

# **THE ROLE AND APPLICATION OF THE UNION DEFENCE FORCE IN THE SUPPRESSION OF INTERNAL UNREST, 1912 - 1945**

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***Declaration***

I, the undersigned, hereby declare that the work contained in this thesis is my own original work and that I have not previously submitted it, in its entirety or in part, to any university for a degree.

Signature:.....

Date:.....



## ABSTRACT

The use of military force to suppress internal unrest has been an integral part of South African history. The European colonisation of South Africa from 1652 was facilitated by the use of force. Boer commandos and British military regiments and volunteer units enforced the peace in outlying areas and fought against the indigenous population as did other colonial powers such as France in North Africa and Germany in German South West Africa, to name but a few. The period 1912 to 1945 is no exception, but with the difference that military force was used to suppress uprisings of white citizens as well. White industrial workers experienced this military suppression in 1907, 1913, 1914 and 1922 when they went on strike. Job insecurity and wages were the main causes of the strikes and militant actions from the strikers forced the government to use military force when the police failed to maintain law and order. Public reaction to the use of force was strong and the government, particularly Gen. J.C. Smuts, was severely criticised resulting in a defeat in the 1924 election. Over the period 1921 to 1932 indigenous populations in South Africa and South West Africa such as the Israelites (1921), the Bondelswarts (1922), the Rehoboth Basters (1925) and the Ukuambi (1932), were suppressed through punitive expeditions by the police and military forces of the Union of South Africa. The indigenous populations were a.o. grieved by the government's implementation of branding laws, enforced indentured labour, dog and hut tax. The government's prevailing racial policy of that time, manifested in a master and servant attitude towards the indigenous populations, exacerbated an existing grievance of restrictive political rights. The government reacted quickly and economically in suppressing any indigenous population's protests involving militant action. Although the use of aeroplanes was criticised, it was a force multiplier and greatly assisted the small number of police and military forces deployed in minimising casualties on both sides. The government also had to suppress militant Afrikaner uprisings during the First and Second World Wars. In 1914 and 1915, prominent Afrikaner leaders and veterans of the Anglo-Boer War reacted militantly against the government's participation in the First World War. Gen. L. Botha and Gen. Smuts were the architects of their suppression through quick mobilisation of the Active Citizen Force, using mostly Afrikaans speaking volunteers. The period between the two world wars saw the growth of the Afrikaners on a political, social and limited economical level. This gave rise to further dispute on political and social levels when the government once again opted to fight alongside Britain in the Second World War. Old animosities between the Afrikaners and British were relived and militant elements within Afrikaner society mobilised to impede this participation. The government resorted to using the Union Defence Forces and SA Police to facilitate internment, for spying and to guard strategic objectives in an effort to prevent sabotage and other serious damage to the war effort. Smuts received severe criticism from mostly Afrikaners who were against participation in the war, and the general public who had to suffer under the conditions of martial law.

## OPSOMMING

Die gebruik van militêre mag in die onderdrukking van interne onrus is 'n algemene verskynsel in die geskiedenis van Suid-Afrika. Sedert 1652 het die Europese koloniale besetting van Suid-Afrika gepaard gegaan met geweld. Boerekommando's en Britse militêre regimente en vrywilligereenhede het die vrede in verafgeleë gebiede gehandhaaf en die plaaslike bevolkings onderwerp, net soos ander koloniale moondhede, byvoorbeeld, Frankryk in Noord-Afrika en Duitsland in Duits-Suidwes-Afrika gedoen het. Die periode van 1912 tot 1945 was geen uitsondering nie, maar met die verskil dat opstande ook onder die blanke bevolking onderdruk is. In 1907, 1913, 1914 en 1922 het die blanke industriële werkers sodanige onderdrukking ervaar. Werksonsekerheid en loongeskille was die dryfkrag agter die stakings en die stakers se militante optrede het die regering gedwing om militêre mag te gebruik om die opstande te onderdruk, nadat die polisie se pogings om wet en orde te handhaaf, misluk het. Die publiek was sterk gekant teen sulke hardhandige optrede en Genl. J.C. Smuts het veral onder kritiek deurgeloop, wat tot sy politieke nederlaag gelei het. Opstandige inheemse bevolkings in Suid-Afrika en Suidwes-Afrika soos die Israeliete (1921), die Bondelswarts (1922), die Rehoboth Basters (1925) en die Ukuambi (1932) het deurgeloop onder strafekspedisies van elemente van die Unie van Suid-Afrika se polisie en weermag. Die inheemse bevolking is gegrief deur die regering se implimentering van brandmerkwette, geforseerde kontrakarheid, hut- en hondebelaasting. Die regering se rassebeleid van die tyd het 'n meester-en-onderdaan-houding teenoor die inheemse bevolkings geskep, wat die teer kwessie van beperkte politieke regte vererger het. Opstande deur inheemse bevolkings wat militant van aard was, is op 'n vinnige en ekonomiese manier onderdruk, dog het skerp kritiek uitgelok. Die benutting van vliegtuie om die opstande te onderdruk was 'n magsvermenigvuldiger wat die klein polisie- en weermag gehelp het om verliese tydens die onderdrukking van opstande aan beide kante te beperk. Die regering het ook opstande van Afrikanergroepe tydens die Eerste en Tweede Wêreldoorlog onderdruk. In 1914-1915 het prominente Afrikanerleiers en veterane van die Anglo-Boereoorlog militant opgeruk teen die regering in verset oor die regering se deelname aan die Eerste Wêreldoorlog. Genl. L. Botha en Genl. Smuts was die argitekte van die vinnige onderdrukking van die opstande deur die Aktiewe Burgermag op te roep en hoofsaaklik Afrikaanssprekende vrywilligers te gebruik. Die periode tussen die twee Wêreldoorloë is gekenmerk deur die groei van die Afrikaner op politieke, sosiale en in 'n beperkte mate, ook ekonomiese gebied. Hieruit het verdere onenigheid op politieke en sosiale vlak ontstaan toe die regering weer besluit het aand die kant van Brittanje tot die Tweede Wêreldoorlog toe te tree. Ou vyandighede tussen Afrikaans- en Engelssprekendes het herleef en militante elemente binne die Afrikanersamelewing het gemobiliseer om die deelname te belemmer. Die regering het die Unieverdedigingsmag en die SA Polisie gebruik vir internering, spioenering en die beveiliging van strategiese doelwitte teen sabotasie en ander aktiwiteite wat die oorlogsdeelname sou belemmer. Smuts het die meeste kritiek ontvang van Afrikaners wat gekant was teen die oorlog, asook die publiek in die algemeen wat gebuk gegaan het onder krygswet.

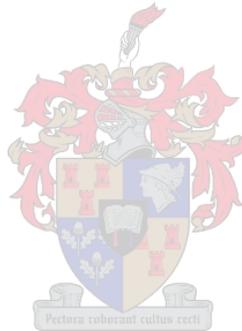
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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ACF	- Active Citizen Force
ASRHS	- Amalgamated Society of Railway and Harbour Servants
ATKV	- <i>Afrikaanse Taal- en Kultuurvereniging</i>
CFR	- Citizen Force Reserve
CID	- Criminal Investigation Department
CMR	- Cape Mounted Rifles
CNRV	- Commando National Reserve Volunteers
CPS	- Civilian Protection Services
DDMI	- Deputy Director of Military Intelligence
DEIC	- Dutch East India Company
ESPC	- Essential Services Protection Corps
FAK	- <i>Federasie vir Afrikaanse Kultuurvereniging</i>
FRB	- First Reserve Brigade
HNP	- <i>Herenigde Nasional Party</i>
ICB	- Intelligence Clearance Bureau
NP	- National Party
OB	- <i>Ossewa-Brandwag</i>
OFS	- Orange Free State
SAC	- South African Constabulary
SAIF	- South African Industrial Federation
SAMR	- South African Mounted Rifles
SANDF	- South African National Defence Force
SANDFA	- South African National Defence Force Archives
SAR & H	- South African Railways and Harbours
SAWADC	- South African Woman's Auxiliary Defence Corps
SAWAS	- South African Woman's Auxiliary Service
SWA	- South West Africa
UDF	- Union Defence Force
VFP	- Victoria Falls and Transvaal Power Company
ZAR	- <i>Zuid-Afrikaansche Republiek</i>



## PREFACE

The national objectives of a state are determined by a country's civil authorities, such as parliament, and defence objectives are derived accordingly. Along these lines a defence force is bound to formulate a defence policy that is subservient to the national objectives. A defence force is an extension of the ruling government relating to situations that may threaten state structures. Defending these structures is paramount to the survival of the ruling government and the continued safeguarding of its citizens. A national defence force is obligated to protect the sovereign borders and vital interests of the state against foreign and domestic threats.

Threats can be divided into external threats from foreign entities and internal threats from groups within the state. Insurrection, rebellion and unrest are all activities that can occur within a state and threaten a ruling government. A state's police force is the first line of defence against these activities, but if the police force is unable to suppress these activities, government utilises its defence force to reinforce the police in order to restore law and order. If this support is unable to restore law and order effectively, martial law is proclaimed and the defence force is mobilised. The defence force assumes command under martial law and restores order with the police in a supporting role. The former Union Defence Force (UDF) of the Union of South Africa, 1910-1957, was involved in two World Wars and the Korean War, as well as in protecting the state against domestic threats.

This dissertation investigates the utilisation of the UDF against domestic threats. The history of the UDF will be briefly discussed to show how it came about and what major issues were relevant at the time of its establishment. This is followed by an overview of the Union Defence Act (no 13 of 1912) to highlight the birth of a Defence Force from two diverse cultures, British and Afrikaner. This will place the newly established UDF within the political context of the early twentieth century and in particular the second decade of that century.

The foreign role of the UDF will be discussed briefly, followed by its domestic role where the emphasis will be placed on the internal policing role of the UDF during and between the two World Wars. The focus will be on three categories to serve as examples of its utilisation in an internal policing role. These three categories are white industrial unrest, indigenous (black) unrest and Afrikaner unrest. Each category will contain an analysis of the tactical deployment of forces, particularly the UDF, in the context of the socio-political environment. The study is not a social or political history *per se*, but a military history of the UDF's deployment to suppress internal unrest within the Union as well as South West Africa (SWA) as a mandated territory of the Union from 1912 to 1945.

The nature and practice of colonial policing and early policing in South Africa are covered in published sources, such as A. Clayton and D. Killingray's **Khaki and Blue: Military and Police in British Colonial Africa** (1989), D.E. Omissi's **Air Power and Colonial Control. The Royal Air Force 1919-1939** (1990), M. Lacey's *Platskiet Politiek* in **War and Society, the Militarisation of South Africa** (1989), edited by L. Nathan, and J.D. Brewer's **Black and Blue, Policing in South Africa** (1994), to name but a few. The background and conception of the UDF is documented by articles in **Militaria**, such as, *Hoofstukke uit die Voor- en Vroeë Geskiedenis van die SAW* (1969) by J. Ploeger, *Voorgeskiedenis tot die Stigting van 'n Unieverdedigingsmag* (1982) by E.M. Meyers and *'n Kort Kroniek van die Suid-Afrikaanse Weermag* (1987) by W.A. Dorning.

White industrial unrest enjoyed attention in K.L. Thorpe's extensive unpublished MA thesis, *Early Strikes on the Witwatersrand Gold Mines (1886-1907), with Specific Reference to the 1907 Strike* (1986), S.J. Pietersen's unpublished MA dissertation, *Stakings aan die Witwatersrand, 1913-1914* (1970), C.J. Jacobs's article in **Militaria**, *Die Rol van die Unieverdedigingsmag in die Onderdrukking van die Nywerheidsontluste van Januarie 1914* (1988), N. Herd's **1922, The Revolt on the Rand** (1966), G.R. Kent's **Through the Red Revolt on the Rand, A Pictorial Review of events. January, February, March, 1922** (n.d.), A.G. Oberholtser's *Die Mynwerkerstaking 1922* (1982) and J. Krikler's **The Rand Revolt. The 1922 Insurrection and Racial Killing in South Africa** (2005). These sources provide political and socio-economic background, but, with the exception of Jacobs and Krikler, include very little information on the tactical deployment of the UDF. This information was found in government publications, the South African National Defence Force (SANDF) Archives and the National Archives of South Africa.

The Bondelswarts, Rehoboth and Ukuambi uprisings occurred in South West Africa (now Namibia) and valuable background information was found in literature pertaining to Namibian history. These sources include **Namibia: the Violent Heritage** (1986) by D. Soggot, **A History of Resistance in Namibia** (1988) by P.H. Katjavivi and A.B. Emmett's book, **Popular Resistance and the Roots of Nationalism in Namibia, 1915-1966** (1999). Literature on indigenous uprisings in the period from 1921 to 1932 is informative and provides insight into social structures and the political background of the uprisings, but lack detail regarding tactical deployments. D.H. Makhobe published three articles in **Militaria** on the 1921 Bulhoek 'Massacre' (1996) and R. Edgar wrote a book on the Israelites called, **Because they Chose the Plan of God, the Story of the Bulhoek Massacre** (1988). The uprising of the Bondelswarts in 1922 received attention in R. Freislich's **The Last Tribal Stand, A History of the Bondelswart Uprising** (1964), A.M. Davey's **The Bondelswarts Affair** (1961) and G.L.M. Lewis's unpublished MA thesis, **The Bondelswarts Rebellion of 1922** (1977). There are useful

sources available on the Rehoboth 'Basters' such as P. Pearson's **The History and Social Structure of the Rehoboth Baster Community of Namibia**(1985), R.G. Britz's **A Concise History of the Rehoboth Basters Until 1990** (1999) and an unpublished D Litt thesis by G.J.J. Oosthuizen, *Die Rehoboth-Basters binne die Konteks van die Staatkundige verhoudinge tussen Suidwes-Afrika en Suid-Afrika, 1915-1939* (1993). The uprising and suppression of the Ukuambi tribe in 1932 is mostly discussed in government reports delivered to parliament and very little published literature could be traced. Archival sources in the National and the SANDF Archives provided reports and correspondence illustrating the tactical deployment of Union forces. The most useful archive groups at the National Archives of South Africa are the archives of the Secretary of Native Affairs, the archives of the Governor-General, the archives of the Minister of Justice, the archives of the South African Party and the archives of the Prime Minister. The most informative archive groups at the SANDF Archives are the "Accessions" and the archives of the Adjutant-General, the Chief of the General Staff, the Secretary of Defence and the Chief of Defence Force Administration.

The Afrikaner Rebellion in 1914-15 has been extensively covered in literary sources and it was briefly revisited to indicate the military suppression thereof and to set the stage for Afrikaner politics and culture before and during the Second World War. H.W. Wilson and J.A. Hammerton covered the Rebellion in **The Great War, The Standard History of the All-Europe Conflict, Vol 3**. (1915) H. Giliomee, **The Afrikaners, Biography of a People** (2003), T.R.H. Davenport, **South Africa, A Modern History** (1991), S.B. Spies: *Unie en Onenigheid, 1910-1924* (1986), L. Thompson, **A History of South Africa** (1990) and E. Walker, **A History of South Africa** (1957) cover a broad spectrum of information, but lack tactical detail of military deployments. The blue book publications are Union of South Africa, **Report on the Outbreak of the Rebellion and the Policy of the Government with Regard to its Suppression** (1915) and Union of South Africa, **Report of the Judicial Commission of Inquiry into the Causes of and Circumstances Relating to the Recent Rebellion in South Africa** (1915) and provide valuable information on government policy and the execution thereof during the rebellion. G.D. Scholtz, **Die Rebellie, 1914-15** (1942) and P.J. Sampson, **The Capture of De Wet, The South African Rebellion 1914** (1915) were invaluable sources of information that enabled a study of the Rebel's attitudes and underlying frustrations at the time.

Information about Afrikaner unrest during the Second World War was found in various literary sources and archival material. P.J. Furlong's, **Between Crown and Swastika. The impact of the Radical Right on the Afrikaner Nationalist Movement in the Fascist Era** (1991) investigated the influence of National Socialism and the accompanying political and economic growth of the Afrikaners. Information on Afrikaner resistance against participation in the Second World War, in particular the *Ossewa-Brandwag*, was found in *Die Ossewa-Brandwag en*

*Afrikanereenheid* (1987) by L.M. Fourie, the research project *Die Ossewa-Brandwag en die Tweede Wêreld Oorlog* (1983) by P.F. van der Schyff, **John Vorster, OB-Generaal en Afrikanervegter** (1983) by H.O. Terblanche, **OB, Traitors or Patriots** (1976) by G.C. Visser, **For Volk and Führer** (1982) by H. Strydom and **Their Paths Crossed Mine, Memoirs of the Commandant-General of the Ossewa-Brandwag** (1956) by H. van Rensburg. Journals such as **Koers** and **STET** published articles by P.J.J. Prinsloo, *Die Kentering in die Kultuurbeeld van die Ossewa-Brandwag* (1996) and S. Louw, "Discourse Theory, Afrikaner Nationalism and the Ossewa-Brandwag" (1990), respectively. The Ossewa-Brandwag collection at the Ferdinand Postma Library, University of Potchefstroom has reports and personal correspondence between members. H.J. Martin and N.D. Orpen cover home defence during the Second World War in **South African Forces World War II Vol II: South Africa at War: Military and Industrial Organisation and Operations in Connection with the Conduct of the War, 1939–1945** (1979). Regimental histories such as N. Orpen, **The Cape Town Highlanders, 1885-1970** (1970), W.S. Douglas, **Regimental History of the Cape Town Highlanders** (1944), C. Birkby, **The Saga of the Transvaal Scottish Regiment, 1932-1950** (1950) and G.E. Visser, *Die Geskiedenis van die Middelandse Regiment, 1934-1943* (1983) also provide useful information on the internal deployments of the UDF during the Second World War especially, regarding deployments for guard duties at internment camps.



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Andries Marius Fokkens  
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## CHAPTER 1

### THE THEORY OF MILITARY POLICING AND ITS MANIFESTATION IN SOUTH AFRICA

#### 1.1 INTRODUCTION

The South African White Paper on Defence, as approved by Parliament in May 1996, lists the provisional role and functions of the South African National Defence Force (SANDF) as stipulated by the Constitution. It states that the primary objective of the SANDF is to defend South Africa against an enemy threatening its sovereignty and territorial integrity, in conjunction with service for the preservation of life, health and property. The secondary function of the SANDF is of an internal nature: "...for service in the upholding of law and order in the Republic in co-operation with the South African Police Service under circumstances set out in law where the Police Service is unable to maintain law and order on its own."<sup>1</sup>

The involvement of the SANDF in law enforcement is a perpetuation of the historical role and application of military forces in South Africa initiated by the Dutch in 1652. This use of military force was not unique to South Africa as many countries, including Portugal, Britain, France and Germany applied it in the territories they colonised.<sup>2</sup> But the military, para-military and volunteer units in South Africa have some unique qualities. It is therefore important to describe the colonisation of South Africa during the Dutch and British regimes to provide the background from which the military culture developed. The experiences and actions of other colonial powers, such as Britain, France and Germany are described to provide the milieu in which the Dutch and later the British handled the situation in South Africa. An evaluation of the origin of militant policing follows in order to discover why it became synonymous with expansion and white supremacy. The development of the military system is discussed with the focus on how the different military forces in South Africa evolved into a national force, the Union Defence Force (UDF). The final section describes the different roles of the UDF and, in particular, the policing role it inherited.

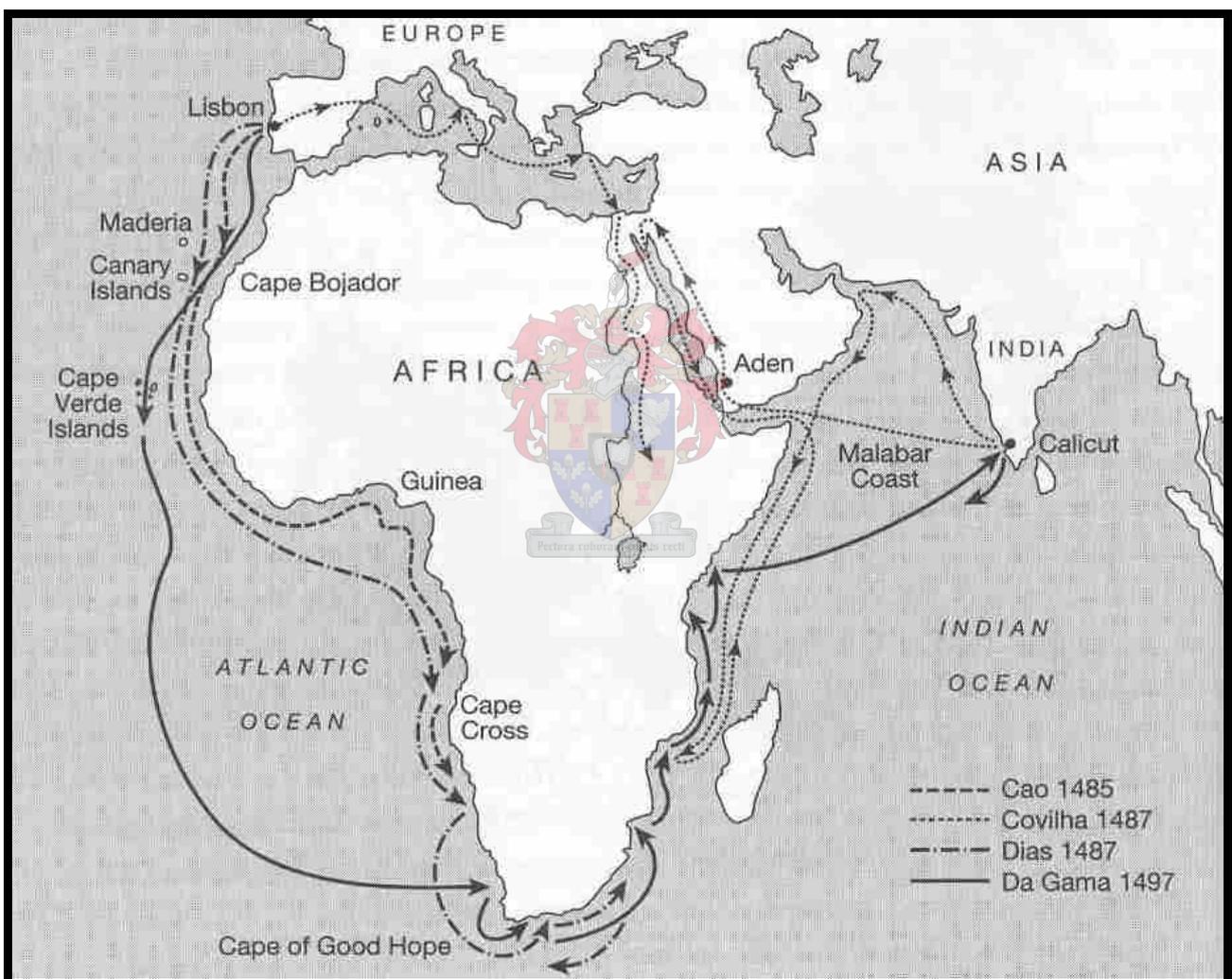
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1 Department of Defence: **Defence in Democracy as approved by the South African Parliament, May 1996 [and] South African Defence Review as Approved by Parliament, April 1998**, p.34; Department of Defence: **Command Doctrine, GWU 90**, pp.8-3.

2 H. Strachan: **European Armies and the Conduct of War**, pp.76-89; I.F.W. Beckett: **The Roots of Counter-Insurgency, Armies and Guerrilla Warfare, 1900-1945**, p.11; M. Bennett: "The German Experience", in I.F.W. Beckett: **The Roots of Counter-Insurgency, Armies and Guerrilla Warfare, 1900-1945**, p.63; F. Toase: "The French Experience", in I.F.W. Beckett: **The Roots of Counter-Insurgency, Armies and Guerrilla Warfare, 1900-1945**, p.41; J. Pimlott. "The British Experience", in I.F.W. Beckett: **The Roots of Counter-Insurgency, Armies and Guerrilla Warfare, 1900-1945**, p.17.

## 1.2 THE COLONISATION OF SOUTH AFRICA

The colonisation of South Africa was a side effect of the need to establish a refreshment post along the ocean trade route, halfway between Europe and the East. The Cape was initially discovered by the Portuguese in their search for an ocean route that would minimise expenditure in the overland trade of silks and spices. (See Figure 1.1: Portuguese Trade Routes.) Companies from France, England and the Netherlands travelled the ocean route, but it was the Dutch East India Company (DEIC) who established a refreshment post at the Cape of Good Hope. The main goal was to provide fresh produce to curb the scurvy which broke out among the crew during the long voyage.<sup>3</sup>

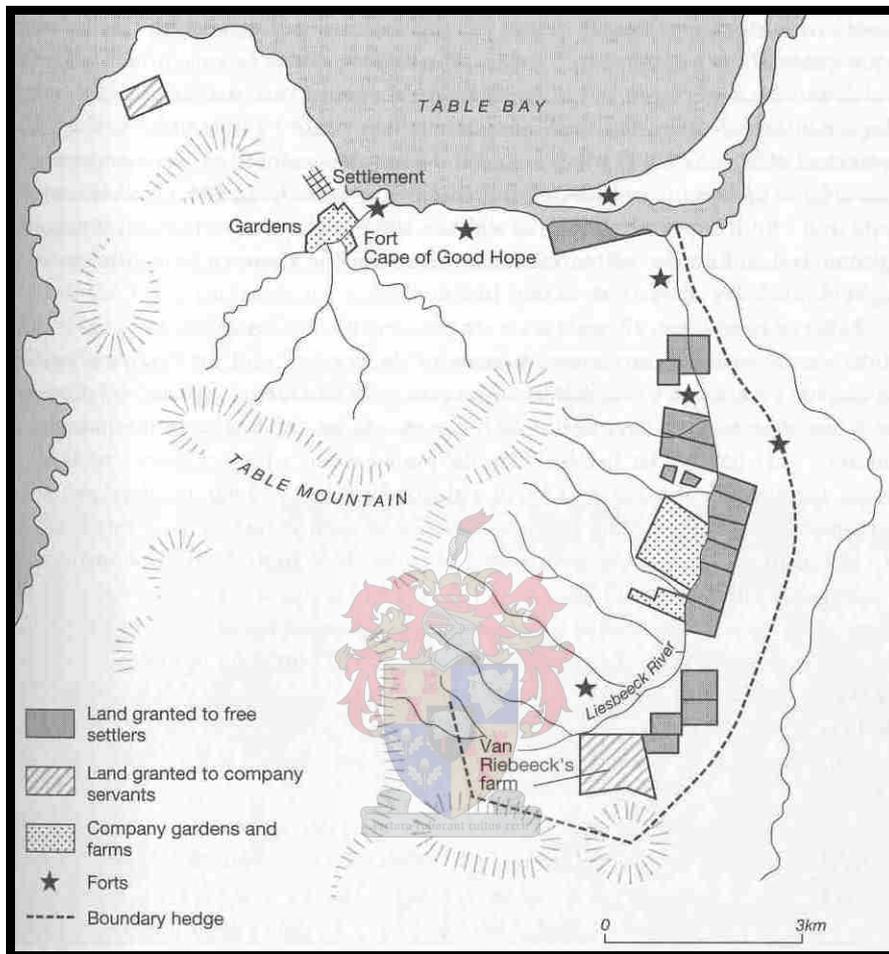


**Figure 1.1:** The Portuguese Trade Routes, 1485 - 1497.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>3</sup> T.R.H. Davenport: **South Africa, A Modern History**, p.19; L. Thompson, **A History of South Africa**, p.33; A. Lester, et al: **South Africa, Past Present and Future**, pp.50-51.

<sup>4</sup> A. Lester, et al: **South Africa, Past Present and Future**, p.52.

The task of establishing the refreshment post was given to Commander Jan van Riebeeck. He arrived in Table Bay in April 1652 and began in earnest to trade with the indigenous Khoikhoi tribes for fresh meat. The DEIC did not intend to establish a permanent colony at the Cape, but after a few years, it became inevitable for three reasons - company employees were given the right to become free burghers, the influx of slaves and the gradual expansion of the Dutch settlement.<sup>5</sup>



**Figure 1.2:** Cape Town and Early Surrounding Settlements, 1657 - 1701.<sup>6</sup>

The business-like reasoning of the DEIC hoped that free burghers would provide produce at a lower cost than slaves and men on the company payroll. Merchandise was sold at a fixed rate to the company and with the rise in the demand for fresh produce, the number of free burghers, as well as Dutch, French and German immigrants also rose. From 1658 the population at the Cape rose steadily with the influx of slaves from Dahomey, Angola, Madagascar, Mozambique, Indonesia, India and Ceylon (Sri Lanka). By 1778, the number of slaves was 14,747, outnumbering the 13,830 free burghers. The influx of immigrants and slaves was coincidental to the gradual expansion of the Dutch territory to the areas known today as Stellenbosch and

5 T.R.H. Davenport: **South Africa, A Modern History**, p.19; L. Thompson, **A History of South Africa**, p.33; A. Lester, et al: **South Africa, Past Present and Future**, pp.50-51.

6 A. Lester, et al: **South Africa, Past Present and Future**, p. 53.

Somerset-West. It was grudgingly accepted by the DEIC that the refreshment post was growing into a fully-fledged colony.<sup>7</sup>(See Figure 1.2 and 1.3: Expansion of the Cape Colony.)

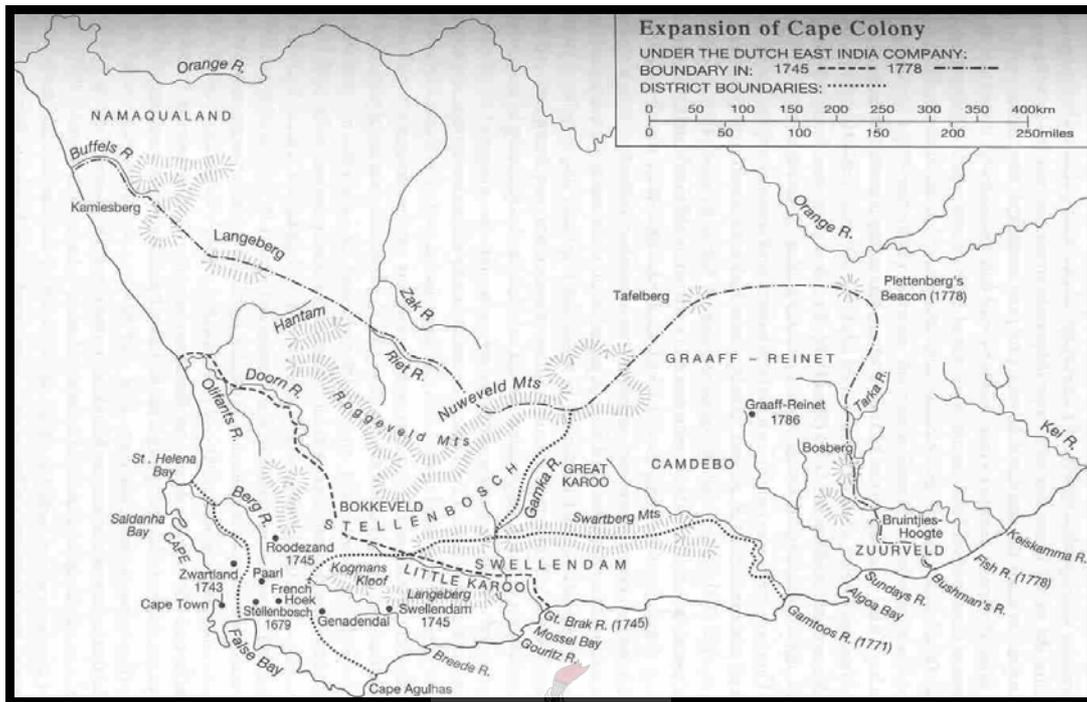


Figure 1.3: The Expansion of the Cape Colony in 1790.<sup>8</sup>

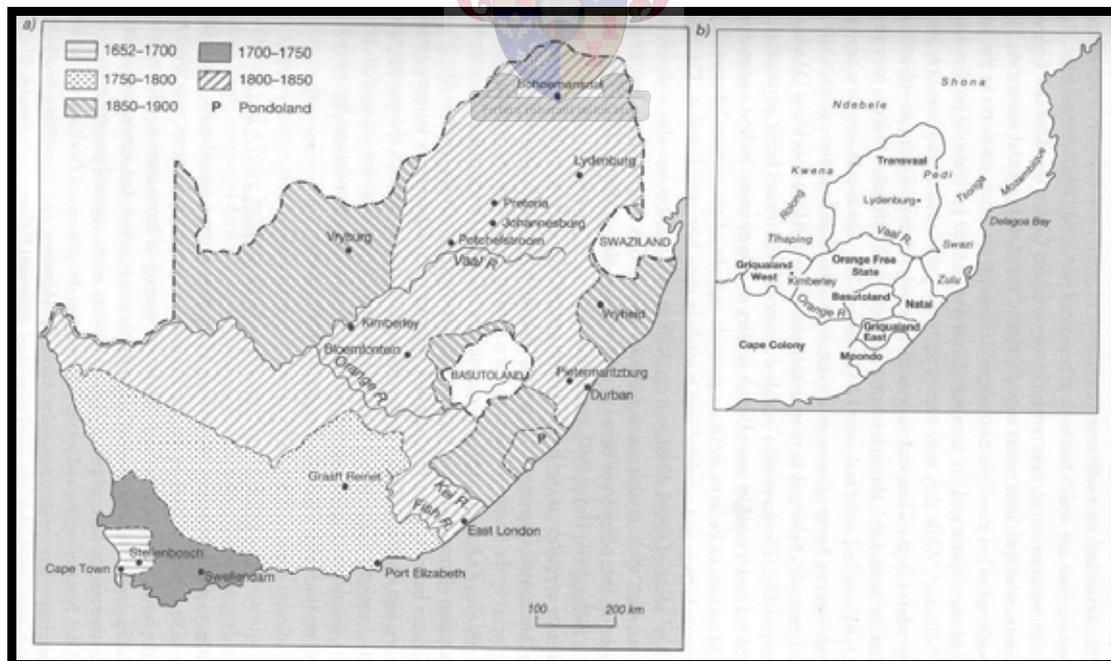
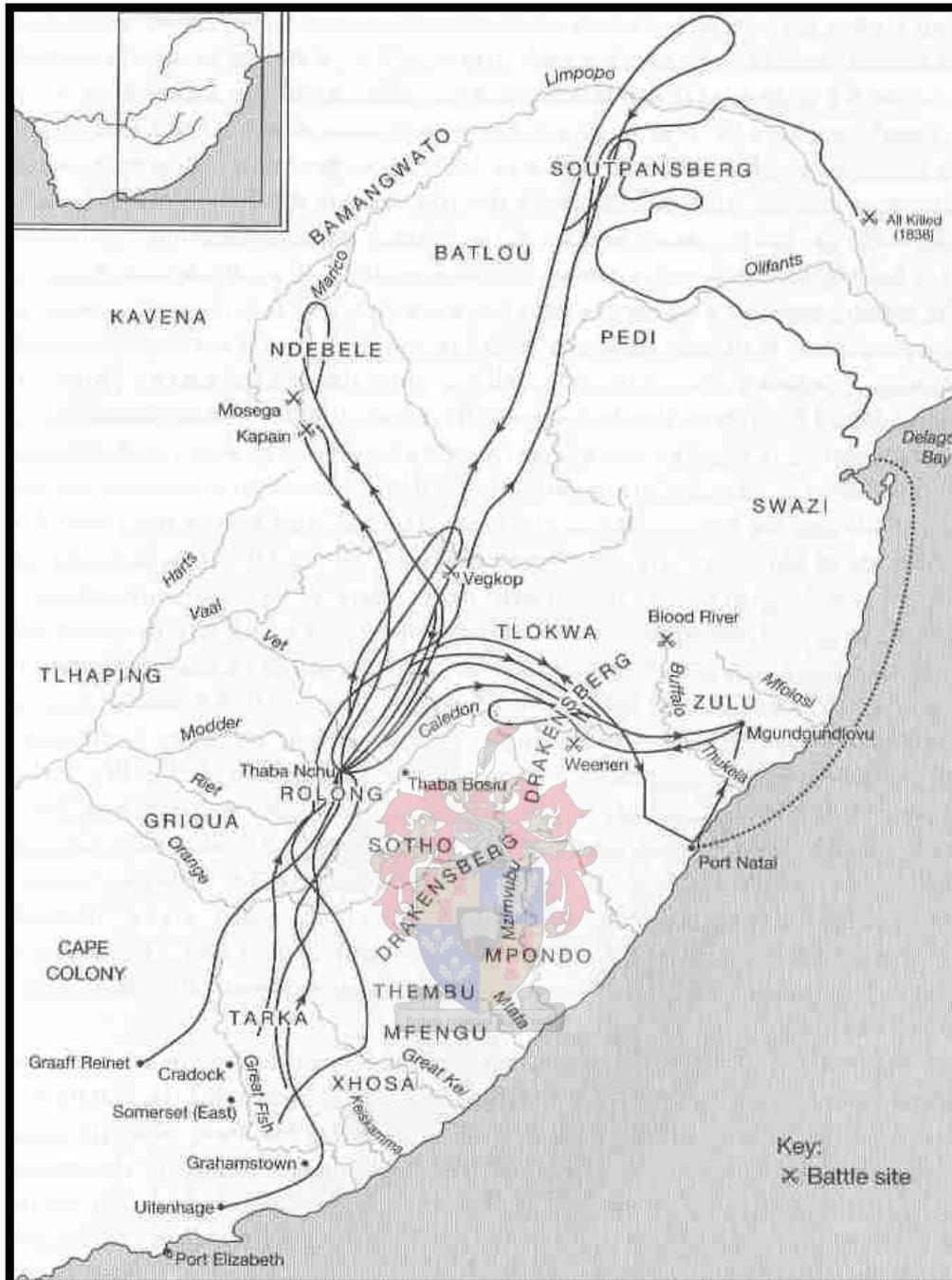


Figure 1.4: Expansion (a) and States (b) by 1870.<sup>9</sup>

7 T.R.H. Davenport: **South Africa, A Modern History**, pp.19-21; L. Thompson, **A History of South Africa**, pp.33-36; A. Lester, et al: **South Africa, Past Present and Future**, pp.50-51.  
 8 A. Lester, et al: **South Africa, Past Present and Future**, p.57.



**Figure 1.5:** The Main Trek Routes during the “Great Trek”.<sup>10</sup>

The gradual colonisation of South Africa had a direct effect on the indigenous population. They faced the dilemma of either displacement or integration. Whatever choices were made profoundly affected them. Tribal cohesion and traditional values were lost in the constant battle to regain the land taken from them by the colonists. The use of military power was instrumental in facilitating the growth of the small refreshment post into a colony at the southern tip of Africa. These actions did

9 A. Lester, et al, **South Africa, Past Present and Future**, p.91.

10 A. Lester et al, **South Africa, Past Present and Future**, p.75.

not only include military expeditions, but also the policing of the settled areas by militant means.<sup>11</sup> South Africa is not unique in this policing tradition, as this was the norm for many western colonial powers.

### 1.3 IRREGULAR WARFARE BY COLONIAL FORCES

Britain, France and Germany were three prominent participants in the colonisation of Africa, but the real “Scramble for Africa” only began in the 1880s and 1890s. The European colonisation of the various territories was met with fierce resistance by the indigenous tribes. Germany consistently carried out military expeditions in German East Africa from 1889 to 1907, including the one against the Maji-Maji uprising from 1905-1907. Resistance to German rule also occurred in German South West Africa with the Herero revolt from 1904-1907. The indigenous populations of West and North-Central Africa bravely resisted French colonisation, but were eventually suppressed by French colonial forces. Resistance was especially fierce in Algeria (1903-10) and Morocco (1912-1934). British colonisation in West Africa encountered fierce resistance from the indigenous populations of Nigeria (1892-1902) and the Gold Coast (1895-1900), as was the case in South Africa. The Basutos (1868), the Xhosas (1878), the Pedi and the Zulus (1879), the Boers of the Transvaal and the Orange Free State (1899-1902) and other groups resisted this colonial drive, but in the end all succumbed to British rule.<sup>12</sup>

The military played a significant role in suppressing the uprisings in the various colonies. These colonial operations were not carried out in the orthodox style of war for which the conventional armies were trained. The irregular wars in distant colonial territories received scant theoretical attention due to the priority placed on preparing for and fighting conventional wars. At a strategic level armies approached colonial operations with a conventional doctrine and only adapted to the environment at a tactical level. The military lacked a coherent doctrine regarding its role and application in colonial operations, due to the diversity of the colonial opponents and the variety of campaigns.<sup>13</sup>

The general assumption of colonial forces in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries was that the use of extreme force and superior firepower was an appropriate response to suppress the uprising of local inhabitants. This was the case with Germany’s colonial campaign in German East Africa and

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- 11 L. Thompson, **A History of South Africa**, pp.52-53; T.R.H. Davenport: **South Africa, A Modern History**, p.21; A. Lester, et al, **South Africa, Past Present and Future**, p.58.
- 12 T. Pakenham: **The Scramble for Africa**, pp.xv-xvii; G. Pool: Die Herero-Opstand, 1904-1907 (Unpublished M.A. Thesis, US, 1976), pp1-17; H. Strachan: **European Armies and the Conduct of War**, pp.77-9; I.F.W. Beckett: **The Roots of Counter-Insurgency, Armies and Guerrilla Warfare, 1900-1945**, p.11; F. Toase: The French Experience, p.41.
- 13 H. Strachan: **European Armies and the Conduct of War**, p.76; I.F.W. Beckett: **The Roots of Counter-Insurgency, Armies and Guerrilla Warfare, 1900-1945**, p.15, B. Vandervort: **Wars of Imperial Conquest in Africa, 1830-1914**, pp. 11-12, 37-39; T.M. Meguire: **Guerilla or Partisan Warfare**, pp.1-3.

German South West Africa during the Maji-Maji uprising and the Herero revolt respectively in the period 1904-1907. Over 26,000 people died during the Maji-Maji uprising and the Herero population declined by over 60,000 in this period. French colonial strategy was typical of the approach used by European forces at the time. In 1830, the French applied their tactics of *Grande Armée* in French North Africa without initial success. It was through Marshal Bugeaud that a change in their approach towards colonial operations was initiated in 1840. Bugeaud brought into play the element of achieving a political aim during colonial campaigns. Conquering a land was now no longer the only objective - the colonisation of the land as an asset to France was added.<sup>14</sup>

Joseph Gallieni and Hubert Lyautey developed Bugeaud's ideas further by emphasising the slow and methodical expansion of French administration alongside a strong military presence. The theoretical expression of this type of colonisation was written by Lyautey in an article for the *Revue des Deux Mondes* in 1900, which stressed the political context of colonial operations and equally importantly, the regeneration of French society and politics.<sup>15</sup>

It was only in 1896 when C.E. Callwell published his *Small Wars: Their Principles and Practise* that the British Army received a standard manual for conducting colonial operations. This book categorised the potential foes expected in colonial operations as well as the operational objectives of the colonial force. Callwell was of the opinion that the use of force with just enough violence was called for to overawe the enemy and bring them to terms. The use of extreme force, however, would only exacerbate the situation and inflame the uprising. In this manner military force was used to acquire new territories. In the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century, Col. H.T. Lukin, Commandant General of the Cape Colonial Forces, influenced the debate on colonial warfare with the publishing in Cape Town of a training pamphlet, *Savage Warfare: Hints on Tactics to be Adopted and Precautions to be Taken*. Lukin draws from his experience in previous conflicts with the South African Zulus and Basothos and describes what a colonial army can expect in campaigns against indigenous populations.<sup>16</sup>

#### 1.4 THE ORIGIN OF MILITARY POLICING IN SOUTH AFRICA

Technological advances enabled expanding colonial communities to counter indigenous resistance to white settlement successfully. Indigenous weapons, such as the bow and arrow and the spear

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14 H. Strachan: **European Armies and the Conduct of War**, p.79; I.F.W. Beckett: **The Roots of Counter-Insurgency, Armies and Guerrilla Warfare, 1900-1945**, p.11; B. Vandervort: **Wars of Imperial Conquest in Africa, 1830-1914**, pp. 48-55, 62-64.

15 I.F.W. Beckett: **The Roots of Counter-Insurgency, Armies and Guerrilla Warfare, 1900-1945**, pp.14-15; H. Strachan: **European Armies and the Conduct of War**, pp.78-80; B. Vandervort: **Wars of Imperial Conquest in Africa, 1830-1914**, pp. 72-73.

16 I.F.W. Beckett: **The Roots of Counter-Insurgency, Armies and Guerrilla Warfare, 1900-1945**, p.9; H. Strachan: **European Armies and the Conduct of War**, pp.76-8; B. Vandervort: **Wars of**

were overwhelmed by colonial firepower. The technologically disadvantaged indigenous populations were subjugated eventually by the use of military force and firepower. Steamships, prophylaxes, developments in communications and modern weapons, such as air power and the machine gun, assisted the Europeans to consolidate their power. A few examples were the Xhosas who were beaten decisively after nine frontier wars ending in 1878, the Pedi and the Zulus who were subjugated in 1818 and 1879 and in 1885 control was established over the Tswana-speaking people and their territory. Firepower was the key to ensuring the settlement of South Africa by populations migrating from Europe.<sup>17</sup>

The structures that facilitated the victories were the Boer commandos and the British military regiments. It is within these military systems that the policing tradition of South Africa must be viewed. John Brewer states, *Police bodies in South Africa began as colonial forces... and retained most of the features of this model as the 20<sup>th</sup> century progressed.*<sup>18</sup> Brewer further describes two policing traditions within South Africa. The first was the Afrikaner tradition present in the Boer Republics, the Transvaal and the Orange Free State. The second was the colonial tradition that was present in the British territories of Natal and the Cape Colony.<sup>19</sup>

Jan van Riebeeck established what became the Afrikaner tradition of policing in the initial appointment of a *Geweldiger* (Enforcer) barely six months after his arrival in 1652. The task of the *Geweldiger* was to deal with the growing crime problem in the settlement. The main problems were stock theft by colonialists and the indigenous tribes in the area and illegal trade between the Dutch and Cape populations. The combating of crime within the early Dutch settlements needed to be increased as the settlements expanded and the usual crimes associated with an urban environment were committed. The urban police in the Boer Republics were not only used to prevent crime, but also to regulate social and cultural boundaries between black and white, by calming white fears regarding the crime committed by blacks and keeping blacks out of white areas.<sup>20</sup>

Another feature of the Afrikaner tradition was the policing of the rural environment using the commandos. The commando system was born in 1659 from the need to protect the outlying areas against stock theft and possible attacks by the Khoikhoi. War with the local tribes was not viewed

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**Imperial Conquest in Africa, 1830-1914**, pp. 209-211; H.T. Lukin: **Savage Warfare: Hints on Tactics to be Adopted and Precautions to be Taken**, pp.1-9.

17 A. Seegers: **The Military in the Making of Modern South Africa**, pp.1-7; E. Roux: **Time Longer Than Rope**, pp.13-18; G. Cawthra: **Policing South Africa, The South African Police and the Transition from Apartheid**, p.5; D.E. Omissi: **Air Power and Colonial Control. The Royal Air Force 1919-1939**, pp.3-4.

18 J.D. Brewer: **Black and Blue, Policing in South Africa**, p.15.

19 A. Seegers: **The Military in the Making of Modern South Africa**, pp.1-2; J.D. Brewer: **Black and Blue**, pp.15-18.

20 J.D. Brewer: **Black and Blue**, pp.15-18; E.M. Meyers: Voorgeskiedenis tot die Stigting van 'n Unieverdedigingsmag, **Militaria**, vol. 12, no. 2, 1982, p.1.

as economical, but expeditions to punish them were often executed. The use of the horse was born from the necessity to react quickly to dangers in the outlying areas of the early settlement. The tasks of the commandos were twofold, primarily to defend the Cape against a foreign invasion and secondarily to curb stock theft by the indigenous tribes. Company soldiers of the DEIC were initially used to man the commandos.<sup>21</sup>

The expansion of the colony changed the setup of the commando profoundly. It created the need for a commando consisting primarily of citizens in charge of their own defence and policing. In the rural environment crime and disorder were manifested in stock theft and plunder and policing was done by these commandos. The commandos constituted burghers and even integrated Khoikhoi with a Company officer in charge. The burgher commandos provided a mobile and flexible component that was able to take over the policing of its area of responsibility and become a military component if the need arose. Regions were demarcated and the commandos consisted of all able-bodied males with a firearm, horse, saddle and a few rounds of ammunition. Participation became compulsory from 1739 and an elaborate system began to emerge as the white settlers moved into the interior. The settlements in the rural interior of South Africa were isolated and constantly feared attacks from the indigenous population. They were responsible for their own defence and the commando system was the most practical and best tactical system for protection of these small isolated communities.<sup>22</sup>

The burgher commandos became synonymous with the expansion of the Afrikaner communities during the "Great Trek" and protected the settlements that followed. These settlements expanded and spread into the territory of the later Transvaal and the Orange Free State. They eventually received independence from Britain in 1852 and 1854 respectively. The burgher commandos became the Boer commandos and grew to become the cornerstone of the Boer military machine responsible for the defence and policing of the Boer Republics.<sup>23</sup>

The same process occurred in the Cape and Natal with regard to mobile units protecting and policing the rural areas. The British military tradition prevalent in the British colonies of the Cape

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21 C.M. Bakkes: Die Kommandostelsel met Spesiale Verwysing na die Historiese Ontwikkeling van Sy Rangstruktuur, in P.G. Nel (red): **Die Kultuurontplooiing van die Afrikaner**, pp.294-295; A. Seegers: **The Military in the Making of Modern South Africa**, pp.1-2; P.H. Frankel: **Pretoria's Praetorians**, pp.19-20; J.D. Brewer: **Black and Blue**, pp.15-18; G. Cawthra: **Policing South Africa**, pp.8-9; E.M. Meyers: Voorgeskiedenis tot die Stigting van 'n Unieverdedigingsmag, **Militaria**, vol. 12, no. 2, 1982, pp.1-3.

22 C.M. Bakkes: Die Kommandostelsel met Spesiale Verwysing na die Historiese Ontwikkeling van Sy Rangstruktuur, in P.G. Nel (red): **Die Kultuurontplooiing van die Afrikaner**, pp.294-310; A. Seegers: **The Military in the Making of Modern South Africa**, pp.1-2; P.H. Frankel: **Pretoria's Praetorians**, pp.19-20; J.D. Brewer: **Black and Blue**, pp.15-18; G. Cawthra: **Policing South Africa**, pp.8-9; E.M. Meyers: Voorgeskiedenis tot die Stigting van 'n Unieverdedigingsmag, **Militaria**, vol. 12, no. 2, 1982, pp.1-3.

23 C.M. Bakkes: Die Kommandostelsel met Spesiale Verwysing na die Historiese Ontwikkeling van Sy Rangstruktuur, in P.G. Nel (red): **Die Kultuurontplooiing van die Afrikaner**, pp.294-310; J.D.

and Natal introduced volunteer units and regular units. Volunteer units were created alongside the burgher commandos to supplement the numbers of regular units during campaigns against the indigenous population. These volunteer units were disbanded as soon as the conflict came to an end. Within these colonies regular units such as the Cape Mounted Police, Cape Mounted Rifleman, Natal Mounted Police and Zululand Mounted Police patrolled the rural areas. These and other regular units were responsible for the defence of the Cape and Natal colonies. These police units were paramilitary in style and it was their task to impose British rule of law in the colony, to protect territory, suppress uprisings and to show a presence in the countryside. Their daily routine consisted of civil police duties, but it was more often the case that they acted as the general servants of the colonial power and so were responsible for civil justice, enforcing health regulations and collecting tax. These forces were often needed to guard, extend and uphold colonial authority against local resistance. Civil and military duties were merged in these paramilitary policing forces and enabled the state to centralise control over the population.<sup>24</sup>

The rurally-based paramilitary police forces of the British colonies had the extra role of protecting the borders against invasion. Their transformation into mobile military units was essential to the defence of the territories in case of an invasion. A good example of this was the participation of regiments from the Cape and Natal in the Second Anglo-Boer War. The Boer Republics also employed their commandos in a military role to resist British imperialism during the First and Second Anglo-Boer Wars in 1880-1881 and 1899-1902 respectively.<sup>25</sup>

In 1900, during the Second Anglo-Boer War, the South African Constabulary (SAC) was established under the leadership of Col. R.S.S. Baden-Powell. British colonial policing through police and military forces continued after the war to ensure dominance and the enforcement of British rule of law. The main task of this paramilitary force was the policing of the rural areas of the conquered Boer Republics for the duration of the war. After the war in 1902 the SAC continued its policing of the rural areas, but was disbanded in 1908. The Transvaal Police and the Orange River Colony Police were allocated the task of rural policing together with their urban policing roles after the SAC was disbanded. The police and military structures within the four colonies, the Cape Colony, Natal, the Transvaal and the Orange River Colony, were steadily finalised as negotiations towards a union of these colonies progressed. The Union of South Africa was established on 31

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24 Brewer: **Black and Blue**, pp.15-18; G. Cawthra: **Policing South Africa**, pp.8-9; E.M. Meyers: Voorgeskiedenis tot die Stigting van 'n Unieverdedigingsmag, **Militaria**, vol. 12, no. 2, 1982, pp.1-3.

25 J.D. Brewer: **Black and Blue**, pp.6, 15-18; A. Seegers: **The Military in the Making of Modern South Africa**, pp.1-2; P.H. Frankel: **Pretoria's Praetorians**, pp.19-20; G. Cawthra: **Policing South Africa**, pp.8-9; E.M. Meyers: Voorgeskiedenis tot die Stigting van 'n Unieverdedigingsmag, **Militaria**, vol. 12, no. 2, 1982, pp.1-3; A. Clayton and D. Killingray, **Khaki and Blue: Military and Police in British Colonial Africa**, pp.4-6; J.S. Kotze: **Kaapse Stande Mag, 1872-1882**, pp1-3.

J.D. Brewer: **Black and Blue**, pp.15-21; G. Cawthra: **Policing South Africa**, pp.8-9; A. Clayton and D. Killingray, **Khaki and Blue**, pp.4-6.

May 1910 and the role and application of the new Union Defence Force and the South African Police were firmly based on the military policing that had existed in South Africa since 1652.<sup>26</sup>

## 1.5 VOLUNTEER UNITS FOR THE DEFENCE OF THE COLONIES

In the aftermath of the Second Anglo-Boer War the victorious British Supreme Commander, Lord Kitchener, and the British High Commissioner, Lord Milner, were of the opinion that a contingent of the Imperial troops returning from the war should stay behind. The reason for stationing Imperial troops in South Africa was stated by Milner in a letter to Gen. N.G. Lyttleton. It read: "I attach great importance, from the political point of view and with a view to the complete pacification of the country and the abandonment of all schemes of future disturbance to the maintenance for at least a year or two longer, of such a force in the country."<sup>27</sup> The Imperial garrisons were stationed in all four provinces with the aim of suppressing any Afrikaner or black unrest for at least two years after the war. The Imperial troops fell under the central British command of Lt Gen. Lord Methuen who was stationed in Pretoria.<sup>28</sup>

In conjunction with these Imperial garrisons stationed in the different colonies, each colony had an independent defence organisation and command structure. The military forces of the *Zuid-Afrikaansche Republiek* as well as the Orange Free State were disbanded after the War. The commando system of the old Boer Republics was disbanded, but the principle was incorporated into the colonial military and British-orientated volunteer organisations. Gen. L. Botha re-established the commandos, firstly as defence rifle associations, in July 1907. The rifle associations were an economic necessity. The lack of funds hampered scheduled training for all the volunteer units and the decision was made to group them into defence rifle associations where they could continue training informally. Weapons and ammunition were supplied to the associations in order for musketry training to continue without the added expenditure of mobilising a unit. In addition, these organisations were established to lessen the responsibility of protection by the Imperial troops. Imperial troops in the colonies were decreased in due course as the volunteer organisations were established and this also saved the British government money.<sup>29</sup>

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- 26 A. Seegers: **The Military in the Making of Modern South Africa**, p.24; J.D. Brewer: **Black and Blue**, p.28; J. Ploeger: Hoofstukke Uit die Voor- en Vroeë Geskiedenis van die SAW, **Militaria**, vol. 1, no. 3, 1969, p.2; E.M. Meyers: Voorgeskiedenis tot die Stigting van 'n Unieverdedigingsmag, **Militaria**, vol. 12, no. 2, 1982, p.2; C.L. Grimbeek: Die Totstandkoming van die Unieverdedigingsmag met Spesifieke Verwysing na die Verdedigingswette van 1912 en 1922 (Ongepubliseerde D Phil Thesis, UP, 1985), p.6; J.D. Brewer: **Black and Blue**, p.28;
- 27 J. Ploeger: Hoofstukke Uit die Voor- en Vroeë Geskiedenis van die SAW, **Militaria**, vol. 1, no. 3, 1969, p.2.
- 28 J. Ploeger: Hoofstukke Uit die Voor- en Vroeë Geskiedenis van die SAW, **Militaria**, vol. 1, no. 3, 1969, p.2; E.M. Meyers: Voorgeskiedenis tot die Stigting van 'n Unieverdedigingsmag, **Militaria**, vol. 12, no. 2, 1982, pp.2-3; C.L. Grimbeek: Die Totstandkoming van die Unieverdedigingsmag met Spesifieke Verwysing na die Verdedigingswette van 1912 en 1922, p.1-2.
- 29 E.M. Meyers: Voorgeskiedenis tot die Stigting van 'n Unieverdedigingsmag, **Militaria**, vol. 12, no. 2, pp.2-5; C.L. Grimbeek: Die Totstandkoming van die Unieverdedigingsmag met Spesifieke Verwysing

In the Transvaal, the Transvaal Volunteers was established in 1902 and various other organisations followed. The volunteers were mainly English-speaking men from the urban environment. Units that were established on the Witwatersrand were the Imperial Light Horse, the South African Light Horse, the Johannesburg Mounted Rifles, the Scottish Horse, the Transvaal Light Infantry and the Transvaal Scottish Volunteers. The strength of the volunteer force in the Transvaal at the end of 1904 was 4,644 men. The inhabitants of the Orange River Colony rejected the idea of volunteer units and had none, but kept the SAC for police work. There were, however, a substantial number of defence rifle associations, but the members had no obligation to do active service.<sup>30</sup>

Apart from the Imperial garrisons defending the coast, 60 volunteer and cadet organisations were stationed in the Cape. The backbone of the Cape defence organisation was, however, the Cape Mounted Rifles (CMR). The CMR was initially the Frontier Armed and Mounted Police who had been doing police work on the Eastern Border since the 1850s. In 1878 the Frontier Armed and Mounted Police was renamed the Cape Mounted Riflemen and described as the colonial permanent force of the Cape for police work and defence. It subsequently participated in the Basuto War (1880-1881) as well as in the Second Anglo-Boer War. After the War, the CMR went back to its original task of policing. The CMR definitely had a military and a policing element and was unique in South Africa. By 1903, the landward defence of the Cape Colony was the task of the Cape colonial defence organisations.<sup>31</sup>

The landward defence of Natal was also based upon volunteer organisations and they actively participated in the Second Anglo-Boer War. After the war the Militia Act of 1903 was passed which set out the reorganisation of the defence of Natal. The volunteer organisations were transformed into a militia force. Members were now called up by ballot in order to defend the colony of Natal. During times of emergency the Permanent Militia Force could be supplemented by the Active Militia, comprising white male citizens between 18 and 50 years of age. It was, however, the prerogative of the governor of Natal to call up male non-whites to perform non-fighting tasks if the

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na die Verdedigingswette van 1912 en 1922, pp.2-6; J. Ploeger: Hoofstukke Uit die Voor- en Vroeë Geskiedenis van die SAW, **Militaria**, vol. 1, no. 3, 1969, p.2.

30 J. Ploeger: Hoofstukke Uit die Voor- en Vroeë Geskiedenis van die SAW, **Militaria**, vol. 1, no. 3, 1969, pp.2-6; E.M. Meyers: Voorgeskiedenis tot die Stigting van 'n Unieverdedigingsmag, **Militaria**, vol. 12, no. 2, pp.2-5; C.L. Grimbeek: Die Totstandkoming van die Unieverdedigingsmag met Spesifieke Verwysing na die Verdedigingswette van 1912 en 1922, pp.2-6.

31 C.L. Grimbeek: Die Totstandkoming van die Unieverdedigingsmag met Spesifieke Verwysing na die Verdedigingswette van 1912 en 1922, pp.3-4; J. Ploeger: Hoofstukke Uit die Voor- en Vroeë Geskiedenis van die SAW, **Militaria**, vol. 1, no. 3, 1969, pp.2-6; E.M. Meyers: Voorgeskiedenis tot die Stigting van 'n Unieverdedigingsmag, **Militaria**, vol. 12, no. 2, pp.1-2; J.S. Kotze: **Kaapse Stande Mag, 1872-1882**, pp 104-105.

situation called for it. In 1904, apart from the militia, 74 defence rifle organisations were already available in Natal to be called up for the purpose of defence.<sup>32</sup>

## 1.6 INTER-COLONIAL CO-OPERATION AND THE UNION DEFENCE FORCE

The idea of inter-colonial co-operation was born from the fear of black uprisings against British colonial rule, not excluding the possibility of an Afrikaner uprising. The Bambatha uprising in Zululand, in 1906, strengthened the idea of co-operation. The operational commander of the expedition, Col. C. McKenzie, was unable to fully control the situation with his limited resources. The Transvaal was asked for support and the Transvaal Mounted Rifles were despatched to the theatre of operations, with the result that the Bambatha-uprising was suppressed. The co-operation during the operation highlighted the importance and need for inter-colonial co-operation.<sup>33</sup>

Imperial defence conferences were held in Johannesburg in 1907, Durban in 1908 and Pretoria in 1909. These conferences set out an inter-colonial defence scheme for British colonies south of the Zambezi River. Early in the restructuring process it was decided that this inter-colonial force would consist of a number of troops provided by each colony. The Cape would provide 1500 men, the Transvaal 1000 men, Natal 500, the Orange River Colony 500 and Southern Rhodesia 200. As the discussions continued, the close co-operation between Southern Africa and the rest of the British Empire was emphasised. In 1908, at the Durban Conference, it was decided that equipment, discipline, training, organisational structure and classification of each colonial defence structure was to be standardised. (See Figure 1.6: Forces Available to the Four Colonies.) Each colony was to have a small permanent force supported by volunteer or militia forces and reserve forces or rifle associations. This conference laid the foundation for the structure of the Union Defence Force for the years to come.<sup>34</sup>

Inter-colonial co-operation extended from the military to the political level. The Cape, Natal, Transvaal and Orange River Colonies unified at government level in 1910 to form the Union of South Africa. The formation of a unified defence force for the Union was, however, more

32 J. Ploeger: Hoofstukke Uit die Voor- en Vroeë Geskiedenis van die SAW, **Militaria**, vol. 1, no. 3, 1969, pp.5-6; E.M. Meyers: Voorgeskiedenis tot die Stigting van 'n Unieverdedigingsmag, **Militaria**, vol. 12, no. 2, p.2; C.L. Grimbeek: Die Totstandkoming van die Unieverdedigingsmag met Spesifieke Verwysing na die Verdedigingswette van 1912 en 1922, pp.4-5.

33 C.L. Grimbeek: Die Totstandkoming van die Unieverdedigingsmag met Spesifieke Verwysing na die Verdedigingswette van 1912 en 1922, pp.8-9; J. Guy: **The Maphumulo Uprising. War, Law and Ritual in the Zulu Rebellion**, pp. 87-89; J. Ploeger: Hoofstukke Uit die Voor- en Vroeë Geskiedenis van die SAW, **Militaria**, vol. 1, no. 3, 1969, p.6; E.M. Meyers: Voorgeskiedenis tot die Stigting van 'n Unieverdedigingsmag, **Militaria**, vol. 12, no. 2, p.3.

34 J. Ploeger: Hoofstukke Uit die Voor- en Vroeë Geskiedenis van die SAW, **Militaria**, vol. 1, no. 3, 1969, pp.6-8; E.M. Meyers: Voorgeskiedenis tot die Stigting van 'n Unieverdedigingsmag, **Militaria**, vol. 12, no. 2, p.3; C.L. Grimbeek: Die Totstandkoming van die Unieverdedigingsmag met Spesifieke Verwysing na die Verdedigingswette van 1912 en 1922, pp.8-12.

complicated than the inter-colonial defence agreements. The task of constructing a Defence Act for the Union became the responsibility of Gen. J.C. Smuts, H.M.R. (later Sir Roland) Bourne, Capt. J.J. Collyer, Sir William Graham Greene (British Admiralty), Brig. Gen. George Ashton and Gen. Lord Methuen.<sup>35</sup> Each had a specific role to play in the construction of a significant document for the young Union of South Africa. After much deliberation the Defence Act No. 13 of 1912 was promulgated on 14 June 1912. The Act now combined the different defence organisations of the four colonies. The newly established Union Defence Force consisted of the Permanent Force, the Coast Garrison Force, the Citizen Force, the Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve and Special Reserves established under the Act.<sup>36</sup>

<b>Colonial Forces</b>	<b>Mounted Troops</b>	<b>Artillery</b>	<b>Infantry</b>	<b>Engineers</b>	<b>Signals and Telegraphers</b>	<b>Medical</b>	<b>Mounted (Police)</b>	<b>Foot (Police)</b>
CAPE COLONY	517	60						
<i>Volunteers</i>	870	133	2395			100		
Police							500	
TRANSVAAL								
<i>Volunteers</i>	1620	125	1080	500	50	200		
Police							889	1060
NATAL								
<i>Militia</i>	1381	251	687		30	74		
Police							774	286
ORANGE RIVER COLONY								
Police							251	156
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>4388</b>	<b>569</b>	<b>4162</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>374</b>	<b>2414</b>	<b>1502</b>

**Figure 1.6:** Forces Available to the Four Colonies in 1908.<sup>37</sup>

35 J. Ploeger: Hoofstukke Uit die Voor- en Vroeë Geskiedenis van die SAW, **Militaria**, vol. 1, no. 3, 1969, pp.19-20; E.M. Meyers: Voorgeskiedenis tot die Stigting van 'n Unieverdedigingsmag, p.3; C.L. Grimbeek: Die Totstandkoming van die Unieverdedigingsmag met Spesifieke Verwysing na die Verdedigingswette van 1912 en 1922, pp.41-42.

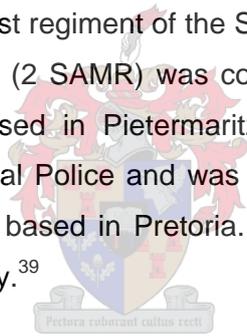
36 Defence Act No 13 of 1912: **Statutes of The Union of South Africa**, p.194; J. Ploeger: Hoofstukke Uit die Voor- en Vroeë Geskiedenis van die SAW, **Militaria**, vol. 1, no. 3, 1969, pp.19-20; E.M. Meyers: Voorgeskiedenis tot die Stigting van 'n Unieverdedigingsmag, **Militaria**, vol. 12, no. 2, p.3.

37 J. Ploeger: Hoofstukke Uit die Voor- en Vroeë Geskiedenis van die SAW, **Militaria**, vol. 1, no. 3, 1969, p.10.

British colonial and military thinking had a strong influence on the role and application of the Union Defence Force. As a member of the Commonwealth of Nations, the Union of South Africa was subject to British influence. Exposure to British military tradition since 1795 and the significant role that British soldiers and officials like Sir William Graham Greene (British Admiralty), Brig. Gen. George Ashton and Gen. Lord Methuen played in the construction of the Defence Act indicate this influence. The British model became the norm in South Africa and was instituted by the many officers of British lineage who served in the new Union Defence Force.<sup>38</sup>

## 1.7 THE POLICING HERITAGE OF THE UNION DEFENCE FORCE

The military policing tradition of the paramilitary and civil police forces in South Africa before 1910 was passed on in 1912 to the newly-formed Union Defence Force. The structure of the new South African Mounted Riflemen (SAMR), as the Permanent Force of the Union Defence Force under Brig. Gen. H.T. Lukin was called, was a clear indication of this policing heritage. It consisted of five regiments and was formed from parts of the old colonial police and military units, which continued their original policing duties after formation. The Cape Mounted Riflemen and a portion of the Cape Mounted Police constituted the first regiment of the SAMR (1 SAMR) and were based in King William's Town. The second regiment (2 SAMR) was constructed from portions of the old Free State and Natal Police and were based in Pietermaritzburg. The third regiment (3 SAMR) consisted of the rest of the former Natal Police and was based in Dundee. A portion of the old Transvaal Police constituted 4 SAMR, based in Pretoria. The rest of the Cape Mounted Police constituted 5 SAMR, based in Kimberley.<sup>39</sup>



The construction of the SAMR was a product of its time and a solution to the ever-present fear of black uprisings. Brewer stated "Union was in part an act of decolonisation for Whites, but it left a tremendous task of internal colonialism in monitoring, regulating and controlling the Black population".<sup>40</sup> This statement reflected the need of the state to have a police force to continue the regulation of race relations, but to also have a modern police force to police whites. The compromise was found in the construction of the SAMR and the SA Police. These two separate police forces had their own jurisdiction, function and style.<sup>41</sup>

38 D.M. Anderson and D. Killingray, *Consent, Coercion and Colonial Control: Policing the Empire, 1830–1940* in D.M. Anderson and D.Killingray, (eds): **Policing the Empire, Government, Authority and Control, 1830–1940**, pp.4-5; A. Seegers: **The Military in the Making of Modern South Africa**, pp.22-25; J.D. Brewer: **Black and Blue**, p.37-38; G. Cawthra: **Policing South Africa**, p.8; G.E. Visser: **British Influence on Military Training and Education in South Africa: The Case of the South African Military Academy and its Predecessors**, pp.2-5; P.H. Frankel: **Pretoria's Praetorians**, p.14; R. Dale: *The South African Armed Forces and Their Link with the United Kingdom and the Commonwealth of Nations, 1910-1961*, **Militaria**, 9, 1 (1979), p.7.

39 J.D. Brewer: **Black and Blue**, p.39; J. Ploeger: *Hoofstukke Uit die Voor- en Vroeë Geskiedenis van die SAW*, **Militaria**, vol. 1, no. 3, 1969, p.36; W.A. Dorning: *'n Kort Kroniek van die Suid-Afrikaanse Weermag, 1912-1987*, **Militaria**, vol. 17, no.7, 1987, p.27.

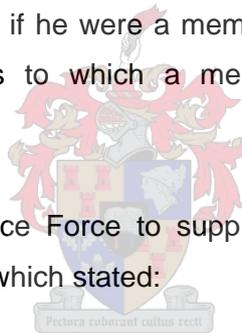
40 J.D. Brewer: **Black and Blue**, p.37.

41 J.D. Brewer: **Black and Blue**, pp.37-38; G. Cawthra: **Policing South Africa**, p.8.

The SA Police and the SAMR were responsible for policing the urban areas and the rural areas respectively. Many of the characteristics of the former colonial forces were retained when the SAMR was formed. It was mounted, paramilitary in style and was specifically tasked to police the black population. As a military unit, it was better equipped than the police to enforce law and order in black areas and to deal with black resistance to white domination. After the SAMR was promulgated under the 1912 Defence Act, rural policing was the responsibility of the Department of Defence. Section 12(4) of the Defence Act clearly allocated the task of policing in times of peace to the SAMR and stated:

“In time of peace there shall be allotted to each regiment or part of a regiment of South African Mounted Riflemen the duty of maintaining order within such portions of the Union as may be appointed, and when any member of such a regiment is carrying out that duty he shall be capable of exercising all such powers and shall perform all such functions as are by law conferred on or are to be performed by a police officer or constable and shall be liable in respect of acts done or omitted to be done to the same extent as he would have been able in like circumstances if he were a member of a police force and shall have the benefits of all the indemnities to which a member of a police force would in like circumstances be entitled.”<sup>42</sup>

The further employment of the Defence Force to suppress internal unrest was catered for in sections 76 and 79 of the Defence Act which stated:



“The whole or any part of the Permanent Force shall at all times be liable to be employed on active service against an enemy anywhere in South Africa within or outside the Union, or for the prevention or suppression of internal disorder within the Union...The Governor-General may, by proclamation in the Gazette, call out the whole or any portion of the Coast Garrison Force, the Active Citizen Force, and the Citizen Force Reserve for the prevention or suppression of internal disorder within the Union.”<sup>43</sup>

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42 Defence Act No 13 of 1912: **Statutes of The Union of South Africa**, pp.196, 244, 246; J.D. Brewer: **Black and Blue**, pp.37-38; A. Seegers: **The Military in the Making of Modern South Africa**, pp.22-25.

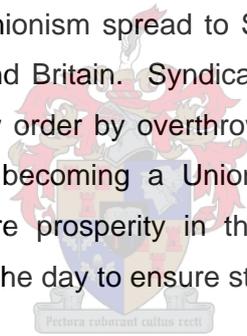
43 Defence Act No 13 of 1912: **Statutes of The Union of South Africa**, pp.244, 246.

## CHAPTER 2

## THE SUPPRESSION OF WHITE INDUSTRIAL UNREST

## 2.1 MILITARY INTERVENTION IN EARLY INDUSTRIAL UNREST, 1907 AND 1913

At the dawn of the twentieth century, South Africa was becoming a strong roleplayer in the mining sector. Labour disputes were common occurrences and the mining sector found itself able to deal with these disputes with little need of government intervention until 1907. General J.C. Smuts, then Colonial Secretary of the Transvaal, called in Imperial troops to curb the disturbance during a strike on the Knight's Deep Gold-mine on the Witwatersrand in 1907. The strike involved more than 4,000 white underground mineworkers who were protesting against the downscaling the number of white supervisors by the mining companies. The strike was suppressed and the foundation was laid for further state intervention in industrial disputes. The increase in union activities and syndicalism involving co-ordinated strikes had a serious impact on the productivity of the mines, which caused the government to assert its authority in order to ensure economic stability. Syndicalism and industrial unionism spread to South Africa by means of unionists and syndicalists from America, Australia and Britain. Syndicalism promoted general strikes and was seen as the method to usher in a new order by overthrowing the state through industrial action. South Africa was in the process of becoming a Union and a stable political and industrial environment was imperative to ensure prosperity in the new state. Military power was an instrument used by the Government of the day to ensure stability.<sup>44</sup>



This stability was challenged in 1913 by another strike by white miners, at the New Kleinfontein Mine on the Witwatersrand. The working hours of the underground mechanics were modified, causing them to work an additional half-day on Saturdays. The mine management mishandled this strike and it became a general strike on 4 July, bringing all the mines and power stations on the Witwatersrand to a standstill.<sup>45</sup> The Government was caught unprepared and were not equipped to deal with a strike of this magnitude. A day before the general strike was announced 1,000 extra men, consisting of police and South African Mounted Riflemen, were deployed on the Rand. The

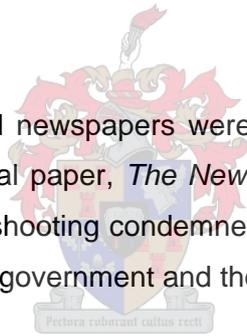
44 K.L. Thorpe: *Early Strikes on the Witwatersrand Gold Mines (1886-1907), with Specific Reference to the 1907 Strike* (Unpublished MA thesis, University of Stellenbosch, 1986); W.P. Visser: *The South African Labour Movement's Responses to Declarations of Martial Law, 1913-1922* (Paper presented at the War and Society in Africa Conference, South African Military Academy, Saldanha Bay, 12-14 September 2001); T.R.H. Davenport: **South Africa: A Modern History**, p.242; J. Ploeger: *Hoofstukke uit die Voor- en Vroeë Geskiedenis van die SAW, Militaria*, vol. 1, no. 3, 1969, p.52; W.P. Visser: *Die Geskiedenis en Rol van Persorgane in die Politieke en Ekonomiese Mobilisasie van die Georganiseerde Arbeiderbeweging in Suid-Afrika* (Unpublished PhD Thesis, US, 2001), p.414; J. Hyslop: **The Notorious Syndicalist. J.T. Bain: A Scottish Rebel in Colonial South Africa**, pp.183-187.

45 W.P. Visser: *The South African Labour Movement's Responses to Declarations of Martial Law*, p.4; M. Lacey: 'Platskiet-politiek': the Role of the Union Defence Force (UDF) 1910-1924, in J. Cock and L. Nathan (eds): **War and Society, The Militarisation of South Africa**, pp.29-30.

Minister of Defence, General J.C. Smuts and other Government officials deemed the available manpower insufficient to ensure the maintenance of law and order. Sir Reginald Hart, commander of the Imperial troops in South Africa, was therefore asked to assist the Union in this matter.<sup>46</sup>

Lord Gladstone, the Governor-General, wrote to the Secretary of State, Lewis Harcourt, to justify and explain the use of Imperial troops. The Government was unable to call upon its own military power due to the fact that the Union Defence Force (UDF) was still being formed. The new Active Citizen Force (ACF) had just been formed and consisted of raw recruits unsuited for the task at hand. Precious time would also be wasted in mobilising these forces, which further necessitated the use of Imperial troops. Government forces on the Rand during the strike comprised 2,853 policemen, 1,681 special constables, 2,910 Imperial troops and 670 members of the Citizen Force. These forces were, however, unable to curb acts of vandalism by the strikers. The offices of a newspaper, *The Star*, and Corner House, the headquarters of a prominent mining company, were set alight on the evening of 4 July. Skirmishes between the combined Government and Imperial forces on the one hand and strikers on the other continued the following day. The dispersal of an illegal gathering of strikers turned sour and twenty strikers and five innocent people were killed in front of the Rand Club.<sup>47</sup>

A public outcry followed and the Rand newspapers were used as a mouthpiece for the strikers through the joint publication of a special paper, *The News*, on 7 July 1913. The use of Imperial troops was severely criticised and the shooting condemned. A list of the deceased was published evoking strong resentment towards the government and those who ordered the shooting.<sup>48</sup>



The incident at the Rand Club prompted Gen. Smuts and the Prime Minister, Gen. Louis Botha, to intervene personally and broker a settlement. Government and Imperial forces were found lacking in strength to suppress the strike. It was in the best interests of the state to settle, since a prolonged strike would wreak havoc on the economy. The strikers were in a strong bargaining position and Botha and Smuts convinced the Chamber of Mines to capitulate to their demands. Smuts felt humiliated by the settlement because the strike committee walked away as the victor and the government had to take second place. He was determined not to let it happen again. His determination and the fear of more industrial unrest ensured that the organisation and training of

46 (Cd) 6941 Union of South Africa: **Correspondence Relating to the Recent Disorders on the Witwatersrand and the Employment of Regular Troops**, p.18; J. Ploeger: Hoofstukke uit die Voor- en Vroeë Geskiedenis van die SAW, **Militaria**, vol. 1, no. 3, 1969, pp.54-55.

47 M. Lacey: 'Platskiet-politiek', p.30; Cd 6941, Union of South Africa: **Correspondence Relating to the Recent Disorders on the Witwatersrand and the Employment of Regular Troops**, p.18; J. Ploeger: Hoofstukke uit die Voor- en Vroeë Geskiedenis van die SAW, **Militaria**, vol. 1, no. 3, 1969, pp.56-59; W.P. Visser: The South African Labour Movement's Responses to Declarations of Martial Law, p.5.

48 W.P. Visser: The South African Labour Movement's Responses to Declarations of Martial Law, p.5.

the UDF was accelerated. This ensured their readiness when another general strike threatened the Union's industries in 1914.<sup>49</sup>

## 2.2 THE GENERAL STRIKE OF 1914

### 2.2.1 THE CAUSES OF THE STRIKE

Labour relations had remained tense since the July 1913 strike and were further strained by the announcement on Christmas Eve of the possible retrenchment of railway workers during the course of 1914. The Amalgamated Society of Railway and Harbour Servants (ASRHS) were trying desperately to reverse the planned retrenchment of railway workshop employees. The cabinet minister in charge of the South African Railways and Harbours (SAR & H), Henry Burton, and the general manager, William Hoy, justified the retrenchment as an economic necessity. Plans for the railway retrenchments continued, whereupon the ASRHS issued instructions to its members throughout the country to strike on 8 January 1914. The ASRHS demanded that Government renounce the retrenchments and reinstate the dismissed workers. Shortly after the railway strike was called, J.T. Bain announced that the Federation of Trade Unions was in charge of the strike. The ASRHS's general secretary, Hessel Poutsma, asked the Federation of Trade Unions to call for a general strike. Railway employees from workshops in Pretoria, Johannesburg, Bloemfontein, Durban and Salt River in the Cape Peninsula, as well as coal miners in Natal, went on strike.<sup>50</sup>

The Government, especially Gen. Smuts, was not unaware of the growing tension between capital and labour at the end of 1913. Wealthy inhabitants of Johannesburg had even boarded up their homes and vacated the Witwatersrand fearing the worst from the imminent strike. By 1914, there was only one police officer for every 73 square miles (117.53 km<sup>2</sup>). The area that needed protection on the Witwatersrand constituted 50 square miles (80.5 km<sup>2</sup>). There were 45,000 railway workers, 22,000 white mine workers and 12,000 semi- and unskilled workers on the Witwatersrand alone and it was feared that the SA Police would not be able to suppress another general strike, but this time Government was ready to act swiftly. The Governor-General issued three proclamations when the news of the railway strikes broke. Proclamation No. 8 in the *Extraordinary Government Gazette* of 9 January 1914 prohibited the selling or transporting of weapons and ammunition in the magisterial districts of Johannesburg, Boksburg, Germiston, Krugersdorp, Pretoria and Middelburg for a month with effect from date of issue. Proclamations

49 M. Lacey: 'Platskiet-politiek', pp.30-31; J. Ploeger: Hoofstukke uit die Voor- en Vroeë Geskiedenis van die SAW, **Militaria**, vol. 1, no. 3, 1969, pp.56-61; W.P. Visser: The South African Labour Movement's Responses to Declarations of Martial Law, p.4.

50 J. Ploeger: Hoofstukke uit die Voor- en Vroeë Geskiedenis van die SAW, **Militaria**, vol. 1, no. 3, 1969, pp.65-66; S.B. Spies: The Launching of the Union of South Africa, in B.J. Liebenberg and S.B. Spies (eds): **South Africa in the 20th Century**, p.83; C.J. Jacobs: Die Rol van die Unieverdedigingsmag in die Onderdrukking van die Nywerheidsnoluste van Januarie 1914, **Militaria**, vol. 18, no. 4, 1988, p.48; SAB, GG 1918, 62/488, Dispatch no. 8, Governor General – Colonial Office, 7 January 1914, p.7; J. Hyslop: **The Notorious Syndicalist**, pp.229-230.

No. 9 and 10 in the same *Gazette* ordered the mobilisation of 20 Active Citizen Force (ACF, Class “A” reserve) units and Citizen Force Reserve (CFR, Class “B” reserve) units from various districts for the suppression of a possible strike and to ensure the maintenance of law and order.<sup>51</sup>

Further proclamations on 10 January ordered the mobilisation of more Class “B”-reserves, as well as units of the Coast Garrison Force. Tensions heightened when eight strike leaders were arrested, black workers rioted at the Jagersfontein mine in the Orange Free State<sup>52</sup> and attempts were made to sabotage railway lines. To suppress possible riots by black workers and to patrol the suburbs of Johannesburg special constables were sworn in. Including other installations and the railway lines, over 100 strategic points were protected against sabotage by the reserve units and armed police. The ASRHS were not geared for a general strike and, in centres like East London and Uitenhage, the workers voted against a strike. Only a small number of workers went out on strike beyond the Witwatersrand area. The majority of the trouble was expected on the Witwatersrand and most of the armed forces were subsequently deployed there. As the mobilisation and deployment of the UDF continued, the Federation of Trade Unions announced a ballot for a general strike to take place on 13 January.<sup>53</sup>

The build-up to the ballot included acts of sabotage and attempted sabotage to railway lines as well as a mass meeting on 11 January in Market Square in Johannesburg. Bain used this meeting to air more anti-government and anti-capitalist thoughts, but the Government forces refrained from any action. The Krugersdorp Commando was present in the area, and was to be used as a rapid deployment force in case of an emergency. The mobilisation of Government forces went smoothly and they were in position by the evening of 13 January. The UDF waited in anticipation for the outcome of the vote for a general strike.<sup>54</sup>

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51 UCT Libraries: BC 831, Drummond Chaplain Collection, Diary of Lady Chaplain, 21-23 Jan 1914 (The author is indebted to Lt. Col. (Dr.) I.J. van der Waag, Department Military History, Faculty Military Science, Stellenbosch University, for this reference); (Cd) 7348-1914 Union of South Africa: **Correspondence relating to the recent General Strike in South Africa**, pp.46-47, 91; SAB, GG 1918, 62/494, Telegram, Governor General – Colonial Office, 9 January 1914; J. Ploeger: Hoofstukke uit die Voor- en Vroeë Geskiedenis van die SAW, **Militaria**, vol. 1, no. 3, 1969, pp.67-68; S.J. Pietersen: Stakings aan die Witwatersrand, 1913-1914 (Unpublished MA dissertation, UP, 1970), pp.90-91; C.J. Jacobs: Die Rol van die Unieverdedigingsmag in die Onderdrukking van die Nywerheidsonluste van Januarie 1914, **Militaria**, vol. 18, no. 4, 1988, p.49.

52 The riot of black mine workers on this mine exacerbated the omnipresent fear of a black uprising and it was quickly suppressed.

53 S.J. Pietersen: Stakings aan die Witwatersrand, pp.91-92; J. Ploeger: Hoofstukke uit die Voor- en Vroeë Geskiedenis van die SAW, **Militaria**, vol. 1, no. 3, 1969, pp.68-70; C.J. Jacobs: Die Rol van die Unieverdedigingsmag in die Onderdrukking van die Nywerheidsonluste van Januarie 1914, **Militaria**, vol. 18, no. 4, 1988, p.49; (Cd) 7348-1914 Union of South Africa: **Correspondence relating to the recent General Strike in South Africa**, pp.46-47, 91.

54 C.J. Jacobs: Die Rol van die Unieverdedigingsmag in die Onderdrukking van die Nywerheidsonluste van Januarie 1914, **Militaria**, vol. 18, no. 4, 1988, p.48; S.J. Pietersen: Stakings aan die Witwatersrand, pp.91-92.

## 2.2.2 MARTIAL LAW IS PROCLAIMED

The workers of the Federation of Trade Unions voted in favour of a general strike, which commenced immediately. Shift workers still working were to go out on strike upon completion of their shift, which put the general strike in full swing on 14 January. The Government reacted the same day by placing various magisterial districts in the Transvaal, Orange Free State and Natal under Martial Law. The districts in the Transvaal were Pretoria, Johannesburg, Boksburg, Germiston, Krugersdorp, Middelburg, Lydenburg, Barberton, Carolina, Potchefstroom and Heidelberg. In the Orange Free State, the districts were Vredefort, Heilbron, Kroonstad, Winburg and Bloemfontein. Durban, Pietermaritzburg, Inanda and Camperdown constituted the districts in Natal.<sup>55</sup>

The maintenance of order and the preservation of life and property became the responsibility of the Controlling Officers of twelve Control Areas. These Control Areas divided South Africa into command responsibilities to ensure better command and control as well as co-ordination and deployment of forces. Colonel T.G. Truter, Commissioner of the South African Police, was in charge of Control Area No. 1 with its headquarters in Johannesburg. This area included the municipal districts of Springs, Benoni, Boksburg, Germiston, Johannesburg, Maraisburg, Roodepoort and Krugersdorp. Brigadier General H.T. Lukin, Inspector General of the Permanent Force, became the Controlling Officer for Areas No. 2, 3 and 4 with its headquarters in Pretoria. This area included all the magisterial districts in the Transvaal except those mentioned in Area No. 1 and 5. Inspector C.M.J. van Dam of the South African Police was in charge of Control Area No. 5 with its headquarters in Potchefstroom. This area included the magisterial districts of Potchefstroom, Wolmaransstad, Bloemhof, Lichtenburg and the rural district of Krugersdorp. Deputy Commissioner M.S.W. du Toit took charge over Control Area No. 6 with its headquarters in Bloemfontein comprising all the magisterial districts of the Orange Free State.<sup>56</sup>

Controlling Areas No. 7, 8, 11 and 12 were the regimental districts of the 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Regiments of the SAMR, respectively. Control Area No. 9 was the responsibility of Deputy Commissioner D.G. Grey with its headquarters in Cape Town and comprised the Western Cape Division of the SA Police. Divisional Inspector M.M. Hartigan of the SA Police was in charge of

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55 Union of South Africa: **Union of South Africa Government Gazette Extraordinary**: vol. XV, no. 455, 14 Jan 1914, Proclamation no. 19 of 1914; C.J. Jacobs: Die Rol van die Unieverdedigingsmag in die Onderdrukking van die Nywerheidsonluste van Januarie 1914, **Militaria**, vol. 18, no. 4, 1988, p.48; S.J. Pietersen: Stakings aan die Witwatersrand, pp.91-92; J. Hyslop: **The Notorious Syndicalist**, p.232.

56 Union of South Africa: **Union of South Africa Government Gazette Extraordinary**: vol. XV, no. 455, 14 Jan 1914, Government Notice no. 62; J. Ploeger: Hoofstukke uit die Voor- en Vroeë Geskiedenis van die SAW, **Militaria**, vol. 1, no. 3, 1969, pp.76-77.

Control Area No. 10. Its Headquarters were in Naauwpoort and comprised the Cape Eastern Division of the SA Police.<sup>57</sup>

Martial Law prohibited large gatherings, the use of explosives to destroy property and endanger people, public speeches and the possession of material that may incite riots. Hundreds of strike and union leaders were arrested and censorship of the media was enforced. The action of the strikers was restricted to the Witwatersrand. Their final stand was made in Fordsburg, Johannesburg. Bain and other strikers, after the arrest of many strike leaders, barricaded themselves in the Trades Hall. Government forces surrounded the Trades Hall, cleared a large area of inhabitants and blocked all the exits. The unconditional surrender of the strikers inside the hall was demanded, but was ignored. Advances on the Trades Hall were answered with rifle fire from the strikers and the forces laying siege to the Trades Hall awaited further instructions.<sup>58</sup>

Further instructions came on 15 January. A thirteen-pound field gun from the Transvaal Horse Artillery was placed in front of the besieged building. Col. R. Sholto-Douglas and two officers approached the Trade Hall with the field gun and Government rifles ready to provide covering fire. Bain answered the door upon which Col. Douglas again demanded the immediate and unconditional surrender of everyone in the building. He also informed Bain that a failure to comply with the demand would result in an attack on the building. The inhabitants of the Trades Hall conceded and surrendered to the Government forces.<sup>59</sup>

### 2.2.3 ORDER IS RESTORED AND UNITS DEMOBILISED

The stronghold of the strikers at Fordsburg collapsed and with it the strike. Sporadic and isolated incidents of sabotage and violence still occurred until 30 January 1914, but the threat of a general strike had passed. Railway workers returned to work from as early as 15 January. By 18 January a part of the UDF was demobilised, followed on 20 January by the Witwatersrand commandos. The Federation of Trade Unions called off the strike on 22 January and the Active Reserve demobilised two days later on 24 January. Various units were warned to remain alert for possible redeployment in case of an emergency. This state of readiness only ended after Martial Law was

57 Union of South Africa: **Union of South Africa Government Gazette Extraordinary**: vol. XV, no. 455, 14 Jan 1914, Government Notice no. 62; J. Ploeger: Hoofstukke uit die Voor- en Vroeë Geskiedenis van die SAW, **Militaria**, vol. 1, no. 3, 1969, pp.76-77.

58 S.J. Pietersen: Stakings aan die Witwatersrand, p.95; C.J. Jacobs: Die Rol van die Unieverdedigingsmag in die Onderdrukking van die Nywerheidsonluste van Januarie 1914, **Militaria**, vol. 18, no. 4, 1988, p.50; W.P. Visser: Die Geskiedenis en Rol van Persorgane in die Politieke en Ekonomiese Mobilisasie van die Georganiseerde Arbeiderbeweging in Suid-Afrika, p.415; J. Ploeger: Hoofstukke uit die Voor- en Vroeë Geskiedenis van die SAW, **Militaria**, vol. 1, no. 3, 1969, p.77; R.S. Godley: **Khaki and Blue: Thirty-Five Years' Service in South Africa**, p.125.

59 R.S. Godley: **Khaki and Blue**, p.125; C.J. Jacobs: Die Rol van die Unieverdedigingsmag in die Onderdrukking van die Nywerheidsonluste van Januarie 1914, **Militaria**, vol. 18, no. 4, 1988, p.50; J. Ploeger: Hoofstukke uit die Voor- en Vroeë Geskiedenis van die SAW, **Militaria**, vol. 1, no. 3, 1969, p.77; J. Hyslop: **The Notorious Syndicalist**, pp.231-232.

finally lifted in March 1914. No noteworthy damage was inflicted during the strike and the loss of life was restricted to two UDF members who died in a shooting accident. No strikers were killed by the UDF.<sup>60</sup>

The deportation of nine strike leaders, H.J. Poutsma, J.T. Bain, A. Crawford, R.B. Waterson, G.W. Mason, D. Mckerrel, W. Livingston, A. Watson and W.H. Morgan to London on 30 January, was seen as a necessary action by the Union Government. Gen. Smuts argued that they had used industrial action with the aim of overthrowing the state. According to Smuts it was in the best interests of the country to deport them, thereby ensuring that the strike would not be repeated. Labour circles in South Africa and Britain were outraged. This action contributed to the political success of the South African Labour Party in winning a number of seats in the parliamentary by-elections in the Cape and Natal later that year as well as seats (and a majority of one) in the election for the Transvaal Provincial Council. T.R.H. Davenport called this arbitrary action by Government a demonstration of *kragdadigheid* (power play).<sup>61</sup> Many, both in the government and the opposition parties, were offended by the callous manner in which the deportations were carried out. In the wake of the deportation, the Undesirables Special Deportation Bill was passed to cover Government action. Another outcome of the 1914 strike was the Riotous Assemblies Bill, which aimed at ensuring public order. This bill banned violent picketing, any strikes in the public utility services, the recruitment of unions by force, permitted magistrates to prohibit meetings which might endanger public peace and increased police powers of law enforcement.<sup>62</sup>

#### 2.2.4 PREPARATIONS FOR FUTURE MOBILISATION

The possibility of another deployment to suppress industrial unrest could not be ruled out. In order to ensure that a capable force was available for this as well as to suppress any internal uprising, especially from the black communities, it was decided to ensure that the UDF was capable of such a deployment even after the First World War. The Government's initial mobilisation plan to suppress unrest did not include the utilisation of aeroplanes, but by the beginning of 1922, the UDF included this new weapon in their planning. Being an airpower enthusiast and the main architect of the Royal Air Force at the end of the First World War, Gen. Smuts was aware of the potentially decisive role the use of aeroplanes could play in policing actions and suppressing internal unrest. He also had knowledge of Britain's successes in utilising aeroplanes for suppressing internal

60 C.J. Jacobs: Die Rol van die Unieverdedigingsmag in die Onderdrukking van die Nywerheidsonluste van Januarie 1914, *Militaria*, vol. 18, no. 4, 1988, pp.50-51; J. Ploeger: Hoofstukke uit die Voor- en Vroeë Geskiedenis van die SAW, *Militaria*, vol. 1, no. 3, 1969, p.77.

61 T.R.H. Davenport: **South Africa: A Modern History**, p.243.

62 T.R.H. Davenport: **South Africa: A Modern History**, pp.243-245; S.B. Spies: The Launching of the Union of South Africa, in B.J. Liebenberg and S.B. Spies (eds): **South Africa in the 20th Century**, pp.84-85; J. Ploeger: Hoofstukke uit die Voor- en Vroeë Geskiedenis van die SAW, *Militaria*, vol. 1, no. 3, 1969, p.83.

unrest in Somalia (1919) and Iraq (1920). His accession as Prime Minister in 1920 gave him the opportunity to wield this new weapon.<sup>63</sup>

In 1919, the Union received a weapons package from Britain as a gift, consisting of 100 aeroplanes with spare parts, maintenance equipment, pilots and fuel. This contributed to the Union Defence Force's ability to form a new independent Air Force even though the Defence Force was downsizing and rationalising. Air Force workshops were already assembling aeroplanes by 1922. This was stopped at the end of January 1922 in order to assemble 45 army vehicles to provide the Army with road transport for its possible deployment. Afterwards the aeroplane assembly was resumed and eight were available for military service by 10 March 1922, consisting of De Havilland DH9 and DH4 aeroplanes.<sup>64</sup>

## 2.3 INDUSTRIAL UNREST ON THE RAND, 1922

### 2.3.1 THE RUN-UP TO THE 1922-STRIKE

The same basic grievances that led to industrial unrest in 1907, 1913 and 1914, laid the foundation for the 1922 strike. Disputes over working conditions, working hours, manpower reductions and especially wages persisted between capital and labour.<sup>65</sup> The fall in the gold price after the First World War led to a depression in the Union's economy. The weakened economy as well as rising production costs placed mine companies in a tight spot. It was especially the gold-mine industry that had to take action to stay profitable. The Chamber of Mines could do nothing to curb the rising costs of mine material, but they could try and increase the productivity of the mines and save on wages. The Chamber informed the miners in 1921 of the planned course of action, who, in turn, rejected it.<sup>66</sup>

The above-mentioned steps were not enough to resolve the crisis in the mining industry. The Chamber went ahead and announced on 28 December 1921 that the status quo agreement, reserving mainly skilled and half-skilled job opportunities for white workers, was to be terminated with effect from 1 February 1922. Secondly, the wages of the better-paid white workers were to be

63 W.K. Hancock: **Smuts: the Fields of Force, 1919-1950**, p.6; T. Mason: **Air Power, A Centennial Appraisal**, pp.6-7; J. Pimlott: *The British Experience*, pp.12, 23; D.E. Omissi: **Air Power and Colonial Control**, pp.11-12.

64 W.A. Dorning: 'n Kort Kroniek van die Suid-Afrikaanse Weermag, **Militaria**, vol. 17, no. 2, 1987, pp.31-2; A.G. Oberholster: **Die Mynwerkerstaking 1922**, pp.168-9; SANDFA, DC 229, Departement van Verdediging Jaarverslag, 30 Junie 1922; SANDFA, DC 3520, Union of South Africa, Air Operations from March 10th to March 15th, p.8.

65 D. Jacobsson: **Fifty Golden Years of The Rand 1886-1936**, pp.87-89; M. Steyn: *Stakings aan die Rand gedurende die Twintiger- en Tagtigerjare* (Unpublished MCOM thesis, P.U. for H.C.E., 1992), p.10.

66 S.B. Spies: *The Launching of the Union of South Africa*, pp.145-46, p.148; M. Steyn: *Stakings aan die Rand gedurende die Twintiger- en Tagtigerjare*, p.13; T.R.H. Davenport: **South Africa: A Modern History**, p.253; A.G. Oberholster: **Die Mynwerkerstaking 1922**, pp.62-3.

reduced and finally a reorganisation of underground work was planned. The long-term consequence was that as many as 15,000 white workers would lose their jobs.<sup>67</sup>

The South African Industrial Federation (SAIF) was likewise opposing the reduction of wages in the coal mining industry and on 20 December 1921 rejected the Chamber of Mine's proposal in this regard. The Chamber refused to make concessions, whereby the SAIF announced that the coal miners would strike on 1 January 1922. Elsewhere the SAIF had its hands full. The Victoria Falls and Transvaal Power Company (VFP) and workers at machine workshops were suspending negotiations regarding the reduction of wages.<sup>68</sup>

The SAIF enjoyed support only on the Witwatersrand and represented only white miners. The different trade unions thus tried to establish joint trade union action at management level and formed the Joint Committee of the SAIF. In conjunction with this, propaganda was launched warning that the whole white population was in danger. Political parties, such as the National Party of Gen. J.B.M. Hertzog, were now offered the opportunity to further this issue in the political arena. On 30 December 1921 the Joint Committee approved the strike on the coal mines and decided that the workers on the gold mines, power stations and machine workshops should also take a ballot on the strike. The SAIF created the Augmented Executive of the Federation by drawing in representatives of non-affiliated trade unions. The duties of the SAIF during the strike became the responsibility of the Augmented Executive.<sup>69</sup>

Negotiations between the Augmented Executive and a Government deputation led by the Prime Minister, Gen. J.C. Smuts, failed and the workers on the gold mines, VFP Power Company and machine workshops joined the striking coal miners. All the mines from Randfontein in the west to Springs in the east, as well as machine workshops in Johannesburg were brought to a standstill by the strike. The power stations of the Victoria Falls Power Company were also shut down and only essential services, such as pumping out water, were maintained to ensure that the mines did not close down permanently. The direct consequence of this was that 20,000 white workers and 180,000 black workers stopped working.<sup>70</sup> A quick solution had to be found to save the situation on the Rand.

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67 T.R.H. Davenport: **South Africa: A Modern History**, p.254; J.P. Brits: The last years of South African Party Rule, in B.J. Liebenberg and S.B. Spies (eds): **South Africa in the 20th Century**, p.148.

68 A.G. Oberholster: **Die Mynwerkerstaking 1922**, pp.73-5, 82; J.P. Brits: The last years of South African Party Rule, p.148.

69 M. Steyn: Stakings aan die Rand gedurende die Twintiger- en Tagtigerjare, p.22; W.K. Hancock: **Smuts: the Fields of Force, 1919-1950**, p.67; A.G. Oberholster: **Die Mynwerkerstaking 1922**, pp.82-3

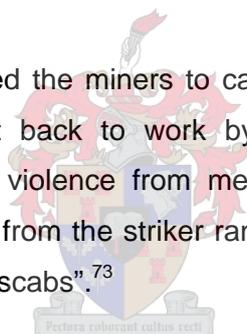
70 A.G. Oberholster: **Die Mynwerkerstaking 1922**, p.87; M. Steyn: Stakings aan die Rand gedurende die Twintiger- en Tagtigerjare, p.22.

### 2.3.2 FAILED NEGOTIATIONS LED TO VIOLENCE

Gen. Smuts quickly organised negotiations between the Chamber and the SAIF under the chairmanship of Judge J.S. Curlewis, but no settlement could be reached. Further negotiations between the Chamber and the Augmented Executive were organised by Gen. Smuts. The meetings failed and by 11 February Gen. Smuts realised that further negotiations would be fruitless. As far as he was concerned, the Government had done all it could to resolve the issue.<sup>71</sup>

The white miners had not forgotten Smuts' harsh handling of the previous strikes. In their minds, he was only a puppet in the hands of the capitalistic bankers and mine owners. Due to their mistrust, he was handicapped in his attempts to resolve the current strike issue. The Transvaal leader of the National Party, Tielman Roos, criticised the Government's actions and accused them of deliberately creating a situation which would necessitate the promulgation of Martial Law. The Government was thus, according to Roos, conspiring, as with the previous strikes, to use force against the strikers eventually.<sup>72</sup>

On 11 February 1922, Smuts requested the miners to call off the strike and he promised police protection to any member who went back to work by 13 February. This effort was also unsuccessful due to intimidation and violence from members of the striker commandos who reprimanded those workers who broke from the striker ranks to go and work. They were marked as strike-breakers and were known as "scabs".<sup>73</sup>



The striker commandos were established at the beginning of the strike to keep the strikers busy and maintain order. These striker commandos consisted of 50 to 500 individuals who were mainly from the Afrikaner population. They were initially successful in their task and good co-operation even existed with the police. It was the radical, revolutionary element growing within the striker commandos that influenced them to become more militant. The agents responsible for maintaining law and order amongst the strikers became violent towards the scabs in order to maintain the strike itself. The police were forced to be harsh with the striker commandos, since the Government promised protection to strike-breakers. The police were, however, prevented from executing their

71 T.R.H. Davenport: **South Africa: A Modern History**, p.255; A.G. Oberholster: **Die Mynwerkerstaking 1922**, pp.94-99; M. Steyn: *Stakings aan die Rand gedurende die Twintiger- en Tagtigerjare*, p.28.

72 W.K. Hancock: **Smuts: the Fields of Force, 1919-1950**: pp.64-5, 71, 81; J. Simons and R. Simons: **Class and Colour in South Africa, 1850-1950**, p.288; A.G. Oberholster: **Die Mynwerkerstaking 1922**, pp.94-99.

73 T.R.H. Davenport: **South Africa: A Modern History**, p.255; A.G. Oberholster: **Die Mynwerkerstaking 1922**, pp.94-99, 136-44; M. Steyn: *Stakings aan die Rand gedurende die Twintiger- en Tagtigerjare*, p.28; W.K. Hancock: **Smuts: the Fields of Force, 1919-1950**: p.80; Anon.: *The Red Revolution on the Rand: Holding down the Lid of Hell, Nonqai*, vol. 13, no. 5, 1922, p.257.

task properly due to the striker commandos outnumbering them.<sup>74</sup> (See Figure 2.1: A Striker Commando.).

A substantial number of members within the striker commandos were armed, because they belonged to the UDF's Rifle Associations. The rest of the weapons were stolen as the opportunity arose. The striker commandos were also armed with dynamite, taken from the mining sites, and homemade bombs. In addition, thousands were veterans of the First World War and they had at their disposal extensive military knowledge and experience.<sup>75</sup> In military terms the striker commandos were a force to be reckoned with.



**Figure 2.1:** A Striker Commando Manning a Roadblock.<sup>76</sup>

74 T.R.H. Davenport: **South Africa: A Modern History**, p.255; A.G. Oberholster: **Die Mynwerkerstaking 1922**, pp.94-99, pp.136-44; M. Steyn: *Stakings aan die Rand gedurende die Twintiger- en Tagtigerjare*, p.28; W.K. Hancock: **Smuts: the Fields of Force, 1919-1950**: p.80; Anon.: *The Red Revolution on the Rand*, **Nonqai**, vol. 13, no. 5, 1922, p.257.

75 Anon.: *The Red Revolution on the Rand*, **Nonqai**, vol. 13, no. 5, 1922, p.261; A.G. Oberholster: **Die Mynwerkerstaking 1922**, pp.136-7; W.K. Hancock: **Smuts: the Fields of Force, 1919-1950**: p.67; B. Hessian: *An Investigation into the Causes of the Labour Agitation on the Witwatersrand, January to March, 1922* (Unpublished MA thesis, UWits, 1957), p.158.

76 Anon: *The Rand Rebellion of 1922*, <http://www.sahistory.org.za/pages/specialprojects/randrevolt/rand-revolt.htm>, n.d. (10 July 2004).

Col. T.G. Truter, Commissioner of the South African Police, issued a proclamation on 22 February 1922 that prohibited striker commandos and other similar groups from molesting people, intimidating the families of strike-breakers and damaging mining property. Accordingly, all gatherings by striker commandos and other groups were proclaimed illegal. Lt. Col. R.S. Godley, Deputy Commissioner of Police on the Witwatersrand, gave clear instructions regarding this. He ordered that all illegal gatherings were to stop and warned that force, even armed force when needed, would be used to enforce law and order. The police on the other hand had to handle these gatherings with extreme caution, so as to not provoke unnecessary violence.<sup>77</sup>

The UDF at that stage played no active role in the suppression of the strike, but they did prepare for possible involvement. A total of 35 Permanent Force members from the various military districts in the Union received orders to report to the SA Military School (currently the SA Army College) in Robert's Heights (later Voortrekkerhoogte, currently Thaba Tshwane). Together with instructors from the Military School, ten special machine gun units were formed and placed on alert from the 11 February 1922 to be deployed on the Witwatersrand at a moment's notice.<sup>78</sup>

The police asked for military assistance on 22 February as the situation deteriorated to the point where policemen were unable to control it. The UDF answered the call by sending six machine gun detachments to the Witwatersrand. The situation on the Rand deteriorated to such an extent that Col. Truter requested additional military reinforcements on 28 February. The Minister of Defence, Col. H. Mentz, then ordered elements of the Permanent Force to deploy on the East Rand upon which the 1<sup>st</sup> (Maj. J.F. Wolmarans) and 3<sup>rd</sup> Permanent Battery SAMR (Capt. Hunt-Grubbe) left on the same day for Benoni and Boksburg respectively. These forces reached their destination on the morning of 1 March.<sup>79</sup>

At the end of February the striker commandos clashed with the police and various incidents occurred that contributed to the collapse of law and order. One of the incidents occurred on 28 February when strikers in Boksburg marched to the local gaol to sing to their detained comrades. Capt. J. Fullard of the SA Police in Boksburg was under the impression that they wanted to attack the gaol and release their friends upon which he ordered them to disperse. He was of the opinion that they disobeyed his order, upon which, he subsequently ordered a squad of police under the command of Capt. O.S. Leishman to launch a baton charge. During the charge shots were fired at the police from the crowd. The police reacted by firing warning shots over their heads and then

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77 A.G. Oberholster: **Die Mynwerkerstaking 1922**, p.144.

78 SANDFA, DC 460, 2/52032, Memorandum insake die aandeel van die Unie Verdedigingsmag in die onderdrukking van die afgelope industriële onluste wat op rewolusie uitgeloop het, Hoof van die Generale Staf, 22 March 1922; A.G. Oberholster: **Die Mynwerkerstaking 1922**, p.144.

79 SANDFA, DC 460, 2/52032, Memorandum insake die aandeel van die Unie Verdedigingsmag in die onderdrukking van die afgelope industriële onluste, 22 March 1922; Anon.: *The Red Revolution on the Rand*, **Nonqai**, vol. 13, no. 5, 1922, p.266; A.G. Oberholster: **Die Mynwerkerstaking 1922**, p.170.

into the crowd after they refused to disperse. This caused the death of three strikers and several strikers were wounded.<sup>80</sup>

### 2.3.3 THE UNION DEFENCE FORCE IS CALLED IN TO HELP

After the Boksburg incident, the strikers became more militant. The police feared that more violence could break out and they realised that two squadrons of Mounted Rifles were not going to be enough. On the night of the Boksburg incident the Minister of Defence ordered Lt. Col. N.H.M. Burne to move the rest of the Permanent Force and the remaining machine gun detachments via rail to the East Rand. The UDF also formed a special short-service unit, as was allowed under the Defence Act, which stipulated that a voluntary force could be formed as part of the Permanent Force in times of unrest. Time and finances restricted the unit to 120 men, instead of the planned 500, and it was known as the short-service company. The task of this company was to take over the guard and other duties of the Permanent Force in Pretoria. It could also be used for service outside Pretoria if the ACF was called up.<sup>81</sup>

The Boksburg incident elicited strong public reaction. The decision by Gen. Smuts not to launch an investigation into the incident evoked strong criticism especially from strikers and the political opposition. Striker commandos now made a conscious effort to move their focus from strike-breakers to state property and anyone who represented state authority. The result was violent confrontations between the police and the striker commandos. All these activities only contributed to fanning the zeal of the insurgents as thousands of strikers from the Witwatersrand attended the funeral service on 2 March of two of the strikers who had died in the Boksburg incident.<sup>82</sup>

Tension on the Rand was high, several strikers returned to work and many strike leaders questioned the continuance of the strike. The Augmented Executive of the Federation decided to take the initiative and tried to open another round of talks with the Chamber. A letter was sent to the Chamber regarding possible negotiations about resuming mine operations. The Chamber replied with an undiplomatic, insulting letter in which it reiterated its conditions and gave notice that it did not recognise the SAIF as the representative of the miners. This reaction pushed the tension on the Rand to breaking point.<sup>83</sup>

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80 A.G. Oberholster: **Die Mynwerkerstaking 1922**, pp.145-6.

81 SANDFA, DC 460, 2/52032, Memorandum insake die aandeel van die Unie Verdedigingsmag in die onderdrukking van die afgelope industriële onluste, 22 March 1922; Anon.: *The Red Revolution on the Rand*, **Nonqai**, vol. 13, no. 5, 1922, p.266; A.G. Oberholster: **Die Mynwerkerstaking 1922**, p.170.

82 A.G. Oberholster: **Die Mynwerkerstaking 1922**, p.146, 149-150; M. Steyn: *Stakings aan die Rand gedurende die Twintiger- en Tagtigerjare*, p.35; N. Herd: **1922, Revolt on the Rand**, pp.42-45.

83 A.G. Oberholster: **Die Mynwerkerstaking 1922**, p.146, 149-150; M. Steyn: *Stakings aan die Rand gedurende die Twintiger- en Tagtigerjare*, p.35; N. Herd: **1922, Revolt on the Rand**, pp.42-45; J.P. Brits: *The last years of South African Party Rule*, p.150.

The letter from the Chamber discredited the union leaders and paved the way for extremists to play a more decisive role. These extremists consisted of few outspoken communists, such as P. Fisher, J. Wordingham and E. Shaw, who fell into disfavour with the unions and founded their own Council of Action in July 1921. The Council of Action aimed to carry out Marxist principles and form a worker's republic in South Africa. The SA Industrial Federation and Augmented Executive's lack of action was exploited by the Council of Action who tried to keep the strikers' moral high and incite violent action against the Government, mine owners and strike-breakers. Shaw, who was detained for inciting public violence, announced directly after his release that every significant historical change and reform had been brought about through violence. Violence, according to him, was now the solution for the strikers in their fight against the mine owners if their demands were not met. This communist-revolutionary incitement and the extremist actions of the Council of Action became popular amongst the strikers and its influence expanded to the detriment of the Augmented Executive. The Committee of Action within the Council of Action, on which Fisher, Wordingham and Shaw served, campaigned for the continuation of the strike. The Augmented Executive was not in favour of continuing the strike as proposed by the Council of Action. The proposals recommended that strikers become more militant and continue to attack government targets in order to bring about a new order. The Council of Action, however, had no authoritative voice within striker management to really influence its decisions. But because of the continuous support from the striker commandos the Committee of Action could play a deciding role in the events on the Rand.<sup>84</sup>

The Augmented Executive gathered on 6 March in the Trades Hall, Johannesburg, to deliberate on the future of the strike. Thousands of strikers surrounded the Hall and called out for a continuation of the strike. They threatened to not let the union leaders leave the Hall if they did not comply with their demands. The Augmented Executive caved in under the pressure, decided upon continuing the strike, and called for all the workers represented by the Augmented Executive to strike. The strike fell under the control of a five-man committee, whose identities were kept secret, but who were known as the Big Five.<sup>85</sup>

The striker commandos used violence and intimidation to force people to participate in the strike. Workers who were unwilling to arm themselves and attack government targets were persuaded to acquire arms in order to protect their families in case of black unrest. Extremist leaders deliberately fanned these rumours of "black peril" and fights broke out between black and white strikers in Vrededorp on 7 March. Insecurity amongst the strikers was now even higher and this prompted them to action. There were also indications that the Council of Action and striker

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84 A.G. Oberholster: **Die Mynwerkerstaking 1922**, pp.114-15, 118, 153; M. Steyn: Stakings aan die Rand gedurende die Twintiger- en Tagtigerjare, pp.34-35; R.K. Cope: **Comrade Bill: the Life and Times of W.H. Andrews, Workers' Leader**, p.263; B. Hessien: An Investigation into the Causes of the Labour Agitation on the Witwatersrand, January to March, 1922, p.155.

85 R.K. Cope: **Comrade Bill**, pp.263-4; A.G. Oberholster: **Die Mynwerkerstaking 1922**, p.154.

commandos were following their own agenda and radical plans of overthrowing the Government were formed, from which the Augmented Executive distanced itself. A co-ordinating meeting between the striker commandos and the five-man committee of the Augmented Executive on 8 March delivered no results. After this meeting two closed meetings were held by the striker commandos without the trade union leaders, to discuss further militant action.<sup>86</sup>

The security situation on the Rand further deteriorated with striker commandos continuously committing acts of violence against police and SAMR patrols, houses of mining officials and public transport. On a recommendation from the Minister of Defence, Government mobilised various units of the ACF. These units were the 8<sup>th</sup> Citizen Battery (Transvaal Horse Artillery), the 8<sup>th</sup> Infantry (Transvaal Scottish), the 5<sup>th</sup> Mounted Rifles (Imperial Light Horse), the 1<sup>st</sup> Field Ambulance (SA Medical Corps), 12<sup>th</sup> Infantry (Pretoria Regiment), Durban Light Infantry, the Battalion staff and "A" and "B" Companies of the 1<sup>st</sup> Infantry Battalion and two infantry battalions of the Railway and Harbour Brigade.<sup>87</sup>

On the night of 9 March, the police headquarters in Johannesburg received intelligence that striker commandos were planning to attack police stations after which they would launch a co-ordinated march to central Johannesburg in order to take control of the town. The police commander on the Witwatersrand, Lt. Col. R.S. Godley, was in no position to prevent these attacks with his limited manpower. Although police numbers had risen during the strike from 1,192 to 3,136, with reinforcements drawn from elsewhere in the country, there was still not enough manpower to effectively counter the strikers numbering 20,000, even with the initial support from the Union Defence Force. Law and order ended on the morning of 10 March, when the striker commandos attacked several police stations on the Rand. Lt. Col. Godley tried only to keep the strikers occupied with his limited force. This action succeeded in preventing the different striker commandos from joining one another for the planned march on the city centre. Through these attacks, the striker commandos were in turn pinning the police down in their respective areas.<sup>88</sup>

With the police armed only with small calibre weapons, most police stations, such as Newlands, Auckland, Brixton Ridge and Benoni, were in a critical situation. Food and ammunition supplies were insufficient, while they were surrounded by strikers and continuously fired upon by snipers. Home-made bombs were thrown at them intermittently and in most cases the police surrendered to

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86 A.G. Oberholster: **Die Mynwerkerstaking 1922**, pp.156-7; B. Hessian: An Investigation into the Causes of the Labour Agitation on the Witwatersrand, January to March 1922, p.157.

87 SANDFA, DC 460, 2/52032, Memorandum insake die aandeel van die Unie Verdedigingsmag in die onderdrukking van die afgelope industriële onluste, 22 March 1922; A.G. Oberholster: **Die Mynwerkerstaking 1922**, p.171.

88 Anon.: The Red Revolution on the Rand, **Nonqai**, vol. 13, no. 5, 1922, p.268; A.G. Oberholster: **Die Mynwerkerstaking 1922**, pp.158-9; J. Krikler: **The Rand Revolt. The 1922 Insurrection and Racial Killing in South Africa**, p.56.

the strikers. Benoni and Brixton Ridge were two of the exceptions where the police held out against the siege until the Government forces relieved them three days later.<sup>89</sup>

#### 2.3.4 MOBILISATION OF THE UNION DEFENCE FORCE

Even with the Permanent Force elements already deployed, it was apparent that the police could not save the situation. The Union Government was thus obliged to mobilise the UDF to suppress the disturbance. The UDF was ready to deploy at a moment's notice, because Smuts had anticipated the probability of deployment. The UDF had gone ahead organising men and equipment for possible deployment on the Rand throughout the downsizing and rationalisation of the Defence Force after the First World War. When the situation on the Rand got out of hand the Union Defence Force's mobilisation plan was implemented.<sup>90</sup>

On 10 March 1922, the Government proclaimed Martial Law on the Rand and surrounding areas, including Benoni, Bethal, Boksburg, Ermelo, Germiston, Heidelberg, Johannesburg, Klerksdorp, Krugersdorp, Middelburg, Potchefstroom, Pretoria, Roodepoort-Maraisburg, Springs and Standerton. The Government also issued two more proclamations, whereby the ACF and the CFR, which had not yet been called up, could be mobilised. The ACF units involved were the 10<sup>th</sup> Infantry (Witwatersrand Rifles), the 11<sup>th</sup> Infantry (Rand Light Infantry), the 3<sup>rd</sup> Mounted Brigade Train, 3<sup>rd</sup> Infantry Brigade Train and the 1<sup>st</sup> Sanitation Section (SA Medical Corps). The CFR units that were called up numbered 26 commandos from the areas where Martial Law was proclaimed. These commando units were immediately called up per telegram and the first commando moved out to its assembly point within 34 hours of the call. Approximately 55 hours from receiving their call-up instructions commandos started arriving at their assembly points.<sup>91</sup> With the proclamation of Martial Law in the above-mentioned areas, the Deputy Commissioner of Police on the Witwatersrand, Lt Col R.S. Godley, handed over the responsibility of maintaining law and order and protecting life and property to the Union Defence Force. Aeroplanes accompanied the ACF and CFR units that were called up and who marched from their various assembly points to suppress the disturbances.<sup>92</sup>

The military authorities had worked out a system to co-ordinate co-operation between air and ground forces by the end of January 1922. The Air Force had a two-part role. Aeroplanes were firstly used for reconnaissance and secondly to disperse illegal gatherings. Pilots received clear

89 Anon.: The Red Revolution on the Rand, **Nongai**, vol. 13, no. 5, 1922, pp.259-61, 268-9; A.G. Oberholster: **Die Mynwerkerstaking 1922**, pp.159-60.

90 Union of South Africa: **Abridged Annual Report of the Department of Defence for the year end 30th June, 1921**, pp.9-17; Union of South Africa: **Union of South Africa Government Gazette Extraordinary**, vol. XLVII, no. 1216, 10 March 1922, Proclamation no. 50 of 1922; SANDFA, DC 498, 6/2/52454, Secretary for Defence - Minister of Defence, 28 January 1922.

91 Union of South Africa: **Union of South Africa Government Gazette Extraordinary**, vol. XLVII, no. 1216, 10 March 1922, proclamation no 51-2 of 1922.

92 A.G. Oberholster: **Die Mynwerkerstaking 1922**, pp.172-3.

guidelines on how they had to go about dispersing illegal gatherings. The Government printed the procedure for the utilisation of aeroplanes in the local papers where the unrest occurred, informing the strikers and the local population of what to expect. The papers stated categorically that the aeroplanes would take three steps to disperse an illegal gathering. The pilot's first step was to fly at a height of 500 feet and shoot red signal flares with a Very flare pistol while circling the crowd. If the crowd did not disperse, the pilot's second step would be to fly low over them while firing machine-gun bursts into the air. If this was also unsuccessful, the pilot's third step was to fire into the crowd with the machine-guns.<sup>93</sup>

A secret document was distributed by the authorities amongst the commanding officers of the Government forces that stipulated more steps, in conjunction with the three steps mentioned above, regarding actions and communication procedures between air and ground forces. This document informed the pilot that if the third step was unsuccessful he had to continue with step four, throwing bombs into the crowd. Every ground commander was issued with strips of white sheet one metre wide and varying in length. The aim was firstly to show a previously determined letter to the pilots as identification of Government forces. The letters H, I, L, T, V, X, and Z were used for this purpose since they could easily be laid out on the ground. The rest of the commander's white sheet inventory was a circle and an arrow. As is shown in the Figure 2.2, the commander would lay out the circle, with the arrow inside it pointing towards the crowd against which steps one to four were to be taken. The identification letter of the day was laid out next to the circle.<sup>94</sup>



**Figure 2.2:** Method of Communication between Aeroplanes and Government Ground Forces.

93 SANDFA, DC 3520, Union of South Africa, Air Operations from March 10th to March 15th; SANDFA, Industrial Disturbances-Rand 1922; SANDFA, DC 3520, DAS 7/2, Annexure A: Action by Aircraft if Ordered to Assist the Civil Power to Disperse Illegal Assembly to Air Operations from March 10th to March 15th; SANDFA, Accessions 47, Gen. Brink Collection, General G.E. Brink papers, The Rand Revolution 1922, Dispersal of Illegal Assemblies by Air Force; A.G. Oberholster: **Die Mynwerkerstaking 1922**, p.168.

94 SANDFA, Accessions 47, Gen. Brink Collection, General G.E. Brink papers, The Rand Revolution 1922, Dispersal of Illegal Assemblies by Air Force.

### 2.3.5. THE DEPLOYMENT OF THE UNION DEFENCE FORCE

As soon as the UDF took over authority from the SA Police, it appointed six officers in the various unrest areas to maintain law and order. Brig. Gen. P.S. Beves assumed responsibility for Johannesburg (Central Witwatersrand), while Brig. Gen. Sir J.L. van Deventer assumed command of the East Rand, including the magisterial districts of Germiston, Boksburg, Benoni, Springs and Brakpan. Lt. Col A.H.M. Nussey assumed command of the magisterial districts Krugersdorp and Roodepoort-Maraisburg on the West Rand. Lt. Col. I. Swemmer was in charge of the magisterial districts of Bethal, Ermelo, Heidelberg and Standerton, while Insp. J.H. Irvine controlled the magisterial district of Potchefstroom, which included Klerksdorp. The magisterial districts of Pretoria and Middelburg were the responsibility of Lt. Col. J.H. Breytenbach.<sup>95</sup>

The Chief of the General Staff, Brig. Gen. A.J.E. Brink, ordered a reconnaissance flight by the Air Force on the morning of 10 March over Benoni and Brakpan before the official proclamation of Martial Law. Three planes, armed only with machine-guns, participated in the reconnaissance flight over Benoni. The situation was critical for the Government forces on the ground, since they were surrounded by the strikers and involved in heavy fighting. The pilots regarded the situation as serious. They identified the Trades Hall, where a red flag fluttered and the windows were boarded up, as the centre point of the unrest in Benoni. In accordance with procedure, the pilots first fired signal flares and then warning shots to disperse the rioters. The planes were met with heavy rifle fire from the Trades Hall and private residences. The pilots subsequently fired on the boarded windows of the Trades Hall. One of the reconnaissance planes sustained serious damage over Benoni and had to execute an emergency landing north-west of the town.<sup>96</sup> The reconnaissance flight over Brakpan was fired upon from the woods close to the Apex mine and the officer in charge, Capt. W.W. Carey-Thomas, was fatally wounded.<sup>97</sup>

The Government forces were at that stage involved in various heavy battles against the strikers. On the East Rand, the strikers were in control of Brakpan and Springs, although the besieged police forces in Benoni were still holding out against the striker commandos. Lt. Col. D.M. McLeod and 160 men of the Transvaal Scottish hurried to Benoni by rail to reinforce the police, but they got bogged down at the Dunswart Junction in a skirmish against members of the striker commandos. The Transvaal Horse Artillery came to their rescue an hour later. The Government forces then

95 Union Of South Africa: **Union of South Africa Government Gazette Extraordinary**: vol. XLVII, no. 1216, 10 March 1922, Government Notice no 429.

96 SANDFA, DC 3520, Union of South Africa, Air Operations from March 10th to March 15th; SANDFA, Industrial Disturbances-Rand 1922; SANDFA, DC 3520, DAS 7/2, Annexure B: Report on Benoni Reconnaissance to Air Operations from March 10th to March 15th; SANDFA, DC 460, 2/52032, Memorandum insake die aandeel van die Unie Verdedigingsmag in die onderdrukking van die afgelope industriële onluste, 22 March 1922.

97 SANDFA, DC 3520, DAS 7/2, Industrial Disturbances-Rand 1922, Annexure C: Reconnaissance Report on Brakpan Area and Annexure D: Benoni-Brakpan Reconnaissance Report to Air Operations from March 10th to March 15th.

executed a tactical withdrawal upon which the Transvaal Scottish and the Transvaal Horse Artillery entered Benoni from the south reaching the police barracks by eight o'clock the same night. While the ground forces advanced towards Benoni to help the police, Lt. H.C. Daniel (pilot) and Lt. J.J.C. Hamman (observer) launched an aerial attack upon the Trades Hall. The warning procedures were followed before they opened fire on the Trades Hall with machine-guns. Lt. Daniel then followed by dropping a single Cooper's bomb, which exploded behind the hall. This had the desired effect and twenty strikers fled the hall to seek shelter in the surrounding private residences. Lt. Daniel then dropped the rest of his bombs, two of which hit a house and one failed to explode. The aerial attack and the reinforcements from the Transvaal Scottish and the Transvaal Horse Artillery were, however, not enough to break the strikers' hold on Benoni.<sup>98</sup>

Brig. Gen. Van Deventer arrived in Boksburg on 11 March and held a meeting with Lt. Col. N.H.M. Burne of the 1st Mounted Rifles and Capt. J. Fullard, District Commandant of the Police, in order to be brought up to date on the situation in his area of command. After his scrutiny of the reports regarding the events at Dunswart and other incidents, he decided that the situation on the East Rand, especially in Benoni, Brakpan and Springs, was critical. The striker commandos showed open hostility towards the Government forces. He subsequently went ahead with his planning to restore law and order, if necessary through force, and, in consultation with Lt. Col. Burne and Capt. Fullard, placed the armed forces in his area under the overall command of Lt. Col. Burne. In this way, Van Deventer tried to co-ordinate the actions of the police and Permanent Force units in his area of command.<sup>99</sup>

Reliable intelligence on the strength of the strike commandos in Benoni and Brakpan was unavailable and Van Deventer was convinced that the information available inflated their numbers. In order to determine the real strength of the rioters Van Deventer decided to advance immediately on Benoni, Brakpan and Springs. In his opinion it was necessary to act immediately against the striker commandos in the three towns to deprive them of the opportunity of organising military actions. After he made a personal reconnaissance of Benoni he decided to invade the town the following morning, 12 March, at 05:00.<sup>100</sup>

Brig. Gen. P.S. Beves also had a hard time suppressing the striker commandos in the Central Witwatersrand. The Jeppe and Denver striker commandos launched a surprise attack on the Imperial Light Horse on 11 March at the Ellis Park sport grounds while the unit was being

98 SANDFA, DC 3520, Union of South Africa, Air Operations from March 10th to March 15th SANDFA, Industrial Disturbances-Rand 1922; SANDFA, DC 3520, DAS 7/2, Annexure A: Action by Aircraft if Ordered to Assist the Civil Power to Disperse Illegal Assembly to Air Operations from March 10th to March 15th; A.G. Oberholster: **Die Mynwerkerstaking 1922**, p.174.

99 SANDFA, Accessions 47, Gen. Brink Collection, General G.E. Brink papers, The Rand Revolution 1922, Reports by GOC no 2 (East Rand) Control Area to Chief of General Staff, 30 March 1922.

100 SANDFA, Accessions 47, Gen. Brink Collection, General G.E. Brink papers, The Rand Revolution 1922, Reports by GOC no 2 (East Rand) Control Area to Chief of General Staff, 30 March 1922.

equipped. The attack killed or wounded more than twenty Government troops and was aimed at preventing the mobilisation of the CFR. The Durban Light Infantry arrived in Johannesburg (Park Station) as the attack on the Imperial Light Horse took place, upon which they hurried to Ellis Park to render support. The Imperial Light Horse immediately launched a counter-offensive and throughout the day, with the Durban Light Infantry's assistance, suppressed any further attacks in the area. Reinforced by the Durban Light Infantry and supported by the Air Force, Brig. Gen. Beves decided to launch a counter-offensive against the striker commandos on 12 March. His aim was to relieve the pressure on the police, under siege in the ridges north-east of Johannesburg, and to break the hold of the rioters in his area of command.<sup>101</sup>

### 2.3.6 THE SUPPRESSION OF UNREST ON THE EAST RAND

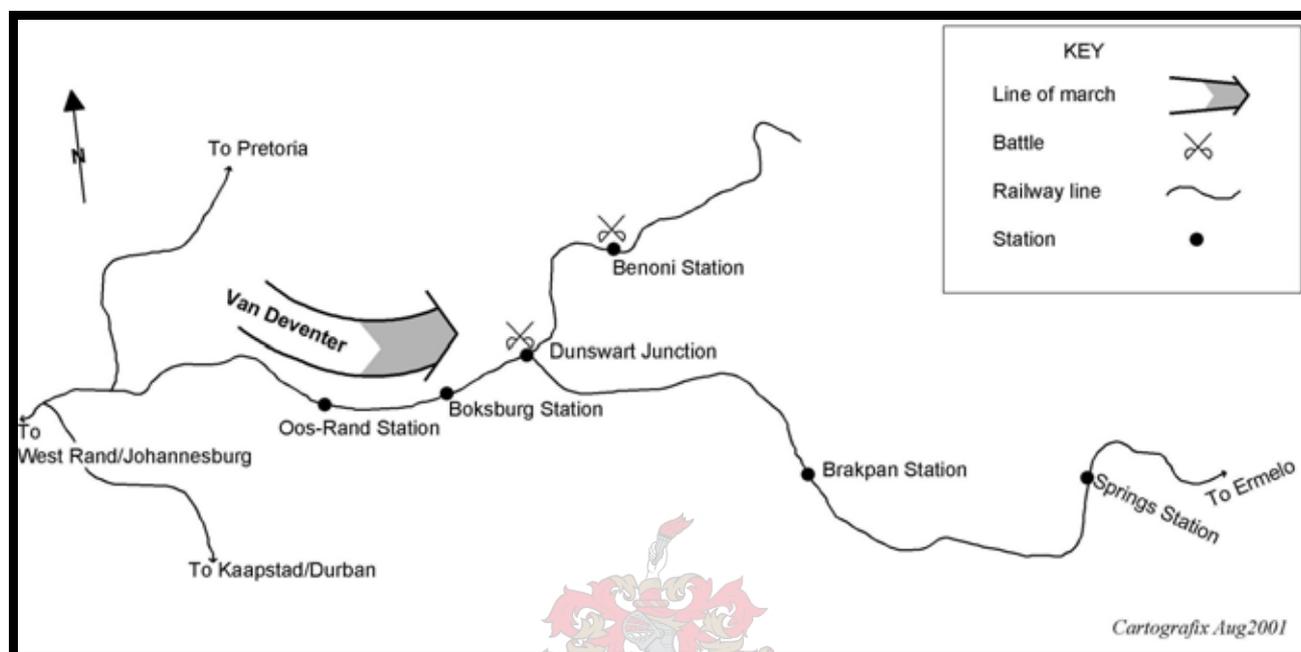
At precisely 05:00 on 12 March 1922 the planned attack on Benoni commenced under the command of Lt. Col. Burne. (See Figure 2.3: Line of March.) The 351-man attacking force consisted of units from the Permanent Force as well as the ACF. This force reached the black and Indian suburb by 06:30 where they joined up with the 1<sup>st</sup> Mounted Rifles under Maj. J.F. Wolmarans and two police units, A and H Squadron, under the command of Capt. J. Fulton and Capt. H. Halse. The immediate objective was to defeat the striker commandos at the steel factory and then move into the rest of the town. The Government forces commenced with their attack at 11:00 and immediately came under heavy fire from the steel factory. Lt. Col. Burne's attack on the steel factory was supported by artillery fire from two positions, which greatly contributed to the striker commandos being dislodged from their positions and falling back in an easterly direction through the town an hour later. Burne then changed his axis of advance to continue his attack along Main Reef Road. Comdt. P. Botha and a portion of the Standerton East Commando joined him at 16:00, after which Burne started to consolidate his position. Burne and his men were under continuous sniper fire from strikers shooting from rooftops, fields and orchards, but he succeeded in suppressing it with small arms and artillery fire.<sup>102</sup>

Lt. Col. Burne called off the attack on Benoni at 17:00 in order to reorganise his force and to further consolidate his position before dark. During the course of the day, the CFR arrived at East Rand Station, but they were badly equipped. Ammunition and arms arrived later that night, with the last commando, and was distributed to the other commandos. The commandos then received the order to join up with Burne's force at the Dunswart Junction. This movement commenced at 06:30 on the morning of 13 March, and strengthened Burne's force with an additional 66 officers and 831

101 G.R. Kent: **Through the Red Revolt on the Rand, A Pictorial Review of Events. January, February, March, 1922**, p.2 (SANDFA, Accessions 47, Gen. Brink Collection); A.G. Oberholster: **Die Mynwerkerstaking 1922**, pp.179-81.

102 SANDFA, Accessions 47, Gen. Brink Collection, General G.E. Brink papers, The Rand Revolution 1922, Reports by GOC no 2 (East Rand) Control Area to Chief of General Staff, 30 March 1922 and Reports by Lt. Col. N.H.M. Burne, Commanding Composite Force to GOC no 2 Control Area, 17 March 1922.

men bringing his total to more than a thousand men. The reinforcements consisted of the rest of the Standerton East Commando, the Blesbokspruit Commando (Standerton), the Heidelberg Commando, the Hoogveld Commando (Heidelberg), the Roodekoppe Commando (Standerton), and the Standerton West Commando. The 295 unmounted soldiers of the various commandos stayed behind at the East Rand Station as a reserve force.<sup>103</sup>



**Figure 2.3:** Van Deventer's Line of March to the East Rand.<sup>104</sup>

Burne commenced his attack on Benoni on 13 March with the combined force in the middle and the Hoogveld, Standerton East and Standerton West Commandos on the left flank to envelope Benoni from the north-west. The Blesbokspruit and Roodekoppe Commandos were on the right flank to complete the envelopment. The Heidelberg Commando did not participate and was kept in reserve. The operation went according to plan and the besieged police and Permanent Force elements were relieved by 10:00. The arrival of the commandos, according to Burne, had such a paralysing effect on the striker commandos that they refrained from resisting. The attacking force crossed various abandoned obstacles placed in the streets by the strikers to serve as barriers and continued towards the fortified Trades Hall. Burne occupied the hall for a while and started with mopping up operations. Since it was difficult to distinguish between members of the striker commandos and the public, all men that could bear arms were rounded up. They were held until

103 SANDFA, Accessions 47, Gen. Brink Collection, General G.E. Brink papers, The Rand Revolution 1922, Reports by GOC no 2 (East Rand) Control Area to Chief of General Staff, 30 March 1922 and Reports by Lt. Col. N.H.M. Burne, Commanding Composite Force to GOC no 2 Control Area, 17 March 1922.

104 G.R. Kent: **Through the Red Revolt on the Rand, A Pictorial Review of Events. January, February, March, 1922**, p.1; (SANDFA, Accessions 47, Gen. Brink Collection) Lt. Col. J.J. Jacobs, Department Military Geography, Faculty Military Science, is recognised for processing the original map.

they could be properly identified and give sufficient explanation of their activities. The unmounted elements in reserve at the East Rand Station were ordered to occupy Benoni and support the police.<sup>105</sup>

The next priority for Brig. Gen. Van Deventer was the relief of Brakpan. The mounted elements were concentrated at the junction of Modderfontein and Brakpan Roads, after which he commenced with his advance on Brakpan at 12:30. The Brakpan power station and mine were occupied an hour later without resistance and the Brakpan Police Station was relieved by 14:30. Little resistance was encountered except for sporadic sniper fire that was soon suppressed with small arms and artillery fire. Many suspects were taken in for questioning by the police during the mopping up operations. Meanwhile Cmdt. J.J. Alberts occupied Springs without any noticeable resistance, which finally broke the striker commandos' hold on the East Rand. Brig. Gen. Van Deventer's relief force lost only five men with 19 men wounded.<sup>106</sup>

### 2.3.7 THE SUPPRESSION OF UNREST ON THE WEST RAND

The situation was less active on the West Rand than on the East Rand and the local striker commandos did not attack most of the police stations on 10 March. Future attacks could not be ruled out and the Government forces quickly deployed on the West Rand. Comdt. E. Wolfaardt arrived in Krugersdorp on 11 March with a commando from the Hekpoort area with the aim of suppressing possible striker commando activities. The commander of the West Rand, Lt. Col. A.H.M. Nussey, was already on his way with a force by rail from Potchefstroom and arrived in Krugersdorp on 12 March. Several commandos, such as the Magaliesberg and Luipaardsvlei Commandos, were under his command.<sup>107</sup> These forces moved unopposed to Witpoortjie after which they were transported by rail to Roodepoort on 13 March. An armoured train escorted the convoy of troop trains, which also enjoyed air cover in the morning.<sup>108</sup>

The striker commandos did not oppose Lt. Col. Nussey's arrival at Roodepoort or his occupation of Florida. He then launched an attack on striker commandos entrenched on the ridges north of

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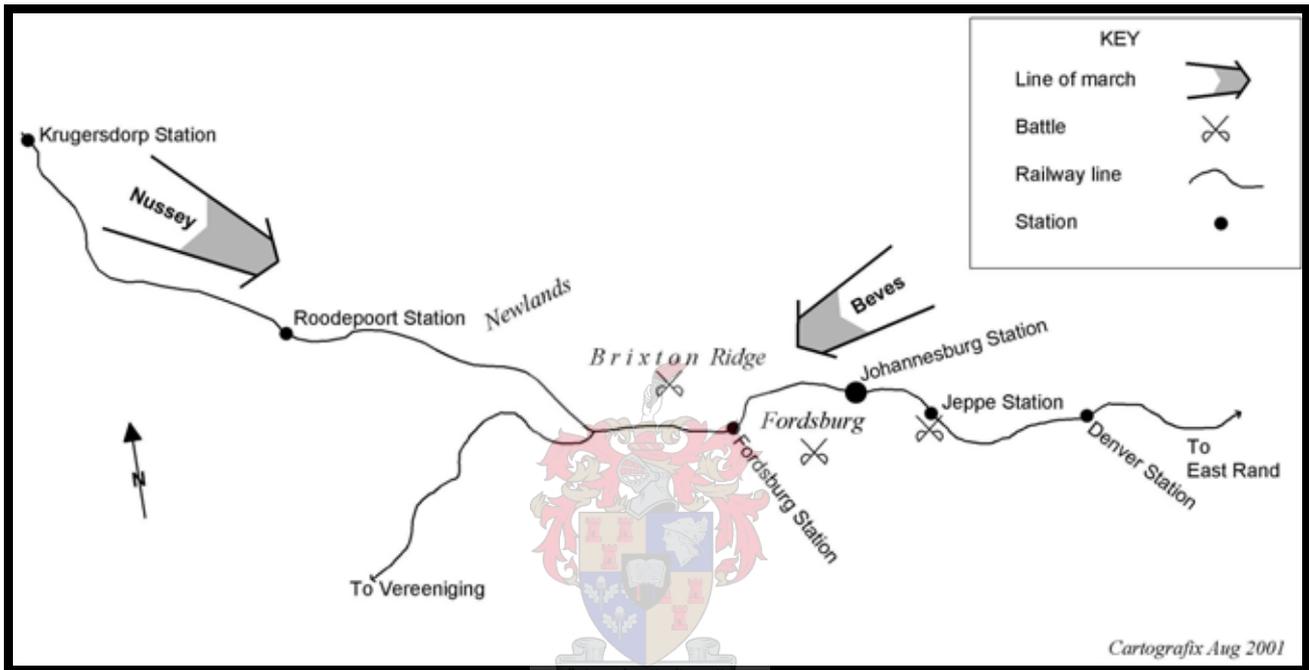
105 SANDFA, Accessions 47, Gen. Brink Collection, General G.E. Brink papers, The Rand Revolution 1922, Reports by GOC no 2 (East Rand) Control Area to Chief of General Staff, 30 March 1922; SANDFA, Accessions 47, Gen. Brink Collection, General G.E. Brink papers, The Rand Revolution 1922, Reports by Lt. Col. N.H.M. Burne, Commanding Composite Force to GOC no 2 Control Area, 17 March 1922; A.G. Oberholster: **Die Mynwerkerstaking 1922**, p.176.

106 SANDFA, Accessions 47, Gen. Brink Collection, General G.E. Brink papers, The Rand Revolution 1922, Reports by GOC no 2 (East Rand) Control Area to Chief of General Staff, 30 March 1922 and Reports by Lt. Col. N.H.M. Burne, Commanding Composite Force to GOC no 2 Control Area, 17 March 1922.

107 SANDFA, DC 3520, Union of South Africa, Air Operations from March 10th to March 15th SANDFA, Industrial Disturbances-Rand 1922; SANDFA, DC 3520, DAS 7/2, Annexure N: Report on Dispatch and Reconnaissance for Colonel Nussey to Air Operations from March 10th to March 15th.

108 A.G. Oberholster: **Die Mynwerkerstaking 1922**, p.178; M. Steyn: Stakings aan die Rand gedurende die Twintiger- en Tagtigerjare, p.39.

Maraisburg. (See Figure 2.4: Operations on the West Rand and Central Witwatersrand.) Elements of the Air Force were used again in a reconnaissance role and utilised to stop the strike commandos from concentrating their forces in the surrounding woods and hills.<sup>109</sup> After driving the strikers off Nussey started with mopping up operations in the occupied areas of the West Rand and detained suspicious persons for questioning. During the mopping up operations, Government forces confiscated various weapons, as well as an amount of ammunition and dynamite sticks with fuses and detonators. Meanwhile Nussey was also deploying his forces for the attack on the striker commandos' stronghold at Fordsburg.<sup>110</sup>



**Figure 2.4:** Operation on the West Rand and Central Witwatersrand.<sup>111</sup>

### 2.3.8 THE SUPPRESSION OF UNREST IN THE CENTRAL WITWATERSRAND

In Central Witwatersrand, Brig. Gen. Beves launched an attack against the striker commandos of Newlands and Vrededorp, who had besieged two police units (F and J Squadron), under the respective command of Maj. S. Hutchons and Capt. J.W. Carruthers, at Brixton Ridge.<sup>112</sup> Beves wanted to achieve two objectives with this operation. The first objective was a counter-offensive in

109 SANDFA, DC 3520, Union of South Africa, Air Operations from March 10th to March 15th SANDFA, Industrial Disturbances-Rand 1922; SANDFA, DC 3520, DAS 7/2, Annexure N: Report on Dispatch and Reconnaissance for Colonel Nussey to Air Operations from March 10th to March 15th.

110 A.G. Oberholster: **Die Mynwerkerstaking 1922**, p.178; M. Steyn: Stakings aan die Rand gedurende die Twintiger- en Tagtigerjare, p.39.

111 SANDFA, Accessions 47, Gen. Brink Collection, G.R. Kent: **Through the Red Revolt on the Rand, A Pictorial Review of Events. January, February, March, 1922**, p.1; Lt. Col. J.J. Jacobs, Department Military Geography, Faculty Military Science, US, is recognised for processing the original map.

112 Anon.: The Red Revolution on the Rand, **Nonqai**, vol. 13, no. 5, 1922, p.270.

reprisal of the strikers' attack the previous day on the Imperial Light Horse at the Ellis Park sports grounds ensuring the end of the strikers' control of the area under his command. The second objective was to relieve the besieged police at Brixton Ridge. (See Figure 2.4: Operations on the West Rand and Central Witwatersrand.)<sup>113</sup>

Lt. Col. E.F. Thackery had the extremely difficult task of leading the attack on Brixton Ridge. He was assisted in his task by the combined application of air and ground forces. The position of the police on Brixton Ridge was very critical. They were totally cut off, with little ammunition and no food or water. They were determined to defend their position at all costs, even with bayonets. The Minister of Defence, Col. H. Mentz, delivered a message to Maj. Hutchons by aeroplane, which lifted their morale and prepared them for the upcoming relief force.<sup>114</sup> The message read: "A combined attack is being made to-day to relieve you. Hold on. The Minister of Defence admires your pluck and endurance, and every nerve is being strained so that your splendid effort will not be in vain."<sup>115</sup>

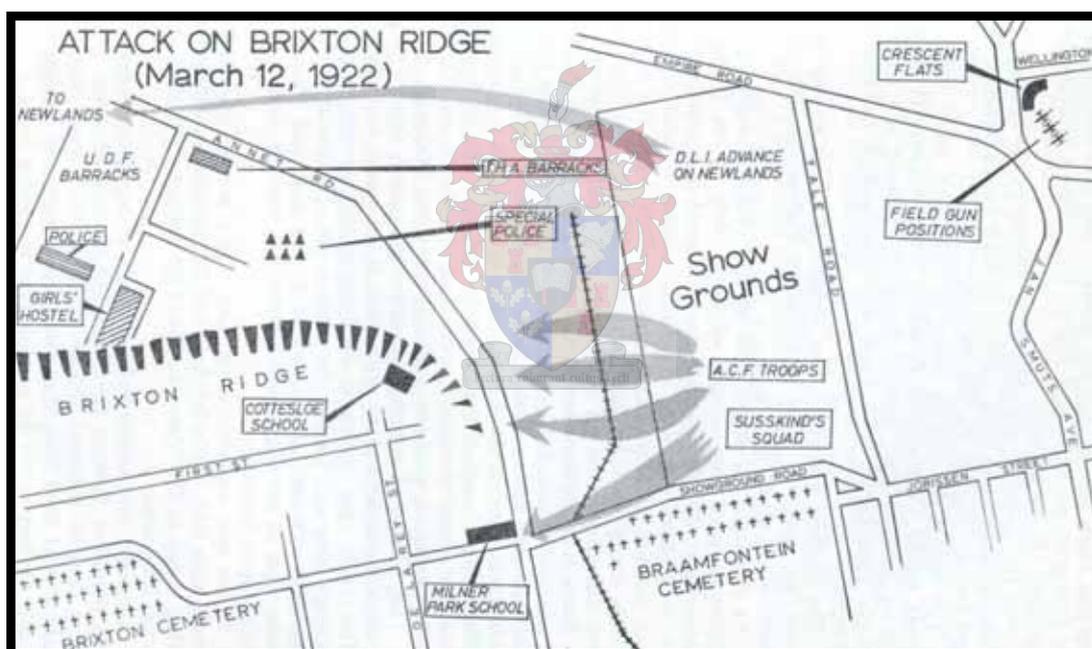


Figure 2.5: The Attack on Brixton Ridge.<sup>116</sup>

113 SANDFA, Accessions 47, Gen. Brink Collection, G.R. Kent: **Through the Red Revolt on the Rand, A Pictorial Review of Events. January, February, March, 1922**, p.1; Lt. Col. J.J. Jacobs, Department Military Geography, Faculty Military Science, US, is recognised for processing the original map.

114 SANDFA, DC 3520, Union of South Africa, Air Operations from March 10th to March 15th SANDFA, Industrial Disturbances-Rand 1922; SANDFA, DC 3520, DAS 7/2, Annexure H: Report on Attack, Brixton and Annexure I: Reconnaissance Report, Auckland Park to Air Operations from March 10th to March 15th; Anon.: The Red Revolution on the Rand, **Nonqai**, vol. 13, no. 5, 1922, p.271; A.G. Oberholster: **Die Mynwerkerstaking 1922**, p.181.

115 Anon.: The Red Revolution on the Rand, **Nonqai**, vol. 13, no. 5, 1922, p.270.

116 N. Herd: **1922, The Revolt on the Rand**, p.127.

On the morning of 12 March, at 08:30, six planes flew over the besieged positions and dropped supplies of bread and ammunition. The bread was of little use since the policemen's mouths were too dry to eat it! The ammunition was a welcome relief and enabled the besieged to hold their position until the relief force arrived. The planes were not only of importance for logistical support, but were also involved in giving close air support to the advancing ground forces. The fortified, entrenched position of the strikers was attacked from the air using machine-guns and bombs. These not only greatly suppressed the strikers' fire on the besieged positions, but also led to various members of the striker commandos surrendering to the besieged police. The police were still subject to heavy fire as soon as the planes withdrew.<sup>117</sup>



**Figure 2.6:** Troops of the Witbank Regiment in Trenches around Braamfontein, Johannesburg.<sup>118</sup>

Lt. Col. Thackery's ground forces attacked Brixton Ridge at 11:00 from the north and the east, supported by artillery fire from the Transvaal Horse Artillery under the command of Maj. F.B. Adler. The Durban Light Infantry, who attacked Brixton Ridge from the north and the north-east, succeeded in reaching the besieged forces by 14:00. (See Figure 2.5: Attack on Brixton Ridge and Figure 2.6: Troops of the Witbank Regiment in Trenches around Braamfontein.) They did not suffer any serious casualties, but the Transvaal Scottish, who attacked from the south-east, suffered three dead and 29 wounded. At 15:00 that afternoon, the siege of the two police units

117 SANDFA, DC 3520, Union of South Africa, Air Operations from March 10th to March 15th; SANDFA, Industrial Disturbances-Rand 1922; SANDFA, DC 3520, DAS 7/2, Annexure H: Report on Attack, Brixton and Annexure I: Reconnaissance Report, Auckland Park to Air Operations from March 10th to March 15th; A.G. Oberholster: **Die Mynwerkerstaking 1922**, p.181; Anon.: The Red Revolution on the Rand, **Nonqai**, vol. 13, no. 5, 1922, p.271.

118 S.B. Spies: Unie en Onenigheid, 1910-1924, p.246.

was ended and the Government forces regrouped for an attack on Fordsburg, the last stronghold of the strikers, on 14 March.<sup>119</sup>

### 2.3.9 THE ATTACK ON FORDSBURG

Reconnaissance flights over Fordsburg on 13 March revealed that the striker commandos had fortified the market square and the Market Hall and had surrounded it with interconnecting trenches. Double breastworks were erected in the main street and the striker commandos were deployed in a strong all-round defence. Before the Government forces commenced their attack on 14 March, pamphlets were dropped over Fordsburg to warn the women, children and loyal citizens against the attack that was to commence at 11:00. Many people, mainly women and children, subsequently left Fordsburg and assembled at the Milner Park show grounds. Half an hour before the attack was to take place, the striker commandos came out under a white flag and requested negotiations on conditions for peace. Brig. Gen. Beves rejected this proposal and demanded their unconditional surrender before 11:00. The strikers, in turn, rejected this demand upon which the attack started at exactly 11:00.<sup>120</sup> (See Figure 2.7: The Attack on Fordsburg.)

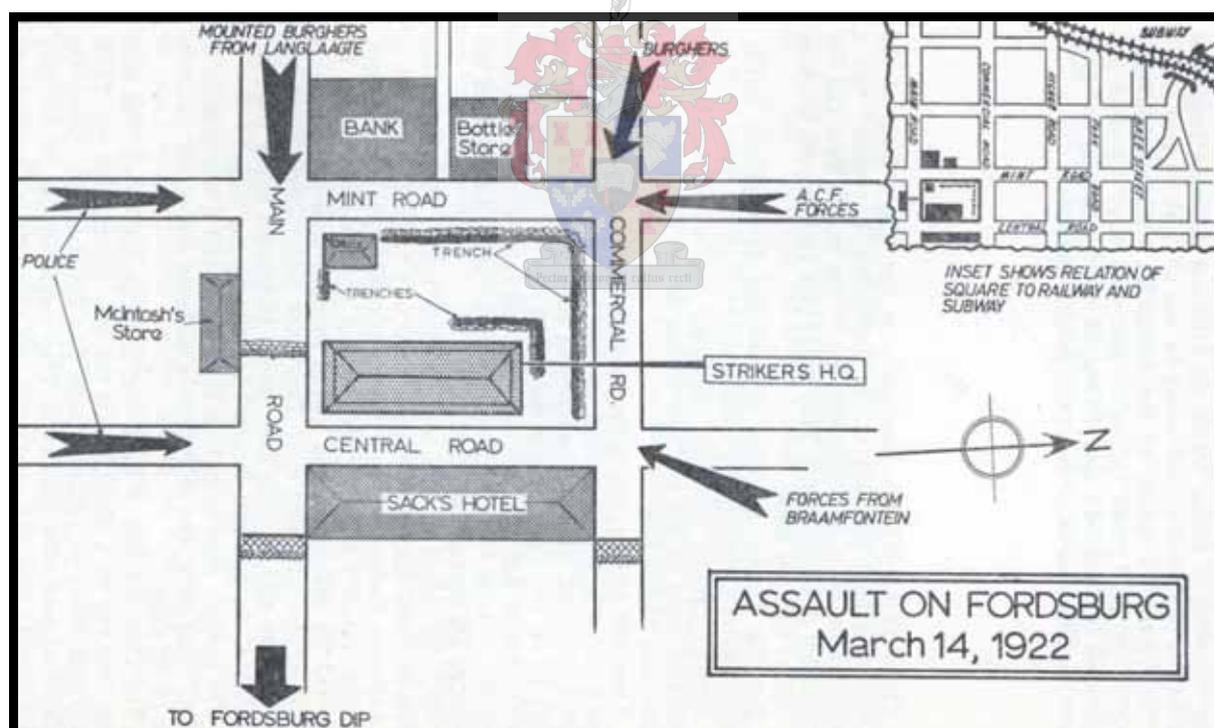


Figure 2.7: The Attack on Fordsburg.<sup>121</sup>

119 Anon.: The Red Revolution on the Rand, **Nonqai**, vol. 13, no. 5, 1922, p.271; A.G. Oberholster: **Die Mynwerkerstaking 1922**, p.183.

120 SANDFA, DC 3520, Union of South Africa, Air Operations from March 10th to March 15th; A.G. Oberholster: **Die Mynwerkerstaking 1922**, pp.184-5; Anon.: The Red Revolution on the Rand, **Nonqai**, vol. 13, no. 5, 1922, pp.276-7.

121 N. Herd: **1922, The Revolt on the Rand**, p.178.

The Government forces started their attack with an artillery bombardment on the striker commandos' positions upon which the infantry, which surrounded Fordsburg, moved in. The Durban Light Infantry, supported by the Rand Light Infantry, attacked from the north, the Transvaal Scottish, with the special police force of Lt. Col. Godley on their left flank, advanced from the north-east and Lt Col. Nussey's force from the west. The artillery barrage successfully dislodged the striker commandos, which made the task of the attacking infantry easier. As with previous battles, the Government forces were subjected to continuous sniper fire while the barricades in the streets slowed them down. The infantry, nonetheless, reached the market square by 14:00 and forced the striker commandos to surrender. The normal mopping up operations aimed at finding the snipers and any member of the striker commandos still running free followed the attack. The Government forces did not suffer any noteworthy casualties during their attack on Fordsburg. According to the official report on the events two striker leaders, P. Fisher and H. Spendiff, committed suicide. The public, particularly the strikers, did not believe these reports and Government forces were accused of murdering them.<sup>122</sup>

### 2.3.10 CONSOLIDATION AND DEMOBILISATION

The striker commandos' hold on the Witwatersrand was finally broken by 15 March. A section of the Government's forces, the Transvaal Horse Artillery and the Transvaal Scottish, were immediately demobilised. The rest were still involved with final mopping up operations, mainly scouting for weapons and remaining groups of armed strikers, in which the Air Force played a vital supporting role. The weapons confiscated during and after the strike amounted to one machine-gun, 3500 rifles, 1281 shotguns, 4945 revolvers and 60500 rounds of ammunition. (See Figure 2.8: Weapons Confiscated.) By 17 March, the trade union leaders decided to call off the strike upon which the CFR started to demobilise on 18 March and completed demobilisation on the morning of 22 March. The rest of the Permanent Force and Active Reserve Force units remained until Lt. Col. Godley resumed his normal duties of maintaining law and order on 22 March.<sup>123</sup>

The Martial Law Commission put the total number of casualties of the 1922 industrial unrest on the Rand at 687, with 153 dead and 534 wounded. The tables below show that the Government forces sustained 291 casualties compared to the 376 civilian casualties. There were 219 (55.4%) casualties of innocent civilians 197 of whom were wounded and 42 killed, while the strikers sustained 157 (39.6%) casualties of whom 118 were wounded and 39 killed. After the unrest,

122 A.G. Oberholster: **Die Mynwerkerstaking 1922**, pp.185-6; Anon.: The Red Revolution on the Rand, **Nonqai**, vol. 13, no. 5, 1922, pp.275-7.

123 SANDFA, Accessions 47, Gen. Brink Collection, General G.E. Brink papers, The Rand Revolution 1922, Reports by GOC no 2 (East Rand) Control Area to Chief of General Staff, 30 March 1922; SANDFA, DC 460, 2/52032, Memorandum insake die aandeel van die Unie Verdedigingsmag in die onderdrukking van die afgelope industriële onluste, 22 March 1922; A.G. Oberholster: **Die Mynwerkerstaking 1922**, p.187.

eighteen of the rioters were sentenced to death of which only four, H.K. Hull, D. Lewis, S.A. Long and C.C. Stassen were hanged on 17 November 1922 for murders committed during the strike.<sup>124</sup>

Weapons and Ammunition Confiscated			
Type	During the Strike	After the Strike	Total
Machine-guns	1	0	1
Rifles	1150	2350	3500
Shotguns	231	1050	1281
Revolvers	745	4200	4945
Ammunition	60500		60500

**Figure 2.8:** Weapons Confiscated during the 1922-Strike.<sup>125</sup>

Civilian Casualties of the Industrial Unrest on the Witwatersrand, 1922			
Group	Wounded	Dead	Total
Strikers	118	39	157
Innocent Civilians	197	42	239
<b>Total</b>	<b>315</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>396</b>

**Figure 2.9:** Civilian Casualties during the Industrial Unrest on the Witwatersrand, 1922.<sup>126</sup>

Total casualties during the Industrial Unrest on the Witwatersrand, 1922			
Group	Wounded	Dead	Total
Government Forces	219	72	291
Civilian	315	81	396
<b>Total</b>	<b>534</b>	<b>153</b>	<b>687</b>

**Figure 2.10:** Total Casualties during the Industrial Unrest on the Witwatersrand, 1922.<sup>127</sup>

### 2.3.11 CRITICISM OF “PLATSKIET POLITIEK”

The Benoni Chamber of Commerce came out strongly against the use of military force. The use of bombs was severely criticised and called a diabolical murder of innocent women and children. The Labour Party voiced their criticism in Parliament and accused the Government of using military

124 W.K. Hancock: **Smuts: the Fields of Force, 1919-1950**, pp.84-88; J. Simons and R. Simons: **Class and Colour in South Africa, 1850-1950**, p.296.

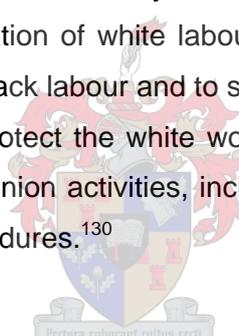
125 N. Herd: **1922, The Revolt on the Rand**, pp.161-162.

126 N. Herd: **1922, The Revolt on the Rand**, pp.161-162.

127 N. Herd: **1922, The Revolt on the Rand**, pp.161-162.

force against innocent civilians. The strike had a ripple effect that affected commerce, education and other services in all the towns on the Rand. The striker commandos contributed to the disruption of the public's daily routine, but, even more so, did the proclamation of Martial Law. Inevitably, the war between the strikers and the Government was fought in the streets of Benoni, Brixton Ridge, Maraisburg and Fordsburg inflicting many casualties on innocent civilians. The civilian attitude towards the whole affair ranged from outrage, fear and outright hostility towards not only the strikers, but also towards the Government forces fighting their own brothers.<sup>128</sup>

The National Party under Gen. J.B.M. Hertzog used Smuts' harsh action against the strikers and the accompanying casualties for political gain. Smuts was singled out and depicted as the main architect of the bloodbath and his actions, especially the proclamation of Martial Law, were branded as "platskiet politiek" (shoot down politics). The execution of Hull, Lewis, Long and Stassen also evoked sharp criticism of Smuts from the white population, which the political opposition used to their benefit. It is accepted that the criticism the Smuts government elicited with its handling of the 1922 industrial unrest contributed to its demise in the 1924 election against the coalition of the National Party and the Labour Party.<sup>129</sup> Krikler is of the opinion that the industrial unrest on the Rand was the manifestation of white labour's need for dignity, to fight against the extinction of white labour in favour of black labour and to struggle against unemployment. The new government elected in 1924 did not protect the white working class. Wages were reduced from between 10% to more than 40% and union activities, including the ability to strike, were curtailed through various mechanisms and procedures.<sup>130</sup>



128 D. Humphriss and D.G. Thomas: **Benoni, Seun van My Smart: Die Maatskaplike , Politieke en Ekonomiese Geskiedenis van 'n Suid-Afrikaanse Goudmyndorp**, 232, 235-236; N. Herd: **1922, The Revolt on the Rand**, pp.165-167; **Debates of the House of Assembly**, vol. 7, 2nd Session, 4th Parliament, 14 March 1922.

129 W.K. Hancock: **Smuts: the Fields of Force, 1919-1950**: p.86-88; J. Simons and R. Simons: **Class and Colour in South Africa, 1850-1950**, p.296; K. Harris: Samuel Alfred Long: Martyr or Murderer, **Journal for Contemporary History**, vol. 17, no. 2, 1992, pp.70-71.

130 J. Krikler: **The Rand Revolt**, pp.291-295; See also K. Harris: Samuel Alfred Long: Martyr or Murderer, **Journal for Contemporary History** for more information on the social impact of the strike.

## CHAPTER 3

## THE SUPPRESSION OF INDIGENOUS UNREST

## 3.1 INTRODUCTION

The period from 1914 to 1932 in the Union of South Africa's history is an abstract of how the Government utilised their resources to punish and subdue recalcitrant indigenous populations. Recalcitrance was rooted in the lack of political rights of any indigenous population, except whites, drafted in the Union's constitution. This was automatically applicable to the indigenous populations of South West Africa when they were administered by Pretoria. When laws were transgressed by the Israelites, the Bondelswarts, the Rehoboth Basters and the Ukuambi a punitive expedition was the outcome. The legitimacy of these actions was founded in the laws governing the authorities.<sup>131</sup>

The approach towards indigenous populations in the early twentieth century is displayed in the policy of separate development. The 1913 Land Act, reserving portions of land for separate races, provided for a measure of control on land acquisition and further control over economic and social affairs followed in its footsteps. An attitude of master and servant was obvious in the mandated territory, as a spill over effect from the Union Government's racial policy. Prejudice, double standards in executing branding laws, enforced indentured labour, dog and hut tax were some of the grievances that indigenous populations had against the authorities.<sup>132</sup>

The incidents discussed in this chapter indicate how the Governing authority executed governance. Negotiations were a prelude to enforcing authority by means of force. The use of the aeroplane has been criticised, but it was an economic, quick and efficient way of suppressing uprisings. It was a force multiplier and it clearly saved lives on many occasions. The efficient way in which force was applied shows a willingness by the authorities to spare lives, rather than kill innocent civilians. Also fewer soldiers were placed in harm's way thus preventing many Government casualties and minimising criticism. Criticism of the use of force, especially when the casualties were innocent women and children, varied, and the ramifications thereof are discussed.

The Israelites, Bondelswarts, Rehoboth and the Ukuambi shared the grievance of forced submission to Government laws and policies. The incident at Bulhoek and the action against Chief Ipumbu are indicative of Government resolve to enforce the law and racial policies. The

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131 W.K. Hancock: **Smuts, the Fields of Force, 1919-1950**, pp.107-108; G.L.M. Lewis: *The Bondelswarts Rebellion of 1922* (Unpublished M.A. Thesis, Rhodes University, 1977), pp.54-58; D. Harrison: **The White Tribe of Africa, South Africa in Perspective**, pp.69-72; A. Odendal: *The Roots of the ANC*. In I. Liebenberg, et al: **The Long March: The Story of the Struggle for Liberation in South Africa**, pp.1-4.

132 W.K. Hancock: **Smuts, the Fields of Force, 1919-1950**, pp.107-108; G.L.M. Lewis: *The Bondelswarts Rebellion of 1922*, pp.54-58; D. Harrison: **The White Tribe of Africa**, pp.69-72.

Bondelswarts and the Rehoboth shared a bond in some of their reasons for resistance. The size of the land allocated to them in the transition from German to South African rule, the way they had to do business and brand their cattle and their utilisation as labourers were some of the shared reasons for their resistance.

## 3.2 THE INCIDENT AT BULHOEK, QUEENSTOWN, 24 MAY 1921

### 3.2.1 ENOCH MGIJIMA AND THE ISRAELITES

The Israelites annually observed Passover in the middle of April. This event had to be attended by all the church members, at a specific place, for a period of ten to thirty days. The Bulhoek sub-location, one of eight sub-locations of the Kamastone Location in the Queenstown district, was the preferred venue because this was the home of their leader, Enoch Mgiijima.<sup>133</sup>

Enoch Mgiijima was born in 1868, the tenth and last child of Jonas Mayekiso Mgiijima. The Mgiijima family settled in Ntabelanga (The mountain of the rising sun) in 1856. The friendly attitude of the British exposed many of the African families living in the area to Western ideas and culture. The children attended missionary schools and the Wesleyan Methodist Church played a significant role in educating many of the Africans in the area. This included Mgiijima, who did not continue his formal education past Standard 3 (Grade 5), but stayed on at Bulhoek to become a farmer and a hunter.<sup>134</sup>

Mgiijima was an active Christian who preached the gospel to all who would listen. His ties with the Wesleyan Methodists became strained when he continued to preach a return to the beliefs of the Old Testament. He gradually gained an independent following and finally broke away from the Wesleyan Methodists in 1912. Mgiijima and his followers identified with the stories of the Old Testament and they eventually became known as the Israelites. A small church in the United States of America, the Church of God and the Saints of Christ, became his new haven. John J. Msikinya was a bishop of this church in South Africa and converted Enoch Mgiijima to the new church. Enoch Mgiijima himself became a bishop and took over the reigns from Msikinya when he died in 1914. The Union Government was aware that the independent black churches played a role in the black communities becoming vehicles of political and social advancement and a conduit for exchanging ideas between blacks in America and Africa. These ideas were perceived as

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133 D.H. Makobe: Understanding the Bulhoek Massacre, Voices after the Massacre and Down the Years. **Militaria**, vol. 26, no. 2, 1996, p.98; Union of South Africa: **Interim and Final Reports of the Native Affairs Commission on the 'Israelites' at Bulhoek**, p.1; R. Edgar: **Because They Chose the Plan of God**, pp.6-9.

134 R. Edgar: **Because They Chose the Plan of God, The Story of the Bulhoek Massacre**, pp.2-6.

radical and these movements were monitored and, if necessary, suppressed as was the case with the Israelites.<sup>135</sup>

Enoch Mgijima was renowned for his visions. His path as missionary was attributed to visions of the end of the world on Christmas Day 1912 and of the First World War. He foresaw a war between blacks and whites, but explained that the Israelites would not participate. Mgijima was asked by the Church of God and the Saints of Christ in America to renounce these visions. His refusal led to his excommunication by the Church, which split the local branch of the church in two. Mgijima and the Israelites continued on their religious path, obtaining converts from the local districts in Queenstown, the Transkeian Territories and the Western Transvaal.<sup>136</sup>

### 3.2.2 THE ILLEGAL OCCUPATION OF LAND LEADS TO CONFRONTATION

The bone of contention between the Israelites and the Union Government was not religion *per se*. The Union Government tolerated such movements and allowed them the freedom to exercise their religion in any way desirable as long they stayed within the boundaries of the law. The conflict was due to the fact that the Israelites were unlawfully occupying land (the Bulhoek commonage) and refused to leave. This commonage was named Ntabalanga and a tabernacle was erected for services. This land was the area that the Israelites had occupied over Passover since 1917, with permission from the Shiloh Mission Station, the local lot-holders of Bulhoek and the Superintendent of Natives at Kamastone, G.E. Nightingale. Permission was granted on the premise that the building of permanent structures for the members attending the ceremony was not allowed and that the participants immediately depart after the ceremony. The reason for this was that the Native Locations Act No. 37 of 1884 forbade damaging, squatting upon or building upon any commonage. In 1920, it came to the attention of Nightingale that the Israelites were transgressing the law by building permanent structures.<sup>137</sup>

Strangers squatted on the commonage, but Nightingale allowed them to stay, after Mgijima explained that they were there for a special ceremony. This arrangement was made on the condition that the squatters were to depart as soon as the ceremony was over. Permission for the

135 SANDFA, DC 451, 52002, Recalcitrant Israelite. Native. Illegal Squatting on Bulhoek Sub-Location, Superintendent of Natives - Queenstown Magistrate, 23 August 1920; R. Edgar: **Because They Chose the Plan of God**, pp.9-11, 38; W.K. Hancock: **Smuts, the Fields of Force, 1919-1950**, p.91; Union of South Africa: **Interim and Final Reports of the Native Affairs Commission on the 'Israelites' at Bulhoek**, p.1.

136 R. Edgar: **Because They Chose the Plan of God**, pp.9-11, W.K. Hancock: **Smuts, the Fields of Force**, p.91; Union of South Africa: **Interim and Final Reports of the Native Affairs Commission on the 'Israelites' at Bulhoek**, p.2.

137 SANDFA, DC 451, 52002, Recalcitrant Israelite. Native. Illegal Squatting on Bulhoek Sub-Location, Superintendent of Natives - Queenstown Magistrate, 23 August 1920; R. Edgar: **Because They Chose the Plan of God**, pp.13-14; W.K. Hancock: **Smuts, the Fields of Force**, p.91; Union of South Africa: **Interim and Final Reports of the Native Affairs Commission on the 'Israelites' at Bulhoek**, p.2.

annual Passover was granted on the same condition. However, the Passover of 1920 was going to be different. Mgijima called all his followers to his home to wait for the Lord's coming, thereby increasing the number of attendants at the yearly festival. Robert Edgar explains that the prophecies of Mgijima offered the attractive alternative of salvation, hope, change, solace and comfort in contrast to drought and plague. It was thus, as a matter of course, that the Israelites converged on Bulhoek, expecting salvation.<sup>138</sup>

The expectations of the Israelites caused friction amongst the Queenstown communities. This was not due to their religious practices, but due to the presence of illegal squatters in the Kamastone Location. The rest of the African inhabitants of the Location were unhappy - especially their neighbours. Their pastures and gardens became grazing for the Israelites' animals. Furthermore they feared that the Government would use this situation to confiscate their land. Their fear was so great that they eventually requested the local officials to intervene. This intervention was strongly supported by the local white farmers, who believed that the Israelites were criminals and responsible for the theft of their sheep and cattle. These allegations were investigated and proved false, but the white farmers were still adamant that the law had to be enforced and the squatters removed. They did, however, not see force as the preferred method, but rather tactful persuasion.<sup>139</sup>

### 3.2.3 ASKING FOR MORE TIME

Nightingale approached Mgijima on 8 June 1920 to determine why the Israelites had not dispersed after the annual Passover as per their agreement. Sickness, lack of funds and a special service were the excuses for the infringement, but the assurance was given that the group would disperse by 20 June. The Israelites did not disperse and continued to erect permanent dwellings. Summonses under the regulations were issued, but were ignored. On 14 September, the magistrate, E.C. Welsh, spoke to Mgijima and was assured that they would disperse on 30 September. The Israelites did not disperse, but rather applied for another extension on 3 October.<sup>140</sup>

The extension was refused, which strained the relationship between the Government and the Israelites. The Israelites resisted passively, defeating the ends of justice by refusing to give their

138 SANDFA, DC 451, 52002, Recalcitrant Israelite. Native. Illegal Squatting on Bulhoek Sub-Location, Superintendent of Natives - Queenstown Magistrate, 23 August 1920; R. Edgar: **Because They Chose the Plan of God**, p.13, W.K. Hancock: **Smuts, the Fields of Force**, p.91; Union of South Africa: **Interim and Final Reports of the Native Affairs Commission on the 'Israelites' at Bulhoek**, p.2.

139 R. Edgar: **Because They Chose the Plan of God**, pp.15, 24-25; Union of South Africa: **Interim and Final Reports of the Native Affairs Commission on the 'Israelites' at Bulhoek**, pp.2-3.

140 SANDFA, DC 451, 52002, Recalcitrant Israelite. Native. Illegal Squatting on Bulhoek Sub-Location, Superintendent of Natives - Queenstown Magistrate, 23 August 1920; Union of South Africa: **Interim and Final Reports of the Native Affairs Commission on the 'Israelites' at Bulhoek**, pp.2-3.

names, which prevented the issuing of summonses. Tension was mounting as the rest of the African inhabitants and the white farmers were unhappy with the Government's apparent inability to end the dispute. The Government decided on a more active measure and instructed Nightingale, in his capacity as Superintendent of Natives, to proceed with enforcing the law.<sup>141</sup>

In an effort to enforce the law, a name list was to be drafted of every member residing in the Bulhoek area. This enabled the issuing of summonses against an individual, but if the inhabitants refused to give their names, they were to be arrested and charged with contravening the Native Locations Act No. 37 of 1884. The police were informed of the plan and they were instructed to assist Nightingale. The procedure proved to be a challenge greater than expected. The Israelites refused Nightingale entrance and posted guards as well as a notice that read, "Halt - No Admittance".<sup>142</sup>

Welsh returned to Bulhoek on 8 December 1920 with a force of 93 mounted and armed police under the command of Maj. S. Hutchons. The magistrate was authorised to issue the Israelites with free passage per train and rations if they were willing to depart immediately. Welsh and Hutchons spoke with delegates from the Israelite village and informed them of the registration that was to take place. The Israelites held firmly to the belief that God did not approve of the registration and that they would not allow it. Welsh and Hutchons concluded that the Israelites were religious fanatics and that the current force was insufficient to have an impact. Subsequently, they requested reinforcements. Their fear of an insufficient force became apparent when the police moved from their camp near the village after an aggressive demonstration by the Israelites. This proved to be an overreaction, but fuelled the mounting tension.<sup>143</sup>

The request for reinforcements was denied due to the fact that the Government felt the situation did not warrant bloodshed. Instead, the Secretary of Native Affairs, E.E. Barrett, the Commissioner of Police, Col. T.G. Truter, and a Defence Force representative, Brig. Gen. A.J. van Deventer, were instructed to investigate the matter. Barrett called a meeting with headmen and representatives of the Kamastone Location two days prior to meeting the Israelites. The representatives were adamant that the dispute should be ended, the houses destroyed and the Israelites removed. Barrett also had discussions with prominent members of the African community, such as J. Tengo Jabavo, the editor of *Imvo Zambanzsundu* (a leading African

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141 SANDFA, DC 451, 52002, Recalcitrant Israelite. Native. Illegal Squatting on Bulhoek Sub-Location, Superintendent of Natives - Queenstown Magistrate, 23 August 1920; Union of South Africa: **Interim and Final Reports of the Native Affairs Commission on the 'Israelites' at Bulhoek**, pp.2-3; W.K. Hancock: **Smuts, the Fields of Force**, p.92.

142 SANDFA, DC 451, 52002, Recalcitrant Israelite. Native. Illegal Squatting on Bulhoek Sub-Location, Superintendent of Natives - Queenstown Magistrate, 23 August 1920; Union of South Africa: **Interim and Final Reports of the Native Affairs Commission on the 'Israelites' at Bulhoek**, pp.2-3; W.K. Hancock: **Smuts, the Fields of Force**, p.92.

143 Union of South Africa: **Interim and Final Reports of the Native Affairs Commission on the 'Israelites' at Bulhoek**, p.3.

newspaper), Rev. F. Xabanisa of Idutywa, Chief Veldtman of Butterworth and M. Pelem of Queenstown. These people held their own talks with the Israelites in order to persuade them to disperse, but to no avail. The investigating team finally held a meeting with Israelite representatives on 17 December, but they too failed to reach a settlement. The Israelites requested an interview with the Prime Minister, Gen. J.C. Smuts, who agreed to meet them as soon as his schedule allowed, but the meeting never materialised. In the meantime, the Israelites continued to ignore both the officials and their procedure.<sup>144</sup>

Instead of an interview with the Prime Minister, on 6 April 1921 they received a visit from the Native Affairs Commission. This commission was established in 1920 with the aim of consulting and discussing topics that were of concern to Africans. The Commission was the interface between the Government and the people at grass roots level. The Bulhoek affair was the first opportunity to test the commission, which comprised of General L.A.S. Lemmer, Dr C.T. Loram and Senator A.W. Roberts. The commission held talks with the Israelites' representatives, but they failed to bridge the gap between the needs of the Israelites and statutory law. They reinforced the opinion that the Israelites were religious fanatics, but emphasised that there was no political agenda involved. They indicated that any attempt to remove the group by force would be resisted and bloodshed would be inevitable. The commission also had talks with local Africans and white farmers who continued to complain of the Government's reluctance to resolve the issue. The general feeling was that the attempts to find a peaceful solution were commendable, but the issue had to be resolved or else they would take the law into their own hands.<sup>145</sup>

In the meantime one of the farmers had, in fact, already taken the law into his own hands when he opened fire on three Israelites for trespassing, killing one and wounding another. The farmer appeared before the Circuit Court, in East London, at the end of April 1921, but the Israelites failed to appear as witnesses. The Court subsequently followed procedure and issued warrants of arrest for the witnesses. The Government made it clear in a public statement that a Court of Law should always be respected, irrespective of race or religion.<sup>146</sup>

The commission held a final meeting with the Israelites on 11 May and again delivered the Government's request. The Israelites refused to accept it and stated categorically that the issue was between the Government and God. Directly after they returned from the meeting, the commission reported via telegram their failure to defuse the situation. The telegram also included the suggestion that a sufficient force be sent to remove the illegal squatters. Forceful eviction was

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144 Union of South Africa: **Interim and Final Reports of the Native Affairs Commission on the 'Israelites' at Bulhoek**, p.3; W.K. Hancock: **Smuts, the Fields of Force**, p.92.

145 Union of South Africa: **Interim and Final Reports of the Native Affairs Commission on the 'Israelites' at Bulhoek**, pp.4-7; R. Edgar: **Because They Chose the Plan of God**, pp.22-23.

146 Union of South Africa: **Interim and Final Reports of the Native Affairs Commission on the 'Israelites' at Bulhoek**, p8.

the last option available to the Government. This was to be executed by the police, supported by elements of the UDF.<sup>147</sup>

### 3.2.4 THE EVICTION OF THE BULHOEK SQUATTERS

The public opinion at the time reflected strong support, across the demographic spectrum, for the Government's stance. On 17 May, *Imvo* criticised the Israelites and pointed out that the Government was left with no choice. The General Council of the Transkeian Territories followed suit and passed a resolution condemning the Israelites and calling on the Government to enforce the law. The Johannesburg *Star* fully supported the Government and insisted on a massive contingent to enforce the law.<sup>148</sup>

This "massive contingent" consisted of 800 policemen selected from all over the country. Police arrived at Queenstown between 12 and 15 May, and were divided into two regiments (six squadrons) and a Maxim machine-gun detachment. The Union Defence Force detached an Artillery section and an Ambulance section to the police force for support. The preparations continued, while Col. Truter notified Mjijima that he had been ordered by the Union Government to carry out the following orders:

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- a. To arrest certain men, against whom warrants have been issued, in order that they should be dealt with according to law.
  - b. To see that all unauthorised residents leave Ntabalanga and go back to where they came from.
  - c. To destroy all houses erected without authority.
  - d. On completion of these operations, a force will be left at Ntabalanga to prevent any unauthorised resident squatting there. Everyone's person and property will be respected...any resistance to lawful authority will be drastically dealt with."<sup>149</sup>

Mjijima answered this notice and again explained his background and how the Israelites were ordained by God to stay there and wait for Him. Col. Truter mobilised the force under his command early on the morning of 23 May and moved out in the direction of the Kamastone Location. On 24 May 1921, at 09:00, Truter deployed his force on the sloping hills south of Bulhoek.<sup>150</sup> (See Figure 3.1: Sketch of Bulhoek Incident.)

147 Union of South Africa: **Interim and Final Reports of the Native Affairs Commission on the 'Israelites' at Bulhoek**, p.8.

148 W.K. Hancock: **Smuts, the Fields of Force**, p.95.

149 Anon.: *The Bulhoek Affair*, **Nonquai**, vol. 12, no. 7, pp.337-338.

150 SANA, JUS 288, 2/853/20, Police Reports on Bulhoek Fight, 24 May 1921, 4 June 1921, Commissioner of Police - Secretary for Justice, p.1; Union of South Africa: **Interim and Final Reports of the Native Affairs Commission on the 'Israelites' at Bulhoek**, pp.9-11; E.J. Brinton: *A Reminiscence of the Bulhoek Affair*, **Nonquai**, vol.13, no. 7, p.389.

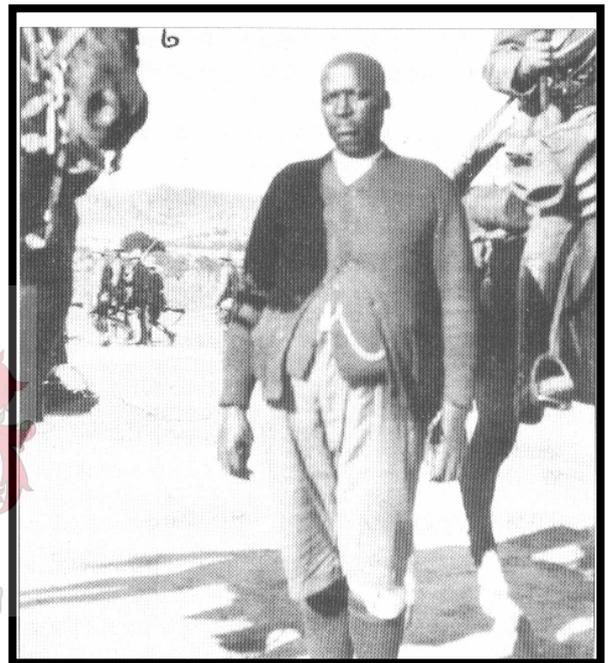
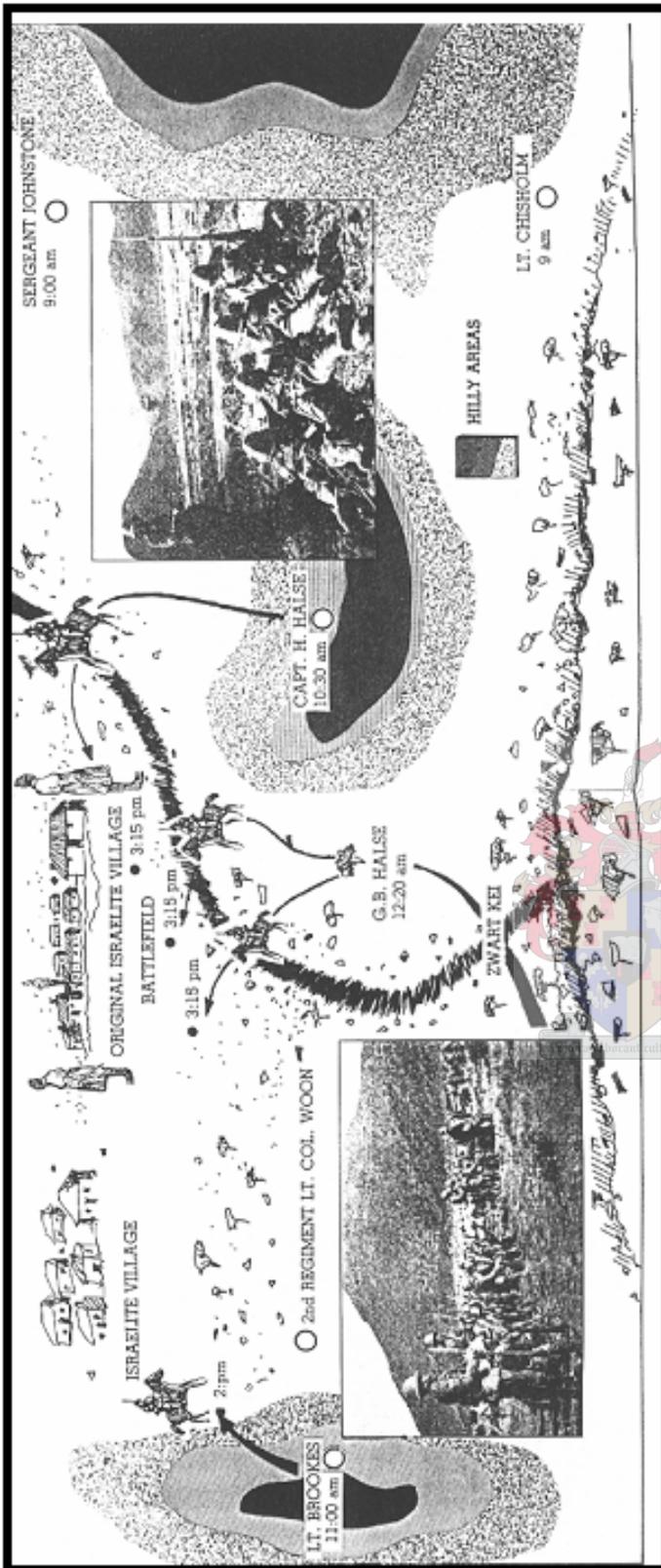


Figure 3.1: Sketch of the Bulhoek Incident (Left).<sup>151</sup>

Figure 3.2: Enoch Mgijima (Right).<sup>152</sup>

151 R. Edgar: **Because They Chose the Plan of God**, p.31.

152 D.H. Makobe: Understanding the Bulhoek Massacre, Voices after the Massacre and Down the Years, **Militaria**, vol. 26, no. 2, 1996, p.98.

The Israelites were gathering in formations, dressed in white smocks and khaki shorts and armed with swords, knobkerries, spears and other home-made weapons. Three policemen, Sgt. Wicks, Sgt. Boucher and Insp. W.H. Quirk, were dispatched to speak to the Israelites before the general advance was to begin. They were met by three Israelites and the following conversation took place:

SA Police: "What are your intentions? Will you allow us to come in and do as we intend to do or do you intend to fight?"

Israelites: "From Jehova we will not allow you to scatter our people from Ntabalanga, we will not allow you to burn our huts and we will not allow you to arrest the two men you wish to."

SA Police: "That means you intend to fight?"

Israelites: "That is for you, not for us to know."<sup>153</sup>

Sgt. Wicks reiterated the point that surrender could still save them from harm, but the Israelites did not surrender and they returned to their respective sides. The Israelites grouped into four armed columns of a 100 each with smaller armed groupings bringing their total strength up to 500. The commander of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Regiment, Lt. Col. E. Woon, had advanced to 300 yards from the Israelites, when three Israelites approached him from within the group. They enquired as to his intentions and they were told that Woon wanted to enter the village, but would meet any opposition with force. They warned him that God was on their side and returned to their position. The Israelites subsequently advanced upon Woon's force.<sup>154</sup>

The centre troop of 25 men was ordered to shoot one volley as a warning over their heads, but this had no effect on the Israelites' charge. Woon then ordered the whole front line to open fire with five rounds rapid fire. Still the Israelites advanced amidst heavy casualties. (See below for figures) Hand-to-hand fighting broke out, but the Israelites fell back and regrouped for a counterattack on the right flank of the police. The machine gun, stationed on the right flank on high ground under the command of Lt S. Chisholm, opened fire on the attacking column and drove it back. The firing

153 SANA, JUS 288, 2/853/20, Police Reports on Bulhoek Fight, 24 May 1921, 4 June 1921; Commissioner of Police - Secretary for Justice, p.1, R. Edgar: **Because They Chose the Plan of God**, p.29; Union of South Africa: **Interim and Final Reports of the Native Affairs Commission on the 'Israelites' at Bulhoek**, pp.9-11.

154 SANA, JUS 288, 2/853/20, Police Reports on Bulhoek Fight, 24 May 1921; 4 June 1921, Commissioner of Police - Secretary for Justice, p.2, R. Edgar: **Because They Chose the Plan of God**, p.32; E.J. Brinton: A Reminiscence of the Bulhoek Affair, **Nonquai**, vol.13, no. 7, p.389; Anon., The Bulhoek Affair, **Nonquai**, vol. 12, no. 7, p.340; Union of South Africa: **Interim and Final Reports of the Native Affairs Commission on the 'Israelites' at Bulhoek**, pp.9-11.

stopped as soon as the attack was broken off. The Israelites surrendered and Mjijima (see Figure 3.2) was arrested and taken to the Queenstown jail. A total of 95 Israelites were arrested.<sup>155</sup>

### 3.2.5 THE AFTERMATH OF THE BULHOEK INCIDENT

Lt. Col. Woon continued his advance on the village and arrested the rest of the Israelites. The prisoners were allowed to take care of their dead and hold a burial service. The Ambulance section, under the command of Maj. Welsh, assumed responsibility for the wounded and attended them until they could be transported to the Queenstown hospital. The casualties amongst the Israelites were 163 dead and 129 wounded. The woman and children were registered on 26 May, while the Native Affairs Department and the magistrate arranged for them to be dispersed.<sup>156</sup>

The police had only one stab wound as casualty, and shortly after the incident the policemen were shipped back to their original posts. The operation cost the police £472. The Artillery section returned to Pretoria without firing a shot while the Ambulance section received praise for a job well done.<sup>157</sup>

Hearty congratulations, however, were not forthcoming from the press or the opposition. The Johannesburg *Star*, ironically, led the charge in criticising the Government for sending too big a force, not utilising air power to frighten the Israelites into submission and for shooting at the last minute, which ensured maximum casualties. The use of force, however, became inevitable when negotiations failed. The police gave verbal and physical warning of their intention to use force if necessary. The police force advanced upon the inferiorly armed Israelites. Their warning shots were insufficient and in the execution of their duties they fired upon the charging Israelites as a last resort. The South African Native National Congress strongly criticised the action and denounced it as racial bigotry. A commission of inquiry was demanded in African political and social circles. However, the Government announced on 15 June 1921 that no commission would be appointed<sup>158</sup>. Gen Smuts bore the brunt of the criticism and was even labelled the "Butcher of Bulhoek". The severity of the Government's actions was not forgotten when, in the following year,

155 R. Edgar: **Because They Chose the Plan of God**, p.3; SANA, JUS 288, 2/853/20, Police Reports on Bulhoek Fight, 24 May 1921; 4 June 1921, Commissioner of Police - Secretary for Justice, pp.3-4.

156 SANA, JUS 288, 2/853/20, Police Reports on Bulhoek Fight, 24 May 1921, 4 June 1921, Commissioner of Police - Secretary for Justice, pp.96-97, Union of South Africa: **Interim and Final Reports of the Native Affairs Commission on the 'Israelites' at Bulhoek**, pp.9-11.

157 SANDFA, DC 451, 52002, Recalcitrant Israelite. Native. Illegal Squatting on Bulhoek Sub-Location, Secretary for Defence - Secretary for Finance, 22 October 1921; SANA, JUS 288, 2/853/20, Police Reports on Bulhoek Fight, 24 May 1921, 4 June 1921, Commissioner of Police - Secretary for Justice, p.4; W.K. Hancock: **Smuts, the Fields of Force**, pp.96-97; Union of South Africa: **Interim and Final Reports of the Native Affairs Commission on the 'Israelites' at Bulhoek**, pp.9-11.

158 W.K. Hancock: **Smuts, the Fields of Force**, p.97.

the Government reacted against the uprising of the Bondelswarts in the Protectorate of South West Africa.<sup>159</sup>

### 3.3 THE UPRISING OF THE BONDELSWARTS, MAY TO JUNE 1922

#### 3.3.1 THE SOUTH WEST AFRICAN MANDATE

Union forces invaded German South West Africa, known today as Namibia, in 1915 and occupied the territory for the remainder of the First World War. Gen. L. Botha provided this force in support of Britain's fight against Germany. The German colony was thereafter under martial law until 1919. The victors of the war divided the colonial assets of Germany amongst themselves. The Treaty of Versailles identified South West Africa as a category C mandate, which was henceforth placed in the custody of the British Monarch. The League of Nations endorsed various nations with the responsibility of administering these territories. The Union of South Africa was requested to administrate South West Africa on behalf of the British Crown.<sup>160</sup>

President W. Wilson of the United States of America initiated the system of mandatory government to prevent outright annexation of territories. He envisaged the mandatory power to fulfil a “sacred trust of civilisation”, providing “tutelage for those people not yet able to stand by themselves in the strenuous conditions of the modern world”, and it was expected to promote their “well-being and development.”<sup>161</sup> The Union Parliament accepted this responsibility and approved the South West Africa Mandate Act No. 49 of 1919. The mandate was signed on 17 December 1920. Martial law was recalled and the civilian administration was awarded the authority to rule South West Africa as a mandated territory from 1 January 1921. (See Figure 3.3: Map of South West Africa.) G.R. Hofmeyer, the appointed Administrator-General, ruled with an Advisory Committee of nine members.<sup>162</sup>

#### 3.3.2 THE BONDELSWARTS UNDER GERMAN RULE

The Bondelswarts were indigenous to the South West African region, known today as Southern Namibia and the Northern Cape in South Africa. In South West Africa, they were the masters of the south before the German occupation. They were a nomadic, pastoral people who lived in

159 D.H. Makobe: Understanding the Bulhoek Massacre, *Voices after the Massacre and Down the Years. Militaria*, vol. 26, no. 2, 1996, p.111; W.K. Hancock: **Smuts, the Fields of Force**, pp.96-97.

160 F.J. Burger: Teeninsurgensie in Namibië: Die Rol van die Polisie (Ongepubliseerde M.A. Tesis, Universiteit van Suid-Afrika, 1992), pp.96-100; B.J. Liebenberg: “Botha en Smuts Aan Bewind, 1910-1924”, uit C.F.J. Muller, et al: **Vyfhonderd Jaar Suid-Afrikaanse Geskiedenis**, p.411.

161 G.L.M. Lewis: The Bondelswarts Rebellion of 1922, p.53.

162 F.J. Burger: Teeninsurgensie in Namibië: Die Rol van die Polisie, pp.96-100; B.J. Liebenberg: “Botha en Smuts Aan Bewind, 1910-1924”; p.411; G.L.M. Lewis: The Bondelswarts Rebellion of 1922, p.53; P. Pearson: **History and Social Structure of the Rehoboth Baster Community of Namibia**, Vol I, p.150.



Morris fought as a captain. He made a name for himself as being a capable and resourceful leader and a master of guerrilla tactics.<sup>165</sup>

The conflict ended with both parties signing a peace treaty, which stipulated that the territory of the Bondelswarts would be reduced to 175,000 hectares and that no chief was to be appointed. Cristiaan and Morris feared personal retribution from the Germans. They crossed the Orange River into the Northern Cape accompanied by a few followers and settled in the Steinkopf and Matjiesfontein areas respectively. They were declared outlaws with a price on their heads. The rest of the tribe lived under German rule until Union forces defeated the Germans 1915.<sup>166</sup>

### 3.3.3 “EXCHANGING ONE YOKE FOR ANOTHER”

The Bondelswarts expected the new colonial power to abolish the restrictions of the German treaty. Instead, the conditions of the treaty were confirmed. This aroused strong resentment among the Bondelswarts and they remarked to the Commission of Enquiry that they had, “only exchanged one yoke for another”.<sup>167</sup> The return of their true chief, Cristiaan, in 1919, fuelled these resentments. The Administration did not recognise Cristiaan and confirmed Timotheus Beukes as the chief appointed by the Administration. Cristiaan surrendered himself to the police to face charges of illegally entering South West Africa and bringing stock over the border without authorisation. He was subsequently tried and was fined £100 or 12 months imprisonment. However, the sentence was suspended and Cristiaan was allowed to stay in the area. This commuted sentence was brought about by the fact that the Union Government refused to let Cristiaan’s stock return to the Union.<sup>168</sup>

The reaction of the Administration to Cristiaan’s return enraged the Bondelswarts, but was by no means the only reason for their eventual uprising. The poverty amongst the Bondelswarts worsened year after year. The reserve allocated to them became too small to accommodate their nomadic ventures and the cultivation of crops was unknown to them. They bartered and shop owners paid them in "good-for" vouchers that were only redeemable at the specific store. Their poverty was compounded by the fact that Hofmeyer proclaimed a new dog tax, Proclamation No. 16 of 1921. Dog owners had to pay £1 for the first dog, £2.10 for two dogs, £4.10 for three dogs,

165 G. Cockram: **South West African Mandate**, pp.130-131; R. Freislich: **The Last Tribal War**, pp.4-5; Union of South Africa: **Report of the Commission Appointed to Enquire into the Rebellion of the Bondelzwarts**, no. 16/13, 19 March 1923, pp.2-3.

166 R. Freislich: **The Last Tribal War**, pp.4-5; G. Cockram: **South West African Mandate**, pp.130-131; Union of South Africa: **Report of the Commission Appointed to Enquire into the Rebellion of the Bondelzwarts**, no. 16/13, 19 March 1923, pp.2-3.

167 Union of South Africa: **Report of the Commission Appointed to Enquire into the Rebellion of the Bondelzwarts**, no. 16/13, 19 March 1923, p.3.

168 R. Freislich: **The Last Tribal War**, pp.5-6; G. Cockram: **South West African Mandate**, p.134; Union of South Africa: **Report of the Commission Appointed to Enquire into the Rebellion of the Bondelzwarts**, no. 16/13, 19 March 1923, pp.2-3, 5-8.

£7 for four dogs and £10 for five dogs. The dog tax was applicable to everybody, but the tax itself was extremely high for the prevailing economic situation. A drought in the region caused an economic slump, which caused the payment of lower wages or of payment in kind. The effect of the tax on the Bondelswarts was fines or imprisonment and inevitably, fewer dogs. This resulted in their inability to protect their flock from jackals and hampered their hunting.<sup>169</sup>

The hunting of game was also restricted and caused many Bondelswarts to go without the vital, established component of meat in their diet. The compulsory dipping and strict quarantine measures also hampered the selling of their stock. These measures were implemented to curtail the spreading of stock diseases and were vital in an area where many commercial farmers traded in stock. However, much of the stock died and the economic viability of selling stock continued to decline during the economic slump.<sup>170</sup>

The remark of, “trading one yoke for another”, became all too true for the Bondelswarts. They resented the Administration for their unjust approach and felt antagonised by not being afforded their proper place in their historic area. Many of the older members of the tribe remembered when they were rulers of the whole of southern South West Africa and it was a bitter disappointment when the Union accepted the treaty between the Bondelswarts and the Germans, which confirmed the boundaries of the Bondelswarts Reserve. (See Figure 3.4: Map of the Bondelswarts Reserve.) It became a bone of contention between the Administration and the Bondelswarts when land was allocated to white farmers on their northern boundary and the Bondelswarts living on the land were removed to Driehoek. They had a sketch in their possession, which was given to them by the German Commission when the allocation of the reserve was discussed, that indicated the northern boundary. This included parts of the Uitschot, Welgelegen and Plankieskop farms. However, the official survey map indicated that their northern boundary ran south of these farms. The Administration accepted the official survey as the true reflection of the boundaries, which left the Bondelswarts believing that they had been robbed of much needed land. Their contempt grew to include all activities of the Administration.<sup>171</sup>

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169 Union of South Africa: **Report of the Commission Appointed to Enquire into the Rebellion of the Bondelzwarts**, no. 16/13, 19 March 1923, pp.2-3; R. Freislich: **The Last Tribal War**, pp.4-5; G. Cockram: **South West African Mandate**, pp.130-131.

170 T. Emmet: **Popular Resistance and the Roots of Nationalism in Namibia**, pp.116-118; G. Cockram: **South West African Mandate**, pp.135-136; Union of South Africa: **Report of the Commission Appointed to Enquire into the Rebellion of the Bondelzwarts**, no. 16/13, 19 March 1923, pp.1-12; Union of South Africa: **Report of the Administrator on the Bondelswarts Rising, 1922**, no. 30/22, 22 June 1922, p.3.

171 Union of South Africa: **Report of the Administrator on the Bondelswarts Rising, 1922**, no. 30/22, 22 June 1922, p.2; Union of South Africa: **Report of the Commission Appointed to Enquire into the Rebellion of the Bondelzwarts**, no. 16/13, 19 March 1923, pp.8, 12.

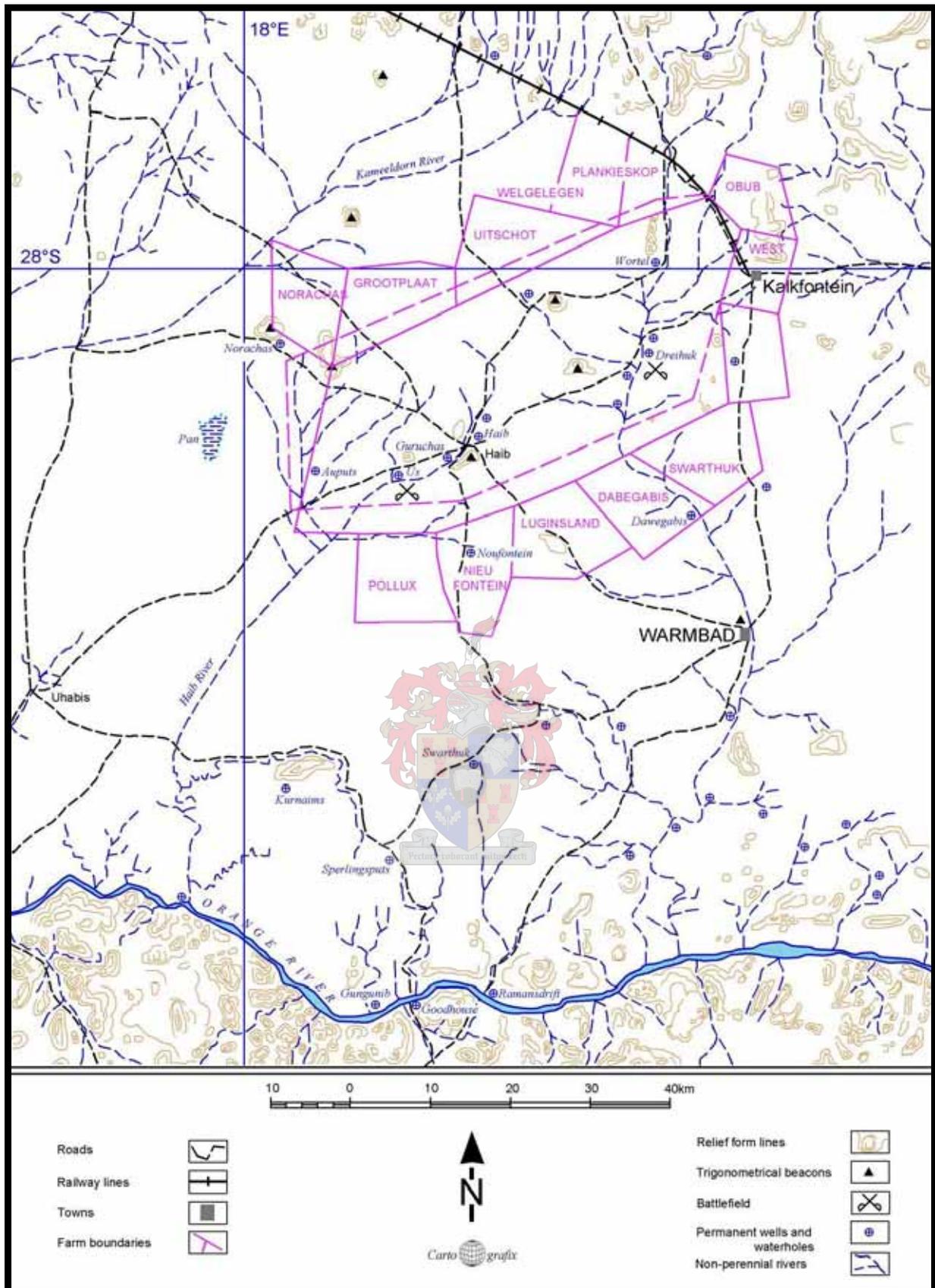


Figure 3.4: The Bondelswarts Reserve.<sup>172</sup>

172 SANA, PM 1/2/66, 167/22: Report by Maj. Van Coller of Military Operation against the Bondelswarts Hottentots, 26 May to 8 June 1922; Lt. Col. J.J. Jacobs, Department Military Geography, Faculty Military Science, Stellenbosch University, is recognised for processing the original map.

One of these activities was the Branding of Cattle Proclamation. This provided for the branding of large stock by everyone. The white farmers were allowed to keep their branding iron in their possession after they had paid for and registered the brand. The indigenous populations were not allowed to keep their branding iron, even after paying for and registering the brand. The branding iron was kept in the possession of the local magistrate. He authorised the branding of stock by tasking an official to do it, but only after ownership was established. The reason for this discrimination was to contain stock theft by the indigenous populations. The Bondelswarts, being a proud tribe, felt antagonised by this blatant act of discrimination. Thus, the relationship between the Bondelswarts and the Administration continued to deteriorate.<sup>173</sup>

The Administration continued the German law which stated that indigenous men had to enter the labour market if they had no visible means of support. This was interpreted by the Administration as having less than ten head of cattle or fifty head of small stock. The influx of indigenous people to the towns to seek work was strictly controlled and no vagrancy was allowed. This forced many to seek work on commercial farms. The dog tax and hunting regulations were aimed at ensuring that the Bondelswarts would be forced to seek work. These taxes were instated when farmers asked the Administrator to facilitate a process whereby labour would be secured. Hofmeyer denied this to be the intention, but the magistrate of Warmbad and a farmer in the district delivered evidence to the Native Affairs Commission confirming it.<sup>174</sup>

However, the Bondelswarts were notorious for being bad labourers. It was not part of their natural heritage to render labour on commercial farms and their tribal responsibilities often kept them away from work. Much friction arose between the Bondelswarts and the white farmers. The farmers described the Bondelswarts as lazy and uncooperative and handed out punishment, such as flogging and not paying wages or not giving the labourers food. This friction was further aggravated by the sour relationship between the Bondelswarts and the police.<sup>175</sup>

The Bondelswarts experienced the police as harsh, provocative and unnecessarily severe. The police, on the other hand, viewed them as insolent, lazy and thievish. The general view of the police was that they were policing a subservient race and insolence was rewarded with flogging.

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173 Union of South Africa: **Report of the Administrator on the Bondelswarts Rising, 1922**, no. 30/22, 22 June 1922, p.3; T. Emmet: **Popular Resistance and the Roots of Nationalism in Namibia**, p.117; G. Cockram: **South West African Mandate**, pp.136-137; Union of South Africa: **Report of the Commission Appointed to Enquire into the Rebellion of the Bondelzwarts**, no. 16/13, 19 March 1923, pp.9-10.

174 T. Emmet: **Popular Resistance and the Roots of Nationalism in Namibia**, p.116; Union of South Africa: **Report of the Commission Appointed to Enquire into the Rebellion of the Bondelzwarts**, no. 16/13, 19 March 1923, p.11; G. Cockram: **South West African Mandate**, p.136.

175 Union of South Africa: **Report of the Commission Appointed to Enquire into the Rebellion of the Bondelzwarts**, no. 16/13, 19 March 1923, p.11; G. Cockram: **South West African Mandate**, p.136.

The Bondelswarts viewed the police with suspicion and fear. This antagonism between the police and the Bondelswarts was exacerbated following Cristiaan's return. A police force of 15 men was sent to arrest some of the men who returned with Cristiaan on suspicion of stock theft. The police were confronted by the naturally suspicious Bondelswarts. The situation was, however, quickly brought under control after the police explained their presence. They said that Cristiaan and four headmen had to discuss their presence with the magistrate, Fleck, at Warmbad. Cristiaan sent four headmen who were arrested in Haib on their way to the magistrate. They were released soon thereafter, but the relationship between the Bondelswarts and the police continued to deteriorate. This provided a breeding ground for contempt on both sides.<sup>176</sup>

### 3.3.4 THE RETURN OF ABRAHAM MORRIS

White fears of indigenous uprisings created an atmosphere of paranoia in which any large movement by the Bondelswarts was seen as a possible mobilisation. Cristiaan and 50 of his followers were no exception. Their movement into South West Africa was immediately noticed and reported to the magistrate in Warmbad. The message, which reached the centre of the farming community in the area, contained a warning that a large force of 3 000 Bondelswarts was about to attack the town of Warmbad. The magistrate was not affected by the hysteria of the moment and dispatched policemen to arrest the illegal immigrants.<sup>177</sup>

More Bondelswarts crossed the Orange River in the wake of Cristiaan's return. Their return sparked off more fears of unrest and the relationship between the Bondelswarts and the police, as well as the Bondelswarts and the white farmers, deteriorated. The tension reached breaking point with the return of Abraham Morris in April 1922. Morris embodied the fighting spirit of the Bondelswarts and he was given a hero's welcome when he arrived at Guruchas.<sup>178</sup>

The motive for his return to Guruchas is unsure. The members of the Commission investigating the uprising had different arguments. Dr. A.W. Roberts and Dr C.T. Loram argued that his intention in returning to his homeland was to rest and die there. He was a man in his fifties, his wife had passed away recently and he had been away from his home for almost seventeen years. He was not spoiling for a fight. The opposing argument by Gen. Lemmer states that he was looking for a fight. His return was the sign that the Bondelswarts would rise again. He would lead them in tearing up the treaty and in the process reclaim what was rightfully theirs. Scores of

176 Union of South Africa: **Report of the Commission Appointed to Enquire into the Rebellion of the Bondelzwarts**, no. 16/13, 19 March 1923, pp.5-7; G. Cockram: **South West African Mandate**, p.127.

177 R. Freislich: **The Last Tribal War. A History of the Bondelswart Uprising, which took place in South West Africa**, p.7; Union of South Africa: **Report of the Commission Appointed to Enquire into the Rebellion of the Bondelzwarts**, no. 16/13, 19 March 1923, pp.5-6; T. Emmet: **Popular Resistance and the Roots of Nationalism in Namibia**, p.121.

178 R. Freislich: **The Last Tribal War**, pp.12-13.

Bondelswarts apparently believed some action would follow, because they converged on Haib and Guruchas as soon as Morris returned.<sup>179</sup>

However, his return was not kept secret. Cristiaan notified the Location Superintendent, Noothout, stationed at Driehoek, who in turn notified the magistrate at Warmbad. The information reached the ears of Hofmeyer, who issued instructions that Morris must be arrested and charged with the following offences:<sup>180</sup>

- a. Bringing sixteen rifles into the territory of SWA without permits.
- b. Bringing cattle over the border without a permit.
- c. Entering the territory without a permit.

Sgt. Van Niekerk and Native Constable Gert Kraai were ordered on 5 May to arrest Morris on these charges. Their attempt to arrest Morris was obstructed by the tribe. It was the opinion of the tribe that Morris had done nothing wrong and their champion would not go to gaol. Angry words were exchanged, although Van Niekerk and Kraai denied this, the Bondelswarts delivered testimony at the Commission of Enquiry that the following was said: "*Die lood van die Goevernement sal nou op julle smelt.*" ("The Government's lead will now melt upon you.") The Bondelswarts accepted this as a declaration of war. The word spread through the reserve of an impending conflict. The Bondelswarts converged on Haib and Guruchas with their stock, possessions and rifles.<sup>181</sup>

### 3.3.5 NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN THE ADMINISTRATION AND THE BONDELSWARTS

Sgt. Van Niekerk reported the incident to the magistrate, who dispatched Johannes Bezuidenhout, a Bondelswart, on 10 May with a message ordering Cristiaan to attend a meeting in Warmbad. Bezuidenhout delivered the message, but informed Cristiaan that he was not returning to Warmbad. In view of the previous meeting, when four headmen were arrested, this invitation was met with cynicism and the order was ignored. The magistrate telegraphed the Administrator on the same day he sent Bezuidenhout. He stated the events of the attempted arrest as well as the movement of the Bondelswarts to Guruchas. He requested a strong police force to deal with the situation. The Administrator answered the call by sending the Commissioner of Police in South West Africa, Maj. C.A. van Coller, and at the same time mobilised volunteers. The dichotomy in

179 G. Cockram: **South West African Mandate**, p.139; Union of South Africa: **Report of the Commission Appointed to Enquire into the Rebellion of the Bondelzwarts**, no. 16/13, 19 March 1923, pp.13-14.

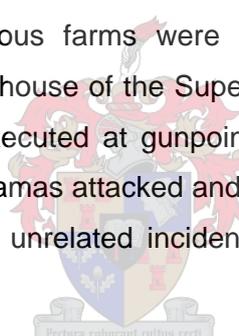
180 G. Cockram: **South West African Mandate**, p.139; T. Emmet: **Popular Resistance and the Roots of Nationalism in Namibia**, p.121; R. Freislich: **The Last Tribal War**, p.13.

181 Union of South Africa: **Report of the Commission Appointed to Enquire into the Rebellion of the Bondelzwarts**, no. 16/13, 19 March 1923, pp.14-15; T. Emmet: **Popular Resistance and the Roots of Nationalism in Namibia**, p.121; G. Cockram: **South West African Mandate**, p.140; R. Freislich: **The Last Tribal War**, pp.15-16.

this approach confused the Bondelswarts and made them suspicious of Hofmeyer's true intentions.<sup>182</sup>

Hofmeyer's duality clouded the negotiation process. Maj. Van Coller was instructed by the Administrator to facilitate the arrest of Morris and four other members on related charges. Van Coller called in the support of Noothout and the head of the Catholic Mission in the Bondelswarts Reserve, Monsignor Von Krolokowski, to facilitate the process. Over the following ten days, several attempts were made to bring the Administrator and the Bondelswarts to an amiable agreement. The Bondelswarts were suspicious of moving out of their reserve and feared arrests. Cristiaan demanded that the Administrator should come to see him in the reserve. The Administrator, however, declined and sent an ultimatum on 20 May. The ultimatum called for Morris and four tribesmen to hand themselves over for trial, the surrender of all arms and ammunition and the obstruction of officers of the law to stop, or there would be dire consequences for the whole tribe.<sup>183</sup>

The Bondelswarts rejected the ultimatum and continued preparations for the coming conflict. In the period 22 to 25 May 1922 various farms were raided for horses, supplies, rifles and ammunition. These raids included the house of the Superintendent of the Bondelswarts Reserve, Noothout, himself. The raids were executed at gunpoint, but nobody was injured or physically abused. In a separate incident three Namas attacked and murdered Mrs. Lydia Sarah Coleman on the farm, Kubub, near Luderitz. This unrelated incident only heightened white fears and anti-Bondelswarts feelings.<sup>184</sup>



### 3.3.6 PREPARING FOR THE CONFLICT

It was important for Hofmeyer to resolve the situation quickly and quietly for various reasons. He was in charge of a protectorate and had to answer to the Union of South Africa. The Union in turn answered to the Permanent Mandates Commission of the League of Nations. A clash between Protectorate forces and an indigenous group, who they were supposed to develop and to hold in sacred trust, was an undesirable situation. However, a prolonged uprising by the Bondelswarts constituted the danger of further uprisings by other indigenous populations of the Protectorate. This was even more undesirable and Hofmeyer did not wish to have to explain to Gen. Smuts why a general uprising had occurred.<sup>185</sup>

182 Union of South Africa: **Report of the Commission Appointed to Enquire into the Rebellion of the Bondelzwarts**, no. 16/13, 19 March 1923, p.15, R. Freislich: **The Last Tribal War**, pp.16-17; Union of South Africa: **Report of the Administrator on the Bondelswarts Rising, 1922**, no. 30/22, 22 June 1922, pp.4-5.

183 R. Freislich: **The Last Tribal War**, pp.20-31; G. Cockram: **South West African Mandate**, pp.140-141; Union of South Africa: **Report of the Commission Appointed to Enquire into the Rebellion of the Bondelzwarts**, no. 16/13, 19 March 1923, pp.16-22.

184 G.L.M. Lewis: **The Bondelswarts Rebellion of 1922**, p.86.

185 R. Freislich: **The Last Tribal War**, p.18.

Hofmeyer was therefore reluctant to involve the Union of South Africa in the matter and altruistically pointed out that the Union was still reeling from the Rand strike of 1922 and that the settlers of the Protectorate had an opportunity to prove themselves worthy of the privileges they enjoyed by helping to suppress the uprising. Aid from the Union, however, was forthcoming and came in the form of two De Havilland D.H. 9 aeroplanes (see Figure 3.5), two mountain guns and four Vickers machine-guns with the respective personnel. Col. Sir P. van Ryneveld (see Figure 3.6), Director Air Services, was in command of the aeroplanes. The Protectorate forces mobilised and arrived at Kalkfontein South on 23 May.<sup>186</sup>



**Figure 3.5:** De Havilland, D.H. 9. (Left).<sup>187</sup>

**Figure 3.6:** Col. Sir Pierre van Ryneveld, KBE, DSO, MC. (Right).<sup>188</sup>

Hofmeyer, a former Clerk of the Union House of Assembly, appointed himself commander of the combined force and bestowed upon himself the rank of Colonel. It was his opinion that there was a lack of experienced commanders in the Protectorate and that he could not wait for the Union to send an able commander because quick action was called for. However, the Union Defence Force did send a liaison officer with the support weapons, Maj. A.H. Prins, to assist Hofmeyer during the conflict.<sup>189</sup>

186 SANA, PM 1/2/66, 167/22, Report by Maj. Van Coller of Military Operation against the Bondelswarts Hottentots, 26 May to 8 June 1922, pp.1-2; R. Freislich: **The Last Tribal War** p.37; G.L.M. Lewis: *The Bondelswarts Rebellion of 1922*, p.87.

187 P.F. Straney and R. Sacchi: 'South Africa's War Birds', <http://www.trains-n-planes.com/ocw/saw/saw2.htm>, 1992 (10 July 2004).

188 Anon.: *The Trouble in the South-West: Full Story of the Origin and Suppression of the Bondelzwarts' Revolt*, **Nonqai**, vol. 13, no. 7, July 1922, p.402.

189 G. Cockram: **South West African Mandate**, p.144; G.L.M. Lewis: *The Bondelswarts Rebellion of 1922*, p.88; SANDFA, CGS(1) 12, 23, Native Disturbances at Kalkfontein, May 1922 Bondelswarts Rebellion, 2/52570, Telegram G.M. 1309, Chief of Union Defence Force - Minister of Defence, 23 May 1922; SANDFA, CGS(1) 12, 23, Native Disturbances at Kalkfontein, May 1922 Bondelswarts

The volunteers arrived steadily at Kalkfontein South from the Gibeon, Keetmanshoop, Aroab and Warmbad districts and were grouped into squadrons. The Union contingent joined the Protectorate force at Kalkfontein South on 26 May.<sup>190</sup> (See Figure 3.7: Composition of the Protectorate Force.)

Hofmeyer employed siege tactics against the Bondelswarts. He enveloped their positions at Guruchas and Haib by occupying the waterholes situated at Wortel, Driehoek, Dawigabis, Neufontein, Auputs and Norachas. He planned to deprive them of food and water and to cut off their retreat to the Orange River and the Fish River Canyon.<sup>191</sup>

Unit	Officers	Other Ranks	Total
Headquarters	5	4	9
A Squadron	4	103	107
B Squadron	4	88	92
C Squadron	4	70	74
D Squadron	2	47	49
Mountain Gun Section	1	13	14
Machine Gun Section	2	15	17
Signalling Sections		8	8
<b>Total</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>348</b>	<b>370</b>

**Figure 3.7:** The Composition of the Protectorate Force.<sup>192</sup>

South of the Orange River, forces from the Union of South Africa prepared to intercept possible stragglers crossing the border. The head of the South African Police in the Western Districts, Lt. Col. H.F. Trew, instructed reinforcements in the Steinkopf region to assist with border patrols. Smuts made it clear to Trew that the police were not allowed, under any circumstances, to cross the border and participate in the expedition against the Bondelswarts. Lt. Col. A.H.M. Nussey, the Staff Officer of the Potchefstroom Military District, was sent with orders by the Prime Minister to support the police and to prepare for the possible rapid deployment of volunteers in the event that military intervention became necessary.<sup>193</sup>

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Rebellion, 9/52570, Telegram G.M. 1315, Chief of Union Defence Force - Administrator S.W.A., 25 May 1922.

190 SANA, PM 1/2/66, 167/22: Report by Maj. Van Coller of Military Operation against the Bondelswarts Hottentots, 26 May to 8 June 1922, p.2; G.L.M. Lewis: The Bondelswarts Rebellion of 1922, p.88.

191 SANA, PM 1/2/66, 167/22, Report by Maj. Van Coller of Military Operation against the Bondelswarts Hottentots, 26 May to 8 June 1922, p.2; G.L.M. Lewis: The Bondelswarts Rebellion of 1922, p.88.

192 SANA, PM 1/2/66, 167/22, Report by Maj. Van Coller of Military Operation against the Bondelswarts Hottentots, 26 May to 8 June 1922, p.2.

193 SANDFA, CGS(1) 12, 23, Native Disturbances at Kalkfontein, May 1922, Bondelswarts Rebellion, Report by Lt. Col. Nussey, 27 July 1922, pp.1-2; G.L.M. Lewis: The Bondelswarts Rebellion of 1922, p.90.

### 3.3.7 MILITARY OPERATIONS

The Bondelswarts organised their hierarchy, with Cristiaan as the hereditary chief and Morris as the war chief with a few vice-captains. Each vice-captain was in charge of a commando, which was divided into sections. They still had a severe shortage of arms and ammunition, but their raiding strategy was to ambush Protectorate soldiers and relieve them of their weapons and ammunition.<sup>194</sup> During their war with the Germans, the Bondelswarts executed this tactic with efficiency and they were hopeful of more successes.<sup>195</sup>

Morris sent Babab, also known as Klaas Isaacks, and Adam Pienaar to Driehoek and Wortel with a commando of 75 men to dominate the direct line of advance towards Guruchas from Kalkfontein South. Morris accompanied by Beukes and a commando of 50 men, moved east towards Warmbad. The intention of this move was never truly established, but it is commonly accepted that Morris wanted to attack and occupy the town. Beukes later testified that their intention was to link up with the Warmbad Bondelswarts. An attack on Warmbad would divide Hofmeyer's force and divert his concentration from the reserve. Cristiaan and the rest of the Bondelswarts occupied the hilly western region of the reserve around Guruchas and Us.<sup>196</sup>

Hofmeyer deployed his squadrons. On 25 May, Capt. J.C. Balt marched with C Squadron, a machine gun section and a Heliographic team on Norachas, after they had disembarked from the train at Klein Karas. On 26 May, Capt. Jordaan was ordered to occupy Driehoek and Wortel with D Squadron, comprising 47 unmounted men, one machine gun and 21 mounted men. They were transported with lorries and were escorted to their objective by two troops of mounted rifles, Capt. Du Preez and Capt. Prinsloo being in command of a troop each.<sup>197</sup>

The advancing column of D Squadron narrowly missed an ambush laid by Babab at Driehoek. Their choice to take a higher route to avoid the soft sand, because of the vehicles, took them past the ambushing party, who in turn was caught off guard. A fire-fight ensued and the Bondelswarts were driven off without one Protectorate rifle being captured. The pursuit had to be called off due to bad light. The advancing Protectorate force had only one fatal casualty, but the Bondelswarts left three wounded, nineteen killed and nine prisoners behind. The prisoners were duly sent to Kalkfontein South.<sup>198</sup>

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194 The Native Affairs Commission reported that the Bondelswarts had only one rifle between four fighting men.

195 G.L.M. Lewis: *The Bondelswarts Rebellion of 1922*, pp.89-90.

196 G.L.M. Lewis: *The Bondelswarts Rebellion of 1922*, p.90; R. Freislich: **The Last Tribal War**, p.42.

197 SANA, PM 1/2/66, 167/22, Report by Maj. Van Coller of Military Operation against the Bondelswarts Hottentots, 26 May to 8 June 1922, pp.3-4.

198 SANA, PM 1/2/66, 167/22, Report by Maj. Van Coller of Military Operation against the Bondelswarts Hottentots, 26 May to 8 June 1922, p.4; G.L.M. Lewis: *The Bondelswarts Rebellion of 1922*, p.91; R. Freislich: **The Last Tribal War**, p.43.

Upon hearing of the Bondelswarts' reverse at Driehoek Morris immediately returned to Guruchas. His plan to fight on an extended front was abolished. Their failure to acquire more weapons and ammunition was a serious setback for their combat power, but Morris deployed the Bondelswarts in and around Guruchas in defensive positions, hoping to make the Protectorate forces pay dearly for every inch of ground. The Bondelswarts numbered some 1,100 people, with 600 cattle and 8000 small stock.<sup>199</sup>

The troops of Du Preez and Prinsloo returned on the night of 26 May to prepare for the advance on the following day. On the next day, 27 May, A Squadron, two mountain guns, two machine-guns and a heliograph section accompanied Hofmeyer and the HQ personnel as they advanced towards Neufontein via Dawigabis. Prinsloo and his troop provided the advance and the screens, while Du Preez was placed in charge of B Squadron, which covered the rear of the advancing column. The HQ was established at Neufontein on 28 May. Prinsloo received orders to advance from Dawigabis towards Auputs on 27 May and joined Balt's C Squadron, that had advanced from Norachas towards Guruchas. Prinsloo's squadron took a direct line of advance towards Auputs, which took him past the waterhole Us, close to Guruchas. Pienaar ambushed Prinsloo and his men near Us on 28 May, but the trap was sprung too quickly. Prinsloo had one fatality and three wounded, while Pienaar was shot and killed. The Bondelswarts were driven off and Protectorate forces occupied all the waterholes around Guruchas.<sup>200</sup>

The Protectorate forces surrounded Guruchas and Hofmeyer attacked the stronghold on 29 May at 15:00. The mountain guns opened fire from a commanding position east of the objective as soon as the aeroplanes commenced their bombing. Machine gun and rifle fire accompanied the aerial and artillery bombardment. The aerial bombardment concentrated on enemy strong points and concentrated stock. Stock was very dear to the Bondelswarts and the subsequent killing of their stock was a severe blow to their fighting spirit. The aeroplanes would fly over advancing columns and fire ahead on their line of advance and occasionally bomb a position. This co-ordinated air and ground assault afforded the advancing troops the opportunity to make excellent use of air cover. The Bondelswarts bravely held their positions and continued to fire on the advancing force. This was not enough to stop the advance and night found the Protectorate forces between 400 m and 1.6 km from their objective. At the foot of the Guruchas hills in the west, the Protectorate forces were holding the line in the Haib River bed, while the lower hills in the south, west and north were also occupied.<sup>201</sup>

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199 G.L.M. Lewis: *The Bondelswarts Rebellion of 1922*, p.91; R. Freislich: **The Last Tribal War**, pp.43-44.

200 SANA, PM 1/2/66, 167/22, Report by Maj. Van Coller of Military Operation against the Bondelswarts Hottentots, 26 May to 8 June 1922, pp.6-8; G.L.M. Lewis: *The Bondelswarts Rebellion of 1922*, p.92.

201 SANA, PM 1/2/66, 167/22, Report by Maj. Van Coller of Military Operation against the Bondelswarts Hottentots, 26 May to 8 June 1922, pp.8-9; SANDFA, CGS(1) 12, 23, Native Disturbances at

The attack was halted for the night with the aim of commencing activities the next morning. Meanwhile, a cordon was established to prevent any Bondelswarts from escaping. This was ineffective as a band of 30 horsemen, 30 donkey-riders and 290 men on foot escaped to the southeast driving a small number of stock in front of them.<sup>202</sup>

The bombing was resumed at dawn on 30 May, while the Protectorate force advanced towards the defensive Bondelswarts positions. The order to cease fire was issued at 09:00, when the Bondelswarts raised white flags indicating their surrender. Hofmeyer's victory was short-lived when he realised that the prize only included 90 old males, and 700 women and children. Prinsloo and 45 mounted rifles were immediately mobilised to pursue the fleeing Bondelswarts.<sup>203</sup>

Balt was tasked to hold the waterholes surrounding the reserve and to sweep the area for any stragglers and livestock. The stock rounded up totalled 13,970, which comprised 12,470 sheep and goats, 800 head of cattle and 700 donkeys. The prisoners were escorted to Wortel, where arrangements were made to incarcerate them. Hofmeyer believed the uprising had been crushed and sent a telegram to Smuts confirming this. He subsequently returned to Kalkfontein South via Neufontein and awaited Prinsloo's report.<sup>204</sup>

### 3.3.8 GUERRILLA TACTICS IN THE GUNGUNIB

Prinsloo followed the spoor of the fleeing Bondelswarts and reported the same day that they had split into three groups. The first was a group of approximately 70 men who were heading for Sperlingsputs, the second group comprised 130 men and were moving towards Kurniams and the third group consisted of 60 mounted men and 160 men on foot who were heading for Haibmund. Prinsloo decided to follow the last group and requested the occupation of the Swarthuk, Sperlingsputs and Kurniams waterholes as well as reinforcements.<sup>205</sup>

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- 202 Kalkfontein, May 1922, Bondelswarts Rebellion, Report by Col. Sir P. van Ryneveld, pp.2-3; R. Freislich: **The Last Tribal War**, pp.46-47; G.L.M. Lewis: The Bondelswarts Rebellion of 1922, p.92.  
SANA, PM 1/2/66, 167/22, Report by Maj. Van Coller of Military Operation against the Bondelswarts Hottentots, 26 May to 8 June 1922, p.8; R. Freislich: **The Last Tribal War**, p.50.
- 203 SANA, PM 1/2/66, 167/22, Report by Maj. Van Coller of Military Operation against the Bondelswarts Hottentots, 26 May to 8 June 1922, p.10; SANDFA, CGS(1) 12, 23, Native Disturbances at Kalkfontein, May 1922, Bondelswarts Rebellion, Report by Col P. van Reyneveld, p.4; R. Freislich: **The Last Tribal War**, p.50; G.L.M. Lewis: The Bondelswarts Rebellion of 1922, p.93.
- 204 SANA, PM 1/2/66, 167/22, Report by Maj. Van Coller of Military Operation against the Bondelswarts Hottentots, 26 May to 8 June 1922, pp.10-11; SANDFA, CGS(1) 12, 23, Native Disturbances at Kalkfontein, May 1922, Bondelswarts Rebellion, Report by Col P. van Reyneveld, p.4; R. Freislich: **The Last Tribal War**, pp.50-51; G.L.M. Lewis: The Bondelswarts Rebellion of 1922, pp.93-94.
- 205 SANA, PM 1/2/66, 167/22, Report by Maj. Van Coller of Military Operation against the Bondelswarts Hottentots, 26 May to 8 June 1922, p.12; R. Freislich: **The Last Tribal War**, p.51; G.L.M. Lewis: The Bondelswarts Rebellion of 1922, pp.95-6.

The Protectorate forces moved out to occupy the waterholes and Balt sent Lt. Jordaan and 75 mounted rifles to reinforce Prinsloo. Lt. Eksteen, 18 men and one machine-gun were transported via Uhabis to Vioolsdrift to act as a cut-off group, and they were reinforced by Balt and 70 men on 3 June. Morris and the Bondelswarts were hampered from moving towards their traditional stronghold, the Fish River Canyon by the continued aerial reconnaissance. Morris adapted his plan and moved into the Gungunib gorge with the aim of fighting the pursuing force with guerrilla tactics.<sup>206</sup>

The guerrilla tactics employed by the Bondelswarts were well known to Prinsloo and he remembered the lessons learned by the Germans 16 years earlier. He therefore decided not to meet Morris head on, but to envelope Morris by moving at night via Ramans Drift, a gorge running parallel to the Gungunib, stopping at Goodhouse to replenish. Goodhouse was a farm across the Orange River and C. Weidner, the manager, gladly provided them with oranges, fodder and much needed water. This envelopment cut Morris off from the Orange River, his southern escape route, preventing him from continuing his retreat.<sup>207</sup>

Prinsloo expected his reinforcements to arrive on 31 May, because he was under the impression that Hofmeyer was camped at Neufontein in order to quickly support his force. The move towards Kalkfontein South subsequently caused the reinforcements to arrive two days later than expected. The aeroplane ensured that Prinsloo was quickly informed of the delay, which provided him with the opportunity to rest his men, their mounts and to replenish their supplies until 2 June.<sup>208</sup>

The pilots of the two aeroplanes, Col. Sir Van Ryneveld and Lt. Holthouse, facilitated co-ordination between Prinsloo and Jordaan. They landed at Goodhouse to ascertain the battle plan from Prinsloo and in turn located Jordaan on 1 June before he entered the Gungunib to brief him. The plan was for the two forces to move into the Gungunib Gorge<sup>209</sup> on 2 June and crush the Bondelswarts between them in co-ordination with aerial support. The attack commenced on the morning of 2 June. Each attack group had a plane flying in front of them to reconnoitre and to engage the Bondelswarts. The pilot and observer, Lts. Holtshouse and H. Daniel, located the

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206 SANA, PM 1/2/66, 167/22, Report by Maj. Van Coller of Military Operation against the Bondelswarts Hottentots, 26 May to 8 June 1922, p.12; R. Freislich: **The Last Tribal War**, p.51; G.L.M. Lewis: *The Bondelswarts Rebellion of 1922*, pp.95-6.

207 SANA, PM 1/2/66, 167/22, Report by Maj. Van Coller of Military Operation against the Bondelswarts Hottentots, 26 May to 8 June 1922, p.12; R. Freislich: **The Last Tribal War**, p.51; G.L.M. Lewis: *The Bondelswarts Rebellion of 1922*, pp.95-6.

208 SANA, PM 1/2/66, 167/22, Report by Maj. Van Coller of Military Operation against the Bondelswarts Hottentots, 26 May to 8 June 1922, pp.11-13; SANDFA, CGS(1) 12, 23, Native Disturbances at Kalkfontein, May 1922, Bondelswarts Rebellion, Report by Col. Sir P. van Ryneveld, pp.4-5; R. Freislich: **The Last Tribal War**, pp.52-60; G.L.M. Lewis: *The Bondelswarts Rebellion of 1922*, pp.94-96.

209 The Gungunib Gorge was 15 miles (24,15 km) long and 20 to 50 ft (7 to 17 m) wide at the base, with precipitous sides rising to 2 000 ft (700 m).

Bondelswarts and immediately engaged them by firing the machine gun into their midst and bombing them. The attack wreaked havoc among the men and livestock, and the two Protectorate forces continued their advance into the Gungunib Gorge.<sup>210</sup>

Morris regrouped and was informed by his scouts that the force, which had been behind them three days ago, was now between them and freedom, the Orange River. He concluded that their only hope was for a decisive defeat of their pursuers and decided to lead Prinsloo into an ambush at their secret waterhole, the Bergkamer. A group of approximately 160 Bondelswarts were not prepared to fight and moved down the Gungunib. However, Prinsloo had already turned back to Goodhouse to regroup for the next day's advance and the Bondelswarts group skirted around the enemy position into the Union, where they broke into smaller groups and disappeared.<sup>211</sup>

The pilots, via a letter drop, informed Jordaan that the Bondelswarts had left the Gungunib completely. Jordaan continued his advance southwards along the gorge until he reached the Orange River and joined forces with Prinsloo. Operations were continued the next day, 3 June. The Protectorate force tracked the Bondelswarts into the Haib River gorges. Jordaan was ordered to bring up the rest of the force while Prinsloo and fifteen men investigated the rocky amphitheatre, known as Bergkamer.<sup>212</sup>

Morris concealed his men in the crevices in the rocks forming the amphitheatre above the waterhole. Halfway up the valley a Bondelswarts reserve force was waiting to storm the Protectorate force as soon as snipers had pinned them down. The plan was to strike a decisive blow and to replenish their weapons, ammunition and meagre supplies. The snipers, however, opened fire too soon and only pinned down a tenth of the whole force. The main force quickly moved up to render support and to return the rifle fire. Prinsloo and Jordaan managed to gain high ground and inflict heavy casualties during the battle. Fifteen rifles were captured and 49 Bondelswarts were killed in the battle, including Morris. All their remaining cattle were left behind during their flight over the ridge. Only three Protectorate soldiers were injured.<sup>213</sup>

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210 SANA, PM 1/2/66, 167/22, Report by Maj. Van Coller of Military Operation against the Bondelswarts Hottentots, 26 May to 8 June 1922, pp.11-13; SANDFA, CGS(1) 12, 23, Native Disturbances at Kalkfontein, May 1922, Bondelswarts Rebellion, Report by Col. Sir P. van Ryneveld, pp.4-5; R. Freislich: **The Last Tribal War**, pp.52-60; G.L.M. Lewis: *The Bondelswarts Rebellion of 1922*, pp.94-96.

211 SANA, PM 1/2/66, 167/22, Report by Maj. Van Coller of Military Operation against the Bondelswarts Hottentots, 26 May to 8 June 1922, pp.11-13; SANDFA, CGS(1) 12, 23, Native Disturbances at Kalkfontein, May 1922, Bondelswarts Rebellion, Report by Col. Sir P. van Ryneveld, pp.4-5; R. Freislich: **The Last Tribal War**, pp.52-60; G.L.M. Lewis: *The Bondelswarts Rebellion of 1922*, pp.94-96.

212 SANA, PM 1/2/66, 167/22, Report by Maj. Van Coller of Military Operation against the Bondelswarts Hottentots, 26 May to 8 June 1922, p.13; SANDFA, CGS(1) 12, 23, Native Disturbances at Kalkfontein, May 1922, Bondelswarts Rebellion, Report by Col. Sir P. van Ryneveld, p.5; R. Freislich: **The Last Tribal War**, pp.58-60, 68-71; G.L.M. Lewis: *The Bondelswarts Rebellion of 1922*, p.96.

213 SANA, PM 1/2/66, 167/22, Report by Maj. Van Coller of Military Operation against the Bondelswarts Hottentots, 26 May to 8 June 1922, p.13; SANDFA, CGS(1) 12, 23, Native Disturbances at

The Protectorate forces retreated to the Haib valley where they spent two days resting and replenishing their supplies. They set out again from Bergkamer on 6 June, following the spoor left by the Bondelswarts, caught up with them on 7 June in a gorge leading northwards into the plains. Cristiaan, who had assumed leadership of the group after Morris's death, surrendered with 150 men and 50 rifles. The Bondelswarts uprising was finally over.<sup>214</sup>

### 3.3.9 THE RESULT AND THE REVIEW

Cristiaan and Beukes explained in hospital to the Administrator on 9 June that Morris was solely responsible for the uprising. He had incited violence against the Protectorate forces and worked them up to such an extent that neither Beukes nor Cristiaan could intervene. Their explanation did not keep them from the courts and Cristiaan was sentenced to five years hard labour, while Beukes testified for the Crown and was pardoned. The Bondelswarts were allowed to return to their reserve and the captured livestock was returned to them, although many of the stock had stampeded into the desert and were never recovered. Action was taken to improve their economic plight. Work and rations were offered, while medical assistance was given to paupers and the attendance of schools was encouraged.<sup>215</sup>

The few casualties on the side of the Protectorate forces can be attributed to the Air Force. Close co-operation between the ground and air forces ensured that the aeroplanes were effectively utilised. The bombing and strafing of the Bondelswarts attributed to a loss of morale and gave their fighting power a great knock. The aeroplane was unknown to the Bondelswarts and the psychological effect on them was tremendous. Hofmeyer therefore requested Van Ryneveld and his pilots to fly over reserves in the Keetmanshoop area on 15 June as a show of force. The aim was to prevent any other indigenous group attempting anything radical in the wake of the uprising.<sup>216</sup>

Hofmeyer was criticised severely for his handling of the uprising and for appointing himself as commander. Newspapers in South West Africa, South Africa and England questioned his

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Kalkfontein, May 1922, Bondelswarts Rebellion, Report by Col. Sir P. van Ryneveld, p.5; R. Freislich: **The Last Tribal War**, pp.58-60, 68-71; G.L.M. Lewis: The Bondelswarts Rebellion of 1922, p.96.

214 SANA, PM 1/2/66, 167/22, Report by Maj. Van Coller of Military Operation against the Bondelswarts Hottentots, 26 May to 8 June 1922, p.13; R. Freislich: **The Last Tribal War**, pp.71-83; G.L.M. Lewis: The Bondelswarts Rebellion of 1922, pp.96-97.

215 SANDFA, CGS(1) 12, 23, Native Disturbances at Kalkfontein, May 1922, Bondelswarts Rebellion, Telegram 52570(G.I.), Maj. Prins - Chief of Union Defence Force, 9 June 1922; G.L.M. Lewis: The Bondelswarts Rebellion of 1922, pp.102-103.

216 SANA, PM 1/2/66, 167/22, Report by Maj. Van Coller of Military Operation against the Bondelswarts Hottentots, 26 May to 8 June 1922, pp.18-19; SANDFA, CGS(1) 12, 23, Native Disturbances at Kalkfontein, May 1922, Bondelswarts Rebellion, Report by Col. Sir P. van Ryneveld, p.10; R.

appointment and noted his lack in military experience. The Labour Party criticised Smuts severely in Parliament. The uprising, in the wake of the Rand strike, provided the Labour Party with the opportunity to further criticise Smuts. Hofmeyer had acted on general guidelines and had been requested by Smuts to use constraint, but the leadership style of Smuts required him to shoulder the blame as Prime Minister. The Native Affairs Commission was asked to investigate the whole affair.<sup>217</sup> The report portrayed the sequence of events, but the result was clouded by the differences of opinion between Drs. Roberts and Loram and Gen. Lemmer. The opposition capitalised on the report and used it against Smuts.<sup>218</sup>

The British press questioned the use of force against the Bondelswarts in a mandated territory and went as far as to describe the event as a betrayal of the mandate trust. Sir Edgar Walton, the South African representative at the League, produced the reports on the incident on 5 September 1922. The League Assembly passed a resolution on 20 September 1922 for the Permanent Mandate Commission to investigate the matter. The uprising only received attention by the League Assembly on 12 May 1924, when Hofmeyer was requested to appear before the Permanent Mandate Commission. Their report to the League Council stated their disapproval of Hofmeyer's action in combining the roles of military commander and the civil duty of Administrator. This removed the opportunity for the Bondelswarts to appeal to a higher authority or for an impartial judge to investigate the conduct of operations. Hofmeyer's actions were defended by Smuts and he remained the Administrator.<sup>219</sup>



### 3.4. THE REHOBOTH UPRISING, 1924-1925

#### 3.4.1 THE TREATY OF PROTECTION AND FRIENDSHIP

During the 18<sup>th</sup> century, descendants of white colonial men and Khoisan women established communities that called themselves Basters (persons of mixed blood).<sup>220</sup> Two Baster groups existed. One group eventually settled in Griqualand-East under the leadership of Adam Kok, while the second group moved to Rehoboth, South West Africa,<sup>221</sup> in 1870. The Rehoboth Basters were a community based on constitutional and religious beliefs, which were maintained by organised structures such as their elected council. These structures provided a strong base from which they

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Freislich: **The Last Tribal War**, pp.50, 62, 81; G.L.M. Lewis: *The Bondelswarts Rebellion of 1922*, p.92.

217 This was the same Commission that investigated the Bulhoek incident. Senator Dr. A.W. Roberts chaired the Commission of Enquiry with Dr. C.T. Loram and Gen. Lemmer as members.

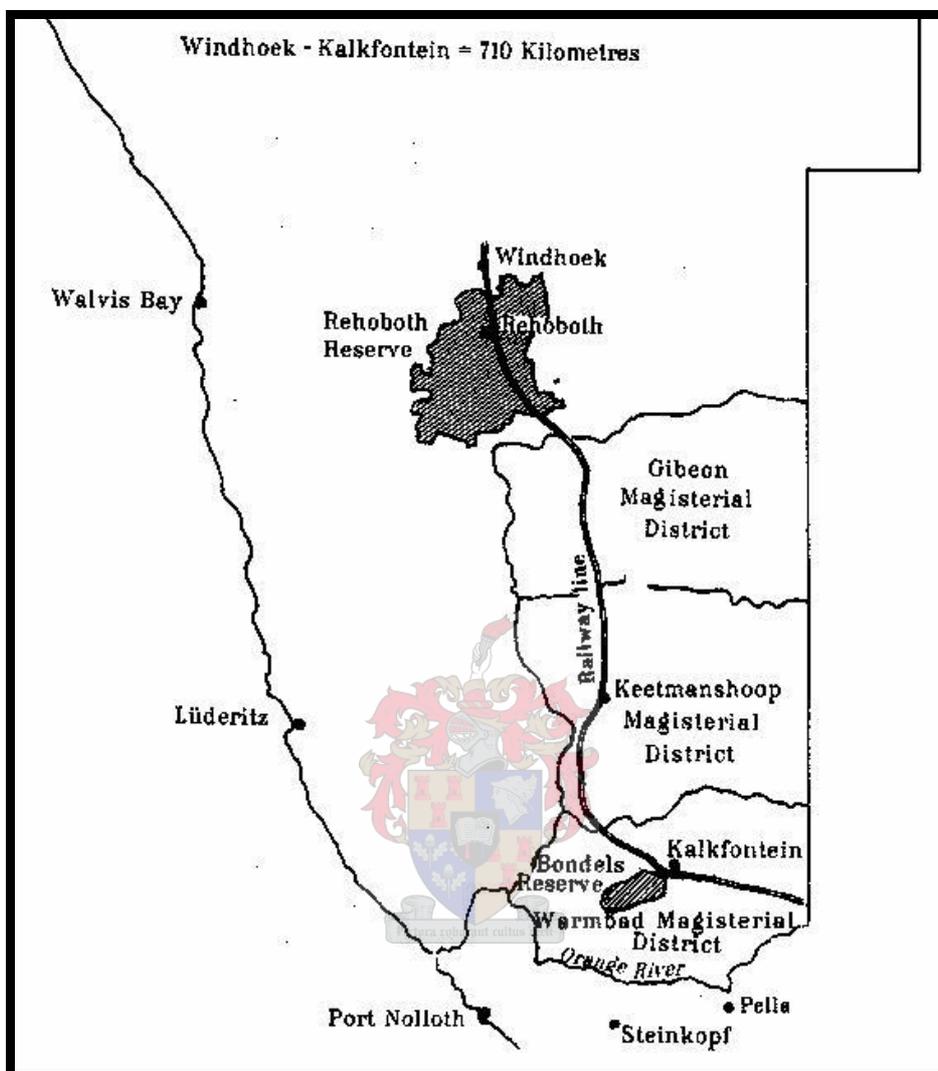
218 A.M. Davey: **The Bondelzwarts Affair: A Study of the Repercussions, 1922-1959**, p.9; W.K. Hancock: **Smuts, the Fields of Force**, p.109; T. Cameron: **Jan Smuts, An Illustrated Biography**, p.95.

219 G. Cockram: **South West African Mandate**, p.144; A.M. Davey: **The Bondelzwarts Affair**, pp.15-17; T. Cameron: **Jan Smuts**, p.95; W.K. Hancock: **Smuts, the Fields of Force**, p.108.

220 English translation: "Bastards".

221 Known today as Namibia.

executed self-administration. However, in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century the tenure of the permanent Baster community on the Rehoboth land was in jeopardy due to constant attacks by Namas and Hereros.<sup>222</sup>



**Figure 3.8:** Rehoboth Reserve, 1925.<sup>223</sup>

Germany proclaimed South West Africa a German Protectorate in 1884. The Basters' concern for security and protection from attacks paved the way for a Treaty of Protection and Friendship on 15 September 1885 and a treaty relating to defence on 26 July 1895 between Germany and the Rehoboth Basters. Germany accepted the responsibility of protecting the Basters in Rehoboth against further attacks from the Namas and the Hereros, which ensured their residence. The Basters on their part provided men for military training and gave military assistance to the Germans during their fights against the Namas and Hereros in 1893, 1896-1897 and during the Herero uprisings in 1904-1906. The Treaty, furthermore, recognised the rights and liberties of the Basters

222 T. Emmet: **Popular Resistance and the Roots of Nationalism in Namibia**, p.155; R.G. Britz, et al: **A Concise History of the Rehoboth Basters until 1990**, pp.10-11.

223 G. Cockram: **South West Africa Mandate**, p.133.

in Rehoboth. Internal matters were dealt with by the Baster Council, but disputes between the Basters and external parties were resolved by the German administration.<sup>224</sup>

The execution of the Treaty was another matter. German officials systematically encroached upon the Basters' territory and liberties. (See Figure 3.8: Map of Rehoboth Reserve.) Tension between them and the German administration reached breaking point during the First World War, when the Basters were employed to guard prisoners-of-war. This was in violation of the agreement that the Basters were not to be used against whites or that they would not be deployed outside the Rehoboth boundary. The Basters protested, but the German military authorities ignored them. The Germans, subsequently, informed the Basters that the Treaties of 1885 and 1895 were invalid. Cornelius van Wyk, the leader of the Basters, made contact with Gen. L. Botha, commander of the Union Forces in South West Africa, in April 1915 informing him of their plight. The Germans declared war on the Basters during May 1915 and attacked men, women and children who were fleeing to Sam-Kubis, a natural fort in the form of a circle of mountains. The Basters made final stand at Sam-Kubis against the Germans on 8 May and defended their position with 300 armed men. The Germans attacked Sam-Kubis between sunrise and sunset, but retreated the next day leaving 30 Basters dead and wounded.<sup>225</sup>

### 3.4.2 UNDER UNION MANAGEMENT

The Union Defence Force did not mobilise to rescue the Basters because the Germans retreated from Rehoboth on 9 May 1915 and deployed to meet the Union Forces in strength. On 9 July 1915, the German Governor, Dr. Theodor Seitz, and Col. Victor Franke, the Commander-in-Chief of the *Schutztruppe*, surrendered to Gen. Botha at Khorab. Martial law was instituted and the Basters remained in Rehoboth, working towards two goals: they wanted to regain their former independence and recover the land taken from them.<sup>226</sup>

Their hope of regaining independence was rekindled when Botha told Van Wyk during their discussion in April 1915, "that which you have, at least, you will keep".<sup>227</sup> The Basters expected the Union authority in South West Africa to allow a return to the state of affairs prior to the signing of the treaty of 1885. The status of the Basters, prior to hostilities with the German government, was reinstated. The Baster Council resumed their internal administrative affairs and retained their

224 T. Emmet: **Popular Resistance and the Roots of Nationalism in Namibia**, p.155; R.G. Britz, et al: **A Concise History of the Rehoboth Basters until 1990**, pp.19-20; Union of South Africa: **Report of the Rehoboth Commission**, no. 41/26, 20 September 1926, pp.57-8.

225 R.G. Britz, et al: **A Concise History of the Rehoboth Basters until 1990**, pp.22-27; T. Emmet: **Popular Resistance and the Roots of Nationalism in Namibia**, p.155.

226 P. Pearson: **History and Social Structure of the Rehoboth Baster Community of Namibia**, p.149; R.G. Britz, et al: **A Concise History of the Rehoboth Basters until 1990**, p.28.

227 T. Emmet: **Popular Resistance and the Roots of Nationalism in Namibia**, p.155.

Baster magistrate and other officials who dealt with legal matters, the collection of taxes and the granting of liquor permits.<sup>228</sup>

The Baster community still hoped for full independence and continued their efforts to achieve this. A Member of the Union Parliament, D.W. Drew, became a staunch supporter of the Basters. He eventually became a paid consultant of the Basters and participated in negotiations. He prompted the Basters to seek protectorate status for Rehoboth from the British Crown, but their initial request in August 1917 was denied due to Britain's involvement in the war. Further requests were sent after the war, but those were continuously denied. The Governor General, representing the British Crown in South Africa, Prince Arthur of Connaught, visited Rehoboth and explained to the Basters that their request would never be approved. South West Africa was a mandate of the Union of South Africa and retained administrative and legislative powers. The British Crown had no say over Rehoboth.<sup>229</sup>

### 3.4.3 THE AGREEMENT

The Administrator, G.R. Hofmeyer, submitted a draft agreement on how Rehoboth would be governed on 9 January 1922, after which he and the Baster Council held various rounds of negotiations in July 1923. The two main issues that were discussed were the extent of their self-governance and the issue of land. These issues were not resolved and insignificant concessions were made to the Basters. The agreement returned the affairs of the Basters, to what they had been when Union forces invaded the territory in 1915. Hofmeyer's approach was no different from what it had been with other tribes, such as the Bondelswarts. The Basters only had limited authority over local matters and were subservient to the Administrator and his officials in legal and political affairs. The boundaries remained unchanged despite the Basters' objections. After the negotiations the Council returned to Rehoboth to discuss the agreement with their community.<sup>230</sup>

The community was opposed to the agreement and the issue was put to the vote on 9 August 1923. The Agreement was rejected by 116 votes to 43. Drew and two council members travelled to Windhoek on 13 August to explain the outcome of the referendum to the Administrator who made it clear that the agreement had to be signed by 16 August or else it would be ratified by proclamation. The Baster Council agreed to sign, but also sent a petition to the Union Parliament

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228 P. Pearson: **History and Social Structure of the Rehoboth Baster Community of Namibia**, p.149; R.G. Britz, et al: **A Concise History of the Rehoboth Basters until 1990**, p.28.

229 R.G. Britz, et al: **A Concise History of the Rehoboth Basters until 1990**, pp.28-30; P. Pearson: **History and Social Structure of the Rehoboth Baster Community of Namibia**, pp.153-157.

230 P. Pearson: **History and Social Structure of the Rehoboth Baster Community of Namibia**, pp.153-157; R.G. Britz, et al: **A Concise History of the Rehoboth Basters until 1990**, pp.28-30.

regarding the boundary and land issues. Proclamation No. 28 of 1923 ratified the agreement on 28 September.<sup>231</sup>

Opposition to the agreement was organised by Samuel Beukes and a letter informed the Council that the majority of the community did not accept it. The festivities to celebrate the agreement were attended by the Council and the Administrator, but many Basters boycotted it to show their disapproval. Samuel Beukes organised the opposition further and they became known as the Majority Party. The Majority Party rallied the community to reject the agreement and by November 1923 a campaign of passive resistance was instigated. Proclamations and orders by Administration officials were ignored and taxes were not paid. In the light of the repercussions from the Bondelswarts situation nothing was done for fear of another backlash.<sup>232</sup>

The Majority Party continued to oppose the Agreement and the Council, who they saw as traitors, openly. On 23 April 1924, the Majority Party organised elections for a new Council and a Parliamentary Council. The Majority Party won all the seats on the Council and in the Parliamentary Council. Major financial transactions were not allowed without the consent of the 23-member Parliamentary Council. The New Council was instated, but the old Council complained to the Administrator that the elections were unconstitutional. The new Council refused to meet with the Administrator, who, in turn, on 5 May, issued Proclamation No. 13 of 1924. This Proclamation decreed that the old Council was the elected and properly constituted authority of Rehoboth and that a new election was to be held on 16 June 1924.<sup>233</sup>

The new Council refused to accept the Proclamation and the new elections were boycotted because, according to them, the Council had already been elected on 23 April. The new Council pleaded their case with the League of Nations, but was informed that they had to send their petition via the mandatory power, the Union Government. A delegation met with Gen. J.B.M. Hertzog, now the South African Prime Minister, early in August to discuss the situation. They reiterated their wish for the agreement to be scrapped and for complete independence. Hertzog stated that the agreement would not be scrapped and would only be amended through negotiations with the Administration. He also offered a solution by suggesting that the old Council resign and that the

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231 R.G. Britz, et al: **A Concise History of the Rehoboth Basters until 1990**, p.30; P. Pearson: **History and Social Structure of the Rehoboth Baster Community of Namibia**, pp157-169; T. Emmet: **Popular Resistance and the Roots of Nationalism in Namibia**, pp.158-159.

232 P. Pearson: **History and Social Structure of the Rehoboth Baster Community of Namibia**, pp.176-178; I. Goldblatt: **History of South West Africa from the Beginning of the Nineteenth Century**, p.222; R.G. Britz, et al: **A Concise History of the Rehoboth Basters until 1990**, pp.31, 159.

233 I. Goldblatt: **History of South West Africa from the Beginning of the Nineteenth Century**, p.222; P. Pearson: **History and Social Structure of the Rehoboth Baster Community of Namibia**, pp.176-178; R.G. Britz, et al: **A Concise History of the Rehoboth Basters until 1990**, pp.31, 159.

new Council provide proof, in writing, that they had the support of the majority. The old Council did not resign and proof of the new Council's majority support did not materialise.<sup>234</sup>

The new Council continued to govern over Rehoboth, collecting taxes, making their own laws and issuing their own permits. The state of affairs reached boiling point when the new Council issued a Declaration of Independence on 1 December 1924, and the old Council called on the Administrator to intervene.<sup>235</sup>

### 3.4.5 PROCLAMATION 31 OF 1924

On 10 December 1924, the Administration issued Proclamation No. 31 of 1924, which suspended the powers of the Captain and the Councils of the Basters and transferred power to the white magistrate, Maj. C.N. Manning. The Proclamation was accompanied by a strong police contingent, which stepped up patrols in the area. The new Council objected strongly to the increased patrols and petitioned the Prime Minister to redress the state of affairs. On 16 December, they marched on the magistrate's office and demanded that the police be withdrawn, dumped copies of the Proclamation at the office entrance and refused to abide by its conditions. Elections were held in January 1925, in defiance of the Proclamation, and the new Council members were re-elected to their positions. The new Council continued to rule Rehoboth as the *de facto* government, while the Administration worked on measures to curtail its influence.<sup>236</sup>

Certain measures were executed by the magistrate who denied permits for various aspects linked to the economic structure of the Basters. They were not allowed ammunition, to cut or export firewood, export stock or purchase liquor. These actions had an adverse economic impact on the community. Ammunition was needed to hunt in order to provide for those who did not own stock. Firewood as well as stock was sold outside the boundaries of Rehoboth to white traders. By refusing to abide by the law of dipping and branding stock, no stock was allowed to leave the

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234 R.G. Britz, et al: **A Concise History of the Rehoboth Basters until 1990**, pp.31, 159; P. Pearson: **History and Social Structure of the Rehoboth Baster Community of Namibia**, pp.176-178; I. Goldblatt: **History of South West Africa from the Beginning of the Nineteenth Century**, p.222.

235 P. Pearson: **History and Social Structure of the Rehoboth Baster Community of Namibia**, pp.179-188; R.G. Britz, et al: **A Concise History of the Rehoboth Basters until 1990**, pp.32-33; T. Emmet: **Popular Resistance and the Roots of Nationalism in Namibia**, p.159.

236 G.J.J. Oosthuizen: Die Rehoboth-Basters Binne die Konteks van die Staatkundige Verhoudinge tussen Suidwes-Afrika en Suid-Afrika, 1915-1939 (Ongepubliserrde D Litt Tesis, Universiteit van Potchefstroom, 1993), pp.183-185; T. Emmet: **Popular Resistance and the Roots of Nationalism in Namibia**, p.159; R.G. Britz, et al: **A Concise History of the Rehoboth Basters until 1990**, pp.32-33; I. Goldblatt: **History of South West Africa from the Beginning of the Nineteenth Century**, pp.222-223; P. Pearson: **History and Social Structure of the Rehoboth Baster Community of Namibia**, pp.188-190.

boundaries of Rehoboth. This measure was implemented to prevent the spread of stock disease and curtail stock theft.<sup>237</sup>

The new Council refused to submit to the Administration and continued to rule. They once again submitted a petition to the League of Nations, without consulting the Union Government, and V. Catastini, Chief of the Mandate Section of the League, returned the petition stating that they should follow the correct procedure. The Administration contemplated taking legal action against the Basters. The Basters refused to submit to the conditions of Proclamation No. 31, which provided the Administration with ample opportunity to prosecute the offenders. Political considerations stemmed the Administration's immediate response and it was decided that the Basters would only be prosecuted for contravention of the law on cattle branding. Manning issued a notice that everybody in Rehoboth had to comply in terms of Proclamation No. 36 of 1921, Proclamation No. 14 of 1923 and Proclamation No. 15 of 1923 with the regulations regarding stock branding by 1 March 1925, or face the legal consequences. This included the Nama and Herero tribes also living in Rehoboth, who hired land from the Basters to breed stock or worked for the Basters, and strongly supported the new Council.<sup>238</sup>

This notice was totally disregarded and the magistrate issued summonses to Toko Koopman, a member of the new Council, Piet Diergaart, the Baster magistrate, and Samuel Beukes, the leader of the Majority Party. They failed to appear in court and their arrest was ordered. The police, led by Sgt. H.H. Erasmus, were unable to arrest them because the community prevented them from entering the Council offices. The magistrate issued warrants of arrest for Jacobus Beukes, Petrus Job, Jacob Beukes, Daniel Beukes, David Swart, Frederick Draghoender, Hendrik Beukes and Nicolaas Draghoender for obstructing the police when they were attempting to arrest Koopman, Diergaart and Samuel Beukes. The new Council stated in a letter to Manning dated 28 March that the members would not be delivered to the court because the warrants that were issued were based on laws they refused to acknowledge.<sup>239</sup>

### 3.4.5 MILITARY ACTION

The Basters were on a collision course with the Administration and the new Council called for all the Basters, Namas and Hereros in the district to assemble at Rehoboth. At least 600 men gathered to await the Administrator's reaction. Hofmeyer reacted in due course by sending 157

237 P. Pearson: **History and Social Structure of the Rehoboth Baster Community of Namibia**, pp.190-191; G.J.J. Oosthuizen: *Die Rehoboth-Basters Binne die Konteks van die Staatkundige Verhoudinge tussen Suidwes-Afrika en Suid-Afrika*, p.186.

238 G.J.J. Oosthuizen: *Die Rehoboth-Basters Binne die Konteks van die Staatkundige Verhoudinge tussen Suidwes-Afrika en Suid-Afrika*, p.186; P. Pearson: **History and Social Structure of the Rehoboth Baster Community of Namibia**, pp.190-191.

239 P. Pearson: **History and Social Structure of the Rehoboth Baster Community of Namibia**, pp.190-191; G.J.J. Oosthuizen: *Die Rehoboth-Basters Binne die Konteks van die Staatkundige Verhoudinge tussen Suidwes-Afrika en Suid-Afrika*, p.186.

policemen to Rehoboth under the command of Van Coller. They were armed with two Maxim and two Lewis machine-guns and arrived at Rehoboth on 1 April 1925. Van Coller waited for the arrival of Col. M.J. de Jager, the Protectorate Force Commander, and the Citizen Force units from the Aroab, Bethanie, Gibeon, Keetmanshoop, Maltahöhe, Okahandja, Warmbad, Windhoek and Rehoboth districts, which were mobilised the same day. Proclamation No.9 of 1925 instituted Martial law on 3 April in Rehoboth and the surrounding districts.<sup>240</sup>

The mobilisation of the Citizen Force was hampered by a shortage of horses and coal as well as flooding the railway lines after the summer rains. However, on 4 April 1925, within 72 hours, the Citizen Force of 36 Officers, 428 NCOs and troops of which only 108 were mounted, were in a staging area close to Rehoboth. The Union Defence Force supported the Administration by sending Air Force elements under the command of Van Ryneveld, which comprised three De Havilland aeroplanes and support personnel.<sup>241</sup>

Col. De Jager deployed his 621 men and surrounded the town of Rehoboth by first light on 5 April. Lt. Col. L. Rautenbach led A Squadron and deployed in the ridges west of the town. Capt. J. Balt and B Squadron deployed east of the Town and C Squadron under the command of Capt. J.J. Smith was deployed as a cut-off group to prevent escape. The police were on standby for deployment in the town. The new Council received an ultimatum at 07:00, which demanded the unconditional surrender of everybody, the handing over of weapons and those Basters for whom warrants of arrest had been issued. The deadline was 08:00 and De Jager warned the new Council that he would use violence, if necessary, if they did not conform to the ultimatum. De Jager also requested them to remove all the non-combatants, women and children, to the north of the town to ensure their safety.<sup>242</sup>

The new Council requested an extension until 12:00 the next day, but De Jager refused. The new Council sent a second message to De Jager, in which they indicated their refusal to adhere to the ultimatum. The Air Force was given the signal to take off and to start circling the town at 08:00, the time of the deadline. Lt. Uys and his police contingent moved through the town towards the Council offices to execute the warrants of arrest. Uys handed the names to Jacobus Beukes, who, in turn, refused to deliver the men. Uys gave them five minutes to deliver the men and when they still refused he ordered a charge on the Council offices. Everybody who stood in their way, including women, were removed and the men were arrested. The police rounded up the Basters

240 G.J.J. Oosthuizen: Die Rehoboth-Basters Binne die Konteks van die Staatkundige Verhoudinge tussen Suidwes-Afrika en Suid-Afrika, pp.192-198, 200-202, 204-206; P. Pearson: **History and Social Structure of the Rehoboth Baster Community of Namibia**, pp. 194-197.

241 G.J.J. Oosthuizen: Die Rehoboth-Basters Binne die Konteks van die Staatkundige Verhoudinge tussen Suidwes-Afrika en Suid-Afrika, pp.192-198, 200-202, 204-206; P. Pearson: **History and Social Structure of the Rehoboth Baster Community of Namibia**, pp. 194-197.

242 G.J.J. Oosthuizen: Die Rehoboth-Basters Binne die Konteks van die Staatkundige Verhoudinge tussen Suidwes-Afrika en Suid-Afrika, pp.192-198, 200-202, 204-206; P. Pearson: **History and Social Structure of the Rehoboth Baster Community of Namibia**, pp. 194-197.

with support from the aeroplanes, which did not fire a shot during their deployment. The planes provided the psychological edge by making diving sorties over the town, while the police arrested 632 members of the community. (See Figure 3.9: Police Guarding Baster Prisoners.) The uprising was suppressed within an hour and without the loss of life. De Jager ordered by right of martial law that all weapons, ammunition and explosives be surrendered. The police confiscated 177 rifles and various clubs and sticks.<sup>243</sup>

De Jager attributed the prevention of loss of life mainly to the use of aeroplanes, which scared the community and distracted them from focussing on the land force that was moving in. He further indicated that rapid mobilisation, the concentration of force, well-executed orders and the show of force had also contributed to a quick and successful suppression of the uprising. B and C Squadrons of the Citizen Force returned to their districts on 6 April. A Squadron and 100 policemen demobilised on 8 and 10 April respectively. The remaining police force patrolled the area until 22 April and by 30 April the local police force was once again in charge of the area. Martial law was lifted on 11 May 1925.<sup>244</sup>



**Figure 3.9:** Police Guarding Baster Prisoners, 5 April 1925.<sup>245</sup>

Hofmeyer received permission to use the Air Force for “show of force” demonstrations on 1 April 1925, as was done in 1922 after the Bondelswarts uprising. Bombing of targets and subsequent use of high explosive charges supplemented the air shows. The air shows were presented at

243 SANDFA, CGS 42, 7/62, Aeroplanes for Rehoboth Friction in South West Africa, 1925, Letter 2/1925, Chief of General Staff - Imperial General Staff, 19 August 1925, pp.1, 8-9; G.J.J. Oosthuizen: *Die Rehoboth-Basters Binne die Konteks van die Staatkundige Verhoudinge tussen Suidwes-Afrika en Suid-Afrika*, pp.206-208; P. Pearson: **History and Social Structure of the Rehoboth Baster Community of Namibia**, pp. 196-199.

244 G.J.J. Oosthuizen: *Die Rehoboth-Basters Binne die Konteks van die Staatkundige Verhoudinge tussen Suidwes-Afrika en Suid-Afrika*, pp.209-210.

245 G.J.J. Oosthuizen: *Die Rehoboth-Basters Binne die Konteks van die Staatkundige Verhoudinge tussen Suidwes-Afrika en Suid-Afrika*, p.210.

Otjiworongo, Tsumeb, Ondonga, Namatoni, Ovitot Reserve, Windhoek, Schiethof, Vaalgras Reserve and Keetmanshoop. The local tribes were intimidated by the air shows and feared the use of aeroplanes against them. However, the air shows gave away the element of surprise, but, since the tribes lacked an adequate military response to neutralise the aeroplane, the areas remained free of uprisings. The Air Force element returned to Pretoria on 24 April 1925.<sup>246</sup>

### 3.4.6 THE AFTERMATH

The group of 632 arrested at Rehoboth consisted of 289 Basters, 218 Hereros, 75 Namas and 50 Damaras. A group of 226 was set free, but the remaining 406 appeared before the Windhoek magistrate, A.R. Wilmot, in the Rehoboth magistrate's court between 7 and 9 April. Manning was not allowed to preside over the cases, because he had to deliver testimony. Judgement was passed and those found guilty were sentenced from between £30 or three months in jail to £2 and one month in jail. Considering the impoverished nature of the Rehoboth few of the fines were paid; 319 were imprisoned, of which 68 served the full sentence. During a visit by the Prince of Wales on 4 May 1925, the rest of the group was released from prison as a gesture of good will.<sup>247</sup>

Jacob de Villiers, a judge from the Appellate Division of the Union, was appointed to head a Commission of Inquiry into the uprising and submitted his report on 26 September 1926. The Basters continually sent petitions to the Permanent Mandates Commission until 1932, when the Commission decided in favour of the Administration and indicated that the Basters did not really have independence and had therefore no grounds for further petitions. It also decided that the Basters were not fit to rule themselves and that the Administration should take appropriate action. The Administration placed the management of Rehoboth under the white magistrate, who was advised by an Advisory Council, which consisted of three elected and three appointed Basters. The suppression of the revolt and the subsequent air shows were a clear indication to the rest of the tribes in South West Africa that recalcitrant communities would be severely dealt with.<sup>248</sup>

246 SANDFA, CGS 42, 7/62, Aeroplanes for Rehoboth Friction in South West Africa, 1925, Letter 2/1925, Chief of General Staff - Imperial General Staff, 19 August 1925, p.9; G.J.J. Oosthuizen: Die Rehoboth-Basters Binne die Konteks van die Staatkundige Verhoudinge tussen Suidwes-Afrika en Suid-Afrika, pp.210-211.

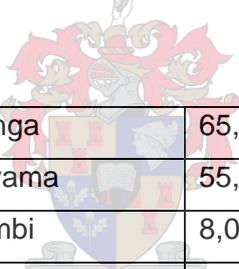
247 T. Emmet: **Popular Resistance and the Roots of Nationalism in Namibia**, pp.160-162; G.J.J. Oosthuizen: Die Rehoboth-Basters Binne die Konteks van die Staatkundige Verhoudinge tussen Suidwes-Afrika en Suid-Afrika, pp.210-212; R.G. Britz, et al: **A Concise History of the Rehoboth Basters until 1990**, p.36; P. Pearson: **History and Social Structure of the Rehoboth Baster Community of Namibia**, pp.199-200.

248 I. Goldblatt: **History of South West Africa from the Beginning of the Nineteenth Century**, pp.223-224; T. Emmet: **Popular Resistance and the Roots of Nationalism in Namibia**, pp.160-162.

### 3.5. MILITARY ACTION AGAINST CHIEF IPUMBU OF THE UKUAMBI TRIBE, 1932

#### 3.5.1 THE ACTIONS OF CHIEF IPUMBU

Apart from the trouble with the Bondelswarts and the Rehoboth Basters, the Administration had to deal with Chief Ipumbu who continuously disregarded its authority. Chief Ipumbu of the Ukuambi tribe in Ovamboland was not convinced by the Administration's show of force. He defied the authorities and launched a raid against the Ukuanyama tribe in November 1921. Subsequent talks with the Chief failed and Hofmeyer fined Chief Ipumbu 20 head of cattle for his offence. Chief Ipumbu's *modus operandi* was to promise the payment, then always have excuses why he could not pay by the time of the deadline. Chief Ipumbu was sent an ultimatum in June 1923 to pay the fine and to surrender his arms and ammunition. He reluctantly paid only 10 head of cattle and refused to surrender his arms and ammunition. This set the stage for a punitive expedition against Chief Ipumbu, but in the light of the Bondelswarts debacle and the cost of a ground force no military action was taken. Further negotiations were held and the Chief eventually paid the remaining 10 head of cattle on 27 November 1923.<sup>249</sup>



Ondonga	65,000
Ukunyama	55,000
Ukuambi	8,000
Ongandjera	6,600
Ukualuthi	6,100
Ombalantu	5,100
Onkolonkathi	1,200
Eunda	600
<b>Total:</b>	<b>147,600</b>

**Figure 3.10:** The Strength of the Various Tribes in Ovamboland.<sup>250</sup>

249 SANDFA, GG 289, 4/300, South West Africa, General Insurrection of Native Chief Ipumbu, Report by Administrator to Governor-General, 2 September 1932, pp.1-6; P. Pearson: **History and Social Structure of the Rehoboth Baster Community of Namibia**, p.170.

250 SANDFA, CGS(1) 43, DAS 7/13/1, Operations, Campaign and Stores in South West Africa, July 1932, Report by Col. Sir P. van Ryneveld, 15 December 1932, p.2; SANDFA, GG 289, 4/300, South West Africa, General Insurrection of Native Chief Ipumbu, Report by Administrator to Governor-General, 2 September 1932, p.1.

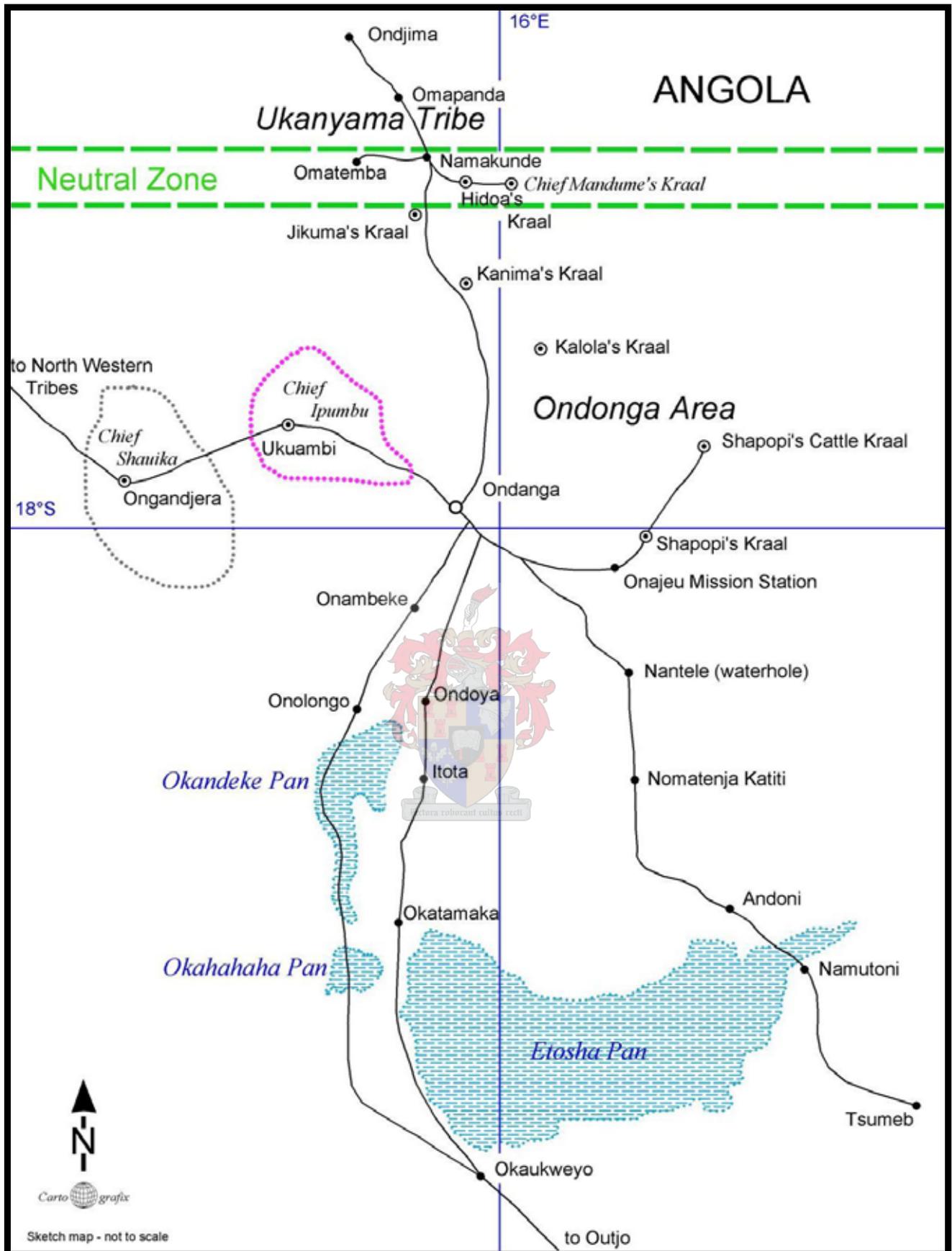


Figure 3.11: Boundaries of Ovamboland Tribes.<sup>251</sup>

251 SANDFA, CGS 63/1, Native Tribe, Ovamboland, 1932; Lt. Col. J.J. Jacobs, Department Military Geography, Faculty Military Science, US, is recognised for processing the original map.

The rest of the tribes in Ovamboland watched the debacle with great interest. The population of Ovamboland was estimated at about 150,000. (See Figure 3.10: Strength of the Various Tribes and Figure 3.11: Boundaries of Ovamboland Tribes.) All the tribal leaders in Ovamboland, except Ipumbu, accepted the Administration's authority. It was in the best interest of the Administration to appear strong in the eyes of the tribal leaders and leading headmen to ensure obedience. Chief Ipumbu, however, did not openly oppose the Administration after he had paid the fine in 1923. His reign over his tribe continued and was characterised by tyranny and forced obedience.<sup>252</sup>

The chief of an Ovambo tribe was the ultimate authority and he ruled autocratically. Custom forbid any member to question his rule and Chief Ipumbu exercised this authority with zeal. He also overstepped the legal boundaries and executed members without trial. The Finnish missionaries in Ovamboland complained of his actions and the neighbouring tribes severed ties with the Ukuambi. Several Ukuambi headmen left to reside with other tribes, but Chief Ipumbu continued to harass the missionaries and their converts.<sup>253</sup>

In July 1931 Chief Ipumbu ordered that Christian girls from his tribe be brought to him to participate in rites practised on the attainment of puberty. Some of the Christian girls discovered his intent to violate them and escaped capture. They sought sanctuary at the Finnish Mission, which Rev. Aho, head of the mission, provided. The relationship between the Mission and Chief Ipumbu was poor at the best of times and was further exacerbated by this turn of events. Revs. Aho and Liljebad were occasionally shot at, but purposely missed. An indigenous teacher from the mission was also assaulted as the harassment continued. The Native Commissioner, Capt. C.H.L. Hahn, warned Chief Ipumbu to put an end to his misconduct, whereby the Chief solemnly promised that it would never happen again.<sup>254</sup>

Ipumbu's promise was short-lived and trouble between the Mission and the Chief erupted again on 30 December 1931. Chief Ipumbu intended to take one of his own daughters, Nekulu, as a wife. This was forbidden by tribal custom, but the Chief was adamant and pursued the union. Nekulu escaped to the Mission where she received sanctuary. This entitled Nekulu to stay at the Mission

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252 SANDFA CGS(1) 43, DAS 7/13/1, Operations, Campaign and Stores in South West Africa, July 1932, Report by Col. Sir P. van Ryneveld, 15 December 1932, p.2; SANDFA, GG 289, 4/300, South West Africa, General Insurrection of Native Chief Ipumbu, Report by Administrator to Governor-General, 2 September 1932, p.6.

253 SANDFA, GG 289, 4/300, South West Africa, General Insurrection of Native Chief Ipumbu, Report by Administrator to Governor-General, 2 September 1932, pp.7-11; SANDFA, CGS(1) 43, DAS 7/13/1, Operations, Campaign and Stores in South West Africa, July 1932, Report by Col. Sir P. van Ryneveld, 15 December 1932, p.4.

254 SANDFA, GG 289, 4/300, South West Africa, General Insurrection of Native Chief Ipumbu, Report by Administrator to Governor-General, 2 September 1932, p.12; SANDFA, CGS(1) 43, DAS 7/13/1, Operations, Campaign and Stores in South West Africa, July 1932, Report by Col. Sir P. van Ryneveld, 15 December 1932, p.5.

as long as the patron of sanctuary, Rev. Aho, occupied the Mission. Chief Ipumbu disregarded the custom and demanded the return of the girl, which was refused. Chief Ipumbu and 300 men armed with breech-loading rifles searched the Mission without success. They withdrew from the Mission, but maintained a cordon. Rifles and arrows were randomly fired at the Mission and its inhabitants. Nekulu was smuggled into a motorcar and was removed to Onandjokue, a Finnish Mission near Ondonga. Chief Ipumbu returned to his kraal after a thorough search of the Mission failed to deliver his intended bride.<sup>255</sup>

### 3.5.2 PAYMENT DUE

As a result of these events, A.J. Werth, the SWA Administrator, decided to fine Chief Ipumbu 10 head of cattle and requested an aircraft and a tank to assist his officials in enforcing their authority. He argued that a ground force would be too costly and would inevitably lead to bloodshed. He was of the opinion that a demonstration would be sufficient to cow the Chief into paying the fine without any bloodshed. No tank was available, but Van Ryneveld, 24 men and three Westland Wapiti<sup>256</sup> aircraft were dispatched from Pretoria. (See Figure 3.12: Westland Wapiti.) A special train with supplies for the Air Force left on 21 July and the aircraft took off on 23 July. The aircraft arrived in Windhoek on the evening of 23 July and a conference was immediately held with Van Ryneveld attending.<sup>257</sup>

Hahn was instructed on 24 July to relay to Chief Ipumbu that his initial fine of 10 head of cattle had been increased with an additional 40 head of cattle. He had to pay a total of 50 head of cattle for contempt of authority and non-compliance. If the Chief did not pay the fine, Hahn was to inform him that he should surrender himself to the Administration to be dealt with in accordance with Section 1 of the Native Administration Proclamation No. 15 of 1928. If he failed to comply he would *ipso facto* be deposed as Chief of the Ukuambi. This message would be delivered under air cover to indicate the Administration's willingness to carry out the threat.<sup>258</sup>

255 SANDFA, GG 289, 4/300, South West Africa, General Insurrection of Native Chief Ipumbu, Report by Administrator to Governor-General, 2 September 1932, pp.13-14; SANDFA, CGS(1) 43, 63, Native Trouble Ovamboland 1932, Telegram Administrator to Prime Minister, 16 July 1932, p.1.

256 The SAAF bought four Westland Wapiti Mk.IIA in 1929 and 27 were built in South Africa from 1931. J. Teeuwen: 'British Aircraft of World War II, <http://www.jaapteewen.com/ww2aircraft/WESTLAND.htm>, 10 April 2003 (10 July 2004).

257 SANDFA, GG 289, 4/300, South West Africa, General Insurrection of Native Chief Ipumbu, Report by Administrator to Governor-General, 2 September 1932, p.17; SANDFA, CGS(1) 43, 23, Native Trouble Ovamboland 1932, Telegram Administrator to Prime Minister, 12 July 1932, p.2; SANDFA, CGS(1) 43, 23, Native Trouble Ovamboland 1932, Telegram Minister of Defence to Administrator, 21 July 1932, p.1; SANDFA, CGS(1) 43, DAS 7/13/1, Operations, Campaign and Stores in South West Africa, July 1932, Report by Col. Sir P. van Ryneveld, 15 December 1932, pp.2-7.

258 SANDFA, GG 289, 4/300, South West Africa, General Insurrection of Native Chief Ipumbu, Report by Administrator to Governor-General, 2 September 1932, pp.17-18; SANDFA, CGS(1) 43, 23, Native Trouble Ovamboland 1932, Telegram Administrator to Prime Minister, 25 July 1932, p.1; SANDFA, CGS(1) 43, DAS 7/13/1, Operations, Campaign and Stores in South West Africa, July 1932, Report by Col. Sir P. van Ryneveld, 15 December 1932, p.7.



**Figure 3.12:** A Westland Wapiti.<sup>259</sup>

On 27 July, Hahn informed Chief Ipumbu, who listened attentively, of the newly imposed fine. He made numerous excuses for not paying the initial fine in time and committed himself to paying the 50 head of cattle on 1 August. The payment was not made and Hahn sent three messengers to the Chief to deliver an ultimatum that he surrender at Mtswi on 3 August. Under customary law the Chief was not allowed to leave the boundary of his tribal lands. Mtswi was just inside Chief Ipumbu's tribal land close to the boundary. Hahn was awaiting Impumbu's surrender, with the aeroplanes providing air cover, when he received a message from Ipumbu requesting him to be at a location about 13 km from the Chief's kraal at 15:30.<sup>260</sup>

Hahn moved to the new location, but instead of the Chief, 60 armed men awaited him as well as a total of 200 tribesmen hiding in the surrounding bush. He was requested to enter the kraal, but Hahn declined for fear of treachery and his own safety. Chief Ipumbu did not meet with Hahn. Hahn proceeded to give the armed detail of 60 Ukuambi a bombing demonstration and ordered them to inform Chief Ipumbu of their observations. Hahn returned to Otjiwarongo to brief the Administrator.<sup>261</sup>

259 Anon: 'Pictures of Westland Wapitis, from the album of C.H. Harrison RAF', [http://www.ivyandmartin.demon.co.uk/v\\_wapiti.htm](http://www.ivyandmartin.demon.co.uk/v_wapiti.htm), n.d., (10 July 2004).

260 SANDFA, GG 289, 4/300, South West Africa, General Insurrection of Native Chief Ipumbu, Report by Administrator to Governor-General, 2 September 1932, pp.18-19; SANDFA, CGS(1) 43, 23, Native Trouble Ovamboland 1932, Telegram Administrator to Prime Minister, 28 July 1932, p.1; SANDFA, CGS(1) 43, DAS 7/13/1, Operations, Campaign and Stores in South West Africa, July 1932, Report by Col. Sir P. van Ryneveld, 15 December 1932, pp.7-10.

261 SANDFA, CGS(1) 43, DAS 7/13/1, Operations, Campaign and Stores in South West Africa, July 1932, Report by Col. Sir P. van Ryneveld, 15 December 1932, pp.10-12; SANDFA, GG 289, 4/300, South West Africa, General Insurrection of Native Chief Ipumbu, Report by Administrator to Governor-General, 2 September 1932, pp.19-20; SANDFA, CGS(1) 43, 23, Native Trouble Ovamboland 1932, Telegram Administrator to Prime Minister, 4 August 1932, p.1.

Werth, Van Ryneveld, Van Coller and Hahn met on 5 August to discuss further steps against Chief Ipumbu. The Chief was seen as the central figure in the situation. The removal of Ipumbu as chief would eradicate the problems facing the Administration in Ovamboland. He had failed to accept the Administration's authority, he had taken rifles from older men and given them to younger, reliable men, removed all the women and children, stationed picket lines around his kraal and had clear intentions of meeting any action with force.<sup>262</sup>

Three options on how to remove Chief Ipumbu by force were considered. The first option was to launch a surgical air strike and kill Ipumbu. The second option was to use the air strike to kill him and his bodyguards and the third option was to discredit Ipumbu in the eyes of his tribe. To facilitate this, he had to be frightened of losing his tribal land and his kraal had to be occupied and destroyed. Tribal custom would ensure that this was seen as a defeat for Ipumbu. The third option was decided on because it held the best chance of settling the dispute without bloodshed, which suited the Prime Minister, Gen. Hertzog. In order to execute an occupation of the kraal two armoured cars were requested on 5 August.<sup>263</sup>

### 3.5.3 THE ASSAULT ON IPUMBU'S KRAAL

The military objective of the operation was to ensure the surrender or capture of Chief Ipumbu. Hahn's intelligence network confirmed that the majority of the tribe of 8,000 would welcome the intervention, but a small following of 300 men would probably support Chief Ipumbu. Hahn was instructed to try once more to settle the dispute, with the added request that the Ukuambi be disarmed. When the message was given to Chief Ipumbu he sent an evasive reply and did not take the matter seriously. He was duly informed that he had disobeyed the Administration long enough and that he was no longer the recognized Chief of the Ukuambi. He had to surrender immediately or else action would be taken to secure him dead or alive. Aerial reconnaissance continued while the Administration waited for the armoured cars to arrive.<sup>264</sup>

262 SANDFA, CGS(1) 43, DAS 7/13/1, Operations, Campaign and Stores in South West Africa, July 1932, Report by Col. Sir P. van Ryneveld, 15 December 1932, pp.11-12; SANDFA, GG 289, 4/300, South West Africa, General Insurrection of Native Chief Ipumbu, Report by Administrator to Governor-General, 2 September 1932, p.20.

263 SANDFA, CGS(1) 43, DAS 7/13/1, Operations, Campaign and Stores in South West Africa, July 1932, Report by Col. Sir P. van Ryneveld, 15 December 1932, pp.12-13; SANDFA, GG 289, 4/300, South West Africa, General Insurrection of Native Chief Ipumbu, Report by Administrator to Governor-General, 2 September 1932, pp.20-21; SANDFA, CGS(1) 43, 23, Native Trouble Ovamboland 1932, Telegram Chief of Union Defence Force to Col. Sir Van Ryneveld, 5 August 1932, p.1.

264 SANDFA, GG 289, 4/300, South West Africa, General Insurrection of Native Chief Ipumbu, Report by Administrator to Governor-General, 2 September 1932, pp.21-22; SANDFA, CGS(1) 43, DAS 7/13/1, Operations, Campaign and Stores in South West Africa, July 1932, Report by Col. Sir P. van Ryneveld, 15 December 1932, pp.13-14; SANDFA, CGS(1) 43, 23, Native Trouble Ovamboland 1932, Correspondence from the Chief of the General Staff to the Adjutant General, 9 August 1932, p.1.

Two Crossley armoured cars<sup>265</sup> with a crew of five men left Pretoria on 8 August under the command of Lt. J.B. Kriegler. They arrived in Windhoek on 11 August and acquired a six-wheeler Thornycroft truck to assist their advance towards Ovamboland. The journey of 440 km was mostly sand and the armoured cars struggled to advance. The front wheels were solid and narrow and due to the weight of the car, sank into the soft sand repeatedly. One armoured car was left at Otjiwarongo with a broken water pipe, while the second car continued its demanding journey north. It eventually arrived at the staging area near Ondonga on 14 August and preparations were made for the upcoming assault.<sup>266</sup>

Kriegler was flown over the target area immediately after his arrival to show him his line of advance and rendezvous point near the kraal. Hundreds of pamphlets were dropped over the kraal while the last reconnaissance flight was taking place. The pamphlet read: "Ipumbu was instructed by the Government to surrender himself. He has not done so. He is no longer Chief of Ukuambi. Tomorrow (Monday) his kraal will be destroyed. Everybody is warned to keep away." The pamphlets were picked up and read by the inhabitants of the kraal.<sup>267</sup>

The Air Force and the armoured car had to work closely together and a code of signals was prepared. The system of communication included the following:

- a. the use of the Popham Panel, which consisted of a series of white canvas strips, put out on the ground to spell out a prearranged code to the pilot and observer;
- b. message dropping by the aeroplane;
- c. message pick-up by the aeroplane. (The message would be placed in a small canvas wrapping attached to a piece of string 7.5 m long. The string would be placed on two 2 – 2.4 m poles. The aeroplane was equipped with a hook or a weight attached to a string, which would catch onto the message wire as the pilot flew over. The observer would then pull up the message); and
- d. wireless telephone between aircraft and armoured car.<sup>268</sup>

On the morning of 15 August at 09:00 the armoured car with Hahn, Kriegler and the rest of the ground crew waited for the aeroplanes to commence bombing. Warriors around the kraal moved

265 Crossley 1924 MK I/L/India Armoured Car.

266 SANDFA, AG(114) 21, KA/UVM, Operation Ipumbu by Brig. Gen. J.B. Kriegler, 7 August 1976, pp.1-2; SANDFA, CGS(1) 43, DAS 7/13, Armoured Vehicles – Ovamboland Expedition, Report by Capt. J.B. Kriegler, 13 September 1932, pp1-2; SANDFA, CGS(1) 43, DAS 7/13/1, Operations, Campaign and Stores in South West Africa, July 1932, Report by Col. Sir P. van Ryneveld, 15 December 1932, pp.14-15.

267 SANDFA, CGS(1) 43, DAS 7/13/1, Operations, Campaign and Stores in South West Africa, July 1932, Report by Col. Sir P. van Ryneveld, 15 December 1932, p.15; SANDFA, CGS(1) 43, 23, Native Trouble Ovamboland 1932, Telegram Administrator to Prime Minister, 15 August 1932, p.1.

268 SANDFA, AG(114) 21, KA/UVM, Operation Ipumbu by Brig. Gen. J.B. Kriegler, 7 August 1976, pp.2-7.

off as soon as the bombing commenced and the kraal was deserted. The end of the bombing was the signal for Kriegler to debus from the armoured car and to set the kraal on fire. This was hampered by a sudden attack of bees, which had been disturbed by the bombing. Very pistols were fired to smoke out the bees and eventually the kraal was set on fire. The perimeter was secured and large quantities of ammunition were found around the kraal where it had been left by the armed men when they departed.<sup>269</sup>

The ground force quickly ascertained that Chief Ipumbu had left early that morning with twenty men and gone to one of his cattle kraals, Mevethia, some 13 km from the main kraal. He left with orders that the men should stay until he returned. Upon hearing the news the aeroplanes immediately took off for a follow-up operation with Hahn as observer to identify the kraal. Chief Ipumbu heard the aeroplanes approach and escaped into the bush towards the Portuguese border (Angola).<sup>270</sup> The aeroplanes proceeded to bomb the kraal and killed 50 head of cattle owned by Chief Ipumbu. This was deemed appropriate as this was equivalent to the fine that had not yet been paid. The aeroplanes returned to Ondonga, but the armoured car took up a defensive position outside the main kraal.<sup>271</sup>

#### 3.5.4 MEETINGS WITH THE UKUAMBI

Members of the Ukuambi tribe returned to the main kraal the day after the bombing. Van Ryneveld and Hahn addressed influential members of the tribe and informed them that their quarrel was with Ipumbu and not with the Ukuambi. They were to surrender their weapons and ammunition and call a tribal meeting for Friday, 19 August. Rifles and ammunition were surrendered during the course of the week and by Friday 500 rifles had been handed in. (See Figure 3.13: Weapons Handed In.) The tribal meeting was attended by 1,300 adult male Ukuambi members and Van Ryneveld and Smit, the Secretary for South West Africa, addressed them.<sup>272</sup>

Van Ryneveld explained the military aspect of the past events and Smit explained the Administration's future policy. In the light of the trouble with Ipumbu no successor would be

269 SANDFA, AG(114) 21, KA/UVM, Operation Ipumbu by Brig. Gen. J.B. Kriegler, 7 August 1976, pp.7-9; SANDFA, CGS(1) 43, DAS 7/13/1, Operations, Campaign and Stores in South West Africa, July 1932, Report by Col. Sir P. van Ryneveld, 15 December 1932, p.15; SANDFA, GG 289, 4/300, South West Africa, General Insurrection of Native Chief Ipumbu, Report by Administrator to Governor-General, 2 September 1932, pp.22-23.

270 Portugal was the colonial power in Angola from the 12th Century.

271 SANDFA, CGS(1) 43, DAS 7/13/1, Operations, Campaign and Stores in South West Africa, July 1932, Report by Col. Sir P. van Ryneveld, 15 December 1932, pp.12-17; SANDFA, GG 289, 4/300, South West Africa, General Insurrection of Native Chief Ipumbu, Report by Administrator to Governor-General, 2 September 1932, pp.23-24; SANDFA, AG(114) 21, KA/UVM, Operation Ipumbu by Brig. Gen. J.B. Kriegler, 7 August 1976, pp.10-11.

272 SANDFA, GG 289, 4/300, South West Africa, General Insurrection of Native Chief Ipumbu, Report by Administrator to Governor-General, 2 September 1932, pp.25-22; SANDFA, CGS(1) 43, DAS 7/13/1, Operations, Campaign and Stores in South West Africa, July 1932, Report by Col. Sir P. van Ryneveld, 15 December 1932, pp.17.

appointed. The Union continued to implement a divide and rule policy in Ovamboland. The Ukuambi would be governed by the system successfully used by the Ukuanyama. This entailed that the tribal area would be split into areas where a headman, approved and appointed by the Administration, would be in charge. The headmen would be obeyed, but the final authority would rest with the Administration's representative, the Native Commissioner, Hahn. The system was instantly accepted by the tribe and implemented in due course.<sup>273</sup>



**Figure 3.13:** Weapons Handed in by the Ukuambi Tribe.<sup>274</sup>

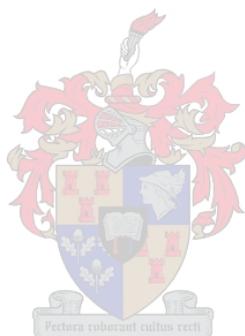
A few days later news reached Van Ryneveld and Hahn that Ipumbu had been refused entrance into Angola. He was wandering around in the Ukuanyama territory when trackers caught up with him. He was arrested and flown to Ondonga on 22 August where he was placed in custody. Tribal custom prevailed and Ipumbu had deposed himself from his chieftainship by leaving his tribal boundaries. Thus the troublesome Ipumbu was deposed as chief without bloodshed and removed to the Okavango River.<sup>275</sup>

273 SANDFA, GG 289, 4/300, South West Africa, General Insurrection of Native Chief Ipumbu, Report by Administrator to Governor-General, 2 September 1932, p.22.

274 I. van der Waag: The Union Defence Force Between the World Wars, 1919-1939, [http://www.sun.ac.za/mil/mil\\_history/244\\_udf.htm](http://www.sun.ac.za/mil/mil_history/244_udf.htm), n.d. (10 July 2004).

275 SANDFA, GG 289, 4/300, South West Africa, General Insurrection of Native Chief Ipumbu, Report by Administrator to Governor-General, 6 September 1932, p.27; SANDFA, CGS(1) 43, DAS 7/13/1, Operations, Campaign and Stores in South West Africa, July 1932, Report by Col. Sir P. van Ryneveld, 15 December 1932, p.18.

The armoured car returned to Pretoria on 23 August and the aeroplanes on 29 August. The aeroplanes were utilised to visit all the tribal leaders in Ovamboland. These visits, under friendly conditions, were used to underline the Administration's position of power and to confirm their authority. The aeroplane, a powerful military and political resource, ensured this authority.<sup>276</sup>



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276 SANDFA, CGS(1) 43, 23, Native Trouble Ovamboland 1932, Col. Sir P. van Ryneveld - Chief of Union Defence Force, 23 August 1932, p.1; SANDFA, CGS(1) 43, DAS 7/13/1, Operations, Campaign and Stores in South West Africa, July 1932, Report by Col. Sir P. van Ryneveld, 15 December 1932, pp.18-9.

## CHAPTER 4

## THE SUPPRESSION OF AFRIKANER UNREST

## 4.1 THE BELEAGUERED AFRIKANER

In all walks of life the Afrikaner of the early twentieth century felt beleaguered. The end of the Second Anglo-Boer War in 1902 stripped the two Boer Republics, *Zuid-Afrikaansche Republiek* (ZAR) and the Republic of the Orange Free State (OFS) of independence. The High Commissioner of South Africa, Lord Milner, aimed to “knock the bottom out of the great Afrikaner nation”.<sup>277</sup> Anglicising the schools was one of the methods used. No Afrikaans was allowed in Government schools, except for three hours a week with an additional two hours for religious practices. The Colonial Secretary, Joseph Chamberlain, applauded the strategy and supported Milner wholeheartedly. These overt attempts at suppressing the language and culture of the Afrikaner and make them British subjects fostered resentment for the British culture. In due course the Dutch Reformed Church established their own schools and by 1906, 200 Afrikaans schools were active in the Transvaal and Free State. By 1903, Chamberlain saw the Dutch Reformed Church as an astute adversary. The establishment of the Union of South Africa in 1910 curbed the overt Anglicising, but social and economic hardships still plagued the urbanised Afrikaner.<sup>278</sup>

After unification, British supremacy was forced on non-English-speaking South Africans in the cultural, administrative, social and economic arenas. English-speaking employers and employees dominated the urban sector. Trade unions who supplied mining, commerce and industry with labour executed a closed-shop principle and prevented semi-skilled white workers and unskilled blacks from obtaining employment. Afrikaners who moved to the cities were generally uneducated and could only be employed as semi-skilled labour. Afrikaners had little experience in dealing with trade unions at that time and hardly any urban relatives to help them find employment. They were inevitably excluded from the formal job market and subsequently became poor whites.<sup>279</sup>

The attempts to Anglicise them and their poor economic state had two distinct effects on the Afrikaner community. Firstly, they resented British imperialism and secondly, it stimulated initiatives towards Afrikaner identity and unity. The subservient position of the Afrikaner struck a

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277 D. Harrison: **The White Tribe of Africa, South Africa in Perspective**, p.48.

278 H. Giliomee: **The Afrikaners, Biography of a People**, p.324; D. Harrison: **The White Tribe of Africa**, pp.48-56; C. O’Neil: *Die Interneringsbeleid van die Smuts-Regering gedurende die Jare 1939–1948. Die Toepassing en Uitwerking van die Beleid*, p.4.

279 H. Giliomee: **The Afrikaners**, pp.323-325; D. Harrison: **The White Tribe of Africa**, pp.52-56; C. O’Neil: *Die Interneringsbeleid van die Smuts-Regering gedurende die Jare 1939–1948*, p.4; K. Fedorowich: ‘Sleeping with the Lion’?: *The Loyal Afrikaner and the South African Rebellion of 1914-15*, pp.2-3.

blow at Afrikaner identity and pride and Britain's involvement in the First World War appeared to provide an opportunity to redress the situation.<sup>280</sup>

## 4.2 THE 1914-1915 REBELLION

The outbreak of the First World War in 1914 raised the question of South Africa's involvement. The Union of South Africa had been a dominion of the British Empire since 1910 and was therefore obliged to support Britain. Gen. L. Botha argued that South Africa must take the initiative in Southern Africa or else face the embarrassment of Australia and New Zealand fighting the war for them. Gen. Botha informed Britain on 4 August 1914, the same day that Britain sent an ultimatum to Germany, that South Africa would take responsibility for its own protection if the British forces deployed within South Africa were needed elsewhere. Botha's suggestion was gratefully accepted with an additional request for the Union Defence Force to invade and occupy German South West Africa to deny the Germans the use of its harbours and the strong radio transmitters in that territory. The Union Parliament voted in favour of participation in September 1914 and preparations for the invasion of German South West Africa began.<sup>281</sup> This decision caused the largest and politically most sensitive internal uprising against the Union government in the period 1912-1945. It not only polarised the Afrikaans and English speakers, but also caused a significant rift between Afrikaners.

### 4.2.1 THE CAUSES OF THE REBELLION

Elements within the Afrikaner community, especially veterans and victims of the Second Anglo-Boer War, opposed participation. The defeat of the Boer forces at the hand of the British during the Second Anglo-Boer War and the Anglicising that followed was still deeply resented by many Afrikaners at the time of the First World War. The War, focussing Britain's attention on Europe, seemed to provide elements amongst the Afrikaner Nationalists with the opportunity to reclaim independence from Britain by proclaiming independent Republics, and dispose of the mantle of dominion, including the overthrow of an out-of-touch Union Government. These sentiments can be traced back to 1902 with the surrendering of the Boer forces at Vereeniging, when prominent Anglo-Boer War veterans still harboured hopes for a restoration of the Republics.<sup>282</sup>

280 H. Giliomee: **The Afrikaners**, pp.323-325; D. Harrison: **The White Tribe of Africa**, pp.52-56; C. O'Neil: Die Interneringsbeleid van die Smuts-Regering gedurende die Jare 1939 – 1948, p.4; K. Fedorowich: 'Sleeping with the Lion?': The Loyal Afrikaner and the South African Rebellion of 1914-15, pp.2-3.

281 Union of South Africa: **Report of the Judicial Commission of Inquiry into the Causes of and Circumstances Relating to the Recent Rebellion in South Africa**, no. 46 - 1916, 5 November 1915, p.3; B.J. Liebenberg: Botha en Smuts aan Bewind, 1910-1924, in C.F.J. Muller, et al: **Vyfhonderd Jaar Suid-Afrikaanse Geskiedenis**, p.404; H. Giliomee: **The Afrikaners**, pp.380-381; E.A. Venter: **400 Leiers in Suid-Afrika oor vier eeue, Beskouinge oor Vierhonderd Leierfigure in Suid-Afrika sedert die Grondlegging**, p114.

282 S.B. Spies: Unie en Onenigheid, 1910-1924, in T. Cameron en S.B. Spies (reds): **Nuwe Geskiedenis van Suid-Afrika in Woord en Beeld**, p.236; B.J. Liebenberg: Botha en Smuts aan

These Anglo-Boer War veterans, who became the leaders of the Rebellion, also served in prominent positions in the UDF, and included Brig. Gen. C.F. Beyers (Commandant General of the Active Citizen Force), Lt. Col. S.G. Maritz (District Staff Officer in charge of the Northern Cape Territory bordering German South West Africa), Maj. J.C.G. Kemp (District Staff Officer of the Western Transvaal) and Capt. J.J. (Jopie) Fourie. All the members, except Jopie Fourie, resigned their commissions in the UDF before the Rebellion. Famous guerrilla leader of the Anglo-Boer War, Gen. C.R. de Wet, was also part of the leadership, while Beyers also consulted the equally prominent Gen. J.H. de la Rey, who was a senator and respected member of the Boer community, on the issue of the Rebellion. Neither De Wet nor De la Rey were members of the UDF at the time, however.<sup>283</sup>

Most of the Rebels were poor white Afrikaners (*bywoners*) who participated with the aim of restoring a disappearing culture and lifestyle. Many white, uneducated, illiterate, subsistence farmers were pushed off their land and replaced by commercial farmers who could sustain a growing urban and industrial sector. Widespread poverty amongst Afrikaners made them susceptible to the wave of republicanism and the hope of restoring the Afrikaner to a position of prominence. This ideal was closely followed by sympathy for Germany, who they saw as an ally against the enemy, Britain. German ancestry amongst the Afrikaners, and sympathy from Berlin during the Second Anglo-Boer War, were remembered when the call came to resist a South African invasion on behalf of Britain, into German South West Africa. Some Afrikaner workers also still remembered the Government's suppression of the 1913-1914 strike and felt alienated.<sup>284</sup>

Tensions were strained to breaking point with the accidental killing of Gen. J.H. de la Rey on 15 September 1914, when he and Beyers, on their way to Potchefstroom to speak with Kemp, drove through a police roadblock set up for the notorious Foster gang. The death of De la Rey was a shock to many Afrikaners and the immediate outbreak of the Rebellion was averted. De la Rey's funeral was an emotional affair and many Afrikaners openly criticised the government and held Botha and Smuts responsible for his death. In an effort to prevent political rift, Botha declared that only volunteers would be used in the invasion of German South West Africa. Maritz was ordered

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Bewind, 1910-1924, pp.405-408; K. Fedorowich: 'Sleeping with the Lion?': The Loyal Afrikaner and the South African Rebellion of 1914-15, pp.2-3, 6-7, 10-12; T.R.H. Davenport: 'The South African Rebellion', p.74; Union of South Africa: **Report on the Outbreak of the Rebellion and the Policy of the Government with Regard to its Suppression**, no. 10, 2 February 1915, pp.7-10, 29.

283 B.J. Liebenberg: Botha en Smuts aan Bewind, 1910-1924, pp.405-408; H. Giliomee: **The Afrikaners**, pp.379-80; K. Fedorowich: 'Sleeping with the Lion?': The Loyal Afrikaner and the South African Rebellion of 1914-15, pp.2-3, 6-7, 10-12; T.R.H. Davenport: 'The South African Rebellion', p.74; Union of South Africa: **Report on the Outbreak of the Rebellion and the Policy of the Government with Regard to its Suppression**, no. 10, 2 February 1915, pp.7-10, 29.

284 H. Giliomee: **The Afrikaners**, pp.379-80; K. Fedorowich: 'Sleeping with the Lion?': The Loyal Afrikaner and the South African Rebellion of 1914-15, pp.2-3; D. Harrison: **The White Tribe of Africa**, pp.61-63, 71-72; B.J. Liebenberg: Botha en Smuts aan Bewind, 1910-1924, pp.405-406;

to take his men from Upington in the Northern Cape and invade German South West Africa in support of Brig. Gen. H.T. Lukin's force. Many Rebel leaders, especially Maritz, were adamant that they would not fight against the Germans. In early October 1914, Maritz made contact with German forces in German South West Africa to discuss co-operation. Maritz and his commando of over a thousand<sup>285</sup> joined forces with the Germans on 9 October 1914. He then sent word to the Government of his actions together with an ultimatum threatening an attack on Upington and Kakamas if he was not allowed to confer with Gens. Hertzog, De Wet, Beyers and Muller as well as Maj. Kemp. The Government responded on 12 October 1914 by declaring Martial Law throughout the Union and calling up mostly Afrikaner citizens - to prevent further Afrikaner-English polarisation - to suppress the Rebellion.<sup>286</sup>

#### 4.2.2 THE OUTBREAK AND SUPPRESSION OF THE REBELLION

The Rebel forces were outnumbered, ill-equipped and poorly armed compared to the Government forces. Nonetheless they continued to prepare for armed resistance. Meetings between the malcontents at Koppies in the Free State on 13 and 22 October finalised the Rebel plans. Beyers and Kemp were to organise the Rebellion in the Transvaal and De Wet was responsible for the Free State. Approximately 11,472 Afrikaners were organised into commandos to oppose the Government on the issue of invading German South West Africa. The strength of the Rebel force was 7,123 in the Free State, 2,998 in the Transvaal and 1,252 in the Cape. However, ineffective co-ordination and planning between the commandos limited their successes against the approximately 32,000 soldiers that Botha fielded against them.<sup>287</sup>

Gen. Botha stepped in and personally assumed overall command of the UDF as Commander-in-Chief in the field to fill the void left by Beyers' resignation. His preparations for the invasion of German South West Africa continued, while he prepared to mobilise against the Rebels. The railway infrastructure was crucial to his plans and the South African Railways and Harbours (SAR & H) supported Botha's efforts admirably. Members of the SAR & H Defence Rifle Associations who supported the Government were used to protect railway bridges, and at the same time

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Union of South Africa: **Report on the Outbreak of the Rebellion and the Policy of the Government with Regard to its Suppression**, no. 10, 2 February 1915, pp.29-30.

285 The **South African Biographical Dictionary** reports that 60 of his men refused and were subsequently detained. W.J. de Kock: **Suid Afrikaanse Biografiese Woordeboek**, Vol. 1, p.535.

286 T.R.H. Davenport: 'The South African Rebellion', p.85-6; H. Giliomee: **The Afrikaners**, pp.380-382; Union of South Africa: **Report of the Judicial Commission of Inquiry into the Causes of and Circumstances Relating to the Recent Rebellion in South Africa**, no. 46 - 1916, 5 November 1915, pp.22-23; G.D. Scholtz: **Die Rebelle, 1914-15**, p.117; B.J. Liebenberg: Botha en Smuts aan Bewind, 1910-1924, pp.406-407.

287 H. Giliomee: **The Afrikaners**, p.382; B.J. Liebenberg: Botha en Smuts aan Bewind, 1910-1924, p.407; Union of South Africa: **Report on the Outbreak of the Rebellion and the Policy of the Government with Regard to its Suppression**, no. 10, 2 February 1915, pp.29-30; P.J. Furlong: **Between Crown and Swastika. The impact of the Radical Right on the Afrikaner Nationalist Movement in the Fascist Era**, pp.71-73; Mahncke, J.: Cape Town Branch, Newsletter, no. 287,

provided crucial intelligence gathering services. The allegiance of the SA Police was another crucial factor to Botha's success. The SA Police in conjunction with the Resident Magistrates were the eyes and ears of the Government. Special constables were drafted to reinforce the police force, which totalled 11 514 at the height of the Rebellion. Disloyal civil servants were quickly identified and dismissed. The use of English speaking ACF personnel would exacerbate the rift between Afrikaans and English South Africans and it was politically prudent of Botha to use mostly Afrikaner ACF members to suppress the Rebellion. Botha surrounded himself with people he could trust and set out from Pretoria to suppress the Rebellion.<sup>288</sup>

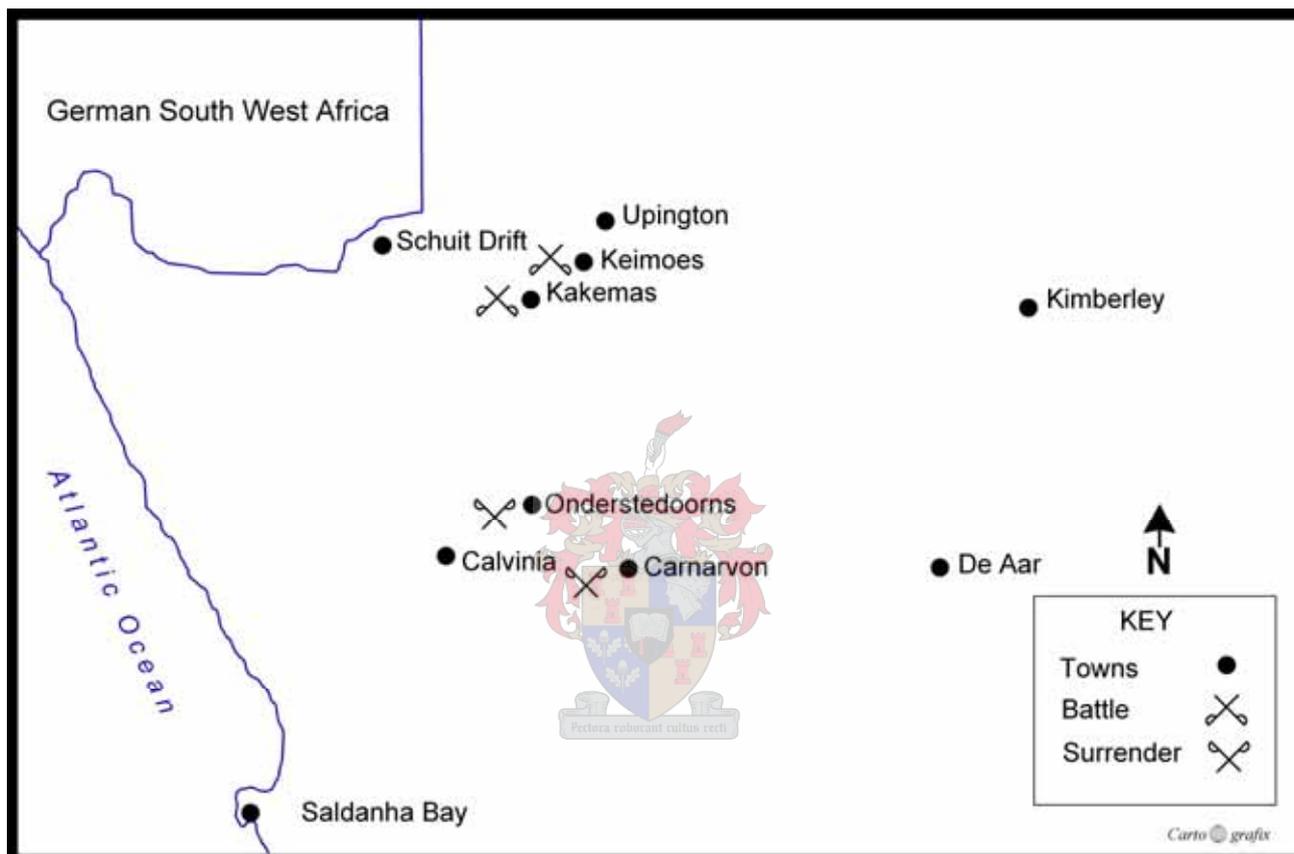


Figure 4.1: Rebellion in North Western Cape.<sup>289</sup>

Rebel commandos were dispatched by Maritz to patrol the North Western districts of the Cape Province, south of the Orange River. A commando moved towards Carnarvon and another commando proceeded to patrol in the direction of Calvinia. The Rebel commando patrolling in the vicinity of Carnarvon encountered loyal Government forces and subsequently surrendered to them. The second Rebel commando was captured by Maj. P.A. Vermaas at Onderstedoorns which

**South African Military History Society**, <http://www.rapidtp.com/milhist/2/c02marne.html>, n.d. (March/April 2002).

288 G.D. Scholtz: **Die Rebelle**, pp.179-181; P.J. Sampson: **The Capture of De Wet, The South African Rebellion 1914**, p.173; K. Fedorowich: 'Sleeping with the Lion?': The Loyal Afrikaner and the South African Rebellion of 1914-15, pp.7-8; H. Giliomee: **The Afrikaners**, p.382.

289 Map in C. O'Neil: *Die Interneringsbeleid van die Smuts-Regering gedurende die Jare 1939 – 1948*, p.69 has been adapted. Lt. Col. J.J. Jacobs, Department Military Geography, Faculty Military Science, US, is recognised for processing the original map.

effectively ended rebel activity in the area. Maritz skirmished with Government scouting parties outside Keimoes on 22 October 1914 and was defeated, but he managed to withdraw to Kakamas. On 24 October, Government forces attacked the Rebel force at Kakamas and again defeated them. (See Figure 4.1: Rebellion in North Western Cape.) The Rebels retreated in the direction of Schuit Drift. The Government captured a few Rebel prisoners, but Maritz escaped into German territory.<sup>290</sup>

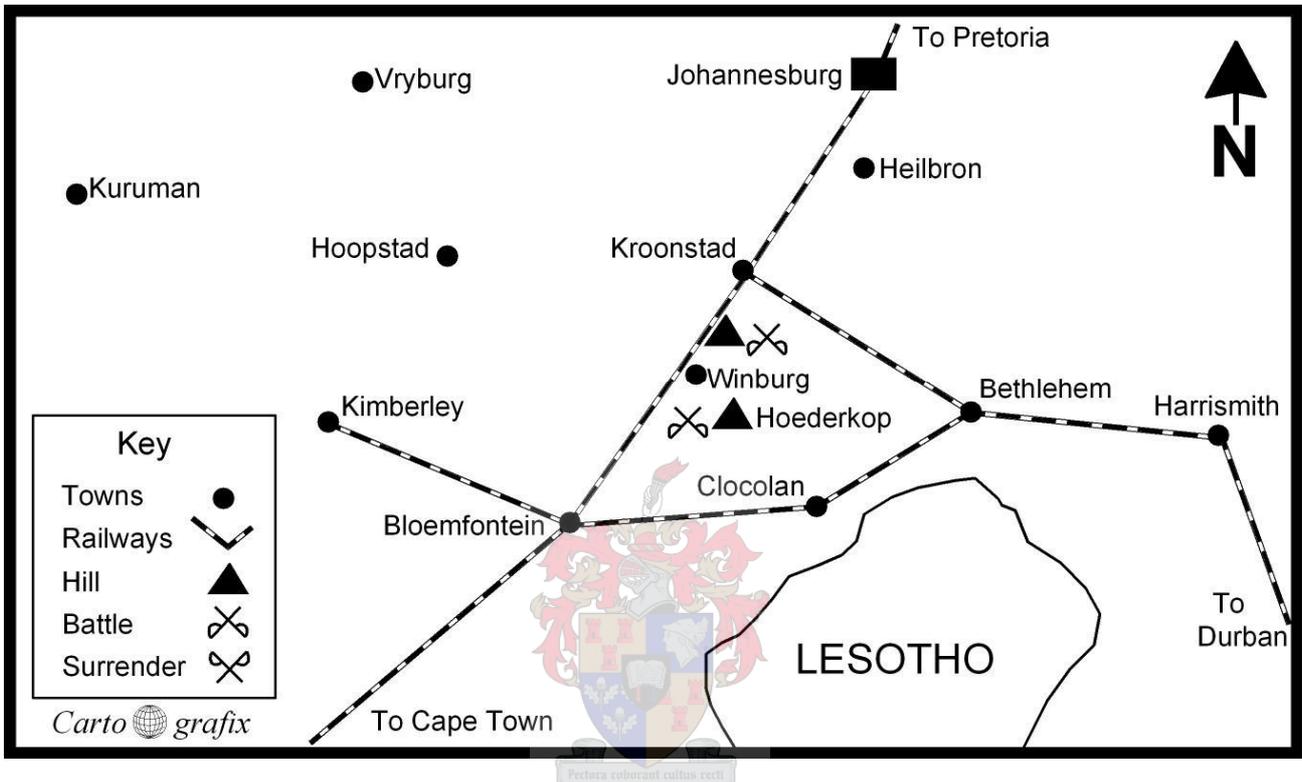
The Northern Free State was a hive of activity in late October, with Gen. De Wet, Rocco de Villiers and Nicolas Serfontein organising Rebel commandos. They occupied Heilbron, Hoopstad and Winburg, while Harrismith was raided and Kroonstad and Bethlehem were surrounded. The Rebels depended on raids to replenish their stores, ammunition, horses and rifles. Many towns were looted as De Wet advanced towards Doornberg. Growing in numbers his commando totalled 1200 mounted men by the time he reached Lindley on 7 November 1914. Commandant F.R. Cronjé commanded a loyal Government commando and intercepted De Wet's force at Doornkop. The skirmish was brief and Cmdt. Cronje was defeated on 9 November 1914. Cronje's force was dispersed and De Wet occupied the town of Winburg the same day. Looting continued and on 10 November 1914 De Wet advanced in the direction of Clocolan. Gen. Botha arrived by train at Winburg on 11 November 1914 and immediately proceeded to follow De Wet's commando with the loyal Transvaal commando. Gen. Botha advanced to make contact with the Rebel force at Hoenderkop on the morning of 12 November 1914 in the Mushroom Valley. Botha launched a three-pronged attack on the Rebel forces, catching them off guard and defeating them decisively. De Wet managed to escape with 2000 men and during his retreat he attacked Government forces at Virginia station on 16 November 1914, thereafter moving into the Vryburg district in the Transvaal. Government forces, transported by motorcar, pursued De Wet and the rest of his followers. This innovative step ensured that the Government forces were quickly redeployed. This method of transport was quicker and needed less logistical effort than cavalry deployments at the time. De Wet was eventually captured on 2 December 1914 at Waterbury in the Kuruman district.<sup>291</sup>

Cmdt. P. Delarey Swartz with 270 men was responsible for defending the railway lines situated in the disaffected areas of the Transvaal. He opened fire on Gen. Beyers at Kingswood station on 5 November 1914 as the Rebels crossed the railway and he continued to harass them until they reached the Vaal River, resulting in more skirmishes and casualties. Gen. Beyers pushed on, but

290 Union of South Africa: **Report of the Judicial Commission of Inquiry into the Causes of and Circumstances Relating to the Recent Rebellion in South Africa**, no. 46 - 1916, 5 November 1915, pp.27-28;

291 P.J. Sampson: **The Capture of De Wet**, p.171; Union of South Africa: **Report of the Judicial Commission of Inquiry into the Causes of and Circumstances Relating to the Recent Rebellion in South Africa**, no. 46 - 1916, 5 November 1915, pp.46, 51-52, 57-8; B.J. Liebenberg: *Botha en Smuts aan Bewind, 1910-1924*, p.408; K. Fedorowich: 'Sleeping with the Lion?': *The Loyal Afrikaner and the South African Rebellion of 1914-15*, p.8; M. Ritchie: **With Botha in the Field**, pp.8-10.

was attacked on 16 November 1914 at Bultfontein. His commando scattered and he managed to escape with a small following in the direction of Reitz. Field Cornet P.H. de Necker tracked down and attacked Gen. Beyers in the vicinity of Hoopstad on 8 December 1914. The Rebels withdrew that same day to a farm on the Free State side of the Vaal River, Greylings Request, and after a short battle 23 Rebels surrendered. During the battle Gen. Beyers tried to ford the Vaal River, but drowned in the attempt.<sup>292</sup>



**Figure 4.2:** Rebellion in the Northern Free State.<sup>293</sup>

Botha eroded Rebel support during his campaign to suppress the Rebellion with a promise of amnesty to any rebel who surrendered before 21 November 1914. Support melted away in many districts as 2,056 surrendered. However, skirmishes between Government forces and the Rebels continued in the Pretoria, Rustenburg and Waterberg districts but one by one the Rebel commandos surrendered. Capt. J.J. Fourie fought a guerrilla type war and inflicted heavy casualties on Government troops. He was finally tracked down where his commando had entrenched themselves in a dry river bed on the farm Nooitgedacht No. 4. On 16 December 1914, Government forces encircled the entrenchment and suffered heavy casualties of 12 killed and 24 wounded before Fourie surrendered with 53 men. Fourie was found guilty of high treason,

292 Union of South Africa: **Report of the Judicial Commission of Inquiry into the Causes of and Circumstances Relating to the Recent Rebellion in South Africa**, no. 46 - 1916, 5 November 1915, pp.59, 64.

293 Map in C. O'Neil: *Die Interneringsbeleid van die Smuts-Regering gedurende die Jare 1939 – 1948*, p.69 has been adapted. Lt. Col. J.J. Jacobs, Department Military Geography, Faculty Military Science, US, is recognised for processing the original map.

because he had failed to resign as an officer of the UDF and he was subsequently executed on 20 December 1914.<sup>294</sup>

Maritz and Kemp held out in the North Western regions of the Cape, but eventually Kemp surrendered on 2 February 1915 with his and Maritz's commandos. Maritz fled to German South West Africa and later to Angola. He stayed in Angola until 1916 and in Spain and Portugal until 1920 when he left for Berlin. In 1923 he moved to Lourenço Marques (Maputo, Mozambique) where he informed the Government of his intention of returning to South Africa. He was arrested at the border and tried for high treason, but he served only three months of his three year sentence, before he was released by the new Pact Government, which came to power after the 1924 elections.<sup>295</sup>

#### 4.2.3 IN THE WAKE OF THE REBELLION

On the side of the Rebels only 190 were killed compared to the 132 of the Government forces. Casualties were expected, but both the Government and the Rebels were unwilling to cause unnecessary bloodshed. Government forces had strict orders from Smuts himself not to fire unless fired upon. The Rebels in turn did not want to fire on people of their own race. Some Afrikaans and some English people in the government camp were of the opinion that the Rebels were treated too softly and in cases such as the Battle of Mushroom Valley more casualties were inflicted than intended by the officers in charge. The political and social ramifications of too many casualties in the suppression of the Rebellion would have been devastating to the ruling party, the Afrikaner community and the White population of South Africa as a whole.<sup>296</sup>

Fines of up to £2000 and imprisonment of up to 7 years were handed out to only 281 of the 11,472 participants. The Rebels were treated with compassion after their capture in order to prevent further rifts within the Afrikaner community or between the Afrikaner and English communities. The animosities of the Second Anglo-Boer war resurfaced and the Government did well not to make more martyrs during the suppression of the Rebellion. De la Rey, Beyers and Fourie were already

294 M. Ritchie: **With Botha in the Field**, pp.8-10; Union of South Africa: **Report of the Judicial Commission of Inquiry into the Causes of and Circumstances Relating to the Recent Rebellion in South Africa**, no. 46 - 1916, 5 November 1915, p.66; K. Fedorowich: 'Sleeping with the Lion?': The Loyal Afrikaner and the South African Rebellion of 1914-15, pp.12-13; B.J. Liebenberg: *Botha en Smuts aan Bewind, 1910-1924*, pp.405-408.

295 M. Ritchie: **With Botha in the Field**, pp.8-10; Union of South Africa: **Report of the Judicial Commission of Inquiry into the Causes of and Circumstances Relating to the Recent Rebellion in South Africa**, no. 46 - 1916, 5 November 1915, p.66; K. Fedorowich: 'Sleeping with the Lion?': The Loyal Afrikaner and the South African Rebellion of 1914-15, pp.12-13; B.J. Liebenberg: *Botha en Smuts aan Bewind, 1910-1924*, pp.405-408.

296 H. Giliomee: **The Afrikaners**, pp.382-383; Union of South Africa: **Report on the Outbreak of the Rebellion and the Policy of the Government with Regard to its Suppression**, no. 10, 2 February 1915, pp.7-10, 29; Union of South Africa: **Report of the Judicial Commission of Inquiry into the Causes of and Circumstances Relating to the Recent Rebellion in South Africa**, no. 46 - 1916, 5 November 1915, pp.74-75; P.J. Sampson: **The Capture of De Wet**, p.173.

seen as martyrs by the Afrikaner Nationalists and their deaths were suspiciously seen as Government plots. This increased the hate and suspicion some Afrikaners had for Botha and Smuts, whom they blamed. By the end of 1916, all those imprisoned for participating in the Rebellion were released in an effort to show compassion and to limit political damage, but the resentment against the Government, especially Botha and Smuts, remained. They were branded as British puppets and traitors to the Afrikaners.<sup>297</sup>

#### 4.3 THE REVIVAL OF THE AFRIKANER CULTURE AND POLITICAL DISPARITY

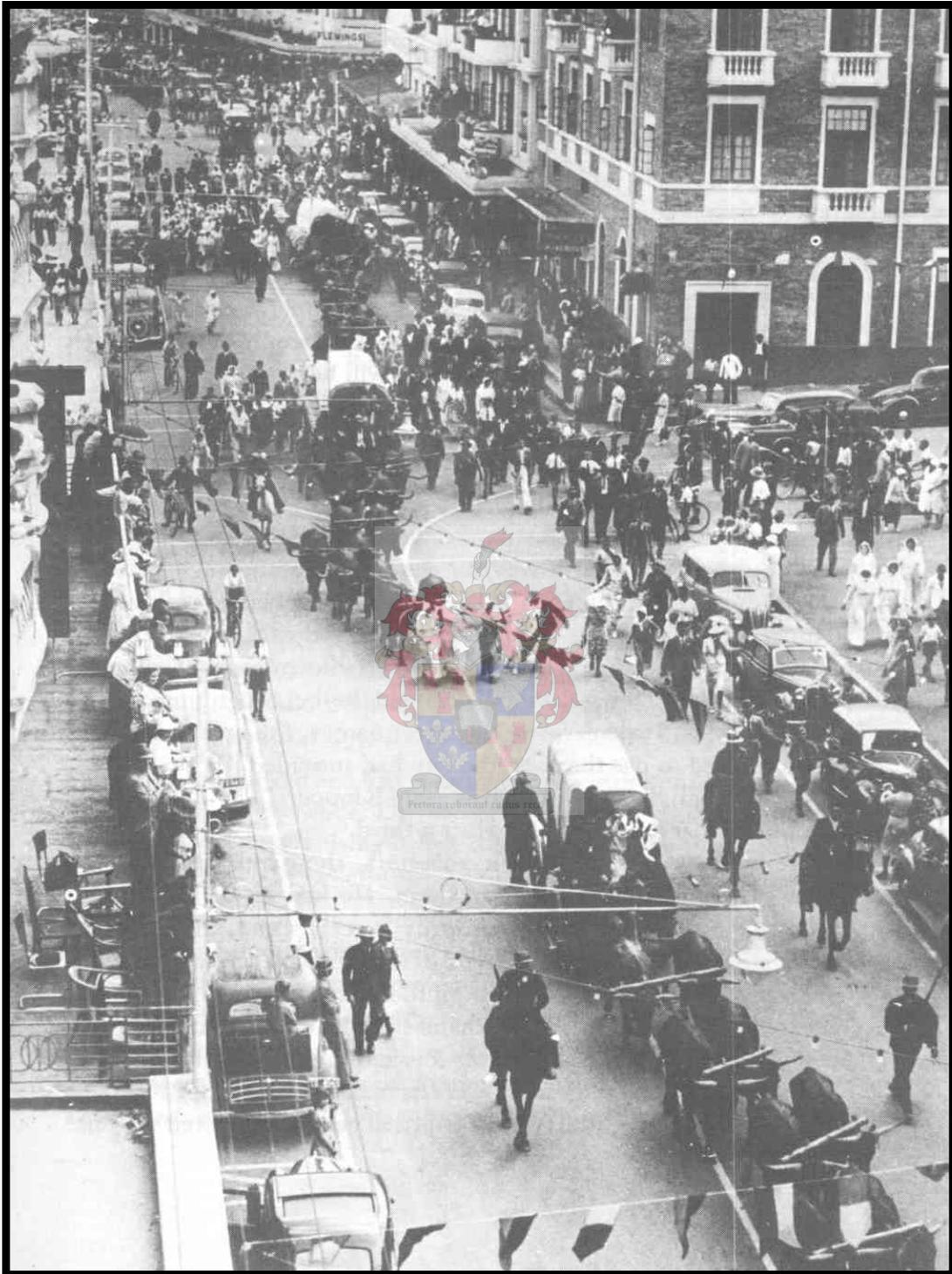
The survival of the Afrikaner and his heritage was a paramount concern amongst the Afrikaners in the period between the two World Wars. The revival of Afrikaner culture provided a platform to restore Afrikaner prestige and ensure the survival of the Afrikaner. In an effort to promote Afrikaner interests the *Broederbond* (Brotherhood) was formed in 1918. The *Broederbond* initiated many cultural organisations and the establishment of the *Federasie vir Afrikaanse Kultuurverenigings* (FAK) (Federation of Afrikaans Cultural Organisations) in 1929 and the *Reddingsdaadbond* (Society for the Act of Rescue) in 1939 characterised their efforts. The FAK stimulated interest and pride in Afrikaans literature and art, education and business interests. The *Reddingsdaadbond* focussed on alleviating the plight of poor whites in the urban environment. Other societies such as the *Voortrekkers* (counterpart to the Girl Guides and Boy Scouts) and the *Noodhulpiga* (counterpart to St. John Ambulance Association and the Red Cross) were encouraged and provided an environment where Afrikaner culture could flourish.<sup>298</sup>

However, the unification of the Afrikaner at a cultural level was impaired by politics. Anti-Smuts sentiments were connected to the anti-British feeling and Afrikaner prominence on the political field was hoped for when Gen. Hertzog won the 1924 elections with the help of the Labour Party (known as the Pact government). This government supported the Afrikaans language struggle, and it became government policy after 1924 to enforce language equality. Equity between English-speaking and Afrikaans-speaking South Africans on a cultural, economic and political level was aimed for, but with rising economic issues, brought on by the Great Depression of 1931-1933, little was actually achieved. The fusion of Hertzog's National Party with Smuts' South African Party in 1934 disillusioned many nationalist Afrikaners. D.F. Malan broke away from the National Party

297 B.J. Liebenberg: *Botha en Smuts aan Bewind, 1910-1924*, pp.405-408; K. Fedorowich: 'Sleeping with the Lion?': The Loyal Afrikaner and the South African Rebellion of 1914-15, pp.2-3, 6-7, 10-12; Union of South Africa: **Report on the Outbreak of the Rebellion and the Policy of the Government with Regard to its Suppression**, no. 10, 2 February 1915, pp.7-10, 29; Union of South Africa: **Report of the Judicial Commission of Inquiry into the Causes of and Circumstances Relating to the Recent Rebellion in South Africa**, no. 46 - 1916, 5 November 1915, pp.74-75; P.J. Sampson: **The Capture of De Wet**, p.173; H. Giliomee: **The Afrikaners**, p.383.

298 H. Giliomee: **The Afrikaners**, pp.400-401; D. Harrison: **The White Tribe of Africa**, pp.10, 85, 95, 97, 108; M. Wilson and L. Thompson: **The Oxford History of South Africa, South Africa 1870-1966**, pp.297-298; B.J. Liebenberg: 'Hertzog aan Bewind, 1924-1939'; in C.F.J. Muller, et al: **Vyfhonderd Jaar Suid-Afrikaanse Geskiedenis**, p.446.

to form the “Purified” National Party and disparity reigned amongst Afrikaners regarding political issues. The discord among the political parties was felt by all Afrikaners and divided them accordingly.<sup>299</sup>



**Figure 4.3:** Centennial Celebration of the “Great Trek” in 1938.<sup>300</sup>

299 C. O’Neil: *Die Interneringsbeleid van die Smuts-Regering gedurende die Jare 1939–1948*, pp.4-5; H. Giliomee: **The Afrikaners**, p.401, 407-408; D. Harrison: **The White Tribe of Africa**, p.99; B.J. Liebenberg: ‘Hertzog aan Bewind, 1924-1939’, p.446.

300 D. Harrison: **The White Tribe of Africa**, p.105.

During this political discord the *Afrikaanse Taal- en Kultuurvereniging* (ATKV) (Afrikaans Language and Culture Society) of the South African Railways and Harbours organised the centennial celebration of the “Great Trek” in 1938. (See Figure 4.3: Centennial Celebration.) This event sparked a wave of patriotism and the Afrikaner’s fight against indigenous tribes and British imperialism was reflected upon. The centenary celebrations brought factious elements within Afrikaner society together and for a short time political rivalry was put aside. Afrikaner nationalism flourished and in an effort to perpetuate the spirit of the celebrations the *Ossewa-Brandwag* (OB) (Ox Wagon Sentinels) was formed on 4 February 1939.<sup>301</sup>

The OB, under the leadership of a UDF officer, Col. J.C.C. Laas, aimed to unite all Afrikaners who had national ardour. The OB organised Afrikaner festivals, the building of memorials, wreath laying at monuments, maintenance of historic sites and other traditional Afrikaner activities. The FAK feared the OB’s festivals might lead to a boycott of their own efforts, but a conscious effort by the OB to openly support FAK events and other cultural organisations prevented this.<sup>302</sup>

The aims and policies of the OB during the tenure of Col. Laas were to perpetuate the “ox wagon” spirit in South Africa; maintain, extend and realise the traditions and principles of the Boer Nation; protect and promote the religious, cultural and material concerns of the Afrikaner and to cultivate love for the fatherland and a national spirit; incorporate and unite all Afrikaners, men as well as women, who endorsed these principles and ideals and who strived towards them. The cultural demeanour of the OB changed when it actively opposed South Africa’s participation in the Second World War.<sup>303</sup>



## 4.4 THE SECOND WORLD WAR

### 4.4.1 SOUTH AFRICA ENTERS THE WAR INTERNALLY DIVIDED

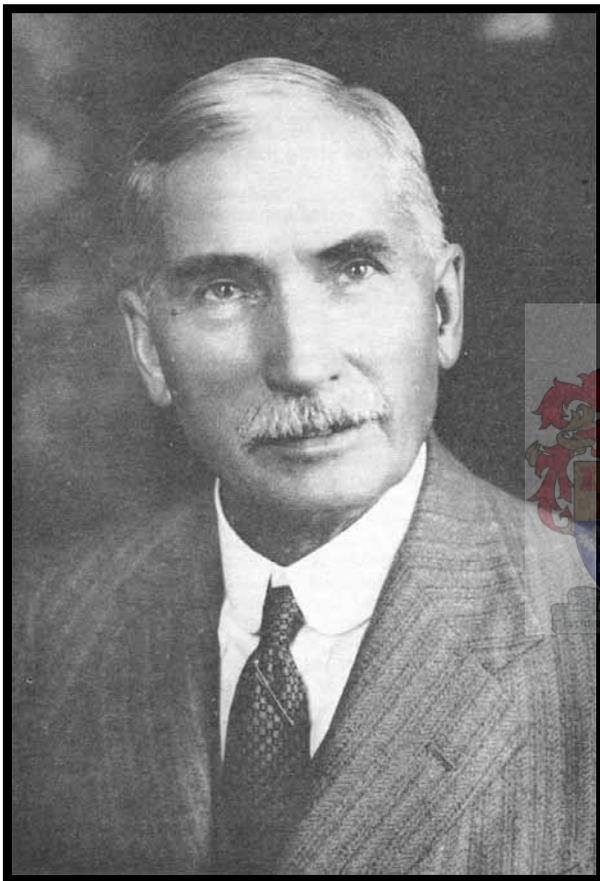
Hertzog’s cabinet was divided on the question of the Union’s participation in the Second World War, but on 4 September 1939 the General Assembly voted 80 to 67 in favour of going to war. Hertzog (See Figure 4.4: J.B.M. Hertzog.) resigned as Prime Minister and the Governor-General, Sir Patrick Duncan, requested Smuts to form a new Government. The War Cabinet of Smuts included Walter Madeley and Col. C.F. Stallard of the Labour and Dominion Parties, respectively,

301 L. Witz: **Apartheid’s Festival. Contesting South Africa’s National Pasts**, pp.49-50; B.J. Liebenberg: ‘Hertzog aan Bewind, 1924-1939’, p.448; D. Harrison: **The White Tribe of Africa**, p.97; S. Louw: Discourse Theory, Afrikaner Nationalism & the Ossewa-Brandwag, **STET**, vol. 6, no. 3, 1990, p.26.

302 P.J.J. Prinsloo, Die Kentering in die Kultuurbeeld van die Ossewa-Brandwag, 1939-1940, **Koers**, vol. 61, no. 3, 1996, pp.349-351; S. Louw: Discourse Theory, Afrikaner Nationalism & the Ossewa-Brandwag, **STET**, vol. 6, no. 3, 1990, p.26.

303 S. Louw: Discourse Theory, Afrikaner Nationalism & the Ossewa-Brandwag, **STET**, vol. 6, no. 3, 1990, p.26-27; C. O’Neil: Die Interneringsbeleid van die Smuts-Regering gedurende die Jare 1939 – 1948, p.8.

as well as remnants of the Fusion Party loyal to Smuts (See Figure 4.5: Gen J.C. Smuts.). Malan stepped down as leader of the opposition in favour of Hertzog and on 9 September 1939 at Monument Hill outside Pretoria, they laid the foundation of the new *Herenigde Nasionale Party of Volksparty* (HNP) (Re-United National Party or People's Party). The HNP struggled to merge the ideals of Hertzog and Malan and eventually Hertzog left the party in November 1940. Malan assumed leadership of the HNP while other members, such as N.C. Havenga, broke away to form the Afrikaner Party and Oswald Pirow established the *Nuwe Orde Party* (New Order Party). Pirow's New Order propagated Christian Republicanism and National Socialism, but its membership remained small.<sup>304</sup>



**Figure 4.4 (Left):** Gen. J.B.M. Hertzog.

**Figure 4.5 (Right):** Gen. J.C. Smuts.

The white society of South Africa was polarised on the issue of support or opposition in terms of participation in the war. Support for the war was forthcoming from Smuts supporters and from members of the Dominion and Labour Parties. The HNP, the Afrikaner Party, the New Order Party and the OB were platforms from which opposition was voiced. They held anti-British sentiments

304 B.J. Liebenberg: 'Hertzog aan Bewind, 1924-1939', pp.445-447; D. Harrison: **The White Tribe of Africa**, pp.123-124; W.K. Hancock: **Smuts: the Fields of Force, 1919-1950**, p.368; P.J. Furlong: **Between Crown and Swastika**, pp.122-128.

and opposed participation in yet another of Britain's wars. Afrikaner society was further divided over a militant approach vis-à-vis a parliamentary approach to oppose the war.<sup>305</sup>

Fear of open rebellion and a repetition of the 1914 Rebellion prompted the War Cabinet to take pre-emptive measures. Proclamation No. 201 of 1939 and the War Measures Act of 1940 (Act 13 of 1940) were passed, which provided the Government with arbitrary powers. Suspects and enemy aliens were interned, privately licensed firearms and ammunition were confiscated under Proclamation No. 139 of 1940, white trade union activities were suspended to prevent industrial unrest and general supplies were controlled. The Government thereby removed the means by which groups could organise themselves militarily against the Government.<sup>306</sup>

Proclamation No. 20 of 1941 forbade any subversive material and instructed the Criminal Investigation Department of the South African Police and Military Intelligence to investigate people and organisations, such as the OB, suspected of subversive activities. Proclamation No. 20 of 1941 prohibited any civil servant from participating in, representing or being a member of any subversive organisation. In March 1941 circulars in the civil sector prohibited any state employee from being a member of the OB as stipulated by Proclamation No. 20 of 1941.<sup>307</sup> The OB honourably discharged all the members who were not allowed in the organisation under the Act, subsequently retaining their support. These members flocked to the banners of secret militant organisations, such as the *Stormjaers* (Stormtroopers) or *Terreurgroep* (Terror Group), to continue their resistance. The Proclamation provided for the suppression of subversive organisations and declared them illegal if they presented a danger to the defence of the Union and the Mandated Territory (SWA), public safety and order and the conduct of war.<sup>308</sup>

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305 H.O. Terblanche: **John Vorster: OB-Generaal en Afrikanervegter**, p116, H. Giliomee: **The Afrikaners**, pp.440-441; D. Harrison: **The White Tribe of Africa**, p.119, pp.124-125; T.H.R. Davenport and C. Saunders: **South Africa, a Modern History**, pp.344-345; B.J. Liebenberg: 'Hertzog aan Bewind, 1924-1939', p.444; C. O'Neil: Die Interneringsbeleid van die Smuts-Regering gedurende die Jare 1939–1948, pp.18-29; P.J. Furlong: **Between Crown and Swastika**, pp.119-120.

306 H.O. Terblanche: **John Vorster: OB-Generaal en Afrikanervegter**, p116, H. Giliomee: **The Afrikaners**, p.444; D. Harrison: **The White Tribe of Africa**, p.119, pp.124-125; T.H.R. Davenport and C. Saunders: **South Africa, a Modern History**, pp.344-345; B.J. Liebenberg: 'Hertzog aan Bewind, 1924-1939', p.444; C. O'Neil: Die Interneringsbeleid van die Smuts-Regering gedurende die Jare 1939 – 1948, pp.18-29; P.J. Furlong: **Between Crown and Swastika**, p.121.

307 SANDFA, DC 3841, DF 1887, Proclamation 44 of 1941. Re. "Die Ossewa-Brandwag" Association: Circular nr. 1 of 1941, 5 March 1941; UNISA, Unisa Collection 1/1. Premier oor Ossewa Brandwag, p.1.

308 SANDFA, DC 3841, DF 1887, Proclamation 44 of 1941. Re. "Die Ossewa-Brandwag" Association: Circular nr. 1 of 1941, 5 March 1941; H. van Rensburg: **Their Paths Crossed Mine, Memoirs of the Commandant-General of the Ossewa-Brandwag**, pp.193-194; D. Harrison: **The White Tribe of Africa**, p.119, pp.124-125; T.H.R. Davenport and C. Saunders: **South Africa, a Modern History**, pp.344-345; B.J. Liebenberg: 'Hertzog aan Bewind, 1924-1939', p.444; C. O'Neil: Die Interneringsbeleid van die Smuts-Regering gedurende die Jare 1939–1948, pp.26-31.

#### 4.4.2 ACTIVIST ELEMENTS AND THE OSSEWA BRANDWAG

Pro-German feelings were prevalent in South Africa during the 1930s and activists from this era won support, before and during the war, from the broader Afrikaner society as the economic, social and later military successes of Germany were reported. As mentioned before, the Afrikaner affinity for Germany stemmed from the many who had German ancestry due to Germans settling in South Africa from the seventeenth century. The Afrikaners had enjoyed German sympathy during both Anglo-Boer Wars and many were reluctant to fight against them in the First or Second World War. German-Afrikaner sympathies were further cemented by sharing a common enemy, namely Britain.<sup>309</sup>

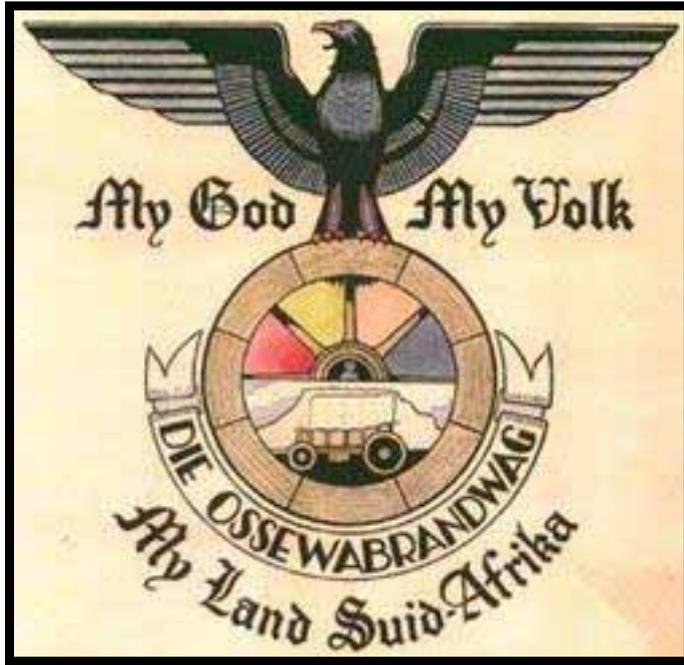
The German-Afrikaner connectivity became prevalent when organisations propagating Nazi ideals were established in South Africa with the advent of Hitler's ascension to power. Far right "shirt" movements like the Greyshirts, Blackshirts and the South African Fascists were founded with a European anti-Semitic programme instead of the traditional anti-Black programme. The Greyshirts, founded by Louis Weichardt, was the main shirt movement and various splinter shirt movements stemmed from it. These movements were the South African Fascists led by J.S. von Moltke, the Gentile Protection League led by J.H.H. de Waal Jr., the People's Movement led by H.S. Terblanche and the South African National Democratic Party or Blackshirts led by M. Wessels, which in turn suffered from splintering when C. Havemann broke away to form *Die Volksbeweging* (The Peoples' Movement).<sup>310</sup>

The strategic location of South Africa was a determining factor in continued German interest and the Auslandorganisation in Berlin, which led and coordinated all Nazi party activities overseas, showed particular interest in the subcontinent of Africa before and during the Second World War. South African intelligence sources indicated that Bruno Stiller, the Nazi Party Leader in South Africa, was cultivating the shirt movements and the OB. Nazi activity in Southern Africa had two dimensions. The first dimension was to create a power base among naturalized South Africans of German descent assimilated into the Afrikaner population and German nationals. The second dimension was to promote the Nazi cause especially amongst German nationals but also among non-Germans. A torrent of propaganda flooded South Africa and Patrick Furlong suggests that this could have influenced people with a limited educational background living in the remote rural areas, the youth and the poor.<sup>311</sup>

309 P.J. Furlong: **Between Crown and Swastika**, pp.70-71; B. Bunting: **The Rise and Fall of the South African Reich**, pp.54-55; W.K. Hancock: **Smuts: the Fields of Force, 1919-1950**, p.368; G.C. Visser: **OB, Traitors or Patriots?**, p.167.

310 B. Bunting: **The Rise and Fall of the South African Reich**, pp.54-56; J. Furlong: **Between Crown and Swastika**, pp.20-21; W.K. Hancock: **Smuts: the Fields of Force, 1919-1950**, p.368; G.C. Visser: **OB, Traitors or Patriots?**, p.167.

311 P.J. Furlong: **Between Crown and Swastika**, pp.23-24, 73, 83.



**Figure 4.6 (Left):** Symbol of the *Ossewa-Brandwag*.<sup>312</sup>

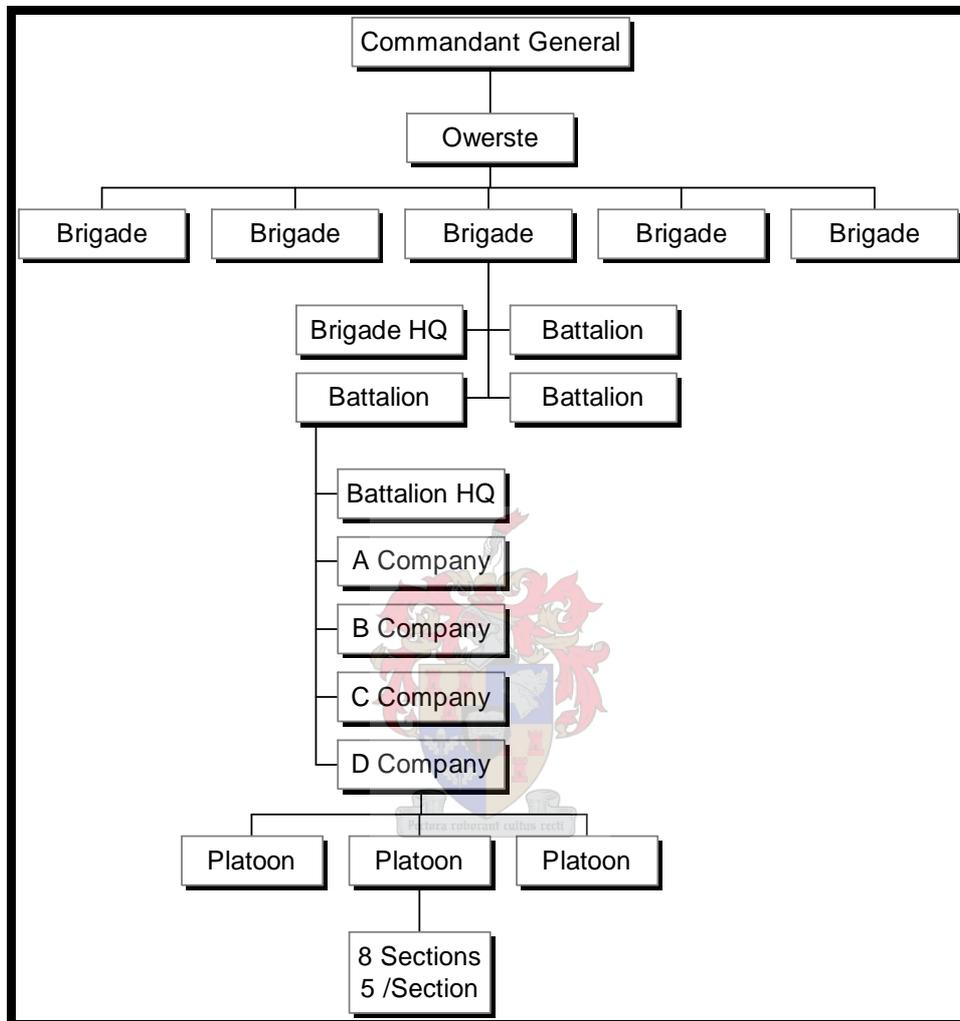
**Figure 4.7 (Right):** Dr. J.F.J. van Rensburg.<sup>313</sup>

German propaganda by means of pamphlets, Zeesen Radio Station and German Missions fuelled anti-war sentiments and the OB became a structured platform from which to oppose the war. The OB developed a political character under the leadership of Hans van Rensburg as it opposed participation in the war and propagated republicanism. (See Figures 4.6 and 4.7: Symbol of the *Ossewa-Brandwag* and Dr. J.H.J. van Rensburg.) Stephen Louw argues that the rise of National-Socialism in Nazi Germany influenced the OB only in the power of unification and that the OB was not a National-Socialist tool, but a populist organisation that expected only commitment in support against the war and for the republican ideal. Van Rensburg was a self-proclaimed National-Socialist (albeit not publicly) and an admirer of Hitler's new Germany. This became apparent after Herr Dieckhoff, of the German Foreign Office, wrote a letter to the South African Government indicating their pleasure at meeting such an important person as Van Rensburg after his visit in 1936. Documents captured after the war implicated Van Rensburg in actively supporting German spy networks and proposing to stage a coup if Germany supplied the weapons. He suggested that the weapons should be offloaded in South West Africa (West Plan) or on an airstrip in Southern Rhodesia (Zimbabwe) (North Plan). Furlong argues that the plan was aborted due to a lack of grass-roots supporters willing to take up arms and the OB's growing estrangement from Malan. The OB's political character brought them into direct conflict with Malan and the HNP. The

312 B. Erasmus: 'Ossewabrandwag', <http://www.biddulphsberg.com/english/about/history/ossewabrandwag.html>, n.d. (10 July 2004).

313 G.C. Visser: **OB, Traitors or Patriots?** (Centrefold Images), p.96.

Cradock Agreement between Laas and Malan stated clearly that co-operation between the HNP and the OB would continue with the HNP focussing on the political sphere and the OB focussing on the cultural sphere. Hans van Rensburg broke the agreement and lost the support of the HNP. The membership of the two organisations overlapped and Malan's distancing himself from the OB led to an exodus of HNP members.<sup>314</sup>



**Figure 4.8:** Organisational structure of a *Stormjaer* Brigade.<sup>315</sup>

The OB executed its anti-war effort through the *Stormjaers*. The *Stormjaers* were an elite group within the OB organisation. They organised among the local jukskei clubs and were responsible for instilling discipline in the OB ranks. They were initially a splinter group within the OB who, under the leadership of Abraham Spies, was more militantly inclined. Col. Laas supported Spies in organising the *Stormjaers* and each OB Commando had to identify members for the *Stormjaers*.

314 S. Louw: Discourse Theory, Afrikaner Nationalism & the Ossewa-Brandwag, **STET**, vol. 6, no. 3, 1990, p.27; P.J. Furlong: **Between Crown and Swastika**, pp.78-79, 141-142, 134; B. Bunting: **The Rise and Fall of the South African Reich**, pp.80-81, pp92-93; T.H.R. Davenport and C. Saunders: **South Africa, a Modern History**, p.348; H. Giliomee: **The Afrikaners**, p.444.

315 J.J. Badenhorst: Die Organisasiestruktuur van die Ossewa-Brandwag, p.147.

Van Rensburg reorganised the *Stormjaers* and gave command to S. Hofmeyer. The OB Commandos in the Transvaal and the Free State were earmarked to specifically provide members for the *Stormjaers* because they were militantly inclined, whereas the rest of the provinces were hesitant to use these tactics. The OB commandos in the Cape, Natal and South West Africa (now Namibia) were therefore not specifically targeted for membership.<sup>316</sup>

Van Rensburg was the Officer Commanding of the 4<sup>th</sup> Brigade and had intimate knowledge of the citizen force structure. Hans van Rensburg and Steve Hofmeyer reorganised the rank and structure of the new *Stormjaers* to be similar to the citizen force structure of the UDF. (See Figure 4.8: Organisational structure of a *Stormjaer* Brigade.) The leader of the *Stormjaers* was called the *Owerste* (Chief/Head), who was appointed by and responsible to the Commandant General. Official contact between the OB Council and the *Stormjaers* was frequent in the Laas period up to 1941. Stephen Louw argues that official contact was limited in the Van Rensburg period, because the Commandant General and the *Owerste* excluded the Council from the various militant actions by the *Stormjaers*.<sup>317</sup>

Members of the *Stormjaers* were men who could be counted on to be trustworthy, dependable and to walk through fire if required. They took their oath during a ceremony where the candidate had a gun or a knife held against his chest and his back, while the following oath was read in Afrikaans:

“Of my free will I promise solemnly before the ALMIGHTY GOD that I will IMPLICITLY subject myself to the demands which my peoples’ divine call require of me. My higher authority will find me obediently faithful, and all commands that I receive will be carried out promptly and kept secret. May the Almighty grant that I shall be prepared to sacrifice my life for the freedom of my people, and may the thought of TREASON never occur to me, knowing that I will voluntarily become a prey to the vengeance of a Stormjaer. May God grant that I will be able to call out with my comrades:

If I advance, follow me.

If I retreat, shoot me.

If I die, avenge me.

SO HELP ME GOD!”<sup>318</sup>

316 J.J. Badenhorst: Die Organisasiestruktuur van die Ossewa-Brandwag, 1939-1952, pp.59-61; D. Harrison: **The White Tribe of Africa**, pp.128-129; P.F. van der Schyff: Die Ossewa-Brandwag en die Tweede Wêreld Oorlog, pp.83-86.

317 J.J. Badenhorst: Die Organisasiestruktuur van die Ossewa-Brandwag, 1939-1952, pp.59-61; S.J. Louw: Discourse Theory and Afrikaner Nationalism. The Case of the Ossewa-Brandwag, p.93; J.J. Badenhorst: Die Organisasiestruktuur van die Ossewa-Brandwag, p.147.

318 S.J. Louw: Discourse Theory and Afrikaner Nationalism, p.95; (See also D. Harrison: **The White Tribe of Africa**, p.129.)

The *Stormjaers'* aims went beyond disciplining the rank and file of the OB and also concentrated on threatening the internal security of the state in protest against the war. Their strategic objective was to pin down as many troops as possible inside the borders of South Africa. They engaged in acts of sabotage, which included the cutting of telephone wires and the bombing of installations, shops and power pylons. (See Figure 4.9: Sabotage.) Julian Visser and Hendrik van Blerk received a commuted sentence of life imprisonment when an innocent bystander was killed during the bombing of the Benoni Post Office in July 1942. The *Stormjaers* helped internees who escaped by hiding them, moving them to safe locations and giving them supplies. They acted as guards at rallies to prevent unwanted elements intervening or disturbing the rally. The families of interned OB members were supported with money and/or supplies that were stolen by the *Stormjaers*. They sent false letters to soldiers and their wives containing allegations of infidelity and openly sullied the reputation of women in the UDF.<sup>319</sup>



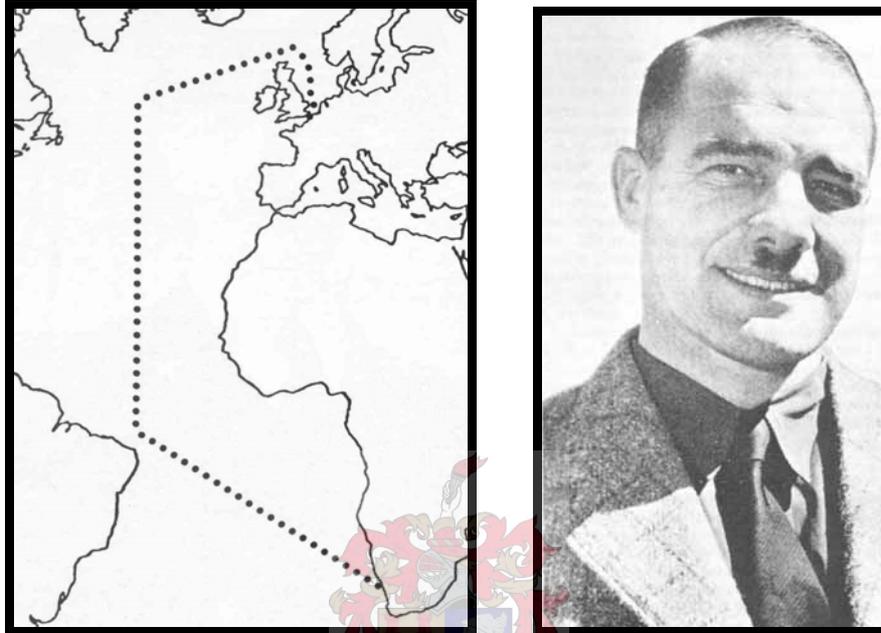
**Figure 4.9:** Sabotage by *Stormjaers* in Boksburg, 1940.<sup>320</sup>

Berlin initiated a daring plan to topple the pro-British Government in South Africa through Robey Leibbrandt, a South African Springbok boxer who had become a fervent Nazi. He was dropped on the Namaqualand coast in June 1941 by a yacht, the *Kyloe*, with orders from Nazi Germany to contact Van Rensburg and investigate the possibility of joint action to assassinate Smuts and bring

319 SANDFA, KCM 56975 (89), 444/7 A, Subversive Activities in the Union. Report by Capt. J.A. Malherbe, 4 June 1941; SANDFA, CGS(2) 93, 169/7, Union of South Africa Fortnightly Intelligence Report 13, 15 September 1941; SANDFA, CGS(2) 93, 169/7, Union of South Africa Fortnightly Intelligence Report 15, 1 November 1941; SANDFA, CGS(2) 93, 169/7, Union of South Africa Fortnightly Intelligence Report 19, 18 February 1942; P.J. Furlong: **Between Crown and Swastika**, p.142; P.F. van der Schyff: *Die Ossewa-Brandwag en die Tweede Wêreld Oorlog*, pp.89-90; S.J. Louw: *Discourse Theory and Afrikaner Nationalism*, p.90; D. Harrison: **The White Tribe of Africa**, p.129.

320 G.C. Visser: **OB, Traitors or Patriots?** (Centrefold Images), p.96.

about a *coup d'état* in South Africa. This plan was code named "Operation Weissdorn". Leibbrandt and Van Rensburg could not come to an agreement, after which Leibbrandt started his own group called the National Socialist Rebels. Van Rensburg sent word to the Minister of Interior, Harry Lawrence, of Leibbrandt's plans and Leibbrandt, together with a few *Stormjaers*, was arrested on Christmas Eve 1941. He was sentenced to life imprisonment, which was commuted.<sup>321</sup> (See Figures 4.10 and 4.11.)



**Figure 4.10 (Left):** The route of the yacht *Kyloe*.<sup>322</sup>

**Figure 4.11 (Right):** Robey Leibbrandt after his release.<sup>323</sup>

More activist elements were prevalent, but on a smaller scale. The *Tereurgroep* consisted of 30 members led by Chris Coetzee. They wanted to strike terror into the hearts of government supporters in order to undermine the war effort. They were separate from the OB, but provided weapons, ammunition and explosives to the *Stormjaers*.<sup>324</sup> (See Figures 4.12 and 4.13.) The X-group was a splinter group that broke away from the *Stormjaers* under the leadership of Advocate Pat Jerling. Jerling and a small number of *Stormjaers* were dissatisfied with Van Rensburg's attempts to restrain their militant activities and went their own way.<sup>325</sup>

321 SANA, W.R. Loubser Collection, 13/50, H.G. Lawrence. 'The Leibbrandt Trap', 1 April 1973, pp.1-20; B. Bunting: **The Rise and Fall of the South African Reich**, p.87; Anon: Kwazulu Natal Branch, Newsletter, no. 326, **South African Military History Society**, <http://rapidtp.com/milhist/2/d02julne.html>, July 2002 (10 July 2004); H. Strydom: **For Volk and Führer**, pp.73-75, 85.

322 H. Strydom: **For Volk and Führer**, (Centrefold Images), p.138.

323 H. Strydom: **For Volk and Führer**, (Centrefold Images), p.138.

324 S.J. Louw: Discourse Theory and Afrikaner Nationalism, pp.101-102.

325 SANDFA, CGS(2) 93, 169/7, Union of South Africa Fortnightly Intelligence Report 8, 31 May 1941; SANDFA, KCM 56975 (89), 444/7 A, Subversive Activities in the Union. Report by Capt. J.A. Malherbe, 4 June 1941; T.H.R. Davenport and C. Saunders: **South Africa, a Modern History**, p.349; B. Bunting: **The Rise and Fall of the South Africa**



**Figure 4.12:** Hand Grenades made by the *Tereurgroep*.<sup>326</sup>



**Figure 4.13:** Weapons made by *Tereurgroep*.<sup>327</sup>

The OB, *Stormjaers* and other activist elements were deemed a clear and present danger to the security of the state. Government Proclamation No. 20 of 1941 prohibiting subversive material as well as banning civil servants from subversive organisations aimed at reducing the risk, but bombings, cutting of telephone wires and violent actions were on the rise during 1941 and 1942. The arrest of 150 policemen and 60 Railway policemen on suspicion of belonging to the

326 G.C. Visser: **OB, Traitors or Patriots?** (Centrefold Images), p.96.

327 G.C. Visser: **OB, Traitors or Patriots?** (Centrefold Images), p.96.

*Stormjaers* was followed by a wave of sabotage nationwide. These arrests swelled the number of internees.<sup>328</sup>

#### 4.4.3 CIVIL-MILITARY RELATIONS

Smuts called for volunteers to take the so-called “Africa Oath” to serve outside the borders of South Africa. They wore red shoulder tabs to show their commitment and were known as *Rooi Lussies* (Red Tabs), but to Nationalists and anti-war supporters they were *Rooi Luissies* (Red Lice).<sup>329</sup> The UDF was unpopular among many in the Afrikaner community due to its deployment against whites and in particular Afrikaners in 1913-1915 and in 1922 as well as its British character. The UDF retained a strong English character and efforts to recruit more Afrikaners had limited success. Friction between soldiers and civilians was ever present and in many cases came to blows. The press continuously commented on these incidents and contributed to the rising tension in civil-military relations. The OB also acted as an agent of agitation and was suspected of inflaming tensions between civilians and soldiers. Soldiers received anonymous letters containing threats, while civilians were on occasion the victims of harassment. One such incident took place in Piet Retief during the performance of a play. UDF soldiers barged into the theatre, occupied the hall and demanded the audience sing “God Save the King” and “*Die Stem*”. The soldiers left the hall after UDF officers from the audience asked them to leave. Undisciplined soldiers drinking heavily at a hotel in Oudtshoorn also strained civil-military relations.<sup>330</sup>

In Potchefstroom a military camp was established a stone’s throw away from the University of Potchefstroom. Many of the students were against the war and the close proximity of soldiers provided them with an outlet for their frustrations. Violent actions were expected in the light of the tense relations existing between soldiers and students. A few assault cases from both parties were reported, but a bioscope and flag incident in Potchefstroom created a lot of hostility. Many students refused to sing or stand when “God Save the King” was played in the bioscope at the end of a show and many even walked out, which infuriated the soldiers present. On occasion the students also hoisted the old Transvaal flag, the *Vierkleur*, while the Union Jack was wound around

328 SANDFA, CGS(2) 93, 169/7, Union of South Africa Fortnightly Intelligence Report 8, 31 May 1941; SANDFA, KCM 56975 (89), 444/7 A, Subversive Activities in the Union. Report by Capt. J.A. Malherbe, 4 June 1941; SANDFA, CGS(2) 93, 169/7, Union of South Africa Fortnightly Intelligence Report 19, 18 February 1942, p.5; T.H.R. Davenport and C. Saunders: **South Africa, a Modern History**, p.349; B. Bunting: **The Rise and Fall of the South African Reich**, pp.92-93; S.J. Louw: *Discourse Theory and Afrikaner Nationalism*, pp.101-103; H. van Rensburg: **Their Paths Crossed Mine**, pp.213-216; W.K. Hancock: **Smuts: the Fields of Force, 1919-1950**, p.340.

329 D. Harrison: **The White Tribe of Africa**, p.124.

330 SANDFA, CGS WAR 47,12/5, vol I, Friction between Civilians and Soldiers. 17/25/2. Letter between Magistrate of Piet Retief and the Control Officer in Ermelo, 2 September 1940; SANDFA, CGS WAR 47, 12/5, vol I, Friction between Civilians and Soldiers. 17/25/2/5. Letter Magistrate Oudtshoorn to Chief Control Officer in Pretoria, 22 October 1940; H. Giliomee: **The Afrikaners**, p.443; G.E. Visser: **British Influence on Military Training and Education in South Africa**, p.24.

the bottom of the pole. A hostile atmosphere developed and any rumour circulating was taken for the truth.<sup>331</sup>

On 7 August 1940, two rumours circulated in the military camp. The first rumour was of an artilleryman's leg that had been deliberately broken by students and the second was that two signallers had been assaulted and one had died. There was no foundation for these rumours, but in the tense and hostile atmosphere it provoked the soldiers into action. Approximately 400 men gathered outside the camp at 18:30 and marched in column towards the student's hall inside the university campus where the students were gathered. The windows of the hall, furniture and bicycles on the outside were damaged as the soldiers attacked the hall and later moved on to attack a men's hostel. Officers from the military camp stopped the soldiers from doing more damage and ordered the troops back to the base. During the incident 20 students and 14 soldiers were injured.<sup>332</sup>

Antiwar sentiments amongst students led to unrest on other traditional Afrikaans university campuses as well. In Pretoria the University was closed a week before the end of the semester in June 1940 due to threats and mounting tension between students and the public. Fears of damage to University property were paramount after the unrest at Potchefstroom University in August 1940. Many students who opposed the war caused mischief off campus and in one incident students threw ink-filled eggs at the cinema screen during the traditional singing of "God Save the King". At the University of Stellenbosch pro- and anti-war factions were intolerant of each other and a group of anti-war supporters decided to oppose the daily two minute silence for the war at noon in Cape Town on 27 July 1940. It was the custom to stand still for two minutes and pray for a British victory at the firing of the noon cannon. The Stellenbosch students openly opposed this custom by continuing to walk, which led to several incidents of fighting between students and especially soldiers in Cape Town. The fights were broken up by the police after a short period without serious casualties and the students returned to Stellenbosch.<sup>333</sup>

In Johannesburg some soldiers were refused entry to the Wierda Club on 3 August 1940, where *Boeredanse* (Boer dances) were being held causing a disturbance which led to all soldiers being banned from the premises. Conflict arose on 10 August as soldiers once again tried to gain entry and the SAP had to intervene. On 31 January 1941 a concert in the Johannesburg City Hall set the stage for serious confrontation between civilians, agitated by the OB, and soldiers. A sailor

331 SANDFA, CGS WAR 47, 12/7, vol I, Disturbances Potchefstroom University College. Report of Commission of Enquiry regarding Potchstroom Disturbances, 9 October 1940.

332 SANDFA, CGS WAR 47, 12/7, vol I, Disturbances Potchefstroom University College. Report of Commission of Enquiry regarding Potchstroom Disturbances, 9 October 1940.

333 C.H. Rautenbach, **Ad Destinatum. Gedenkboek van die Universiteit van Pretoria. 1910 -1960**, pp. 87-88; H. Rex: Oorlog, in W. Mathee (red): **Kollegetehuisgedenkblad, 1915-1985**, pp. 20-22 (The author is indebted to Prof. K. Harris, Department of Historical and Heritage Studies, University of Pretoria, for these references); H. Giliomee en G. Hendrich: 'Die Slag van Andringastraat: Studente-onluste op Stellenbosch, 1940', **Historia**, vol. 50, no. 2, November 2005, pp.189-192.

was denied entrance to the City Hall, where the concert was to be followed by a speech by the OB's new Commandant-General, Dr. J.F.J. (Hans) van Rensburg. This sparked off a clash between the soldiers in the vicinity, OB supporters controlling entrance to the Hall, and civilians on the street. Sporadic fighting between anti-war and pro-war supporters followed for two days. Unarmed soldiers were attacked with sticks, lead piping, batons, knives and anything else that could be used as a weapon. Soldiers retaliated and attacked the buildings of the anti-war newspapers, *Die Transvaler* and *Die Vaderland*. The SAP and military police restored order with batons and teargas. One man died of wounds caused by a baton, while 150 were hospitalised. The Cape Town Highlanders and the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion of the Transvaal Scottish suspended training to assist the police in restoring order in Johannesburg. They produced a show of force by means of visible patrolling.<sup>334</sup>

#### 4.4.4 INTERNMENT AND THE INTERNAL DEPLOYMENT OF THE UDF TO SUPPRESS INTERNAL UNREST

South Africa sent two divisions, 1 SA Div and 2 SA Div, to campaign in East and North Africa. Under the command of Maj. Gen. H.N.W. Botha, 3 SA Division remained behind for home defence and as a reserve to supply replacements to 1 and 2 SA Divisions. Anti-Government actions and the threat of sabotage prompted the Government to utilise the UDF, SA Police, SAR & H, and other volunteer organisations to safeguard Government buildings and strategic civilian installations such as power-generating facilities and communication lines. The training of replacements and volunteers for home defence as well as for garrison duties was the responsibility of 3 SA Division. The defence of South Africa was divided into the Inland Area and the Coastal Area. Deployment in the Inland Area consisted of guard duties at the internment camps, guarding key points and suppressing internal unrest.<sup>335</sup>

On 22 May 1940, the Imperial Light Horse, Royal Durban Light Infantry and the Rand Light Infantry were concentrated at Pietermaritzburg, while their second battalions were concentrated at Johannesburg to counter subversion. The Cape Town Highlanders deployed a company, under the command of Maj. J.A. Cartwright, to Oudtshoorn in November 1940 to establish calm in the area after a new training camp was established. They remained in the area for a few days,

334 SANDFA, DC 1433, Report of Commission of Enquiry Regarding the Disturbances in Johannesburg on 31 January 1941 and 1 February 1941, 19 March 1941; B. Bunting: **The Rise and Fall of the South African Reich**, pp.83-84; D. Harrison: **The White Tribe of Africa**, p.125; N. Orpen: **The Cape Town Highlanders, 1885-1970**, pp.115-6; W.S. Douglas: **Regimental History of the Cape Town Highlanders**, p.4; C. Birkby: **The Saga of the Transvaal Scottish Regiment, 1932-1950**, pp.5, 21.

335 H.J Martin and N.D. Orpen: **South African Forces World War II, Vol VII, South Africa at War**, pp. 60, 68, 70; K. Fedorowich: 'German Espionage and British Counter-Intelligence in South Africa and Mozambique, 1939-1944', p.214; N. Orpen: **The Cape Town Highlanders, 1885-1970**, p.114; W.S. Douglas: **Regimental History of the Cape Town Highlanders**, pp.2-3; S. Rothwell: [Http://homepages.force9.net/rothwell/3sa.htm](http://homepages.force9.net/rothwell/3sa.htm) (21 September 2004); S. Rothwell: [Http://homepages.force9.net/rothwell/southafrica.htm](http://homepages.force9.net/rothwell/southafrica.htm) (26 September 2004).

guarding the aerodromes at Oudtshoorn and George, until they departed for Pollsmoor in Cape Town on 12 November 1940.<sup>336</sup>

Men between the ages of 18 and 45 with B and C medical classifications were drafted into the First Reserve Brigade (FRB), which was formed on 29 February 1940. It consisted of 12 battalions and was primarily responsible for guarding aerodromes throughout the Union. The FRB was incorporated into the Commando National Reserve Volunteers (CNRV) on 7 April 1942 and was disbanded in 1943. The CNRV was formed on 16 October 1940 along the same lines as the FRB. Supplementing the ranks of the home defence forces was the Special Service Battalion, formed on 1 May 1933 and reorganised on 16 September 1939 into three battalions to form the Special Service Brigade. The National Volunteer Brigade, which was formed on 1 October 1940, consisted of Police Reservists and Civic Guards. The Railway and Harbour Brigade, was reformed on 1 April 1940 after it was disbanded in 1928 and the Essential Services Protection Corps (ESPC), which was formed on 24 October 1939, consisted of men over the age of 45. These volunteer units executed a multitude of home defence tasks. The SAR & H and the ESPC worked in close co-operation to guard railway property and bridges. All the bridges over the Vaal, Klip, Pongola, Umtamvuna and Orange Rivers, the bridge over the Umzimkulu River between Natal and East-Griqualand and the Telle Bridge between South Africa and Basutoland (now Lesotho) had to be protected. A chronic shortage of fighting men also led to the Civilian Protective Services (CPS) taking over certain guard duties from the National Volunteer Brigade. The CPS, with its 10,000-strong Civilian Guard, resorted under the Department of the Interior and assisted local authorities and municipalities with the co-ordination, preparation and execution of civilian protection. This enabled the National Volunteer Brigade to release more men for military training.<sup>337</sup>

Women and men of colour were pressed into service to assist with home defence in an effort to free more white men for frontline duty. The Cape Corps was trained as coastal artillery gunners and the women from the South African Woman's Auxiliary Service (SAWAS) ensured that visiting troops received entertainment, hospitality and refreshments, but they were also utilised as auxiliary nurses, for motor transport, secretarial services, civic services, crèche and welfare services, hospital requisite services, canteen services and other general and specialised services. Women also joined the armed forces through the South African Woman's Auxiliary Defence Corps

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336 H.J Martin and N.D. Orpen: **South African Forces World War II, Vol VII, South Africa at War**, pp. 60, 68, 70; K. Fedorowich: 'German Espionage and British Counter-Intelligence in South Africa and Mozambique, 1939-1944', p.214; N. Orpen: **The Cape Town Highlanders, 1885-1970**, p.114; W.S. Douglas: **Regimental History of the Cape Town Highlanders**, pp.2-3; S. Rothwell: <http://homepages.force9.net/rothwell/3sa.htm> (21 September 2004); S. Rothwell: <http://homepages.force9.net/rothwell/southafrica.htm> (26 September 2004).

337 H.J Martin and N.D. Orpen: **South African Forces World War II, Vol VII**, pp. 34, 39, 149; K. Fedorowich: 'German Espionage and British Counter-Intelligence in South Africa and Mozambique, 1939-1944', pp.213-214; ; I.J. van der Waag: A History of Military Intelligence in South Africa, 1912–1968, p.12. Anon: South African Army, 1939-1940, <http://home.adelphia.net/~dryan67/orders/sa.html>, n.d. (21 September 2004); W. Otto: **Die Spesiale Diens Batteljon, 1933-1973**, pp.17, 85.

(SAWADC) and were utilised in home defence tasks such as manning coastal batteries and harbour defences.<sup>338</sup>

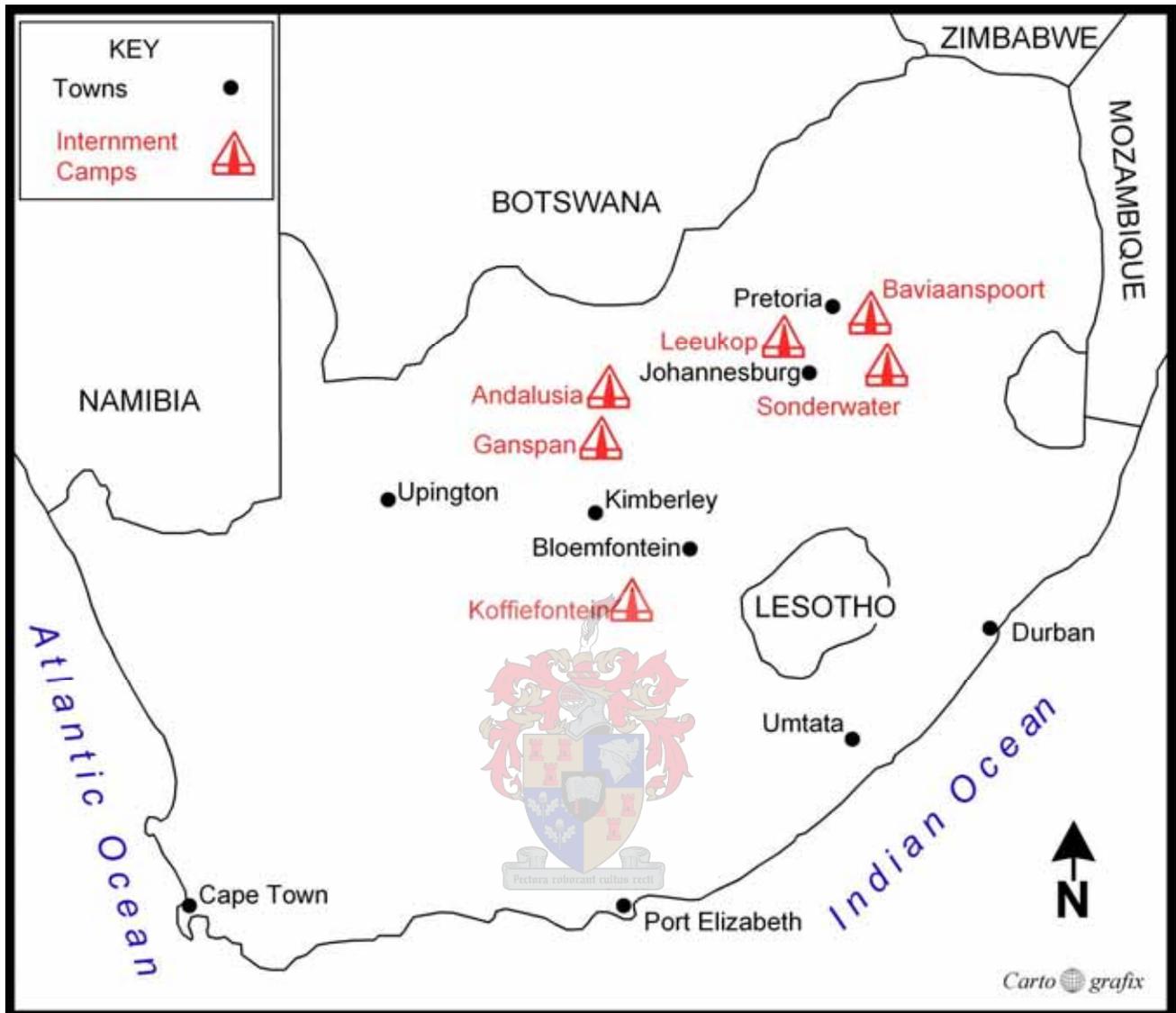


Figure 4.14: Map of Internment Camps.<sup>339</sup>

Union citizens suspected of contravening the War Measures Act were held without trial and faced internment along with enemy spies and foreign nationals who were suspected of subversive acts. They were held at six internment camps, namely Baviaanspoort, Leeukop, Andalusia, Ganspan, Sonderwater and Koffiefontein during the war. (See Figure 4.14: Internment Camps.) German and Italian POWs were held at Sonderwater and Koffiefontein respectively, while citizens of the Union

338 W.M. Bisset: 'Coast Artillery in South Africa' in C.J. Nöthling, (ed.): **Artillery History of South Africa**, pp. 341-351; I.J. Van der waag: 'Naval History of Saldanha', **Paratus**, January 1994, p.46; H.J Martin and N.D. Orpen: **South African Forces World War II, Vol VII**, pp.225-243.

339 C. O'Neil: Die Interneringsbeleid van die Smuts-Regering gedurende die Jare 1939–1948, p.69 and map by C. Mercer: 'South African Map', <http://home.global.co.za/~mercon/map.htm>, 1997 (10 July 2004) were combined. Lt. Col. J.J. Jacobs, Department Military Geography, Faculty Military Science, US, is recognised for processing the original map.

were held at the other camps. Col. E.G. Malherbe, Director of Military Intelligence, noted in his biography that 6636 persons were interned during the war.<sup>340</sup>

The responsibility of guarding these camps was delegated to the UDF. Various units deployed for Home Defence were involved in guarding the various camps on a rotation basis. The Cape Town Highlanders stopped their training at Pollsmoor and departed for guard duty on 14 November 1940. They came under the administrative command of 9 South African Infantry Brigade, commanded by Col. A.A. Hayton, and the operational command of the Directorate of Internments. They set up Headquarters at Sonderwater and guarded the Andalusia, Ganspan, Koffiefontein, Leeukop and Baviaanspoort camps until relieved on 6 January 1941.<sup>341</sup>

*Die Middelandse Regiment* (The Midlands Regiment) and the 2<sup>nd</sup> Rand Light Infantry stopped their training to relieve the Cape Town Highlanders and guarded the camps at Leeukop, Ganspan, Andalusia and Koffiefontein from 6 January to 14 February 1941, after which they resumed their training. Guard duty had a demoralising effect on the troops. They were under the impression that they were an inactive unit to be used only for guard duty. The disappointment at their apparent misfortune of not going to war led to many men requesting transfers to the SAAF and other active units.<sup>342</sup>

The internment camps embittered Afrikaners, because many families had relatives in these camps. Advocate J.G. Strijdom compared the use of camps by Smuts to Kitchener's concentration camps during the Second Anglo-Boer War. The emotional reaction to Smuts' internment camps was the same hate and embitterment experienced by Kitchener's concentration camps. The conditions were not as appalling as those of the concentration camps at all. Capt. G.H.F. Strydom, an Opposition M.P., visited Koffiefontein and found the conditions satisfactory. However, anti-Smuts and anti-British feelings were inflamed and the tension between pro- and anti-war supporters was reaching breaking point.<sup>343</sup>

#### 4.4.5 THE ROLE OF MILITARY INTELLIGENCE

The first UDF Director of Intelligence, Col. B.W. Thwaites, was appointed on 25 September 1939 and was responsible for civil security, local censorship and propaganda. This organisation was known as Internal Security. A second intelligence organisation, known as Military Intelligence, was

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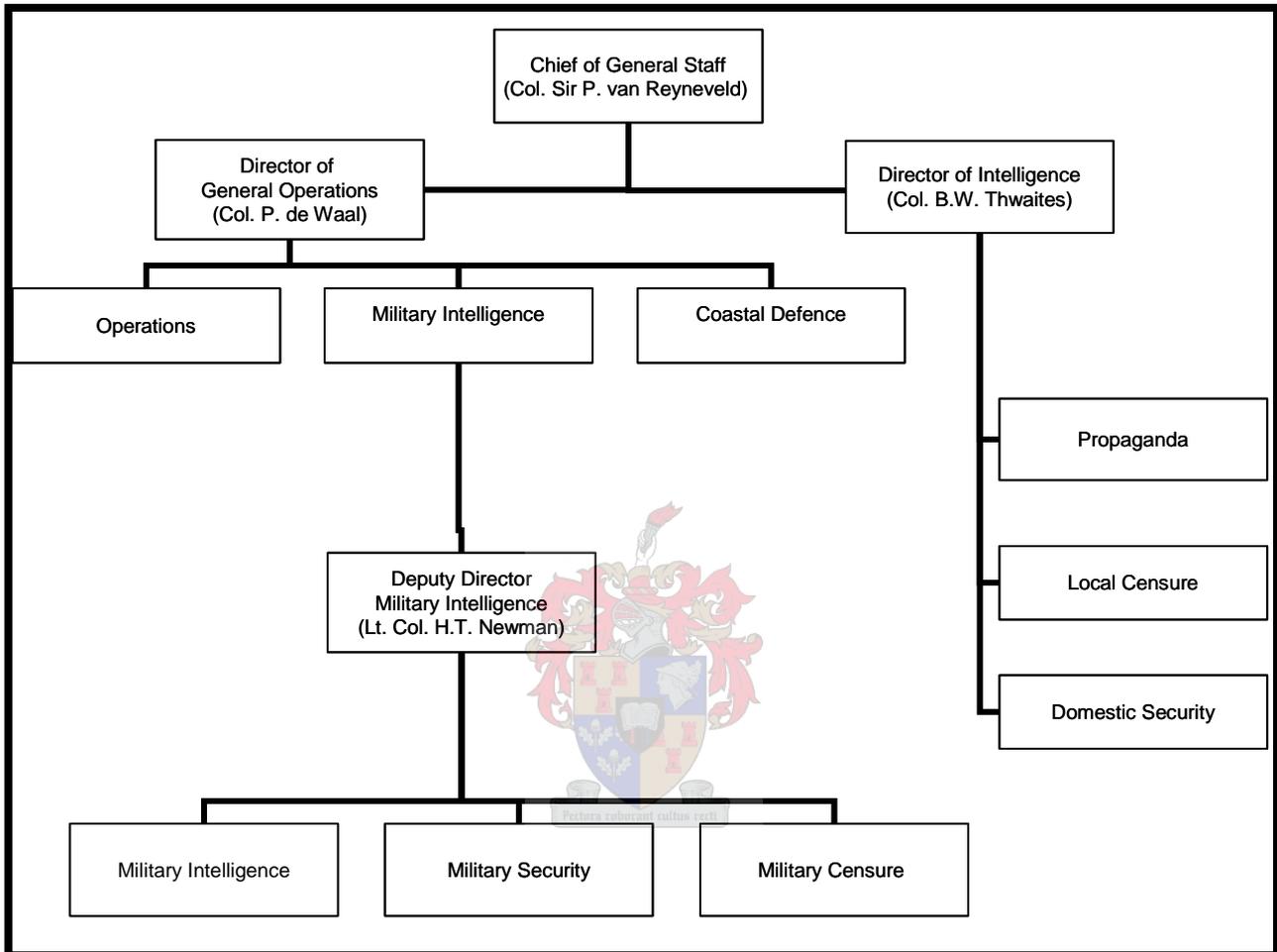
340 SANDFA, CGS(2) 93, 169/7, Union of South Africa Fortnightly Intelligence Report 15, 1 November 1941, p.10; C. O'Neil: *Die Interneringsbeleid van die Smuts-Regering gedurende die Jare 1939–1948*, p.69, E.G. Malherbe: **Never a Dull Moment**, p.245.

341 E.G. Malherbe: **Never a Dull Moment**, p.243; N. Orpen: **The Cape Town Highlanders, 1885-1970**, p.115; W.S. Douglas: **Regimental History of the Cape Town Highlanders**, p.3.

342 G.E. Visser: *Die Geskiedenis van die Middelandse Regiment, 1934 – 1943*, pp.82-84.

343 H.O. Terblanche: **John Vorster: OB-Generaal en Afrikanervegter**, pp.104-105; E.G. Malherbe: **Never a Dull Moment**, p.245; W.K. Hancock: **Smuts: the Fields of Force, 1919-1950**, p.340.

established during February 1940 in an effort to focus on more military related intelligence tasks, which included security of the armed forces and military intelligence. Lt. Col. H.T. Newman was appointed as Deputy Director of Military Intelligence (DDMI) and he was responsible for censorship and propaganda in East Africa, North Africa, Italy and the Middle East when the UDF went on active service. (See Figure 4.15: The Military Intelligence Structure)<sup>344</sup>



**Figure 4.15:** The Military Intelligence Structure in February 1940.<sup>345</sup>

The Union Government was fighting a war on two fronts, North Africa and internally. Thousands of troops were tied down guarding key points and internment camps and Directorates, such as Military Intelligence, were sorely pressed to provide a service for both. South Africa lacked a well-established counter-intelligence service to combat the internal threat from pro-Nazi, anti-British and right-wing Afrikaner groups such as the OB. Proper training and especially funding were major obstacles, which were rectified when Smuts took over the reigns as Prime Minister, Minister of

344 K. Fedorowich: 'German Espionage and British Counter-Intelligence in South Africa and Mozambique, 1939-1944', pp.212-213; I.J. van der Waag: A History of Military Intelligence in South Africa, 1912-1968, pp.11-12.

345 M.C. van Deventer: Die Ontwikkeling van 'n Militere Inligtingsvermoe vir die Unieverdedigingsmag, p.B-1.

Defence and External Affairs. Shortly after his appointment he allocated £1,250 on the defence budget for 'Miscellaneous and Incidental Expenditure' to pay for agents to collect information for military purposes. Military Intelligence waged a silent war against pro-German and anti-Government supporters as well as German spies in co-operation with Allied intelligence agencies. Military Intelligence staff rendered support to the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) of the police. Military Intelligence staff were obliged to pass on any information regarding subversive activities to the police in conjunction with their own reports submitted to higher HQ.<sup>346</sup>

The sharing of information was an integral cog in the wheel of maintenance of internal security. There were several important reasons why military intelligence was utilised domestically. Firstly, a Government at war facing internal unrest directly related to the war had to utilise all the information services at its disposal to gain strategic, operational and tactical knowledge internationally and domestically. The use of military intelligence enabled the Government to collect information, process it through evaluation, collation and interpretation and then disseminate it to all relevant parties to be acted on. The second reason was that without military intelligence domestic law enforcement would not have information about foreign activities influencing domestic situations and cases being investigated by the police, and, by sharing information, this was provided. Thirdly, the information provided would enable pro-active measures to prevent illegal or subversive activities. The fourth reason was to provide law enforcement with the necessary background information when cases were investigated.<sup>347</sup>

The collection of information was critical to form a credible intelligence picture and the intelligence staff worked diligently to keep tabs on many people suspected of subversive activities. Vigilance committees were established in areas where German-speakers were concentrated, with the aim of providing a rapid system of communication between the rural areas and the central Government. Consisting of no less than three and no more than five people these committees performed four functions. They firstly watched for espionage, sabotage and hostile action by groups. Secondly they reported cases of intimidation, tampering with the indigenous population, subversive speeches or actions and watched for possible parachutists. The third function was to report cases of hardship affecting the wives and families of those away on service, investigate the hardship and, where necessary, redress them. The fourth function was to observe and report any movement or action that may tend to impair security. These committees, intelligence agents and other security

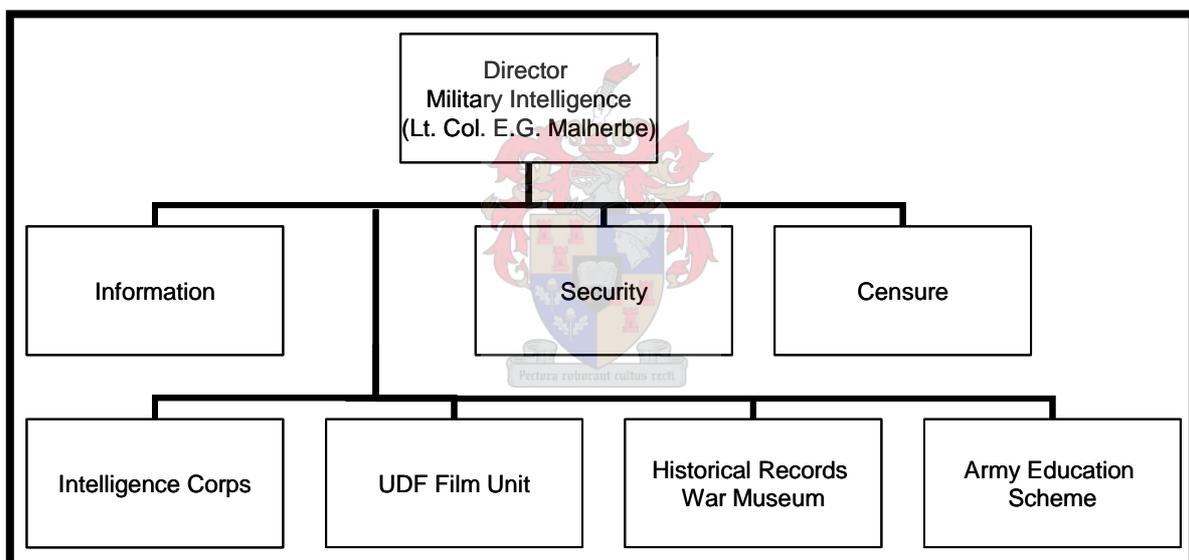
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346 SANDFA, AG(W) 4, 168/2/A-1, E.P. Command Intelligence Staff. Duties of Command Intelligence Officers, 26 March 1940; K. Fedorowich: 'German Espionage and British Counter-Intelligence in South Africa and Mozambique, 1939-1944', pp.211-215; School for Tactical Intelligence, Module 5, Pamphlet 2-10, The Intelligence Cycle, pp.5-71; A.W. Shulsky: **Silent Warfare: Understanding the World of Intelligence**, pp.4-6.

347 SANDFA, AG(W) 4, 168/2/A-1, E.P. Command Intelligence Staff. Duties of Command Intelligence Officers, 26 March 1940; K. Fedorowich: 'German Espionage and British Counter-Intelligence in South Africa and Mozambique, 1939-1944', pp.211-215; School for Tactical Intelligence, Module 5, Pamphlet 2-10, The Intelligence Cycle, pp.5-71; A.W. Shulsky: **Silent Warfare: Understanding the World of Intelligence**, pp.4-6.

services provided ample information, but the processing and dissemination thereof was initially hampered due to the lack of a central co-ordinating agency. The Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Native Affairs, Denys Reitz, suggested an Intelligence Clearance Bureau (ICB)<sup>348</sup> to act as a central reception point.<sup>349</sup>

The ICB was operational by the end of 1940; under the command of Brig. H.J. Lenton, who was also the Controller of Censorship. It did not interfere with the functions and responsibilities of the DDMI. It provided information of military value from sources otherwise not tapped by Military Intelligence. The ICB held weekly meetings with senior representatives from the SA Police, Railway Police, Military Intelligence, Commissioner of Immigration, Commissioner of Customs and the Treasury. The ICB ensured proper dissemination of Internal Security reports and the maintenance of a complete set of intelligence records. It ensured proper co-ordination between departments, facilitated inter-departmental arrangements and submitted regulations and recommendations to the Minister of Interior, H.G. Lawrence.<sup>350</sup>



**Figure 4.16:** Military Intelligence Structure in 1943.<sup>351</sup>

Prof. E.G. Malherbe headed the Army Education Scheme (Renamed Army Information Services), commissioned after the outbreak of hostilities, with the aim of training men to “educate” troops during war. These men were known as Information Officers. Malherbe was asked by Smuts to

348 It was otherwise known as the Intelligence Records Bureau.

349 SANDFA, AG(W) 4, 168/2/A-1, E.P. Command Intelligence Staff. Letter to all Command Intelligence Officers, 18 June 1940; E.G. Malherbe: **Never a Dull Moment**, p.241; K. Fedorowich: ‘German Espionage and British Counter-Intelligence in South Africa and Mozambique, 1939-1944’, pp.214-215.

350 K. Fedorowich: ‘German Espionage and British Counter-Intelligence in South Africa and Mozambique, 1939-1944’, p.215; I.J. van der Waag: A History of Military Intelligence in South Africa, 1912 – 1968, p.12.

351 M.C. van Deventer: Die Ontwikkeling van ‘n Militere Inligtingsvermoe vir die Unieverdedigingsmag, p.E-1.

take over the responsibilities of the Military Intelligence Directorate and was given a commission as Lt. Col. He was thus Director of Military Intelligence and Director of the Army Education Scheme. Maj. L. Marquard was his Deputy Director of the Army Education Scheme and Chief Education Officer. Maj. C. Powell was his Deputy Director Military Intelligence. Malherbe found the combination of an Information Officer and Intelligence Officer very useful during the campaigns. These men were better trained than ordinary military intelligence officers and due to their role as censorship officers they could gauge the morale of the troops quickly. This made them invaluable to commanding officers in the field. In August 1943, Military Intelligence was finalised with Information, Security and Censure sections as well as a broader intelligence capability with the Intelligence Corps, Education Officers, the UDF Film Unit and the Historical Records and War Museum. (See Figure 4.16: Military Intelligence Structure in 1943.)<sup>352</sup>

Intelligence Officers employed inside the borders of South Africa taped council meetings of the *Afrikaner Broederbond* and many members of the *Ossewa Brandwag* were under constant surveillance. Prof. Malherbe's opinion of the above-mentioned organisations was that they presented the greatest security risk to South Africa. It is evident from the fortnightly Intelligence Report that the *Afrikaner Broederbond* and the *Ossewa-Brandwag* were closely watched. Smuts branded the OB a poisonous abscess during his speech at the opening of the Transvaal Congress of the United Party on 20 November 1940. During this speech, he issued a warning to the OB that the Government would keep an eye on them and action would follow without hesitation if deemed necessary. Military Intelligence diligently included reports of the OB in their fortnightly Intelligence Report. Paid informants, such as Baron Otto von Strahl, worked for the Allies and provided valuable information about German activities in Africa. He had been in the German diplomatic service since 1918 and served in Durban, South Africa, from 1936, but his anti-Nazi standpoint led to his dismissal in 1937. Prisoners of War and internees had to be questioned and the morale of the troops in North Africa had to be upheld. It is therefore not surprising that Intelligence expenditure rose considerably during the war. (See Figure 4.17: Military Intelligence Expenditure.)<sup>353</sup>

Military Intelligence had to counter the activities of German spies, German intelligence networks in Mozambique and effective pro-German propaganda from Radio Zeesen. The German deputy consul in Lourenço Marques (Maputo, Mozambique), Luitpold Werz, was in charge of the whole

352 I.J. van der Waag: *A History of Military Intelligence in South Africa, 1912–1968*, p.14; E.G. Malherbe: **Never a Dull Moment**, pp.215-217, 222; M.C. van Deventer: *Die Ontwikkeling van 'n Militere Inligtingsvermoe vir die Unieverdedigingsmag*, pp.15-30.

353 SANDFA, AG(W) 4, 168/2/A-1, E.P. Command Intelligence Staff. Letter to all Command Intelligence Officers, 18 June 1940; UNISA: *Unisa Collection 1/1: Premier oor Ossewa Brandwag*, p.1; A.W. Shulsky: **Silent Warfare**, p.6; E.G. Malherbe: **Never a Dull Moment**, p.241; D. Harrison: **The White Tribe of Africa**, pp.140-144; B. Bunting: **The Rise and Fall of the South African Reich**, p101; W.K. Hancock: **Smuts: the Fields of Force, 1919-1950**, p.369; I.J. van der Waag: *A History of Military Intelligence in South Africa, 1912–1968*, pp.15-16; H. Strydom: **For Volk and Führer**, pp.77-78.

German spy network in southern Africa. He was fluent in Afrikaans, English, French and Portuguese, as well as acquainted with Italian. He provided intelligence on Allied shipping from sources in Mozambique and South Africa. His network was supplemented by the Italian consul, Umberto Campini, who had his own effective intelligence networks in Lourenço Marques and in South Africa.<sup>354</sup>

Financial Year	Expenditure
1939-1940	£ 698-01-05
1940-1941	£ 4 716-10-06
1941-1942	£ 3 006-18-01
1942-1943	£ 5 824-15-11
1943-1944	£ 10 725-13-00
1944-1945	£ 13 711-13-00

**Figure 4.17:** Military Intelligence Expenditure during the Second World War.<sup>355</sup>

The Union Government subjected political opponents and suspects to imprisonment, private letters were confiscated and telephones were tapped. Prisoners were detained and many suspects were confined without trial under the War Measures Act. B.J. (John) Vorster, later Prime Minister of South Africa, was an OB-General and was interned in 1942. Vorster's internment was preceded by a confinement of three-and-a-half months in jail. The official reasons given for his detainment and later internment were his position as OB General, that he was anti-British and anti-war, aided criminals and was seen as a serious threat to the state. He commented on his internment by saying, "...I was an Afrikaner standing up for the rights of my people."<sup>356</sup> Vorster and many Afrikaners like him were rounded up by the police and questioned at leisure. The Afrikaners who opposed the war loathed intelligence officers, informants and the police who investigated possible suspects and called them *kakieridders* (khaki knights). They were regarded as traitors to the Afrikaner cause and thus just as bad as the Afrikaners who joined the British during the Second Anglo-Boer War.<sup>357</sup>

Support for the *Stormjaers*, the *Tereurgroep* and other militant groups waned as Allied victories continued, and the end of the war in favour of the Allies also meant the end of these organisations. Furlong is of the opinion that the change in the war with Allied victories assisted not only Smuts'

354 P.J. Furlong: **Between Crown and Swastika**, pp.129, 141; K. Fedorowich: 'German Espionage and British Counter-Intelligence in South Africa and Mozambique, 1939-1944', pp.224-225.

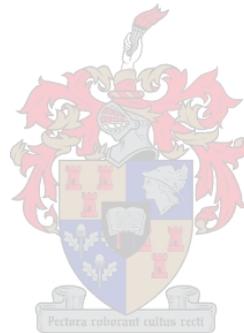
355 I.J. van der Waag: *A History of Military Intelligence in South Africa, 1912-1968*, p.16;

356 H.O. Terblanche: **John Vorster: OB-Generaal en Afrikanervegter**, p.104.

357 A.W. Shulsky: **Silent Warfare**, p.6; E.G. Malherbe: **Never a Dull Moment**, pp.241, 245; H. van Rensburg: **Their Paths Crossed Mine**, p.188; H.O. Terblanche: **John Vorster: OB-Generaal en Afrikanervegter**, pp.104-105; D. Harrison: **The White Tribe of Africa**, pp.140-144; H.O. Terblanche: **John Vorster: OB-Generaal en Afrikanervegter**, pp.102-3, p.133.

victory at the polls in 1943, but Malan's as well. Power balancing took place at the polls and not through violent revolution. The OB was weakened when many members left after the split between the HNP and the OB, and ceased being a determining factor in Afrikaner politics.<sup>358</sup>

The UDF overcame serious challenges and did a fine job of participating in the war and safeguarding internal security. Afrikaner dissidents during the 1914-15 Rebellion and the industrial strike of 1922 were harshly dealt with and quickly suppressed by Smuts. However, he changed his methods during the Second World War by being more lenient and less violent. South Africa's participation in the Second World War came at a price for Smuts in terms of his career in South African politics. Animosity amongst Afrikaners was rife, but at the end of the war many Afrikaners were united in their support for Malan and the National Party (NP). Malan provided Afrikaners with an alternative to Smuts, without the need to resort to violence. Afrikaners flocked to the NP banner seeking political survival, economic prosperity, racial protection and cultural autonomy and the NP became the ruling party after their victory in the 1948 election.<sup>359</sup>




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358 H. Giliomee: **The Afrikaners**, p.446; S. Louw: Discourse Theory, Afrikaner Nationalism & the Ossewa-Brandwag, **STET**, 6(3), 1990, pp.27-28; W.K. Hancock: **Smuts: the Fields of Force, 1919-1950**, pp.370-371; P.J. Furlong: **Between Crown and Swastika**, pp.159-160.

359 P.J. Furlong: **Between Crown and Swastika**, p.144; H. Giliomee: **The Afrikaners**, p.446; S. Louw: Discourse Theory, Afrikaner Nationalism & the Ossewa-Brandwag, **STET**, 6(3), 1990, pp.27-28; W.K. Hancock: **Smuts: the Fields of Force, 1919-1950**, pp.370-371.

## CHAPTER 5

### CONCLUSION

The colonisation of the African continent by predominantly European powers instituted white dominance over indigenous African and Arab populations by the end of the nineteenth century. The technological advantage and the superior military organisation of the European settlers ensured military victory in the long run when it was pitted against inferior indigenous weapons and tactics. Britain, France and Germany were three prominent powers participating in the colonisation process and resistance by local populations against their colonial governments was severely suppressed. Each colonial power had its own style and theory regarding the pacification and policing of their colonial possessions. The British style of policing a colony was prominent in South Africa, and later became entwined with the Dutch style present in South Africa before the British arrived.

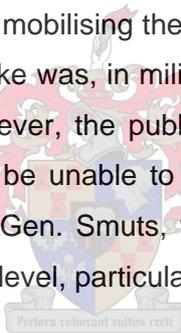
As a Dutch Colony, the indigenous population of South Africa was policed with the use of mounted commandos. Britain supplied the more rigid regimental system of permanent garrison forces and the associated volunteer forces. Both these styles remained prominent in South Africa and eventually provided the backbone of the Union Defence Force which was still to be formed. A constant fear of black uprisings troubled white settler communities and the task of ensuring peace in the rural areas of South Africa fell upon the shoulders of the civil police, paramilitary and military units. They were responsible for suppressing unrest and policing race relations, which included not only white and black relations, but Afrikaner and British relations as well. The British style of colonial policing remained paramount. Local unrest against the governing structures was suppressed and the indigenous population policed to ensure peace.

The new Union Defence Force continued this policing style from its inception in 1912. British military influence provided the Permanent Force of the Union Defence Force, the SAMR, with a specific role when it was not preparing to fight a conventional battle. It was to be applied as a mounted policing body in the rural areas. The pre-Union feature of military policing still prevailed in South Africa. The role and application of the Union Defence Force was a continuation of the military policing of the colonial regime. The Union Government wielded a prominent force capable of ensuring white dominance over the majority black population in South Africa. It also provided the Government with the means to suppress popular uprisings against government rule, whether black or white. It was subsequently put to the test in its peacetime role with the suppression of industrial unrest in 1913-1914 and 1922, indigenous uprisings in South Africa and South West Africa, the Rebellion of 1914-15 and the maintenance of law and order at the Home Front during the Second World War.

The UDF faced three categories of internal unrest which they had to suppress, namely, white industrial unrest, indigenous unrest and Afrikaner unrest. A white, Afrikaner dominated Government faced more criticism and political risks in suppressing whites and especially Afrikaners with military force than suppressing indigenous tribes. Strained racial relations and political pressure were the dominant factors influencing the Union Government and the UDF's approach to suppressing the unrests.

Although the Government elicited sharp criticism for its use of military force in the suppression of industrial unrest, it was a necessary step. The SA Police were not able to suppress the unrest and the use of military force was needed to ensure the protection of state structures and to restore and maintain law and order. A pattern of military reaction to white labour disputes emerged from the 1907 strike. The foundation was laid for more intervention in disputes deemed as a threat to the state. The Union lacked sufficient forces during the 1913 strike and Imperial troops were used to suppress the industrial unrest. It is apparent that Gen. Smuts anticipated another strike and foresaw that the military would be used again.

The pre-emptive move by Gen. Smuts, in mobilising the UDF in early February 1914 for immediate deployment to suppress the industrial strike was, in military terms, well executed and provided the Government with tactical success. However, the public did not accept the use of military force based on the fear that the police would be unable to control the upcoming strike. Resentment against the Government, and especially Gen. Smuts, was harboured. The hearts and minds of many white South Africans at grass roots level, particularly Afrikaners, were turned against him.



In military terms, the young UDF showed that it was capable of defending the authority of the state and maintaining law and order, with relatively low casualties, during the suppression of both the 1914 and 1922 strikes. The 1914 industrial unrest provided good lessons to the UDF and gave it the necessary experience to effectively suppress the 1922 industrial unrest without incurring heavy casualties on both sides.

The military successes of the Government forces during the 1914 and 1922 strikes can be attributed, mainly, to six factors. The foresight of government officials at the end of 1913, thus ensuring the operational readiness of the UDF for a possible deployment against industrial upheaval, was important. Another factor was the quick arrest of many strike leaders when the 1914 strike commenced, which exacerbated the lack of co-ordination and co-operation between strikers in the different centres. The quick and efficient mobilisation and deployment of the UDF in both strikes was the third factor, because it prohibited the strikers from consolidating their positions and digging in properly. The fourth factor contributing to success was the maintenance of mobility throughout the strikes through the protection of the railway lines and assembly points, which ensured the rapid deployment of Government troops.

The successful utilisation of airpower during the 1922 strike, not only in reconnaissance, but also in dispersing illegal gatherings and the bombing of fortified positions, contributed to successful ground operations. The sixth factor was the co-ordination of attacks with overwhelming firepower – small arms fire, artillery barrages and air bombardments. The utilisation of artillery fire to suppress sniper fire was very effective and played an important role in keeping the casualties of the government forces to a minimum, especially during the final assault on the fortified positions of the strikers at Fordsburg.

The utilisation of artillery and aeroplanes in the suppression of the 1922 industrial unrest was extreme compared to the 1914 strike, but its use was an effective means of limiting casualties and ending the unrest quickly. Without it, the battles most certainly would have lasted much longer and the casualties on both sides would have been much higher. Under the circumstances the use of these weapons can be regarded as 'acceptable' and was deemed appropriate for the conflict on the Witwatersrand. Government forces took steps to prevent the public from being caught in the crossfire through proclamations, statements in the local newspapers and through the dropping of pamphlets from aeroplanes. It was impossible, as in all military confrontations, to completely avoid civilian casualties in spite of all the precautions.

The use of military force elicited sharp criticism from the public and opposition parties alike. Martial law was unpopular and the use of military firepower, especially aeroplanes, exacerbated the already negative attitude of the public towards the deployment of Government forces. Military firepower quickly ended the strikes, but failed to address the basic grievances underlying the strikes. The opposition parties used these anti-Government sentiments to good effect. Most criticism was aimed at Gen. Smuts and contributed to his political demise in the 1924 election.

The Israelites of Bulhoek in 1921, the Bondelswarts in 1922, the Rehoboth Basters in 1925 and the Ukuhambi tribe in 1932 staged uprisings against the ruling regime, yet the military actions against these uprisings are noted in history as victories in suppressing recalcitrant indigenous tribes. In the period 1921 to 1932 indigenous tribes in South Africa, as well as South West Africa, were subjected to the laws of the Union Government. Obedience of the police and racial policies was expected. Inevitably conflicts arose when the Bondelswarts and the Rehoboth questioned policy regarding livestock and segregation. Chief Ipumbu, however, did not only contravene Union laws, but tribal laws too. The contravention of laws governing livestock, taxes and his defiance against the Government placed the SWA Administrators and the Union under pressure to resolve the problem quickly. Disobedience of these laws required that action be taken. The failure of negotiations led to punitive measures, which was a practiced and accepted way of dealing with recalcitrants at the time.

Traditional punitive forces consisted of mounted or foot soldiers, but the advent of the aeroplane supplemented this force structure. Joint air-ground operations were executed with success against tribes in South West Africa and the aeroplane and armoured cars were instrumental in their successes. The aeroplane was a force multiplier and was quickly mobilised when immediate action was necessary and it provided the authorities with the element of surprise when they used it against tribes armed with rifles who had the home ground advantage. Its use against the Rehoboth Basters and Chief Ipumbu ensured a quick resolution of the situation and limited casualties all round. The exception to this was the Bondelswarts and the subsequent criticism was instrumental in the more careful approach with the Rehoboth Basters and the Ukuambi. The armoured car in use against the Ukuambi achieved limited tactical successes, but prevented the prolonged exposure of UDF soldiers to possible enemy attacks. Its use indicated the extent to which Government would go to minimise losses regardless of criticism of how it applied force against indigenous populations.

The punitive measures against the tribes received criticism of varying degrees. The Bondelswarts affair received serious international criticism and was labelled as a betrayal of the sacred mandate trust. The Permanent Mandates Commission criticised Hofmeyer's actions and Smuts encountered political criticism in Parliament, led by the opposition leader, Hertzog. Yet Hertzog, as the new Prime Minister after the 1924 election, sanctioned expeditions against the Rehoboth Basters and Chief Ipumbu. The use of the aeroplane contributed to the quick resolution of these situations without loss of life.

Unrest in the white communities of South Africa was suppressed when the 1914-1915 Rebellion occurred and during the Second World War when many Afrikaners opposed South Africa's involvement in the war. Afrikaners during the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century were embittered by their defeat in the Second Anglo-Boer War. Their culture and language was dwindling and many were impoverished as industrialisation and urbanisation encroached on their rural way of life. British imperialism was blamed for the Afrikaner's plight and many Afrikaners hated anything British. Animosities between Afrikaners were omnipresent, which in conjunction with their hate for everything British led to the polarisation of their community over the question of support or opposition to the British Crown during the First and Second World Wars. Prominent members of the UDF resigned their commissions in protest against fighting for the British in the First World War and a Rebellion followed. The Rebels were outnumbered, ill-equipped and poorly armed compared to the government forces of Gen. Botha. The use of the railway infrastructure and motorcars provided government forces with more mobility, which they employed effectively to outmanoeuvre the Rebel forces.

The Rebellion was the most sensitive political and social issue that the Government had to deal with. In an effort to prevent a social schism between the Afrikaner and English communities and

amongst Afrikaners during the Rebellion, the government used mostly Afrikaner ACF units and ordered no shooting unless shot upon to prevent unnecessary bloodshed. The Rebels were compassionately handled after their capture and fines and imprisonment were only given to 281 of the 11,472 participants. Those imprisoned were released in 1916 to show compassion and to prevent further political damage, but the Afrikaner community still resented the government.

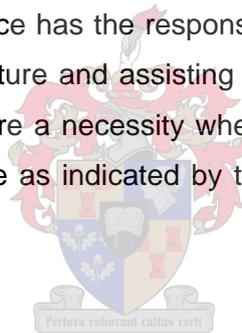
Memories of the Second Anglo-Boer War and the 1914-1915 Rebellion were relived when South Africa entered the Second World War. The period between the World Wars is characterised by the division of English and Afrikaners as well as internal division amongst the Afrikaners due to differing social, economic and political views. Smuts was desperate to prevent further division amongst the white communities at the outbreak of hostilities in 1939. The suppression of the Rebellion and industrial strikes taught Smuts valuable lessons, which he employed against opposition groups during the Second World War. These measures were the passing of the War Measures Act by Parliament in 1940 and other proclamations that removed the means whereby groups could organise themselves militarily against the Government. Private weapons and ammunition were confiscated and prominent figures who opposed the war policy were watched openly or discreetly. Members of suspect organisations were confined, the police and Military Intelligence co-ordinated on all levels to pre-empt militant actions and internment was sanctioned to separate suspects from the broader community.

Many Afrikaner families were polarised on the issue of supporting Britain, many took the Africa Oath to fight for the Commonwealth while others worked hard at preventing them from going to war. National-Socialism and German victories had an influence on Afrikaner actions, but the attempts of the Greyshirts and the New Order had little success in instilling National-Socialism. Those Afrikaners who resisted the war effort were driven by their tradition of being anti-British and out of sympathy for the Germans who shared the same enemy. Among the Afrikaners who opposed the war many expressed their outrage through political action, but the few militants flocked to activist elements to express their anger through sabotage.

Afrikaner unrest during the Second World War was not an open rebellion, but a subversive and clandestine action aimed at disrupting the South African war effort through bombings, sabotage and intimidation. As with the First World War, the Second World War enticed strong anti-British feelings and organisations such as the OB, capitalised on them. The cultural revival within the Afrikaner community provided fertile ground for the OB to sow its seeds of dissension and reap the harvest quickly. Hans van Rensburg's anti-government opinion did not land him in an internment camp, as it did John Vorster, but it did make him a prime suspect of encouraging the many subversive activities that occurred. The secret *Stormjaers* within the OB were responsible for many of these actions of sabotage, but other groups, like the *Tereurgroep*, the X-Group and the National Socialist Rebels, also participated.

The suppression of Afrikaner unrest was a necessity. The home front had to be secured to ensure a steady supply of war material and personnel to the front, because an unstable home front creates low morale and a weak support base. The UDF, SA Police, SAR & H, Military Intelligence and volunteer organisations provided an invaluable service in assisting the Government in keeping the home front subdued. Criticism of Smuts was forthcoming from the opposition and the anti-war activists. Spying, confinement and internment characterised government actions and was answered with more sabotage and intimidation. The war ended in favour of Britain and its Allies and this eroded the anti-war group's power base preventing them from recruiting more members to their cause or finding support amongst the population to continue with their actions. Afrikaners turned their attention to parliamentary actions and their support for the NP ensured a victory during the 1948 elections.

Civilian reaction to the suppression of internal unrest through military means will always illicit strong negative reaction against the government of the day. The politicians and military officers in charge suffer the consequences of their actions in the aftermath. However, in spite of the consequences, a country's defence force has the responsibility of protecting such country against enemies of a foreign or a domestic nature and assisting the local police force in maintaining law and order. These unpopular actions are a necessity when the country's safety, security, stability and in some cases, survival is at stake as indicated by the historical examples discussed in this thesis.



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#### **5.1.4 ARCHIVE OF THE SECRETARY FOR DEFENCE (DC)**

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## **5.2 NATIONAL ARCHIVE REPOSITORY**

### **5.2.1 ARCHIVE OF THE SECRETARY FOR NATIVE AFFAIRS (NTS)**

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### **5.2.2 ARCHIVE OF THE GOVERNOR GENERAL (GG)**

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### **5.2.3 ARCHIVE OF MINISTER OF MINES (MNW)**

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### **5.2.4 ARCHIVE OF MINISTER OF JUSTICE (JUS)**

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### **5.2.5 ARCHIVE OF THE PRIME MINISTER (PM)**

PM 1/2/66, 167/22, Report of Military operations against the Bondelswarts Hottentots, 26<sup>th</sup> May to 8<sup>th</sup> June 1922: Chief of Staff Officer, Maj C.A. van Coller, 9 June 1922.

**5.3 UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH AFRICA REPOSITORY**

**5.3.1 ARCHIVE OF THE UNITED PARTY (UP)**

UNISA Collection 1/1. Premier oor Ossewa Brandwag

**5.4 UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN REPOSITORY**

**5.4.1 DRUMMOND CHAPLAIN COLLECTION**

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