



CRISIS NEWS

A bulletin of news and theological reflection on the South African emergency

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COMMENT ON THE LIFTING OF THE STATE OF EMERGENCY

Towards a military dictatorship

The state of emergency has been lifted. What does it mean? Back to normal? Everything under control? That it has been effective? That this is a step towards peace, towards normality?

As a measure to curb violence and restore order the declared a state of emergency did not work. During the 33 weeks it lasted, the death rate increased. The February death toll was the highest since August last year.

With the lifting of the state of emergency, came the threat of pushing new legislation through parliament this year which will give the security forces the powers to impose state-of-emergency powers when and where they choose which will afford them the same idemnity they enjoyed before.

Little has changed. On the same day of the lifting, 40 people bidding farewell to the deported pastor Kraatz were beaten and arrested at D.F. Malan airport. Troops still roam freely in the townships as they have done before. This time, different from the 1960-state of emergency, the government did not outright ban all major political movements. They are being a bit more sophisticated by bringing the leaders of organisations and trade unions to trial on treason charges, finding them guilty of furthering the aims of existing banned organisations and therefore having the legitimate excuse to outlaw the organisations and unions represented at the trials. These treason trials and the intensions behind them persist. COSAS, banned last year stays banned. New banning orders were recently issued against the important Eastern Cape Leaders, Mkhuseleli Jack and Henry Fazzie. The fact that these orders and those against other popular leaders like Johnny Issel and Trevor Manuel were lifted by the end of March had to do with "technical reasons" and certainly not the State's intentions to at last enter into genuine negotiations with these leaders. In the townships violence continues and



the appearance of vigilantes on the township scene is sinister. The restrictions on open air meetings and funerals are still enforced.

Taking these facts and realities into account one can see that it is a blatant untruth to say that "sufficient order has been restored nationally to warrant the lifting of the state of emergency". The means of dealing with "disorder" are still being used and even extended.

The lifting of the state of emergency (in name) together with the announcement of the Government's willingness to implement UN Resolution 435 over the independence of Namibia should be seen as an attempt by the Botha-government to regain the initiative, not only locally but more specifically internationally after having been on the defensive the last twenty months.

But in the meantime, government powers in the townships (through community councillors) have been replaced by popular power with sophisticated street by street and block by block committee organisation. It is a fact that guerilla activity has become more widespread and

frequent than ever before. Consumer boycotts are still taking their toll and will continue to do so in future. The 31 March deadline for the government to meet student demands will certainly plunge the country into a renewed phase of resistance. The reality is that the State is being openly defied - most notably at funerals where magisterial restrictions are ignored and flags of banned organisations are displayed fearlessly.

Given the constituency it serves and its inherent arrogance, the Botha-regime cannot allow its authority to be so challenged and eroded. The irreversible tide of resistance will soon unleash new states of emergency, more detentions, bannings, assassinations, treason trials and arson attacks on the offices of progressive organisations. There will be retaliations on both sides. And all this will hasten the day of more overt military dictatorship for which legislation is now being prepared.

The state of emergency has been lifted but the emergency is not over.

A number of questions unanswered

Inland, well hidden from the views and beauty of the famous Garden Route, lies Bogani, a tiny black township in the district of Knysna. An unmarked road will take you there. Despite its isolation, this community of about 200 people have become politically very aware in the past year. It is especially the young people in this typical, one shop, one telephone hardly any amenities, neglected country community, that have become frustrated and outspoken.

Recent trouble here started with a very ordinary complaint. A young man Rogers Saaiers (21) was reported to the police because the disco he was running was making too much noise.

On the 3rd of December 1985, the police arrived in force. There were fifty of them and it was 10.15 in the morning. They entered Bogani and started throwing stones on the roofs.

"Hulle wil ons uitart," said Roger to his stepfather, Mr Mfula who is 63 years old and originally came from Zambia.

Mr Mfula told us this strange and terrible story which we will keep in his own words:

"The police came to my house and asked for Roger. Roger closed the door. The police then threw teargas into the house. Roger ran out through the backdoor and climbed onto the roof. Two friends named Ronnie and Hendrick joined Roger on the roof. They started throwing stones at the police. A stone struck a policeman on his neck, this same policeman gave his gun to a sergeant, who shot Roger. Hendrick was shot in his stomach and right wrist and Ronnie in his right ear. I'm not sure whether the same policeman shot all three."

"Ronnie, Hendrick and Roger fell off the roof. The police handcuffed Ronnie and Hendrick. Roger was put into a sack. Ronnie and Hendrick told me that Roger was not dead when they were taken to Knysna Hospital. The police drove off with Roger still in the sack."

The same night at nine o'clock the police returned to Mr Mfula's house, they gathered stones, heaped them together and took photos. They also went into the house and took two car batteries and money from Roger's room. Exactly how much Mr Mfula does not know. No receipts were given, and this money and the batteries were never returned.

On leaving, one policeman turned and said to Roger's father: "Now you are king, we shall never trouble you anymore."

"When I heard this, I knew Roger was dead. This same policeman told me that I had to come to the charge office the

next morning and that I was to bring my wife. My wife and I were fetched by the police because I have an injured leg."

"At the charge office they sent me to the Chief CID who took a statement just like you are doing now (referring to the Council of Churches fieldworker who took down Mr Mfula's original statement) After I had given him the statement, he told me Roger was dead. I then asked to see the body. This was allowed. I saw Roger was shot on the left side and there were strange marks around both ankles.

"I did not get a death certificate, all I received was a box and a hole from the municipality to bury Roger."

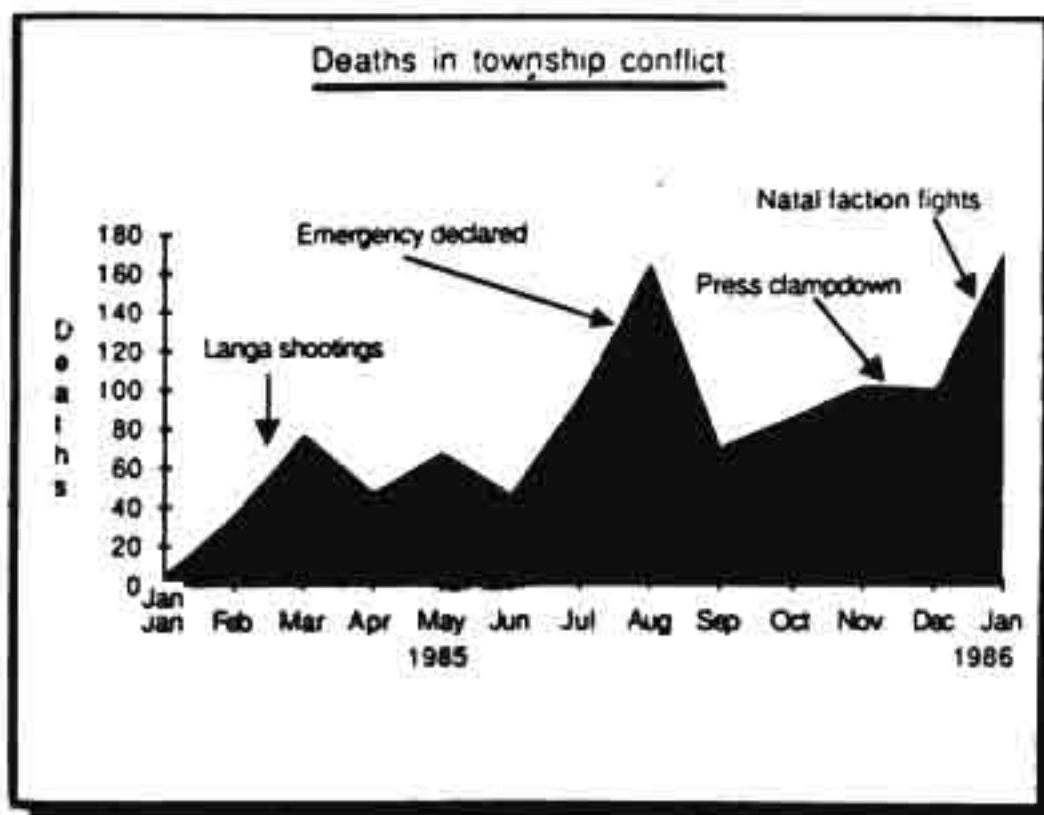
This terrifying story certainly leaves a number of questions unanswered, the most important, the missing death certificate. By law nobody can be buried without a death certificate.

Other questions arise about how and when Roger died. What were the marks on his legs? What happened to the money and the batteries? After this statement was made, the formal process of asking these questions was started. It all happened months ago. Will we ever get the answers?

LAST YEAR

Let us never stare blindly at numbers and figures, because each one represents a human life. But sometimes cold statistics serve as a insight or warning.

GRAPH OF UNREST RELATED DEATHS IN TOWNSHIPS Jan 1985 - Jan 1986



TOTAL NUMBER OF DEATHS

According to the Institute of Race Relations:
1 028 people died in the unrest in the period Jan 1985 to Jan 1986
334 people died in the 201 days before the declaration of the state of emergency
694 people died in the days since the state of emergency
More than half of them were killed by the police

DEATH RATE

Death due to political violence increased from 1,6 people a day before the state of emergency, to 3,3 a day after the declaration.

DEATHS IN POLICE CUSTODY

In South Africa and the homelands 13 people died in police custody or shortly after being released, during 1985.

DETENTION FIGURES

More than 10 000 people were detained in South Africa and the homelands last year
3 637 people were detained under security legislation
1 848 of them took place in the Transkei
99 in the Ciskei
6 in Bophuthatswana

7 381 people were detained under state of emergency regulations



SACLA Clinic in Crossroads

CROSSROADS -treating the casualties

In the last year more than a 1 000 people have died in unrest situations in South Africa and many people have been injured.

At the Crossroads Clinic 500 people who were shot by the police were treated over a 10 month period (Feb 1985 to Nov. 1985). Thirteen of these victims have died of their wounds.

The Empilisweni Sacla Clinic is a small community based health care centre situated in the middle of the squatter community of Crossroads. The staff of 25 people includes 4 doctors. Last year their ability to work together as a team was tested to the full when they had to cope with the emergency situation as well as their routine work. Not only did they treat the injured of Crossroads but also many from the surrounding townships of Nyanga, Langa and Guguletu.

Of the 500 shot, 90% of them carried bird or buckshot wounds. Bird and buckshot consist of numerous small pellets. Although less dangerous than high velocity bullets (of which the Clinic treated five cases) the shot can cause serious and at times fatal injuries. Of the Buckshot patients 60 needed referral to other hospitals and 13 of them died of their wounds.

Of the 31 people the clinic treated for

rubber bullet wounds, 4 had fractures skull and a fractured jaw.

In addition, the Clinic treated 16 people for beatings. Many of these patients were severely beaten, some with up to 30 wounds. Teargas has also been used frequently in this community and has even disrupted the work inside the clinic on a number of occasions. One patient was brought in unconscious after being teargassed while locked in the back of a police van. Another patient received a severe injury when a teargas cannister was shot into his thigh.

Most of the unrest victims treated at the Clinic were male and between the age of 15 and 25 years. Five patients were younger than 9 years old. Thirty seven of them were female.

On one occasion they treated 3 children - one 5 years of age and the other two 7 years who had been shot. One of them was shot on the way to the shops.

Several of the Crossroads unrest patients were breadwinners, and have been disabled and out of work for months. None of them have received disability grants as yet. Though police statements have urged victims to report the circumstances of their injury for investigation (by the police) most of them are too afraid and distrust the

police. Others have attempted to lay charges against the police or bring civil claims but none of Crossroads 500 patients have gained any financial compensation. The fact alone that the laying of charges doesn't seem to work discourages others to do so.

Injured patients are reluctant to attend State hospitals for fear of arrest. Many patients treat themselves at home, come late for medical treatment at the Clinic and are resistant when the Crossroads doctors refer them to hospitals. Several of the Crossroads Clinic patients have been arrested at State Hospitals. The Crossroads doctors find it completely unethical that certain health professionals put the interests of the police above that of the confidentiality of their patients by informing them of patients with gunshot wounds. They also protest against medical superintendants allowing the police to wander around the hospital wards looking for unrest patients.

SACLA Clinic in Crossroads covers only a small area and in Cape Town alone a whole network of medical professionals has been set up and organized to cope with the vast numbers that have been shot in the nationwide conflict. Using the Crossroads statistic as an example we would estimate that about 15 000 people have been injured in South Africa during 1985

Their last township

They were well known in the Cape Province townships for they had visited many of them. They regularly brought back reports and affidavits that shocked many a lukewarm or unbelieving mind into action.

Bongolethu was their last township. On their way back from Oudthoorn to Port Elizabeth, Molly Blackburn and Brian Bishop died in a motor accident. Di Bishop and Judy Chalmers survived the collision. Only a month later Di Bishop (Cape Town MPC) widowed and injured in the crash completed and released a report on what they found in Bongolethu. Though Molly Blackburn and Brian Bishop are gone their work lives on.

Bongolethu is a township just outside Oudthoorn. It was started in 1967 and today it has a population of approximately 4 000. No less than 450 of these people were recently arrested in two military-style operations.

Tied to a fence around the corrugated iron shack that serves as the community hall is a placard with the words: "IF GOD WAS ON EARTH, BOTHA'S REGIME WOULD HAVE BANNED HIM"

In her report Di Bishop writes: "The Bongolethu of 1985 is a product of the horrible neglect which has resulted from apartheid. "Instead of addressing the grievances of the Bongolethu community, the government has employed increasingly repressive measures to deal with the manifestations of residents' frustrations

"Massive SAP/SADF raids on the Bongolethu community and the victimisation of children is serving to exacerbate an already serious situation."

Amongst the affidavits included in Di Bishop's report are several by children. Buyiswa Silo, 14 years old, was ordered out of bed early the morning of 29th November 1985. At the police station "We were taken into a room where there was a cardboard box with holes in it. There were two of these boxes. We could see eyes of people peering out of these holes." According to Buyiswa's affidavit these unknown people then pointed out who should be detained and who not. Other affidavits confirm this selection method.

Buyiswa and many other were arrested this way. Her statement later on reads: "On Wednesday evening, while we were all asleep, the police arrived and said we were making a noise. We said we were not and they threw teargas into the cell." On two further occasions they were teargassed

"There was a noise from the cell next to ours and they again threw teargas into us. Some of us vomited and we felt as if

we were suffocating.

In a separate statement a 14 year old youth who wanted to stay anonymous claimed: "We were making our beds and tidying up, but they (prison people) said we were slow and they sprayed teargas into the cell.

"And they later sprayed water which made the blankets and mats wet. When they sprayed teargas, they locked us in a closed cell. Some of us fainted and some of us vomited. I vomited.

"The others with me in the cell were all young. One was 9 years old, others were 10 and 11 years. That night the mats were wet, so were the blankets. We slept on the wet mats."

Patrick Mlomomba (16) was sitting by a fire when a white policeman caught him.

"He grabbed me and hit me on the chest with his torch. He did not say why he was arresting me. "At the police station he and his friend Dumisane were questioned about goats that were slaughtered. They denied all knowledge of this.

"Another policeman said I lied and grabbed me by the shirt on my chest and put his foot on my foot and slapped my face with an open hand. I fell on the ground and he pulled me up and again put his foot on mine, slapped me with an open hand and accused me of lying. He pulled me up again and slapped me until I fell again."

That night teargas was thrown into their cells and next morning Patrick was charged with Public Violence.

Veronica Ngalo is 12 years old. She was shot by the police on her way back from the shop to buy bread for her mother. Her affidavit tells how she saw about 20 boys and girls running away from the police.

"One girl, I don't know who, called

"run, it's police" in Xhosa. The children were older than me and ran faster. I saw a white policeman come out of the house I was running past. He had a long gun. I was alone in the street and ran faster, still holding the bread. I did not alone in the street and ran faster, still holding the bread. I did not hear any call from the policeman.

"As I reached the corner of 5th Avenue heard a bang and felt a terrible pain in my lower back."

Veronica spent a month in hospital under police guard. After that she spent four days in prison in a cell with seven other women.

"I think they were there for drunkenness not unrest."

"On the 10th August I appeared with about 5 older people (in court) I felt weak. I did not give evidence. The magistrate said I threw stones. I do not know the charge. I did not throw stones. I was sentenced to 5 years imprisonment suspended. The magistrate said that if he heard about me again I would go to a Reformatory."

This affidavit was accompanied by a note from Brian Bishop that he had seen the scar on Veronica's back made by the bullet.

Other affidavits and Di Bishop's report refer to detainees who were severely ill and kept in jail without treatment. She writes: "Allegations of neglect of prisoners and atrocities committed against those in prison and police cells are cause for grave concern and call for follow-up action."

She concludes: "I pray that those who have lost their lives in the struggle for recognition of the human dignity of those who live in Bongolethu, and their right to full participation in the corridors of power and decision-making, will not have been in vain."

CHILDREN'S ART



This drawing was done by a 5 year old child at a pre-school in Valhalla Park. It is a typical example of how children in the area are affected by the violence. Casspirs, fires, sjamboks and dripping blood.

DETENTION

"They can put me in prison. That I can bear. But the hardest thing for me would be leaving the country. My family would feel uprooted, like exiles, and I have never envied exiles their fate."

These were the words of pastor Gottfried Kraatz, Evangelical Lutheran Church minister at Mitchell's Plain at the end of February this year, shortly after he had decided to defy the government's order to leave the country.

Kraatz, who was minister of his Mitchell's Plain congregation for five years was told earlier that month that his residence permit would not be renewed because of "several dubious resistance activities against the authorities". After he failed to have an order for his deportation set aside Kraatz withdrew his case on the advise of his attorney. Under great strain he and his family left the country. Forty of his friends were arrested at the airport.

Kraatz believed that in his role as pastor in the Mitchell's Plain community he had no choice but to step over the "line into what they called politics". He was arrested and detained twice last year. He stood up for the oppressed. He was also a family man and these five years of work in South Africa have also left a lasting impression on his children.

Crisis News spoke to Tobias Kraatz his 14 year old son about his father's detention the previous year. This was at the time when it was already clear that the family would be faced with a possible deportation order because of their father's work. Tobias hoped that they would be allowed to stay in South Africa.

This is Tobias' story:

"My father was detained at half past five one morning. We were all asleep when the dog woke us with loud barking. Our dog always barks like crazy when the police come to our house."

"The police first surrounded our house, then three of them came inside, only one of them was armed. They did not search our house this time. But a few weeks ago when they came to look for Johnny Issel, who was in hiding, they came with machine guns and looked all over, even under the beds."

"They were surprisingly polite this time. They allowed my father to brush his teeth and pack some clothes. My father spoke to my mother and told her all the important things - like whom she had to phone about his detention. We could only say goodbye to him."

"My sister who is 12 and my brother who is 8 years old, understood what was happening and knew about detention



The pastor's son would have liked to stay

and what it meant. But I'm not too sure that my little brother, the youngest one understood. Except that he knew that it was wrong of the police to take our father away."

"I was sad but not too scared about my father's detention. I knew he wasn't a criminal and that he had not done anything wrong."

"We are from Germany. We have been here for five years. My impression of the police in South Africa is that there are different groups of policemen. The worst is the reaction unit or riot police, but the meanest is the security police. They do everything secretly and no-one ever finds out what they have done. During the first week of my father's detention when we knew that he was in the hands of the security police we were scared. After that we were not so upset any more. We knew we could get him out of jail with the help of the German Embassy. But we also knew that my father would never have accepted these conditions for his release. My father did not want any special favours - he wanted to be released with other detainees unconditionally. He said that he had not committed a crime. The police had committed a crime by detaining him."

"Because my father was detained under Section 50 of the Internal Security Act we thought that he would be released after 48 hours. But then we heard that his detention could be extended to 14 days. When he did not come out after 14 days we prepared ourselves for a much longer period. In secret I hoped that my father would be released before my birthday - and he was - just two days before."

"At school I did not have much of a problem explaining why my father was in jail. This is maybe because I attend a German school where many of the students are immigrants. They seem to be more aware of what detention means. My best friend understood it very well. He has been with me to political rallies many times before. My class teacher asked if she could do anything to help our family."

"I did not come across any children who said that my father deserved to be in jail, as I have heard has happened to the children of other parents who have been detained. I was lucky. I had problems concentrating at school but if your

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