

**ARMS ACQUISITION AND PROCUREMENT IN
SOUTH AFRICA: THE SOCIO-HISTORY OF ARMS
DEALS WITH REFERENCE TO ATTITUDES,
STRENGTHS AND LIMITATIONS IN
DECISION-MAKING (1935-1994)¹**

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1. INTRODUCTION

In focussing on arms procurement this article will deal with the strengths and weaknesses of national decision-making behaviour around arms acquisition and procurement over the past seven decades. The ways in which these processes may have impacted on optimal or sub-optimal analysis in decision-making structures within procurement processes over the past decades are addressed. The article also addresses the legacy of past processes and its possible impact on future arms procurement in South Africa.

Past processes amongst others will be analysed and contrasted with the latest arms acquisition process. Amongst others sociological insights, social histories and contemporary history writing are closely linked in this contribution.

The pervasive historical paradigms of the pre-democratic political leadership and élite and its likely impact on the policy processes surrounding future arms procurement will be addressed here. Part of the argument expounded is that a centralist decision-making style by political leadership of both the ancient regime and the contenders that took power, namely those within the broad liberation struggle, will have an impact on future arms procurement decision-making. That impact might lead to sub-optimal (read: restricted) analysis and practice of the arms procurement process and related policies.

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¹ In a follow-up article recent experiences around procurement will be discussed and suggestions and speculative comments made.

In political decision-making styles centralist leadership approaches of the past was underpinned by a marked level of confidentiality (read: secrecy).² In other cases personalities dominated the procurement and acquisition processes. How will these factors influence South Africa's future decision-making approaches?

Is an emerging democracy that attempts to consolidate itself and its political leadership and citizenry able to marry the formulation of arms procurement policy and the execution thereof with (1) accountability, (2) democratising the budget and (3) establishing sound mechanisms for civilian oversight over such processes?

The basic assumption here is that in a move towards establishing sustainable democracy and the eventual consolidation thereof, policy processes should be as transparent and accountable as humanly possible. Such processes should be ultimately under civilian oversight with the right to at least scrutiny and critical questioning, and at most, a blank public veto. A further assumption here is that whereas this is applicable to normal political processes and policy processes, it should apply also to processes regarding arms procurement and decision-making and structures surrounding it. There is little doubt that arms procurement in many cases pertains a measure of confidentiality (depending on the nature and the extent of the needed arms) and as such confidentiality will always impact as a variable of the arms procurement process.

When counterbalanced with the inherent ideals of democracy, the imperative should be to retain an optimal measure of transparency, accountability and citizen input in such a process. In the final analysis, it implies civilian oversight and the establishment of structures to facilitate such oversight throughout the arms procurement process. The following areas will be dealt with in this article:

- ▶ The procurement process before apartheid
- ▶ The procurement process under apartheid

² Some observers use the term secretive state (Cawthra in Singh, 2000 for example).

2. APARTHEID THINKING, POLICIES AND SECURITY ISSUES

Policy processes are understood here to be the conceptualisation, planning, implementation and evaluation of a goal orientated policy. Policy is about intention, decision and implementation to achieve set objectives. Whereas security issues and arms procurement are at stake, measures of confidentiality, restricted consultation and in some cases covert execution go hand in hand with the above. However, in this article the implicit argument is made that in democratic societies the public should have an input into such processes. Having a say refers to policy conceptualisation, input regarding the budget process and setting limits on expenditure - even a veto over deals that are seen as non-viable or not cost-effective given the socio-political context and contemporary threat analysis.

The apartheid/separate development mind frame and its influence on the processes of policy-making should not be underestimated. The eclipse of a separate development paradigm in combination with a stated objective to resist Communism by the para-ideologies of (sham) *Reform* and *Total Onslaught* played a major role in policy processes.

The garrison or bunker state had a pervasive influence on decision-making behaviour and procedures in South Africa. (Davis 1987: 159; Grundy 1988; Leonard 1983; Van Vuuren 1986; Selfe 1987; Liebenberg 1990; Phillips in Cock and Nathan 1989: 16ff and 134ff, Posel in Cock and Nathan: 262ff; Frankel 1984: 29ff and 124ff).

There are strong reasons to argue that the legal environment that was created by the apartheid elite played a role in obfuscating any potential for transparency, accountability to the public and civilian oversight. Security laws regulated policy processes in a variety of ways, for example defence and police force functions relating to security matters or arms procurement (Dugard 1979; Horrell 1982:197 to 200). Dugard (1978:279ff) points out how security laws negatively affected normal political processes in South Africa. Hund and Van der Merwe remark on how "legal ideology" in South Africa served minority powers through an excessive legalistic style and the "ideology of legal positivism that emanates from above and monopolises society as a whole" (Hund and Van der Merwe 1986:33-5). Measures relating to the security of the state with specific reference to armaments and national supplies (Horrell 1982:244-5), information and secret services accounts gained extreme high priority under apartheid rule (Horrell 1982:246-8).

The undermining of participation from civil society within an already restricted democracy by means of security legislation is described in Anthony Mathews, **Freedom, state security and the rule of law: Dilemmas of the apartheid society** (1986:32-61,

192-250, 219 and further, 271-300). Edwin Cameron argues that the pervasive paradigm of the bunker state also impacted on judicial accountability. The apartheid legislation, inclusive of security measures, caused:

- subordination to the legislature of a restricted and quasi-democracy,
- subversion of the institutional independence of the legislature and,
- problematised issues around rule observance and hierarchy (Cameron in Du Toit 1991:185, 191, 195-6).

Government as well as self-imposed censorship by some Afrikaans and English media compromised transparency and accountability and conceivably had a negative impact on the formal neutrality and professionalism of the judiciary (Cameron in Du Toit 1991:184-90. See again Hund and Van der Merwe 1986:53ff, 82ff).

The challengers or contenders, namely the African National Congress/South African Communist Party (ANC/SACP) and the Pan Africanist Party (PAC) as liberation movements seem to have become partially a mirror image of the apartheid regime as a result of what was called "liberatory intolerance".³ Because of severe pressures on their ability to organise and operate freely inside and outside South Africa as a result of a vast range of security legislation, the liberation movements themselves had to act secretive and in intolerant ways (Mathews 1986:33-61, 63ff, 179ff, 192ff).⁴ Did this perhaps have a lasting effect on government-thinking in South Africa?

The apartheid standard threat analysis [read: *Communist onslaught* and later *revolutionary onslaught*]⁵ influenced arms procurement and force planning. Add to this the element of international isolation by an élite experiencing themselves progressively alienated from the international community, and policy-making became more a centralised and secretive operation. This impacted on force planning and the arms procurement process in order to enhance the combat readiness of the South African Defence Force (SADF).⁶

Already early in the 1980s Giliomee (Adam and Giliomee 1981:70-1, 169-8, 184-5, 214) pointed out that the South African political elite became both centralised and militarised in their thinking. Geldenhuys (1984:140ff; 149ff; 247ff) expanded on these issues in more detail. He points out the interplay between international isolation, threat

³ A term coined by Pallo Jordan during the 1987 Dakar meeting between an IDASA delegation and the ANC leadership.

⁴ The SACP's belief that they have to act on behalf of the workers and the oppressed as a revolutionary vanguard worsened the situation (See Kotze in Liebenberg *et al.* (1994).

⁵ A rather infamous term used by Roelf Meyer just before the unbanning of the liberation movements. However Magnus Malan went further in 1988 by stating that "there was a total intellectual onslaught" against the South African regime.

⁶ Suid-Afrikaanse Weermag (SAW).

perceptions and issues pertaining to foreign policy formulation and execution including, for example, mineral and energy matters and arms procurement. The specific nuances of an evolving yet growing paranoia of an élite bunkerising themselves against a perceived "total onslaught", brought about a total disjuncture between transparency and accountability in terms of the arms procurement process. Civilian oversight, or at least the remainder thereof, such as parliamentary committees on defence and budgetary issues, were undermined (Williams 1997).

Though accountability should have been a debate in politics and specifically the arms procurement process, developing framework or frameworks of decision-making by both the incumbents and contenders as it evolved during the late 1970s and the early/middle 1980s made it arguably difficult for future open and public processes. Political socialisation played a major role in this as in any other society. The notion for transition and need for a sustainable democracy, and more specifically the need for public transparency and accountability, thus was born in a complex socio-political environment.

During the 1980s "reform" became a central part of the ruling élite's discourse and advocacy to sell a "new deal". Instead this period that reflected Jekyll and Hyde type politics, proved to be a phenomenon of centralising power rather than decentralisation, i.e., limited reform combined with strong doses of repression. Progressively the locus of state power shifted to the military. Centralising tendencies marked the Tricameral Constitution of 1983 (Du Toit and Heymans 1985:79ff; Cock and Nathan 1989).⁷ A shifting loci of decision-making took place from Nationalist politicians, their culturo-political satellites such as the Afrikaner Broederbond (AB) and the security police to the military and especially the icon or pinnacle of security, the National Security Management System (NSMS). The State Security Council (SSC) in tandem with the executive presidency of PW Botha played a major role in policy conceptualisation and policy-making and further subverted the role of parliament.

One should not underestimate the role of élite politics and the agglutination/cementing of close networks of élite within such a context. However, individuals such as PW Botha, the "political general" Magnus Malan and PW's then secretary, Jannie Roux, also played a role. Pik Botha and his well-known "Kindergarten" within the Department of Foreign Affairs contributed to selling the judicious mix of "reform" and "civilised values" (read: *Verligtheid* and authoritarian "Liberalism") as a logical

⁷ In an 'all-whites referendum' in 1983 the liberal opposition, the Progressive Federal Party (PFP), advocated a no vote to the proposed new parliamentary structure because it would enshrine racial categories in the constitution itself. Extra-parliamentary groups on the left of government such as the United Democratic Front (UDF) and the National Forum (NF) revitalised resistance against top-down and authoritarian government practices at the time.

counter for (perceived Soviet directed) socialism. Also consider the role of Jimmy Kruger and Louis le Grange earlier on.

This strategy was not entirely unsuccessful. The United States in search of satellite states under Ronald Reagan with full support of the Congress and Senate at a stage chose for "constructive engagement" with the apartheid state rather than confrontation. Earlier on under Jimmy Carter the US government initially supported South Africa in its 1975 invasion of Angola (Operation Savannah) before retracting its decision under public pressure and international criticism.⁸ Later on the US was to supply the renegade movement, Unita, clandestinely with arms such as Stinger anti-aircraft missiles.

Given the apartheid history the South African society lacked political leadership education and upgrading the capacity of good governance to guide and manage social transformation.

Stanley Reshoe (1990 in Ichilov:317-36) argues convincingly that established democracies need to upgrade and enhance leadership education. Dror (1990:68-9) is of a similar opinion concerning transforming or democratisation of society of which there was a total lack during South Africa's apartheid regime. Although well able to master technology and production of arms, as well as ascertain effective procurement of technology and weapons systems, education for effective governance was not on the agenda; nor was there a perceived need for public accountability and/or transparency in policy-making (Du Toit 1991:5).

Ample literature on leadership (Dror 1988 and 1990; Hodgkinson 1983; Migdal 1988; Esterhuyse and Du Toit 1990; Liebenberg and Van der Merwe 1991) stresses a need for sound and responsible political leadership that is open to public scrutiny. As long back as 1990 this need for a society in its attempted transition to democracy - more specifically South Africa - was stressed by several theorists (Dror 1990; Du Toit 1991; Liebenberg and Van der Merwe 1991).

The role of leadership, as an essential ingredient to sound politics, should arguably not be seen as the sole factor to attain and maintain an optimum process of policy-making (including those policies and procedures that will have an impact on defence and procurement of arms and technologies). An important role is to be carved out in emergent democracies for civil society and the establishment or development of

⁸ It was a time before the drift towards global uni-polarism when international criticism and public pressures at home still could force the American government into rational and real politik consideration of international exploits and adventures - a situation that was to change drastically following the demise of bi-polarism and the First Gulf War (1991).

structures of civilian oversight in the fields of defence and arms procurement. To attain an optimal balance between procurement of technology and arms, while balancing the sometimes much needed principle of confidentiality, with the democratic imperatives of good governance, transparency and accountability cannot be left to political leadership alone - especially in a democracy (Cawthra in Singh 2000:163, 175ff). The Belgian defence debacle of 1996 acts as a noticeable example. An added benefit would be the persistent pressure from the informed citizen (read: the collectivity of citizens), the media as well as constitutional structures to oversee such policy-making and implementation of policies.

A society that inherited a legacy of centralised decision-making, a fair amount of sub-cultural authoritarianism amongst political élite, lack of an affirmative culture of accountability ("the leaders were/are always right") and citizen involvement - either as an individual or in collective action with others - will seldom demand or attain transparency and accountability.

Devising and managing a process that moves beyond sub-optimal analysis in decision-making structures pertaining arms-procurement will not only ask for a congruence of process and structures. It will also require a government, media and citizenry that can interact with each other in a process where the cornerstones of sustainable democracy (and eventual democratic consolidation), i.e. transparency, civilian oversight and accountability intertwine with an optimal analysis of national concerns. The latter will receive more attention in the last part of this article.

3. THE ARMS PROCUREMENT PROCESS BEFORE 1994

This analysis is given against the background of South Africa as a newly established democracy and given a past of radical division and civil strife. It highlights the "historical prisons" that could limit or even prescribe political and economic decision-making (including defence, but more specifically arms procurement). It accepts that under optimum congruence between the government and its law-giving and executive functions, civil society and the regional environment, managing procurement processes more effectively is possible despite the limitations mentioned.

3.1 Élitism and secrecy

It has been pointed out that the ancient regime, given the structures that evolved over time to maintain the garrison or bunker-state, moved gradually from a severely restricted democracy towards centralised structures of control. In the long run militarisation and the resultant threat perceptions of a state that felt itself isolated and under

permanent attack, resulted in a shifting of state power to an executive president and the State Security Council (SSC).

Political socialisation and lack of leadership upgrading was of little help. As pointed out earlier, the apartheid élite was socialised within the framework of ethnic differences as a given (even as primordial, rather than a changeable) political construct, and the need to combat "communism" and the later notion of "revolution". The white citizenry and those "junior" (constitutionally spoken) coloured and Asian MP's that became supportive of the Tricameral Parliament shared these basic values. The result was a decision-making process that was alienated from (1) the rest of the South African society, and (2) even the followers of the said élite without the patrimonial gift of access to the centralised and fairly authoritarian procedures of decision-making. This was even more so when security matters were at stake. For example, access to decision-making within the influential security bureaucracy - such as attending meetings of the SSC - were pretty exclusive and not in general open to junior ministers or the opposition (Omar 1988:52 -61).⁹

The impact of culturo-political allies and front organisations that co-exercised power with the National Party such as the AB that operated as an arm of the Nationalist Party in utmost confidentiality on all levels of the South African society at the time, should not be underestimated. The activities of such organisations contributed greatly to exclusive and centralist tendencies as observed during political and security debates from the 1960s to the 1990s until the first non-racial universal elections in 1994 - and perhaps thereafter. (For more detail on the 1970s and 1980s, see Adam and Giliomee 1982:117-9, 207; Geldenhuys 171-4 and Wilkens and Strydom 1978; Liebenberg in Schutte, Liebenberg and Minnaar 1998:137ff).¹⁰

⁹ Personal discussions with Frederick van Zyl Slabbert, 1988, Rondebosch, Cape Town, one year after his resignation from the Tricameral Parliament.

¹⁰ We concur with other observers when it is argued that it is far too early to say that the Afrikaner-broederbond and its "restructured" successor, the Afrikanerbond, dropped to insignificance after 1990. An imbedded cultural trend towards secrecy and élitism that nearly bordered on nepotism, contributed greatly, in my opinion, to sub-optimal consultation with civil-society. Post-1996 it seems as if Broederbond (now Afrikanerbond) élite has moved much closer to President Thabo Mbeki, again seemingly speaking on behalf of Afrikaners - a notion strongly opposed by other Afrikaans-speaking people.

3.2 Exclusive thinking

Exclusive thinking-patterns led to a decision-making style and procedures that reflected non-democratic decision-making, centralised in nature (and highly bureaucratized) with little or no civilian input and oversight and lacking in transparency and public accountability. "It follows from Weber's model of bureaucracy that power tends to concentrate at the top" (Giddens 1995:290). Michels argued that power tends to be monopolised at the top by those running political party structures - the so-called iron law of oligarchy (Giddens 1995:290). Others may argue that amongst the apartheid elite within an *Umwelt* of diplomacy of isolation the phenomenon of *groupthink* coined by Janis, played a role. Janis defines *groupthink* as "the psychological drive for consensus at any cost (that) suppresses dissent and the appraisal of other alternatives" (Parsons 1995:344). Such consensus blinds the decision-maker to the realities. In the case of South Africa it led to tension and conflict between the governors and the governed, the South African government and the international community.

The notion of a garrison state, mobilised society and dual mix of sham reform and total onslaught as identified by Van Vuuren (1985:48-56; Van Vuuren and Liebenberg 1998:95ff) as legitimisation strategies for a political élite clinging to power in what they perceived to be a hostile political environment, impacted further on political decision-making. Security issues such as the procurement of energy sources, technology, arms and support for front organisations and surrogate forces were at stake (Leonard 1983:131ff, 137ff, 146ff, 147ff; Williams 1997; Steyn et al. 2003:vi-vii). The development and maintenance of a defence capability included arms acquisition and procurement; in other words buying from foreign sources and developing an own arms production capacity. Conventional arms as well as uranium enrichment, nuclear bomb design, ballistic missile development (inclusive of low earth orbit vehicles (LEO's)) and satellite development were at stake (Steyn et al. 2003:v). Here we concentrate mainly on conventional arms capacity development and arms imports.

The need to democratise budgets or bring it closer to the "common" citizenry, which Van Zyl Slabbert, a prominent sociologist and political practitioner (1992(a)), advocated, received little attention. Many others would later identify the opening up of budgets to public scrutiny and input as a core element of a democracy (old or young). At the time there was little talk of, or attempts towards democratising the budget - even after the information scandal in the 1970s as well as after the later "Inkathagate" scandal where arms supplies to third-force elements became public knowledge. The much needed understanding of the "whole" in its relation to the "particular" where in the reconstruction of a society, an inclusive and legitimate state aimed at an embodiment of a democracy polity lacked. A democratic nation constituted by a free and interactive collective of citizens and nurturing an encompassing culture of human

rights and a constitutional state as argued for by Liebenberg and Duvenage (1996) and Rhodie and Liebenberg (1994), were amiss. These theorists were not the first to argue in favour of more open systems.¹¹

With specific reference to defence matters, Chief Albert Luthuli, erstwhile ANC President and receiver of the Nobel Peace Prize, hinted as long back as in 1962 that the closed thinking of whites had unleashed problematic dynamics. Not only were white politics, but also white defence, rallied against black South Africans (Luthuli 1962:79, 83, 105, 114-5, 204-5). In the years to come this situation, not only confined to fellow-citizens inside South Africa, spilled over into the rest of Southern Africa. Grundy (1988) refers to regional destabilisation politics.

The lopsided focus on security and the maintenance of Christian civilisation and state security by means of the exclusive mobilisation of whites on a cultural and language based (read: ethnic mobilisation) strategy resulted in a range of political decisions on defence issues, technologies and arms procurement that lacked transparency and accountability. It was sub-optimal when regional interests, development of South Africa and to some degree economic growth, were to be counterbalanced with the pervasive notion of political/social control and state security/maintenance of the ruling regime. Political divide and rule strategies (even long after the racially based Tricameral experiment) impacted on defence strategies internally and externally (Schutte, Liebenberg and Minnaar 1998).

As a result arms and armament were acquired and/or developed with the co-operation of other pariah states such as Israel and even Spain before its 1977-transition from Francoist Fascism to democracy. Small arms such as FN and G-3 assault rifles and arms ammunition such as 9 mm and 7,62 mm rounds from Spain as well as technologies for small arms production found their way into South Africa. South Africa for example obtained the basic design of the R-4 infantry assault weapon (in Israel called the *Galil*), from technology imported from Israel. Eventually small arms found their way into conflicts in Southern Africa as a result of the policy of regional destabilisation that Grundy (1988) refers to.¹² Not to be forgotten was that FAPLA in Angola and

¹¹ See Seleane for an appeal towards an open dialogue between civil society and the Constitutional Court on controversial issues such as the death penalty (Seleane, 1996).

¹² South Africa became scourged by crime since 1994. It is regularly found that in post-1996 armed robberies and cash-in-transit heists that small arms used are R1, R 4 and Ak-47 assault weapons; mostly in well-organised crime operations. The previous policy of destabilisation and wide-scale prominence of arms distributed by contending forces facilitated this. More recently in a country rife with syndicate crime and police sub-standard training (in some cases corruption) the new 'gun-laws' resulted in the handing in of weapons by citizens that were not fully informed of the laws. Corrupt officials and lack of security may lead many of these arms handed in by law-bound citizens finding its way back to the black market of unlicensed arms and crime syndicates. Slackening of security at military basis and police depots may play a role also. One of the telling examples of the results of the situation was a robbery in Bloed Street close to Marabastad,

Frelimo in Mozambique were supplied with heavy arms as well as smaller arms such as recoilless rifles, mortars, anti-tank armament capabilities, anti-aircraft equipment and a variety of assault rifles by the then Soviet Union and China. A regional arms race led to arms proliferation, the consequences of which are still felt today.

American produced arms in growing quantities found their way to Unita during the 1980s, as it did earlier on to the FNLA (which became defunct). In an attempt to establish economic, political and military dominance of the *Pax Pretoriana* (a term coined by Kenneth Grundy 1988), South Africa armed and supported the rebel movements Unita (in Angola) and Renamo (in Mozambique). South Africa inter alia supplied FN rifles, R-1's, G-3's and AK-47's. The latter captured from FAPLA and SWAPO (Plan) forces and/or obtained by rouge trade with the growing unstable states in Central Europe.

These strategies to swing the balance of power inside South Africa as well as inside Southern Africa in favour of the *Pax Pretoriana*, did more than its part to sow waves of small arms that would whirlwind through South and Southern Africa for many years to come. They excluded initial "tit-for-tat" deals between front companies of the apartheid state and (instructed or rogue) individuals who had access to small arms or could procure it or facilitate the procurement of it. Such exchanges - internally or outside South Africa - took place in exchange for patronage, intelligence or direct/advisory military assistance to clientele or political allies. On a micro and macro scale, these types of "official"/"unofficial" and "strictly unofficial" (semi-covert or covert) deals became widely spread. On a macro-level, for example, weaponry was supplied to Unita in exchange for examples of sophisticated Russian and Warschau Pact equipment or partly paid off by ivory requested and received from Unita (Ellis 1994; Reeve and Ellis 1995 for more detail on the ivory trade issue). Small arms such as pistols and obsolete rifles that were supplied to vigilante groups inside South Africa during the 1980s for action against UDF militants in the Crossroads Township in Cape Town serve as one micro example. The supply of small arms to Inkatha "defence units" in KwaZulu-Natal also provides a provincial rather than micro-example. Apart from the above the "independent homeland" armies were equipped by South Africa - amongst others with Casa transport aircraft manufactured in Spain.

Pretoria/Tshwane in July 2005 where platoon strength of robbers swooped down on businesses and train commuters. The incident took place a mere kilometre from the Union Buildings and the Pretoria/Tshwane Central Police station. The police services found it impossible to intervene. They justified their action as being caused by a lack of vehicles. The weapons used were mainly R-1's and R-4's. (Strangely enough, primarily non-South Africans advocate the recent gun laws based on US experiments. One strong protagonist for 'gun-control' on legal person firearms, apart from the Ceasefire Campaign in South Africa, is the ISS (See for example Meek 1998; Meek 1998(2)). The current legislation is strongly criticised by gun owner's organisations such as the South African Gun owner's Association (SAGA) and various other groupings.

The basic imperatives of public accountability - even if vaguely considered at some stage by the élite of the apartheid regime - became lost in the storm of strategic domination and "fast procurement" and use or dissemination of such equipment where and when deemed necessary.

In a very real sense South African incumbents and the political contenders, namely the liberation movements, experienced "enabling arms dissemination with in view political disempowerment" of the opponent. This happened with negative social consequences. A major goal of the apartheid regime was to retain supreme control inside and outside South Africa in order to ward off a transition to democracy by majority rule. One of the imperatives of this strategy was to keep the playing field unlevelled to the benefit of the incumbent regime. The late Claude Ake argued that in many cases Africa had experienced economic disempowerment through imposed ideologies. The South African regime of the apartheid era attempted (and in many respects succeeded) in a planned "unlevelling" of the playing field in South and Southern Africa by military, economic, ideological and political means. (Consult Grundy 1988 and Schutte, Liebenberg and Minnaar 1998). The culture of secrecy, élite control and exclusive thinking ("groupthink", resulting from historical paradigmatic prisons) contributed to this and to the designed proliferation of small arms for purposes of strategic dominance.

The story, however, does not end there. The acts and strategies of the apartheid regime were mirrored in many of the political and military activities, strategies and tactics of the liberation movements. The ANC/SACP were striving for the (revolutionary) attainment of a national democracy - at least until its unbanning - and the NP, in contrast, attempted domination through the dual strategies of (sham) reform and oppression. The praxis of the struggle forced both incumbents and contenders towards centralism, the dominance of élite decision-making and secretive strategic activities. The future interaction between the ANC, SACP and Umkhonto we Sizwe (MK) were to be marked by the same tendencies. To understand the need for this and the potential legacy of such operative procedures, read Lerumo (1980), Williams in Liebenberg, Lortan, Nel and Van der Westhuizen (1994), Meli (1988) and Ellis and Sechaba (1992). These authors deal extensively with the potential and real problems that were imposed by the conditions of fighting and co-ordinating a liberation struggle from outside the country, while having to stay operative within the "broad church" of the ANC/SACP alliance. The need for direct political and military activity was enmeshed with the need for confidentiality and control over military (MK), activists and militants.

In conclusion: The past of a violent and militant struggle for political dominance has left us with a legacy that could potentially impact negatively on a transparent and accountable arms procurement decision-making process. This was to be borne out by the post-apartheid arms debacle.

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