destroyed or severely damaged is undoubtedly an underestimate, but even this number probably meant the creation of more than 2000 refugees, even if only temporarily.

In terms of affiliation, over 32 Inkatha supporters' houses were destroyed, 79 UDF and 169 of unknown affiliation. Inkatha spokesman V V Mvelase said in the *Natal Witness Echo* of 17 September that 10 Inkatha houses had been destroyed from January till August. Our database gives the same figure.

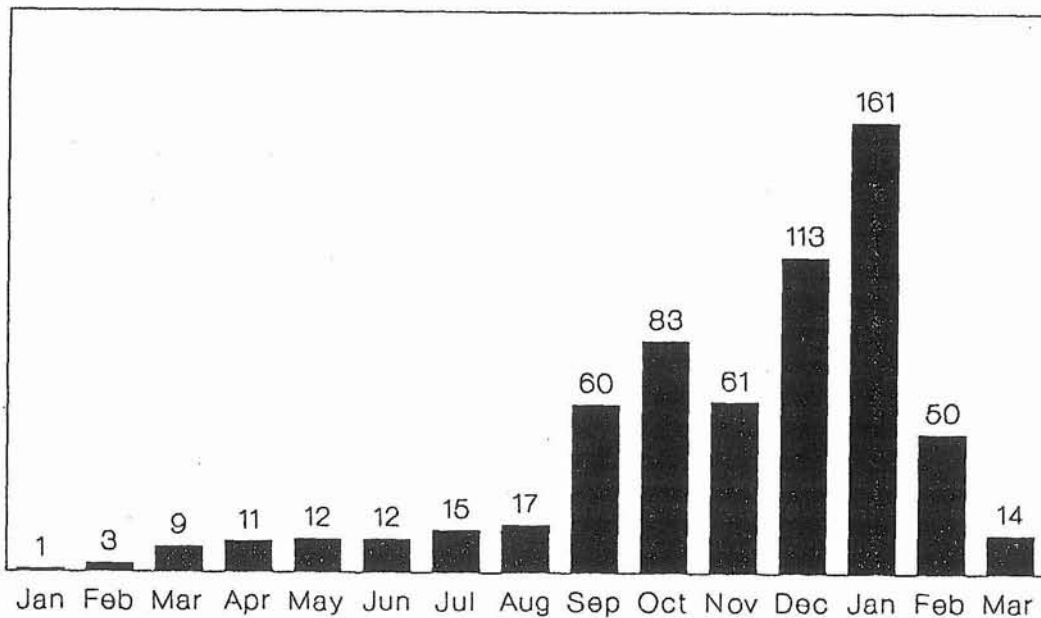
- Torture** Although there have been allegations of police assaults, only one person made allegations of torture and a court granted an interim interdict restraining the police.
- Abductions** A horrifying feature of the conflict has been the number of abductions that eventuate in murder. There were 15 incidents involving 18 people where those abducted survived. Two of these were Inkatha, 7 UDF and 9 of unknown affiliation.
- Rapes** There have been incidents of rape as acts of political violence. There may be many unreported cases but the figure of 9 people raped seems, mercifully, low.
- Collusion** Given the extent to which both Inkatha and the UDF (and particularly the latter) have claimed collusion between the state and their opponents, there were in fact remarkably few records that provide any evidence of active collusion (as distinct from passive collusion in not apprehending criminals) in 1987.
- Intimidation** This has undoubtedly been on a massive scale, and many reporters have commented on this; yet, because it was so pervasive, there are relatively few records of this normal abnormality.
- School boycotts** Another, perhaps unusual, feature, given the crucial role schools have played in black protest in recent years, has been the virtual absence of any school boycotts in the region. The database has two, rather vague, records of school boycotts. The absence of school-based unrest *per se* may simply be an indication of the success of the National Education Crisis Committee (NECC)'s appeal to school children to return to classes in 1987. Schools as a significant source of violence in the region seems unlikely. This is not to say that schools were not disrupted, and severely so, but this was because the conflict outside affected them, usually in the form of external invasions into schools by groups of armed men. In a paper on "The Impact of Violence on Schooling", given by Michael Hart of the University of Natal at the Seminar on Political Violence in the Pietermaritzburg Area, held on 18 April 1988, an estimate was given of 28 schools affected by incidents of violence or disruption in 1987 and the first quarter of 1988. These incidents led, amongst other things, to many pupils and staff leaving the schools.
- Gatherings** These would be gatherings suppressed under emergency regulations. Relatively few of these are recorded, although some of them involved large numbers of people (over 500 in one case).
- Armaments** Although there was a report of a home-made weapons factory being discovered, there seems little evidence of the use of weaponry derived from ANC or other guerrillas - one prosecution for possession of hand-grenades occurred. AK47s have been seen, and spent bullets found, but which force had used them seems very unclear.

The records for 1988 are still too imprecise and unsifted to provide reliable figures. January 1988 was probably the worst month of violence, with 161 deaths (though this is probably an overestimate, owing to duplications), and since then the conflict has definitely been more subdued. In the first three months of the year there were nearly 500 records of political violence. The new element in the situation was the use of special constables (the so-called "kitskonstables") and many allegations of active collusion between the police and Inkatha. There are also indications that schools were more affected, and there were reports of a large drop in numbers of pupils in some schools near Pietermaritzburg.

#### DEATHS - 1987



#### DEATHS: 1987 - MARCH 1988



## The Deaths

The figures we have for deaths give, we believe, the most reliable indication of the state of the violent confrontation in the region. This is partly because deaths are the best reported by the police. The following two tables summarize the monthly toll in 1987 and 1988. The 1988 figures should be treated with considerable caution as they may contain duplications.

### Deaths in the Natal Midlands, by month

#### 1987

397 people were killed in 321 events of political violence (some 36 per cent of the 895 events recorded)

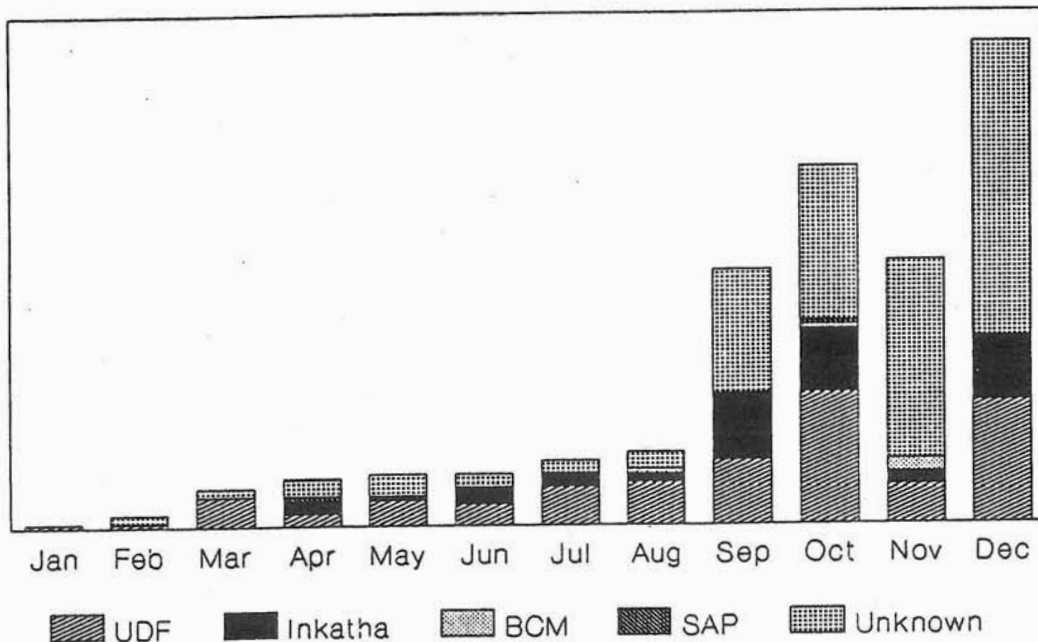
Month	Deaths	UDF	Inkatha	Affiliation BCM	SAP	Unknown
Jan	1	1	-	-	-	-
Feb	3	1	-	-	-	2
Mar	9	7	-	-	-	2
Apr	11	3	3	-	1	4
May	12	6	1	-	-	5
Jun	12	5	4	-	-	3
Jul	15	9	3	-	-	3
Aug	17	10	2	1	-	4
Sep	60	15	16	-	-	29
Oct	83	31	15	1	1	35
Nov	61	9	3	3	-	46
Dec	113	29	15	-	-	69
	397	126	62	5	2	202

#### 1988

Month	Deaths	UDF	Inkatha	Affiliation BCM	SAP	Unknown
Jan	161	33	8	1	-	119
Feb	60	14	8	-	-	38
Mar	14	2	1	-	-	11
	235	49	17	1	-	158

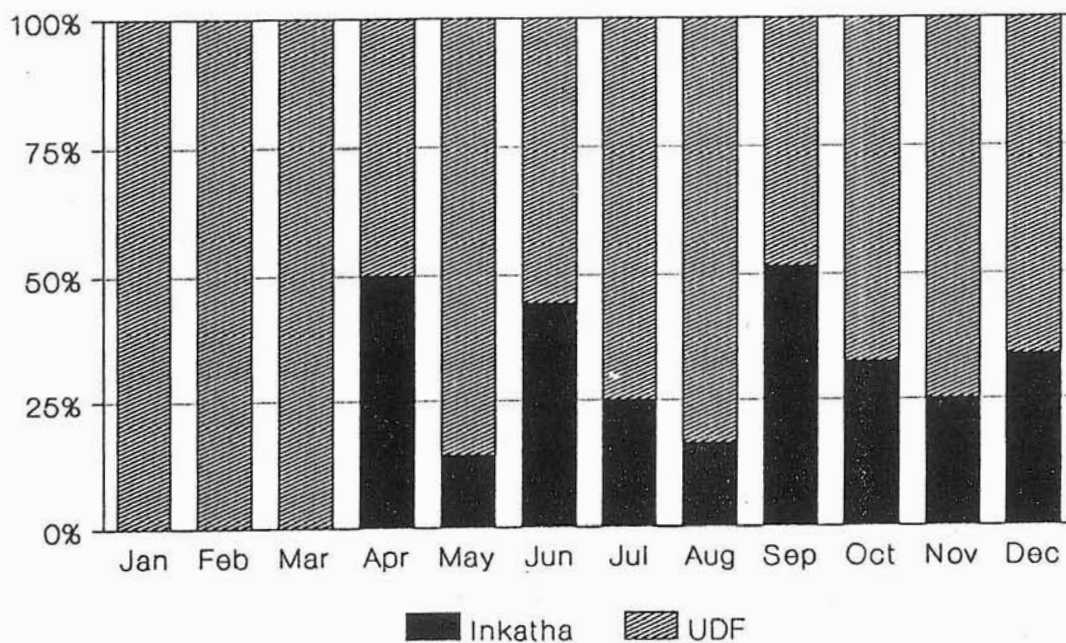
## DEATHS - 1987

### Affiliations of Victims



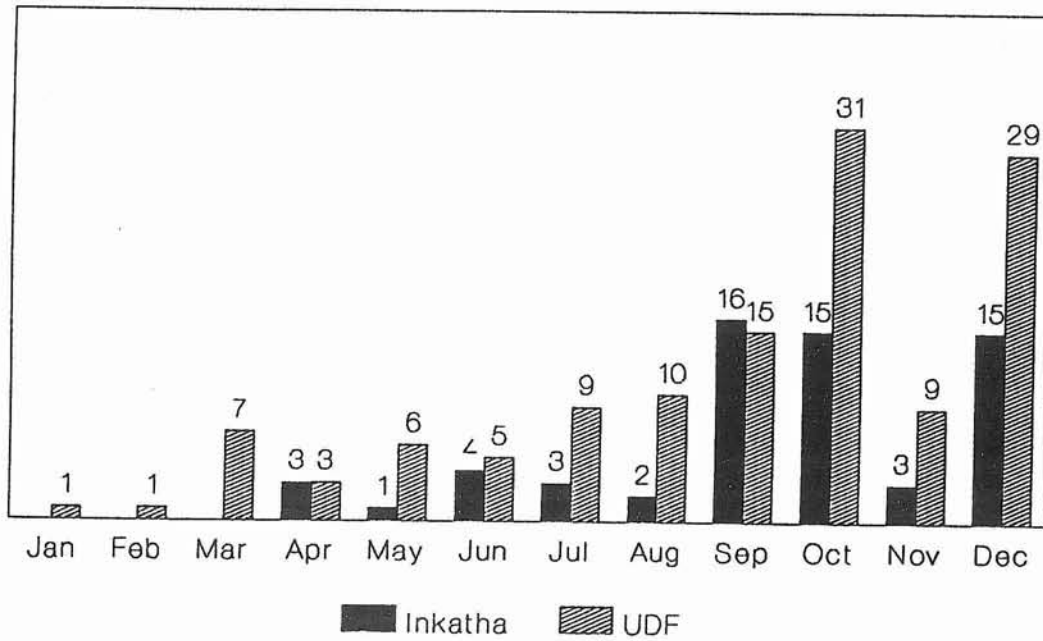
## DEATHS - 1987

### Inkatha and UDF Deaths as Monthly %



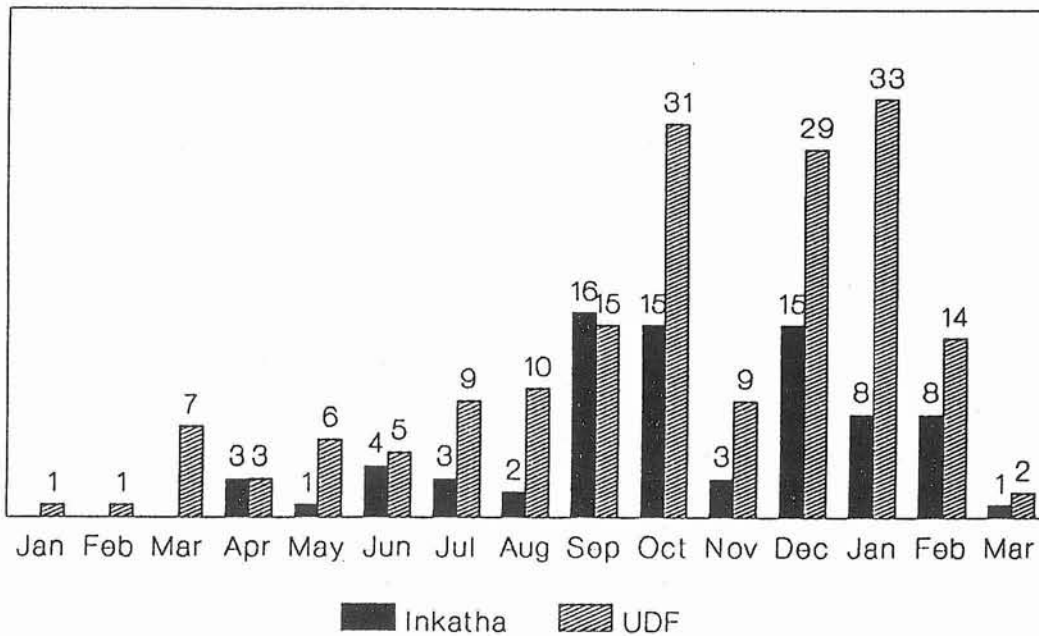
DEATHS - 1987

Inkatha and UDF Deaths



DEATHS: 1987 - March 1988

Inkatha and UDF Deaths



### Is there Confirmation of the Reality of the Statistics?

The figures that the Centre for Adult Education has collected need to be matched with other estimates, particularly those of the political groupings involved. In fact, very little independent data have been produced by such groups.

V V Mvelase said on 18 September 1987, in the *Natal Witness*, that 16 Inkatha members had been killed in the period January to August. Our records show 13 for this period. The other 3 are presumably amongst our unknowns. A defence lawyer in the trial of 43 Inkatha members who were convicted of holding an illegal gathering in the streets of Pietermaritzburg, Mr W von Willich, stated in court on 9 February 1988 that 100 members of the Inkatha Youth Brigade had been killed by the UDF "in the last few months". If one takes this as being October, November and December, our figures show 68 Inkatha dead. If January is included, another 8 or more can be added. So it is likely that some Inkatha supporter deaths are categorized among the unknowns.

UDF and COSATU documents and journal articles obviously drawing on UDF/COSATU sources, whilst providing useful analysis and a coherent "story", seem to provide statistics largely derived from the press and monitoring groups (some of which, such as PACSA and DESCOM, are UDF affiliates).

Our records document only one statistical estimate from AZAPO, which claimed that 20 supporters had been killed in 1987. Our records confirm 5 deaths and there may well have been more.

#### The Areas where the Deaths occurred:

1987

Area	Events	Deaths.	Affiliation				
			UDF	Inkatha	BCM	SAP	Unknown
Imbali	32	37	22	5	-	1	9
Ashdown	17	21	7	6	-	-	8
Sobantu	7	9	2	-	3	1	3
Edendale	104	118	34	16	-	-	68
Vulindlela	88	126	41	31	-	-	54
Slangspruit	19	23	4	-	-	-	19
PMB city	5	5	2	1	1	-	1
Midlands	4	4	-	-	-	-	4
Mpophomeni	3	3	-	1	1	-	1
Hammarisdale (Mpumalanga)	31	37	7	1	-	-	29
Hopewell	1	1	-	1	-	-	-
Impendhle	1	1	1	-	-	-	-
Table Mountain (Bishopstowe)	2	3	2	-	-	-	1
Mpolweni	1	1	-	-	-	-	1
Greytown	5	7	4	-	-	-	3
Swayimani	1	1	-	-	-	-	1
<b>Totals</b>	<b>321</b>	<b>397</b>	<b>126</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>202</b>

January - March 1988

Area	Deaths	Affiliation			
		UDF	Inkatha	BCM	Unknown
Imbali	10	2	-	-	8
Ashdown	7	3	-	-	4
Sobantu	2	1	-	1	-
Edendale	28	6	1	-	21
Vulindlela	128	26	12	-	90
Slangspruit	16	4	-	-	12
PMB city	7	3	3	-	1
Hammarisdale	33	1	1	-	31
Trust Feeds	1	1	-	-	-
Thornville	1	-	-	-	1
Greytown	2	2	-	-	-
<b>Totals</b>	<b>235</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>158</b>

### The Geographical Progress of the Conflict

Restricting oneself to the Pietermaritzburg region, graphing the area in which the deaths occurred in each month enables the geographical progress of the conflict to be charted.

### Deaths from Political Violence in the Pietermaritzburg Area

Place	No	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Imbali	37	1		2	4	5	8	1	2	1	2	3	8
Ashdown	21			2	2			7		1	2	5	2
Sobantu	9						1		1		3	2	2
Edendale	118		2		1		1	1	8	29	33	15	28
Vulindlela	126				2	7		1	2	16	33	18	47
Slangspruit	23											6	17

Omitting the date from Sobantu (where the conflict was largely one between young supporters of the Black Consciousness Movement and the UDF) and from Slangspruit (where killings only started in November), it would appear that the violence started in Imbali (it was the arrival of refugees from Imbali in Sobantu that helped trigger the sub-conflict there), affected Ashdown, and then led to the major battle - that for control of Edendale - and then flowed into Vulindlela, where the number of deaths reached horrifying proportions in December and January.

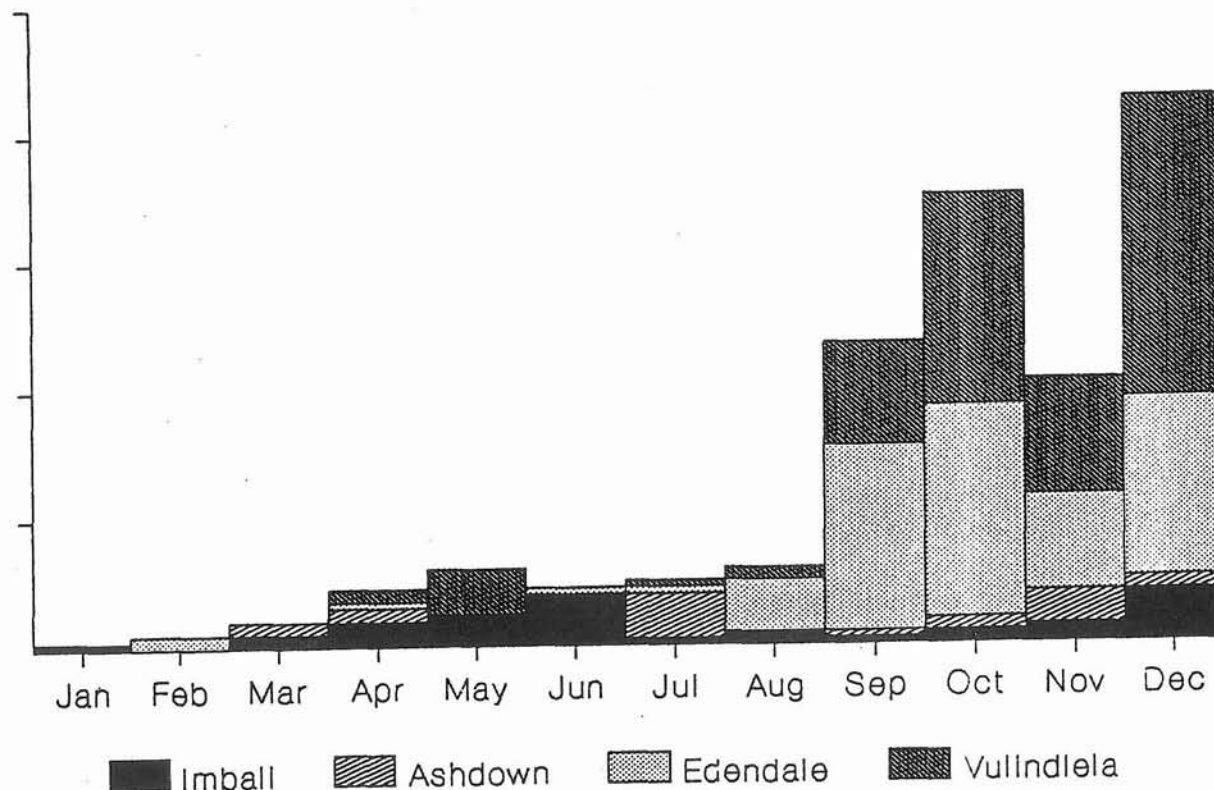


### Geographical Progress and the Causation of the Conflict

In asking what causes began the chain of violence, the evidence displayed in the table above and in the graph on the next page would seem to show an Imbali origin to the violence, and therefore probably an origin of a **political nature**. This renders doubtful suggestions that floods of unemployed and starving people on the margins of the Pietermaritzburg region had an important role in **initiating** the violence (though, of course, they may well have fuelled it, once started).

That the violence flowed **outwards** from the townships adjacent to Pietermaritzburg, engorging itself with deaths as it did, is backed up by the testimony of eye-witnesses such as Tim Smith, SJ, who, in another contribution to the seminar on Political Violence in the Pietermaritzburg Area, stated of that part of Vulindlela farthest away from Pietermaritzburg that "up until September of 1987 it was one of the most peaceful places to be". "Incidents of violence there were, but isolated and certainly never politically motivated. I remember discussing with some of our men, at a time when violence was rocking Edendale, how we reckoned that it would never reach our area, since our people were too much tied to tradition, and the rule of the chiefs was so strong. Inkatha had ruled unchallenged for years, and although much of its support was lukewarm, there was no challenge to it. How wrong we were. The September floods were the turning point. While we were still assessing the damage, we started to hear of the explosion of violence lower down, in areas like Sweetwaters and Imbubu, and then suddenly it was upon us too."

PMB DEATHS BY AREA - 1987

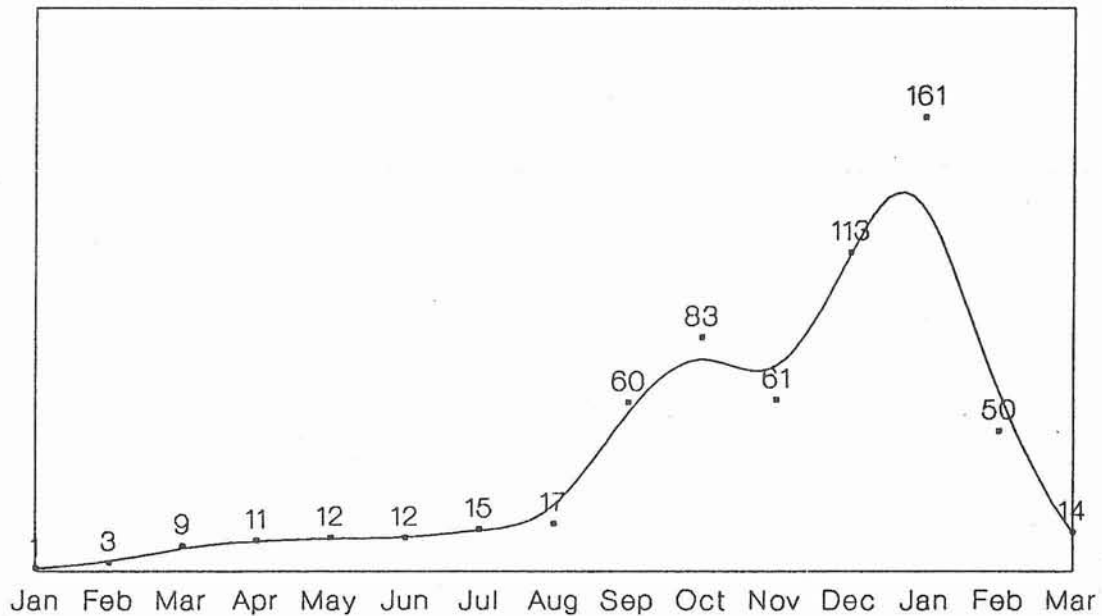


### Critical Events

Another consideration is whether the death figures point to any critical event or events as having stimulated the violence. The UDF/COSATU "story" of the conflict has it that there was a massive recruitment drive by Inkatha in September and early October, accompanied by heavy intimidation. It was this event, which provoked resistance, that increased the number of killings in September and October. Rebuffed, Inkatha then staged a counter-attack, melodramatically described as "Operation Doom" or "Operation Clean up", in January. A graph showing the general curve of the violence lends some credence to the belief that there was some critical event or events in September. Another surge is evident in late December/early January. These patterns can be interpreted as showing a link between an Inkatha recruiting drive and, later, a counter-attack, although, of course, figures cannot reveal who was aggressor and who victim.

The figures provide no support for the 6 May 1987 stay-away (in protest against the whites only election) as having been a critical event.

### DEATHS: 1987 - MARCH 1988



## The Police Response to the Killings

It may be fruitless to speculate on police understanding of the conflict or their agendas in relation to it. At first, when the number of the killings rose dramatically in September and October, there appears, at least for public consumption, to have been a denial of the problem. In the *Sunday Tribune* of 18 October 1987, Brigadier J Kotze, the SAP's Divisional Commander, said: "There is no reason to worry, entry in and out of the townships is no problem and under control. There have been no stepped-up patrols and the police can cope with the situation.... I repeat, the situation is normal and under control."

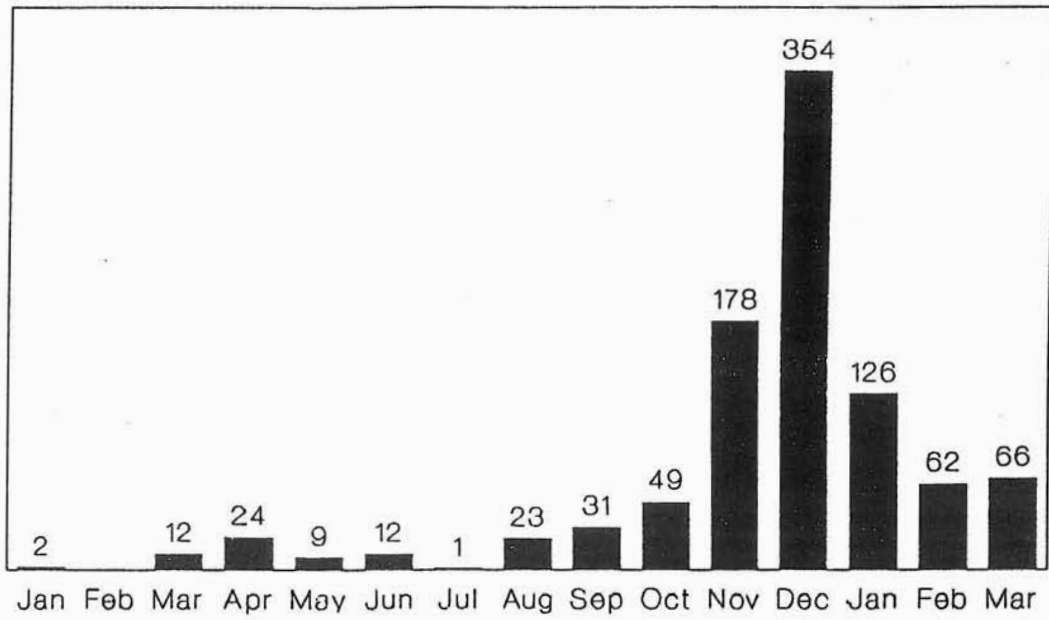
Another police spokesman, as quoted in the *Natal Witness* of 22 October 1987, claimed that a press figure for the deaths was "a gross exaggeration" - it wasn't!

The Police unrest report figures under-reported killings, as did virtually every other source in 1987. This may partly be due to deliberate unwillingness to publicize what was, in effect, a civil war that had erupted in spite of a severe state of emergency. The refusal of the Minister of Law and Order to provide statistics for deaths and injuries in 1987 (*Natal Witness*, 9 April 1988) is indicative of this attitude.

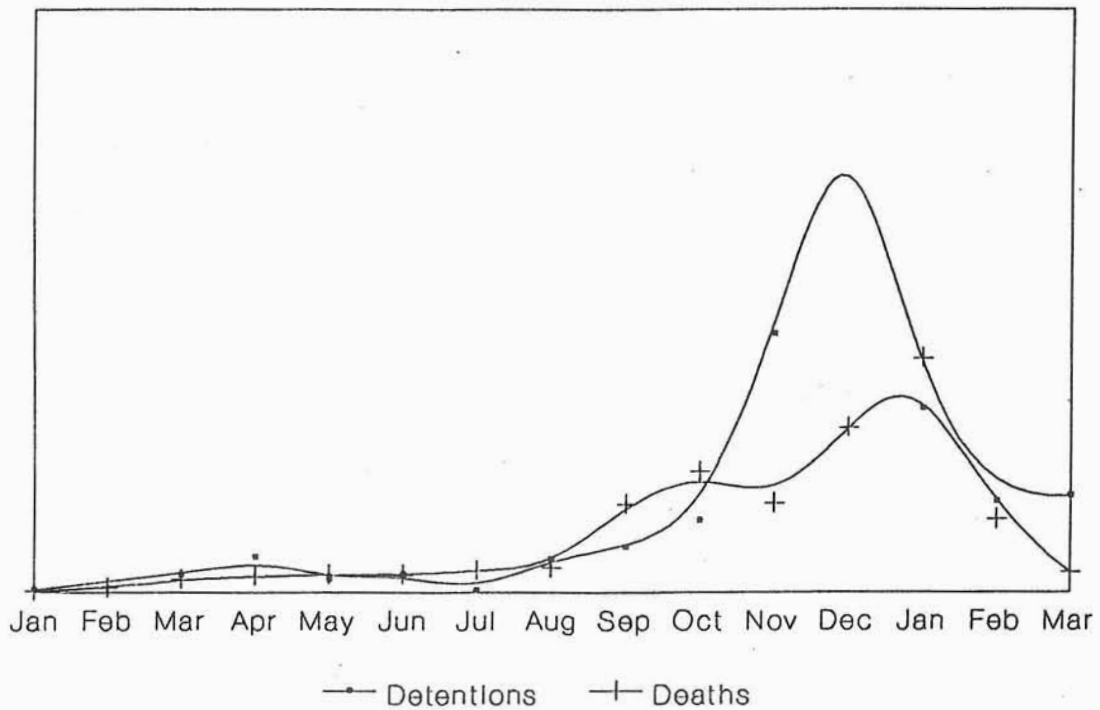
In early 1988, although the conflict continued to rage in January, the deaths were reduced in number in February and much more so in March. The role of the police in eventually halting the massive number of killings through an equally massive deployment of police reinforcements is, undoubtedly, important.

However, the way the police played their role may, in the long term, be equally important - in the first quarter of 1988 the police appeared to many observers to have been totally supportive of one grouping, namely Inkatha. A similar conclusion must be drawn about the use of emergency detention as a means of halting the blood-letting. The rationale for the declaration of the 1986 and 1987 states of emergency was precisely that unrest and killings had required the use of extraordinary measures, such as emergency detention. The detention of a large number of UDF/COSATU supporters and comrades in 1987 is, therefore, understandable in terms of this rationale - undeniably some supporters of the UDF had been involved in killing at least 62 people. What is inconsistent with the rationale is that, though over 648 anti-Inkatha people were detained, not a single Inkatha member or supporter was detained in 1987, although, also undeniably, Inkatha supporters had killed over 125 people.

## DETENTIONS : 1987 - MARCH 1988



## DETENTIONS AND DEATHS : 1987-MARCH 1988



## **The Extent of Collusion Between State and Political Groups**

The Pietermaritzburg conflict has been full of claim and counter-claim that the State, usually represented by the South African Police and to a lesser extent the South African Defence Force, have colluded actively or passively with the perpetrators of violence.

The evidence that can be found in what has been recorded shows that in 1987 the police played a remarkably low-key role compared with other "unrest" episodes in South African history. It was only in the latter part of the year and in 1988 that a massive police presence became obvious in the records.

There is no evidence that the South African Police has aided the UDF. The so-called kwaShange massacre of 25 September 1987, in which 13 Inkatha youths were killed in an attack led by a policeman, revealed no evidence of such collusion and the policeman was subsequently convicted and jailed. Indeed, his defence at the trial was that some Inkatha youths he had arrested for arson were released after the intervention of a local Inkatha official and he had acted to defend himself against them. This very example illuminates the basis of much of the UDF/COSATU complaint of passive state collusion in that the so-called Inkatha "warlords" - among them chiefs, indunas and councillors alleged to have attacked and murdered a number of people - have not been arrested, or, if arrested, have been released almost immediately. The Centre for Adult Education database has many records in which it is alleged that these warlords have killed people and engaged in other illegal acts and that no serious action has been taken against them. By contrast, given that the emergency regulations are ostensibly designed to control precisely such conflict as exists in the Pietermaritzburg area, it is absolutely amazing that in 1987 no Inkatha vigilantes or "warlords" were detained. In 1988, a whole series of applications for interdicts against prominent "warlords" made public the belief held by many that there was passive police collusion with murderers. In addition, particularly in relation to the Inkatha attack on Ashdown township, 31 January 1988, there have been a number of serious allegations of active collusion in 1988 between security forces and Inkatha.

### **Some Conclusions**

The "census" of the conflict shows that there has been a devastating period of destruction, dislocation and abnormality. Against this must be set the fact that the region does not provide a good life for the bulk of its inhabitants and that violence of a less overtly political kind was already high in the areas near Pietermaritzburg (298 murders were reported to the Plessislaer Police Station in Edendale in 1985/86). There is a growing army of unemployed youth for whom the future is exceedingly bleak.

Patterns in the figures for deaths indicate that:

- \* a political dynamic to the conflict, particularly in its inception, is present
- \* that urban township strife has spread outward into peri-urban and semi-rural areas and that even the most conservative, tribally controlled territory is not exempt from turmoil
- \* the violence seems to have a strong connection to Inkatha's attempt to maintain (or increase) its influence in the region
- \* the state's security forces have acted strongly against only one side (that of the UDF/COSATU) in the conflict.

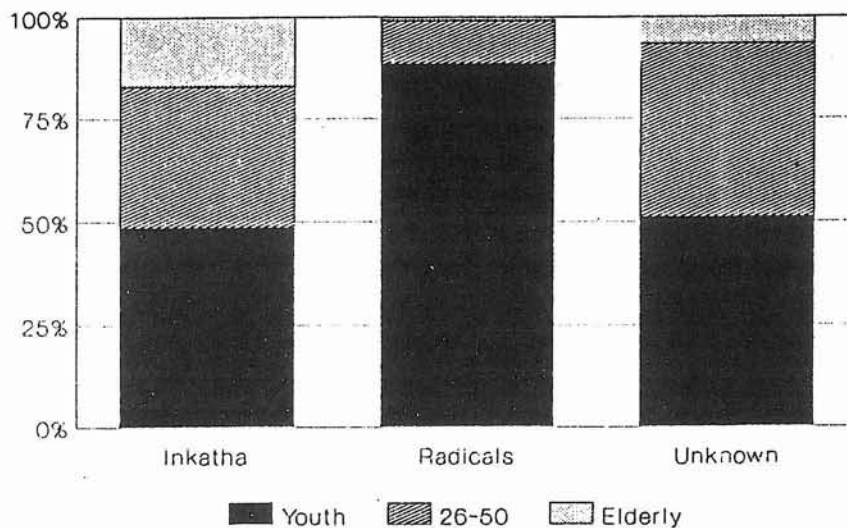
For many young people, life has become nasty, brutish and short. In an analysis of the ages of those killed in 1987 (figures could be obtained for some 237 of the 397 dead), some 68 per

cent of those killed were 25 years old or under (the youngest was 7). The graph below shows the age composition according to the political grouping. There is a terrible message in this age composition. The conflict is devouring the young. In the UDF/radical camp it is clear that youth are the most affected. Any response to the conflict that does not take seriously the aspirations of these youth and offer them a meaningful life (which must include addressing political needs) is doomed to failure.

Academics, reporters, historians and security officials number the dead. But so do the youth. The Pietermaritzburg conflict will have been indelibly burned into the consciousness of young black people. They number their dead. They consider the life of those left living a hell. And they praise and glorify the departed.

### AGES OF THE DEAD - 1987

#### Inkatha, Radical and Unknown Deaths as %



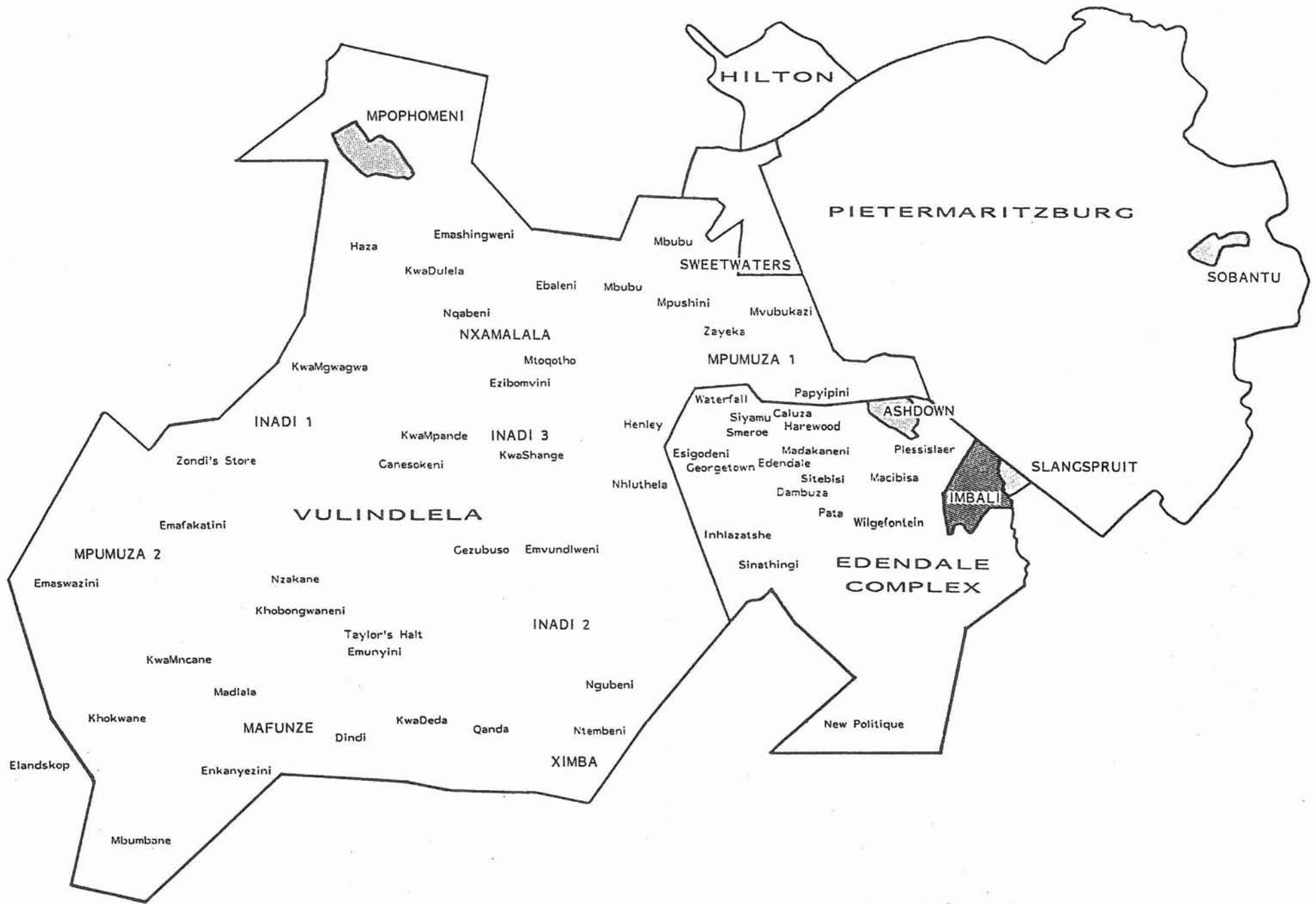
#### **The Cloud of Darkness**

I've lifted my eyes up to the sky,  
 Where our darlings have disappeared  
 But nothing I've seen.  
 There was a thick layer of darkness beyond the sky  
 Beyond the sky, the dark cloud  
 Was gambolling with all colours of grief and darkness  
 I waited for the cloud  
 To move and disappear  
 But it remained constant and motionless.  
 Suddenly my eyes began to sweat  
 The lamenting moment had begun  
 And there were no means of avoiding it,  
 Except to demonstrate that milk tears fell.  
 Peace ruiners had succeeded  
 When the two peace warriors had been shot dead  
 I've never met them before  
 And they've never met me before  
 I knew them not,  
 But like Jesus they loved me.

I know this world with oppression and slavery  
Full of lies and misunderstanding  
Was not yours.  
Yours is the one with equality and reality  
Yours is the one with peace and justice  
Yours is the one with joy and happiness  
Now you're resting forever in paradise  
While we fight and lament in the hell.

Bonginkosi Bafanyana Ndhlovu

*Natal Witness Echo*, 1 July 1987



THE PIETERMARITZBURG REGION