

Of Elephants and Men : Politics and Nature Conservation in South Africa

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South Africa's policy of destabilisation of neighbouring countries was closely associated with the rise of South Africa as a leading middleman in the international ivory trade. South African-based traders, acting in partnership or with protection from officers of the South African Military Intelligence Directorate, imported raw ivory from Angola, Mozambique and points further north and re-exported it to markets in the Far East. This was a source of income both for the South African secret services and for individuals associated with them. The same trade routes were also used for trade in other goods, including rhino horn, drugs, gems, currency and weapons. This was not only as a means of earning money but also a technique of destabilisation in itself.

The extent of South Africa's involvement in this trade, although suspected by some conservationists, was difficult to prove and did not form the target of any concerted campaign by the leading conservation groups world-wide. In this respect, the strength of the South Africa lobby in the World-Wide Fund for Nature seems to have played a significant role.

Since the ending of South Africa's military presence in Namibia and Angola in 1989, the Military Intelligence officers, Special Forces officers and others who conducted the wars for the defence of white South Africa have been intent on the struggle inside South Africa itself. There is evidence that such counter-insurgency specialists are now using Mozambique in particular as a base for operations inside South Africa. Moreover, they continue to have an interest in the ivory and rhino horn trades. Former officers of specialist counter-insurgency units have also found employment as game wardens in national parks.

The bold proposals currently being implemented to create large new game parks along the South African-Mozambican border, using modern management techniques and involving local communities in their management, have important implications for politics and national security.

Introduction

This article demonstrates how the South African conservationist lobby, one of the most influential and sophisticated in the continent, has been used by some of the specialist counter-insurgency or covert action units of the South African Defence Force (SADF). The military

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hierarchy governing these units wielded great power in the Republic from the late 1970s at least until the election of F. W. De Klerk as State President in 1989. Even since the advent of De Klerk, certain security personnel have often been suspected of association with the so-called Third Force, a term widely understood to mean the networks of security officials and right-wing political activists who are alleged to use military means, with or without orders from their superior officers, to influence the process of political reform espoused by President De Klerk and Nelson Mandela, the President of the African National Congress (ANC).

This article will argue that some military specialists have had significant interests in the international ivory trade. It may be shocking to conservationists, and to many members of the general public in northern Europe especially, to learn that any organised group could be so callous as to use conservation for political purposes, while cynically condoning the slaughter of animals to which a high symbolic value is attached, such as elephants. If so, it would not be the first time that Europeans, contemplating the beauties of nature in Africa, have lost sight of the political dimension of what they behold. As another author has pointed out, 'Unspoilt Africa is seen as symbolizing the eternity of nature, in contrast with the artificiality of industrial, urban societies. This romantic vision of Africa as an 'Eden' teeming with wildlife has resulted in a broad notion that the conservation of the African environment is a largely technical exercise, devoid of political considerations'.¹ In reality, conservation requires government action to control land and the people and animals which occupy it. In other words, it requires the control of both natural and human resources, which is the stuff of power.

Soldiers and Wild Animals

South Africa has 17 national parks covering over three million hectares of land, as well as hundreds of smaller provincial or private conservation areas. It is a truism to say that all of this land was originally taken, with a greater or lesser degree of coercion, from the ancestors of black South Africans; in present circumstances, with political power under negotiation and land a major and highly emotive issue, this observation is nevertheless worth making. The national parks have traditionally been run by whites for the recreation of whites. The National Parks Board, at least until the appointment of its current chief executive, Dr G.A. Robinson, has often been regarded as a preserve of Afrikaner officials. Robinson, a marine biologist by training, is generally regarded in conservation circles as having introduced a wealth of new ideas into South African conservation of a type which may make the National Parks Board more attractive to a future black government and to its black citizens, and has succeeded in stimulating a debate in the press on the future of the national parks.²

White South Africans are generally proud of their record of nature conservation and the natural beauty of their land. While by the late 19th century white men with firearms had virtually wiped out the vast herds of wild animals which had roamed the country a century before, they had also set up Africa's first modern game park. The idea for this was first mooted by Paul Kruger, an Afrikaner national hero and the President of the Transvaal, in 1884. In 1898 his idea bore fruit with the foundation of the Sabi Game

1 Jenny Macgregor, 'The paradoxes of wildlife conservation in Africa', *Africa Insight*, Vol.19, No.4 (1989), pp.201-212; see also John MacKenzie, *The Empire of Nature: Hunting, Conservation and British Imperialism* (Manchester and New York, 1988).

2 I am grateful for the assistance of the National Parks Board, Pretoria, during visits on 3 and 10 September 1993, and especially to Dr G. De Graaff for providing information in answer to many of my questions on conservation matters. A general description of the parks may be found in official publications such as *South African Panorama: Special Environment Issue* (March/April 1992) or the official year-book of the Republic of South Africa.

Reserve, which merged into the Kruger National Park, opened in 1926.³ Today South Africa's national parks are generally accepted as being among the best run in the continent. Quite apart from their scientific or aesthetic value, they are an important tourist attraction.

From the very first, there has been an association between game parks and military men all over Africa. In part this is for the obvious reason that ex-soldiers often make good game wardens, accustomed to the outdoor life and trained in the use of weapons. And, given the ferocity of modern poachers, game wardens certainly need to be well-armed. Even before poachers took to arming themselves with automatic weapons, the element of coercion involved in the construction of most game parks made it necessary to use quasi-military methods to police them. Game parks all over Africa have been created by expelling people from their ancestral lands, or forbidding them to engage in traditional hunting pursuits.⁴ Not surprisingly, many Africans living in impoverished rural areas, including in South Africa, have come to equate game reserves with the presence of security forces.⁵ This realisation has led conservationists in recent years, most notably in Zimbabwe, to argue in favour of conservation schemes which associate local communities with their management and give villagers a financial stake in their success.⁶ This holds out the hope of simultaneously conserving animals more effectively and satisfying proponents of economic development.

When modern guerilla war came to southern Africa in the 1960s, game reserves and other remote areas proved to be of strategic value. Large tracts of land, thinly populated or uninhabited, sometimes containing difficult terrain and often lying close to national borders, were ideal for infiltration by guerillas based in neighbouring countries, or indeed for counter-operations by the security forces. The Rhodesian security forces in particular, trained in the British military tradition of counter-insurgency as it had developed in Malaya and Kenya, placed high priority on the use of special units which would use guerilla tactics against their nationalist enemies. Perhaps the most famous, or notorious, was the Selous Scouts, established by the Rhodesian government in 1973, initially as a force of trackers and reconnaissance scouts. The Selous Scouts had their first training camp in a wildlife park, and made a point of recruiting former game wardens or others with specialised knowledge of the bush.⁷

Operating in remote areas, often along the Mozambican border, Rhodesian soldiers began to acquire ivory. Exactly how this came about is a matter of some interest. According to one former Rhodesian and South African Special Forces officer,⁸ it was initially by accident, as the Selous Scouts and other special units would sometimes find dead elephants which had strayed into minefields. The soldiers who stumbled upon these corpses would salvage the ivory and, in order to sell it, would fly it to South Africa where they delivered it to their contacts in South African Special Forces or

3 J. Stevenson-Hamilton, *South African Eden: from Sabi Game Reserve to Kruger National Park* (new edition, London, 1974).

4 For an example from West Africa, see Louis Merlet, 'Domaine réservé: la protection de la faune', *Politique Africaine*, 27 (1987), pp. 55-66.

5 *Weekly Mail*, 14-20 September 1990.

6 Ray Bonner, *At the Hand of Man: Peril and Hope for Africa's Wildlife* (New York, 1993), pp. 272-8.

7 Harry Ellert, *The Rhodesian Front War. Counter-Insurgency and Guerrilla Warfare 1962-80* (Gweru, 1989), pp. 93-123; Peter Stiff, *Selous Scouts: Top Secret War* (Alberton, 1982), pp. 135, 241.

8 Author's interview with former officer of Rhodesian Special Air Service, 11 July 1991.

Military Intelligence. To some extent the Rhodesian Special Forces may also have entered into the ivory trade as a means of establishing a commercial relationship, and thus political alliances too, with some of the people living in isolated areas along the Mozambican-Rhodesian border.

As the guerilla war in the future Zimbabwe grew in intensity in the 1970s, South African intelligence officers developed an interest in the trades in ivory and other commodities from Rhodesia to South Africa. The Selous Scouts were secretly financed in part by the South African Military Intelligence Directorate.⁹ and the provision of ivory and other goods appears to have been required by the South Africans as part-payment for their support of the Selous Scouts. Cargoes of ivory and other commodities regularly headed south from Rhodesia to Pretoria in military aircraft from the mid-1970s. Word of this reached the Rhodesian army commander General Hickman, who ordered his own Military Intelligence service to monitor the commanding officer of the Selous Scouts, Colonel Ron Reid-Daly, and to tap his phone. In June 1979 Reid-Daly was tried by court martial on charges of smuggling ivory, guns and gemstones.¹⁰ He was found not guilty, but later intelligence reports, as well as other information, suggest that some senior officers of the Selous Scouts did indeed traffick on a large scale, and continued to do so, from new locations, even after the collapse of Rhodesia and the disbandment of the Selous Scouts.¹¹

The war for Zimbabwe was, of course, only one conflict among many which encircled South Africa from the 1960s. There were armed insurrections against colonial governments in Angola, Mozambique and Namibia, too. In Namibia, the South African security forces were defending what they regarded as their home territory. In Mozambique and Angola they gave help to Portuguese colonial governments and, after independence in 1975, to anti-government insurrectionary forces, namely the *Uniao Nacional para a Independência Total de Angola* (UNITA) and the *Resistência Nacional Moçambicana* (MNR or RENAMO). Liaison with UNITA and RENAMO was the job of officers working under the Chief of Staff (Intelligence), the main South African Military Intelligence Directorate, operating with various Special Forces or similar units when offensive action was required. From the late 1970s onwards, there were rumours of ivory and other commodities being smuggled out of Angola and Mozambique by personnel of these units on a large scale. Ivory trade sources as early as 1974 reported being approached by senior officials of the South African finance ministry inquiring about marketing illegal ivory, suggesting that senior members of the South African government had approved the establishment of a clandestine trade route.¹²

Much of the international commerce in high-value, low-bulk commodities in southern and eastern Africa at this time, including gemstones, ivory, currency, rhino horns and the drug mandrax, seems to have been in the hands of a relatively small number of people. Such commodities moved along a number of well-known trade routes, with the trading and communications centre of Johannesburg increasingly acting as a hub. Some experts consider that it was drug-smugglers who originally pioneered the trade routes from central and eastern Africa to Johannesburg which were later to be used for other

9 Ellert, *The Rhodesian Front War*, p. 93.

10 Ibid., p. 121.

11 Classified document, Department of National Parks and Wild Life Management, Lusaka, 23 August 1991. Copy in the possession of the author; author's interview with former officer of Rhodesian Special Air Service, 11 July 1991.

12 Confidential document in the possession of the author.

high-value commodities which had previously found their way to a variety of other entrepôts, such as Burundi.¹³ All of these trades tended to implicate senior government officials throughout the region, either because of their value, or because their illegal or semi-legal nature required traders to buy political protection at a high level. Hence, the infiltration of these networks by South African Military Intelligence was not only a means of making money but also a useful tool for South Africa's secret servants to penetrate state machineries in pursuit of their strategy of destabilisation.

Perhaps the first major publicity given to these developments occurred when in 1988 an American environmental organisation alleged in testimony to the US Congress that 'a massive [ivory] smuggling ring' had been operating in Africa for years 'with the complicity of South African officials at the highest levels', involving various clients of South African Military Intelligence. The organisation, with little concrete evidence in support of its claim, went on to allege that the Angolan movement UNITA had killed as many as 100,000 elephants in the previous 12 years and that the tusks had been smuggled out of Angola by the South African Defence Force (SADF), either through Namibia or via Zaïre and Burundi. The organisation alleged that South Africa was 'one of the largest wildlife outlaws in the world'. The SADF denied the report, but, under pressure from the South African parliament, instituted an inquiry, which found the charge to be largely untrue.¹⁴

Within a short time, however, a most authoritative source was to confirm allegations about the scale of UNITA ivory exports, the involvement of South African Military Intelligence officers, and the inadequacy of the official SADF inquiry, asserting that the official inquiry had failed to interview available witnesses and was an obvious cover-up. The source of this information was Colonel Jan Breytenbach, one of South Africa's most experienced Special Forces officers. Breytenbach was a founder-member of South Africa's Special Forces in 1972, and had also established and led the 32 'Buffalo' Battalion, a unit specifically created for service in Angola, as well as the 44 Parachute Brigade.¹⁵

In November 1989, as Namibia headed towards independence and after South Africa had withdrawn from Angola for good, Breytenbach gave a press interview in which he accused UNITA of having conducted 'a massive extermination campaign' against Angola's elephants, which had turned the south-east of the country into a 'sterile, lifeless green desert'.¹⁶ In the early 1980s Breytenbach was working for the Directorate of Military Intelligence training UNITA guerrillas. Even before that time, he said, Military Intelligence had commissioned a Portuguese-run company called Frama Inter-trading to export teak from Angola, which it transported to Namibia in trucks which were exempt from normal customs procedures. According to Breytenbach, they also took ivory. South African Military Intelligence officers not only used Frama to transport ivory but themselves hunted elephant in Angola, flying the tusks out to Namibia and thence to South Africa. The Frama staff and their contacts in Military Intelligence were also trafficking diamonds, drugs and rhino

13 On the ivory trade, see Iain and Oria Douglas-Hamilton, *Battle for the Elephants* (London, 1992). On the mandrax trade, see Simon Baynham, 'Drug trafficking in Africa', *Africa Institute Bulletin*, 32, 5 (1992).

14 *The Guardian*, 6 September 1988.

15 Jan Breytenbach, *They Live by the Sword* (Alberton, 1990).

16 *Sunday Times*, Johannesburg, 19 November 1989. This is supplemented by information given to the author by Breytenbach in a phone interview on 8 January 1991. He is quoted at length in Environmental Investigation Agency, *Under Fire: Elephants in the Front Line* (London, 1992), pp. 33-4, and has been widely quoted or interviewed in other newspapers and television documentary films.

horn. Breytenbach hinted that complicity in the smuggling went very high indeed in the South African military establishment. (A spokesman for the South African Police informed the author in September 1993 that the Police had taken an official statement from Col. Breytenbach but found his allegations to be entirely based on hearsay).

Shortly after Breytenbach had made his evidence public, Defence Minister Magnus Malan confirmed that he and former President P. W. Botha had both been on hunting trips in Angola at the invitation of Jonas Savimbi, the head of UNITA, but he denied taking trophies from elephants.¹⁷ Savimbi had already stated in March 1988 that the South Africans had required him to pay in kind for supplies he received, including with ivory.¹⁸ A similar system worked with regard to Mozambique, where RENAMO also smuggled ivory to agents of South African Military Intelligence.¹⁹ In short, it was clear that during the time when South Africa was fighting secret wars in southern Africa, officers under the command of the SADF's Chief of Staff (Intelligence) were systematically demanding from their allies payment in whatever commodities lay to hand, including hardwood, gold, diamonds, rhino horn and ivory. The motives for doing this were both financial and political. This system certainly operated on a greater or lesser scale with regard to South African military assistance to its allies in Angola, Rhodesia, and Mozambique.

The development of an integrated southern African trade in ivory and other high-value products, with Johannesburg as the main entrepot, gave South African Military Intelligence officers some influence even over forces to which they were politically opposed. By the late 1980s there was evidence that members of the Zimbabwe National Army in Mozambique were smuggling ivory, some of which may have been sold to members of the SADF and marketed through Johannesburg.²⁰ As early as 1978-79, Ian Parker, an ivory expert who was then doing research for a report on the ivory trade commissioned by the US Fish and Wildlife Service, found evidence that South African military men in Namibia were buying ivory and rhino horn from Angolan government forces as well as from UNITA.²¹ The head of the Cuban expeditionary forces in Angola, General Arnaldo Ochoa Sánchez, also trafficked in ivory. In 1989 he was welcomed back in Cuba as a hero, but was shortly afterwards convicted of corruption, including ivory-trafficking, and executed. Although his prosecution was politically motivated, there can be little doubt that he was guilty as charged.²²

The involvement of just about every army in southern Africa in ivory-trafficking and other smuggling could be interpreted as evidence of the triumph of material interests or market forces over ideology, or as a rather bleak commentary on the nature of armies and wars. It is also appropriate to make a more pertinent observation about the involvement of so many different interests in a trade whose main regional wholesale market became concentrated in Johannesburg in the 1980s: it meant that when the wars in the region began to diminish after the signature of the New York Accords on Angola and Namibia in December 1988, to be replaced with a new series of political alliances, South African Military Intelligence was in possession of a strategically valuable network of contacts with both old allies and former enemies. This facilitated the develop-

17 *Sunday Star*, 10 December 1989.

18 Jean Larteguy, 'Jonas Savimbi: Comment j'ai vaincu les Russes d'Angola', *Paris-Match*, 8 March 1988.

19 Alex Vines, *RENAMO: Terrorism in Mozambique* (London, 1991), p. 89.

20 Amnesty International, *Zimbabwe: Poaching and Unexplained Deaths: the Case of Captain Nleya* (London, 1992); Environmental Investigation Agency, *Under Fire: Elephants in the Front Line*, pp. 16-29.

21 Ian Parker, personal communication.

22 Julia Preston, 'The Trial that Shook Cuba', *New York Review of Books*, 36, 19 (7 December 1989), pp. 24-31.

ment of links between Military Intelligence and the government of Mozambique, for example, and gave South Africa's security chiefs extra influence in such distant countries as Kenya and Malawi.

South Africa and the World-Wide Fund for Nature

Those South African officials and businessmen who had seized control of the main ivory trade routes did their utmost to keep the existence of the trade secret. In part, this was because South Africa was loath to admit its involvement in the Angolan war at all and, after 1984 at least, consistently denied having any connection with RENAMO in Mozambique. It was also, no doubt, because South African officials recognised the opprobrium which trafficking in animal products would attract in the Western world, whose good opinion was so important for the survival of the white government in Pretoria. In this respect, South Africa was fortunate in receiving sympathetic treatment from the world's most influential conservation organisation, the World-Wide Fund for Nature (WWF).

The WWF was set up in 1961 specifically as a means of raising funds from those of the world's patricians and others who were interested in animal conservation, a traditional pursuit of European aristocracies. Since its foundation in 1961, the WWF has grown to have an income of some £100 million per year. It has established some 30 national sections which raise funds in their own countries, although WWF International based at Gland, Switzerland, remains the headquarters of the organisation. Its leading patrons include such keen hunters as the first president of WWF International, Prince Bernhard of the Netherlands, and his successor, Prince Philip of the United Kingdom. The WWF has consistently argued that conservation is 'compatible with hunting since, as Prince Philip himself once put it, 'if there were no wild animals, there would be nothing to hunt'.²³ This is a point of view which, although strongly opposed by radical 'green' environmentalists, is also defended by others who are not generally in sympathy with the WWF.²⁴ By the same token, the WWF until very recently argued that the best way to regulate the ivory trade is to associate ivory traders with the measures adopted, in the belief that it is in traders' interests to secure the long-term protection of the species which they exploit.

Among the various wealthy nature lovers who were attracted to the WWF was Dr Anton Rupert, generally regarded as South Africa's leading Afrikaner businessman, the founder and chairman of the Rembrandt tobacco company, the head of Rothmans International, and one of the richest men in South Africa.²⁵ WWF International's first President, Prince Bernhard, considered sympathetic to white South Africa, was a friend of Rupert's. In 1968 the Prince suggested to Rupert that he should found a South African national branch of the WWF. Rupert liked the idea, and duly set up the Southern African Nature Foundation, of which he became the president, persuading South African businessmen to join its board of trustees.²⁶ Rupert became a member of the Board of Trustees of WWF International and in 1971 a member of its executive committee.²⁷ He served as a trustee of WWF International for 22 years, until 1990, in spite of a provision in the organisation's original

23 Quoted in Alistair Graham, *The Gardeners of Eden* (London, 1973), p. 189.

24 See for example, Bonner, *At the Hand of Man*.

25 Karel Roskam, introduction to *Violent Stalemate: Media Perspectives on the South African Negotiations* (African European Institute, Amsterdam, 1990).

26 W.P. Esterhuysen, *Anton Rupert: Advocate of Hope* (Cape Town, 1986), pp. 91-2.

27 *Ibid.*, p. 17.

incorporation documents that limited members to two three-year terms.²⁸ He also served as president of the Southern African Nature Foundation (SANF), the South African chapter of the WWF. From 1980 to 1989 the chief executive of the SANF was Frans Stroebel, a former diplomat who had previously been private secretary to Foreign Minister Pik Botha.²⁹

In the earlier part of his career, Anton Rupert was closely associated with the Broederbond, the Afrikaner nationalist secret society established in 1918. During the 1930s the Broederbond developed a strategy of establishing organisations and institutions in different areas of national life which would reflect its influence and its thinking. Among these was the Afrikaanse Nasionale Studentebond, a nationalist student organisation set up in 1934 by Nico Diederichs, a prominent Afrikaner nationalist who was later to become chairman of the Broederbond and eventually President of South Africa. Rupert was a leading member of the Studentebond in the 1930s.³⁰ In 1937 he was already sufficiently well-connected in nationalist circles as to be offered a job as a journalist by Hendrik Verwoerd, the editor of *Die Transvaler* and the future prime minister of South Africa.³¹ Rupert turned this down, and instead went into business with Diederichs. Rupert's business career after this was meteoric. It was closely associated with leading members of the Broederbond. Rupert's employees included Piet Meyer, sometime chairman of both the Broederbond and the South African Broadcasting Corporation, as well as I. M. Lombard and A. Stals.³² After the electoral victory of the National Party in South Africa in 1948, Rupert's political connections allied to his own business ability guaranteed his success. By the time he set up the Southern African Nature Foundation in 1968, he was a made man, well-connected, cosmopolitan, and wealthy enough to make donations to whichever charitable causes he chose.

So influential did Rupert become in the inner circles of the WWF, that he was able to provide the organisation with the director general of its international headquarters in Switzerland. In or shortly before 1971, while Prince Bernhard was still the President of WWF International, Rupert suggested providing the Prince with a personal assistant, seconded to work at WWF International headquarters while his salary was still paid by his parent company. Rupert proposed the services of Charles de Haes, an executive of Rupert's Rothmans International company.³³ In 1971 De Haes was commissioned to work alongside Bernhard in order to establish a permanent endowment for WWF International, which would permit the international headquarters of the organisation to be financially independent of its national sections. So successfully did De Haes carry out this assignment that he was appointed director general of the WWF in 1977, a post which he still occupied in 1993.

De Haes carried out his fund-raising task by approaching Bernhard's associates and business contacts and others, persuading them to take life membership of an association to be known as the 1001 Club, on payment of a fee of \$10,000, to be donated to the

28 Bonner, *At the Hand of Man*, p. 68.

29 Entry on François Stroebel in *Who's Who of Southern Africa* (Johannesburg, 1992).

30 Patrick Furlong, *Between Crown and Swastika* (Hanover, New Hampshire, 1991), pp. 102, 188; Charles Bloomberg (ed. Saul Dubow), *Christian-Nationalism and the Rise of the Afrikaner Broederbond in South Africa* (London, 1990), p. 137.

31 Esterhuyse, *Anton Rupert*, p. 12.

32 Ivor Wilkins and Hans Strydom, *The Super Afrikaners: Inside the Afrikaner Broederbond* (Johannesburg, 1980), pp. 125, 425-6; Dan O'Meara, *Volkskapitalisme: Class, Capital and Ideology in the Development of Afrikaner Nationalism, 1934-48* (Cambridge, 1983), pp. 201-5.

33 Curriculum vitae of Charles de Haes, supplied by WWF International.

WWF fund. This would provide the WWF with an endowment of some \$10 million. The funds raised through the 1001 Club would enable the WWF's international headquarters to assure potential donors that their money would not be used for headquarters' administrative expenses, since these were already largely assured by the endowment. One of the consequences of this arrangement was that it made WWF International financially independent of the organisation's 30 or so national sections worldwide.³⁴ Membership of the 1001 Club was – and remains – confidential. Nevertheless, details of some of the members were published in a series of articles in a British magazine in 1980 and 1981. The articles, although detailed and apparently well-informed, were anonymous and were published in a magazine which has often been inaccurate. However, we have obtained a copy of the membership list of the 1001 Club for 1987 which confirms many of the published allegations.³⁵

The identities of the 1,001 members of the 1001 Club reflect quite closely Bernhard's own circle of acquaintances, as might be expected. They also reveal the influence of leading South African personalities. The 1987 membership list, for example, includes 60 South Africans, excluding a few people who might be considered South African by adoption but who are registered under different nationalities. The South African members of the Club included such prominent members of the Broederbond as Johannes Hurter, chairman of Volkskas; Etienne Rousseau, chairman of the Federale mining and industrial group; Pepler Scholtz, former managing director of the Sanlam financial group; all three were at the top of companies which had depended on the patronage of the Broederbond.³⁶ Rousseau and Hurter were both members of the executive council of the Broederbond in the mid-1960s, when it had close connections to the South African secret services.³⁷ Rupert himself appears to have left the Broederbond in 1974.³⁸ Also representing South African business on the 1987 membership roll of the 1001 Club were Pieter Vosloo, director of Mercabank, and Mrs Daniel M. Hoogenhout, whose husband was a member of the Broederbond's economic committee.³⁹ Philippus van Zijl, another 1001 Club member, sat on the same committee. Another South African 1001 Club member was Louis Luyt, a former business partner of Rupert, who played a prominent part in the so-called Muldergate scandal in South Africa, wherein it was revealed that the Pretoria government had used secret service funds to buy control of newspapers. At least two other 1001 Club members had both been implicated in the same scandal.⁴⁰ Both Johannes Hurter and Dr Frans Cronje were members of the Defence Advisory Council, a body which advised the government on the armaments requirements of the South African Defence Force.⁴¹ However, among the other South Africans who had joined the 1001 Club by 1987 were many leading businessmen with no known connection to the Broederbond, and even some such as Harry Oppenheimer of Anglo-American who were known to support political parties opposed to the National Party.

Among non-South African members of the 1001 Club were some known for their strong pro-South African government positions in the 1970s and 1980s when the Republic was

34 Philip, Duke of Edinburgh, *Down to Earth* (London, 1989), pp. 53-4.

35 'Lowlife Fund', *Private Eye*, 1 August 1980; see also Bonner, *At the Hand of Man*, pp. 68-70. A copy of the 1987 membership list is in the author's possession.

36 cf. Wilkins and Strydom, *The Super-Afrikaners*, pp. 424-6; Bloomberg, *Christian-Nationalism*, pp. 95-100.

37 J.H.P. Serfontein, *Brotherhood of Power: an Exposé of the Secret Afrikaner Broederbond* (London, 1979), pp. 15, 98.

38 *Ibid.*, p. 178.

39 Wilkins and Strydom, *The Super-Afrikaners*, pp. A106, A278.

40 Mervyn Rees and Chris Day, *Muldergate* (Johannesburg, 1980), pp. 29, 57, 113.

41 Philip Frankel, *Pretoria's Praetorians: Civil-Military Relations in South Africa* (Cambridge, 1984), pp. 80-1.

subject to extensive boycotts. One example is John M. Olin, an American member of the 1001 Club who in March 1978 was found to have broken the United Nations arms embargo against South Africa by selling arms to the Republic.⁴² Other 1001 Club members included shippers who had moved oil to South Africa in defiance of international boycotts. Most members of the 1001 Club are people of irreproachable integrity, although it is to be noted that members of the 1001 Club include a small number of disreputable individuals such as President Mobutu Sese Seko of Zaïre and Agha Hasan Abedi, former president of the Bank of Credit and Commerce International (BCCI), responsible for the biggest fraud in world financial history. Both were members of the 1001 Club in 1987. Certainly, the 1001 Club has many merits in providing finance for WWF International's efforts on behalf of conservation. For present purposes, we seek only to demonstrate the influence of the white South Africa lobby in the financing of WWF International. The strength of the South Africa lobby in WWF International may account for the organisation's failure to publicise or publicly condemn the role of South Africa in the international ivory trade, which became a major factor in the trade in the late 1980s. Needless to say, the evidence that WWF International or its 1001 Club were generally well-disposed to the South African government does not imply that the organisation and its officials, or 1001 Club members, were aware of the machinations of the South African Military Intelligence Directorate.

The Ivory Trade

Since 1975 the world trade in ivory has been governed by the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES), an agreement which bans trade in certain wildlife products. Trade in other products – including ivory, until 1989 – is restricted to certificated dealings. The establishment of CITES in 1975 at first did nothing to halt the decline in numbers of the African elephant. During the 1980s the decline in elephant numbers became so sharp that CITES introduced a system in which exporting countries were required to state a ceiling for the amount of ivory which they hoped or expected to sell in the coming year. The new system was ineffective in halting the drop in elephant numbers but did provide an inducement for traders to shift ivory from country to country and for governments to manipulate statistics.

At the same time as CITES was struggling to control the international trade in wildlife products, the whole notion of self-control by traders and hunters was coming under attack from the growing number of radical 'green' pressure groups in the West, such as Greenpeace and Friends of the Earth. At the CITES meeting of 1989 the 'green' lobby with the support of some African states outside southern Africa successfully argued in favour of a temporary ban on the ivory trade.⁴³ By the time of the 1992 CITES meeting, the 'greens' in the developed world had the full support of some African governments, notably those of Kenya and Zambia, whose elephant herds had declined to alarmingly low levels and who were now ready to support a total ban on the trade. They were still opposed by wildlife officials and conservationists in a number of southern African countries, including South Africa, who argued that efficient national parks would sustain

42 Michael Klare, 'Arms for Apartheid: New Evidence of Illegal US Arms Sales to South Africa', in Ellen Ray, William Schaap, and others (eds.), *Dirty Work 2: The CIA in Africa* (New Jersey, 1979), p. 260.

43 Bonner, *At the Hand of Man*, pp. 153-9.

growing numbers of elephants, and that the only way to keep the numbers to manageable proportions was to cull elephant herds periodically and sell the tusks and hides for profit, which could be reinvested into park management. These arguments had the support of reputable conservationists in many parts of the world.⁴⁴

While the South African authorities and South African conservationists were correct in asserting that elephant herds in their country were stable, their position took no account of the fact that so much of the trade had been encouraged by South African destabilisation of countries in the region and by the active involvement of South African Military Intelligence personnel in the trade. Culling of elephants in South Africa itself produced no more than seven tonnes of ivory annually, and yet generally accepted figures indicate that South Africa was exporting some 49 tonnes of ivory in 1985, reflecting the country's growth as a conduit for the illegal trade in ivory and rhino horn.⁴⁵ The existing trade statistics suggest that lawful South African exports amounted to less than 10 per cent of Africa's documented output of ivory, although the real proportion was probably higher. Trade sources admit to having exported animal products as early as 1979 from Namibia and South Africa without any documentation at all, selling them in Macau and China, where no documents were required. In the late 1980s, when national ceilings had been introduced by CITES, South African military officers and traders are known to have shifted ivory into Mozambique where it was registered as of Mozambican origin. It is also possible that other African countries, such as Uganda, were registered as the source of ivory exported from South Africa.⁴⁶ What is beyond doubt is that the import and re-export of ivory and rhino horn from South Africa was a substantial trade which was growing in size, and that it was a direct result of South African destabilisation of Mozambique and Angola in particular. A modern study maintains that 'South Africa [was] clearly the focal point for the intra-regional trade' in southern Africa, consuming some one half of all imports in the region⁴⁷. Indeed, many conservationists had noted evidence of the fact that, by the late 1980s, 'South Africa had now taken over from Burundi as one of the chief conduits for illegal ivory from all over Africa',⁴⁸ without being able to establish exactly who was controlling the trade, or how they were doing it. From Johannesburg, most rhino horn was re-exported to Taiwan, and most ivory went to Hong Kong or other parts of the Far East. Some of the biggest Chinese and Taiwanese ivory traders in South Africa were well-known for their connections with the illegal trade, but seemed immune from prosecution.⁴⁹

The WWF was well aware of Johannesburg's role in the ivory and rhino horn trades, as WWF officials have made clear.⁵⁰ However, the organisation neglected to expose South Africa's role in the trade in ivory or rhino horn, which seems to have peaked in the late 1980s. By 1993 it had diminished markedly, largely as a result of the collapse in the ivory price following the 1989 CITES ban on the ivory trade, but also because of the establishment of an effective Endangered Species Protection Unit under dynamic

44 Many of the world's major newspapers reported these developments, particularly at the time of the March 1992 CITES meeting in Kyoto, Japan. The South African position is well stated in, for example, Guy Hobbs, 'Elephant People', *Leadership*, February-March 1992, pp. 16-24.

45 Figures quoted in Edward Barbier, Joanne Burgess and others, *Elephants, Economics and Ivory* (London, 1990), pp. 6-7.

46 Ian Parker to the author, 27 July 1992.

47 Barbier and others, *Elephants, Economics and Ivory*, p. 40.

48 Douglas-Hamilton, *Battle for the Elephants*, p. 321.

49 *Sunday Times* (Johannesburg), 16 October 1988.

50 I am grateful to WWF International for providing statements by John Hanks, former head of the WWF International Africa programme, as well as other documents, and for agreeing to telephone and personal interviews.

leadership.⁵¹ Rather, WWF publicity material generally tends to give the impression that poaching is overwhelmingly a problem of black Africa. This is not wrong, since South Africa itself does not have a major poaching problem, but it ignores South Africa's role in the trade in ivory poached elsewhere on the continent. We may note in passing that the huge international publicity given to the emotive subject of elephant and rhino poaching, by emphasising the inadequacies of black African governments and ignoring the role of South African interests, has contributed to the anti-black propaganda which is an important weapon in the arsenal of dirty tricks used by South African security services.

By the time of South Africa's withdrawal from Namibia in 1989-90, the importance of Johannesburg in the ivory trade had been quite extensively described in the South African press, particularly in a spate of articles in the latter part of 1988.⁵² In late 1988 furious arguments were raging among politicians and securocrats in South Africa over whether or not to accept US terms for a withdrawal from Angola and Namibia.⁵³ The release to the press of information on the ivory trade, and indications of SADF involvement, may well have been a reflection of the struggles between rival factions in the government and security forces.

In spite of the abundance of evidence that South Africa has played an important role in the ivory and rhino horn trade since the late 1970s, and indeed that this has been a deliberate policy of various organs of the South African state, the WWF has continued to remain silent on the matter. When, in early 1991, the WWF launched an international campaign to shut down the rhino horn trade, it made no mention of the role of South Africa in the trade. In 1992 the WWF published a final report on a long investigation of the rhino-horn market, concentrating on the nature of the consumer market and mentioning only in passing that for many years, South African ports have been the main point of exit for poached horn and ivory.⁵⁴ To appreciate the significance of the WWF's failure to make any substantial mention of South Africa in the publicity it has given to ivory and rhino horn smuggling, one may make a comparison by imagining a major international report on the cocaine trade which were to devote substantial attention to the North American drug market while devoting only two lines to the role of Colombia.

'You've got a good point', the WWF International press spokesman said when asked in 1991 why the WWF's international campaign on the rhino horn trade failed to target South Africa. The subject 'never came up', he explained.⁵⁵

Gamekeepers and Counter-insurgency

The diplomatic process which was to lead to Namibia's independence resulted in fierce disputes between the war faction and the peace faction in the South African government in the months preceding the signature of the New York Accords in December 1988. In some respects these disputes continue to the present day. Under the terms of the New York Accords, South Africa agreed to grant rapid independence to Namibia in free elections to be held under the supervision of the United Nations.⁵⁶ A key element in the decolonisation

51 I am grateful to Lieutenant-Colonel Piet Lategan of the South African Police Endangered Species Protection Unit for an interview on 6 September 1993.

52 For example: *Sunday Times* (Johannesburg), 16 October 1988; *The Star*, 22 October 1988.

53 Chester Crocker, *High Noon in Southern Africa* (Johannesburg, 1993), pp. 335-424.

54 Kristin Nowell, Chyi Wei-Lien and Pei Chia-Jai, *The Horns of a Dilemma: the Market for Rhino Horn in Taiwan* (Cambridge, 1992), p. 21.

55 Author's phone interview with Robert SanGeorge, WWF press officer, 20 August 1991

56 Crocker, *High Noon in Southern Africa*, pp. 503-11.

process was the role of the two main armed forces, the People's Liberation Army of Namibia (PLAN) on behalf of the South-West African People's Organisation (SWAPO), and, on the government side, *koevoet*, the main counter-insurgency unit in Namibia. *Koevoet*, originally set up by a security policeman from Natal with mostly Zulu personnel, had a fearsome reputation for intimidation and brutality.⁵⁷ It and PLAN were now supposed to retire to barracks while the politicians canvassed for votes. However, a strategic blunder by SWAPO enabled the South African administration to keep *koevoet* in the field, in spite of UN attempts to restrict it to barracks, for several months. By August 1989, some *koevoet* members had been redeployed as members of anti-poaching units, still patrolling the Namibian bush in their armoured vehicles with helicopter support and still striking fear into the hearts of the future voters of Namibia.⁵⁸ The *koevoet* men joined new game conservation units some of which, it later emerged, received funding by WWF International.⁵⁹ Other *koevoet* men were withdrawn to South Africa where they were to surface in new roles, including as private security guards and as members of the KwaZulu Police.⁶⁰

There is indeed a good argument to be made for deploying ex-*koevoet* men or similar ex-combatants as game wardens, where their tracking and other skills can be put to good use. But it would be naive to suppose that such a function is devoid of political or military implications. By the time of their decolonisation of Namibia, South Africa's security chiefs had become extraordinarily adept at two of the traditional skills of Special Forces soldiers: disguise and subterfuge. *Koevoet* was only one of several counter-insurgency or similar units developed by South African security chiefs for service in the wars for southern Africa, from the 1960s to the present day. When circumstances have obliged the South African government to dismantle one of these units, as was the case in Namibia in 1989, it has consistently responded by using every possible means to redeploy the same unit in a new guise, switching personnel from one unit to another, if necessary, to avoid detection. As a *koevoet* officer told his men in 1989, these units are like a snake which sheds its skin.⁶¹

There is evidence that this talent for deception includes the use of counter-insurgency troops as game wardens. At the same time as some *koevoet* men were being redeployed as game wardens in Namibia, the South African Military Intelligence Directorate was taking a hand in the training of game wardens elsewhere.⁶² There were reports in the South African press that unemployed black youths applying for jobs as game wardens were given paramilitary training by white army officers in a camp which also housed Inkatha trainees.⁶³ These reports were denied by the SADF, which insisted that the training was for genuine game wardens, and showed journalists around the training camp.⁶⁴ The Military Intelligence Directorate, however, certainly had trained paramilitary operators for Inkatha as well as supplying Inkatha with secret funds.⁶⁵

There was abundant evidence that the counter-insurgency experts of the South African security forces considered KwaZulu and its ruling party, Inkatha, as crucial strategic allies for the struggle ahead. The commanding officer of the KwaZulu Police Force

57 Denis Herbstein and John Evenson, *The Devils Are Among Us: the War for Namibia* (London and New Jersey, 1989), pp. 61-95.

58 *The Times*, 15 August 1989.

59 *The Independent on Sunday*, 17 November 1991.

60 *The Independent*, 27 June 1992.

61 An anecdote reported to the author in Namibia in May 1989.

62 Stephen Ellis, 'De Lange Arm van het Wereld Natuur Fonds', *De Volkskrant*, 24 August 1991.

63 *City Press*, 21 October 1990.

64 *Weekly Mail*, 15-21 November 1991.

65 *Weekly Mail*, 19-26 July 1991.

until 1992, General Jacques Buchner, was a leading counter-insurgency specialist who had served as a liaison officer between the Rhodesian and South African Police during the Zimbabwean independence war, and had gone on to work at the ANC desk of the Security Police, specialising in turning captured guerillas. In 1987 he became commander of the Security Police in Natal, at the height of the ANC-Inkatha civil war there, and then in 1989 moved to the KwaZulu Police.⁶⁶ The Parks Department of KwaZulu also included counter-insurgency specialists, many of them veterans of the Rhodesian campaign. KwaZulu game wardens were trained by the SADF's 121 Battalion, a Zulu ethnic unit.⁶⁷ It was disclosed in 1991 that the KwaZulu Department of Nature Conservation employed a secret intelligence unit, which had kept under surveillance the anthropologist David Webster shortly before his murder two years earlier. The surveillance team included an officer trained by the Reconnaissance Commandos, and others who were veterans of the Rhodesian Special Forces or counter-insurgency units. The team reported directly to the director of the KwaZulu Bureau for Natural Resources, who was close to Chief Buthelezi, chief minister of KwaZulu and a sworn enemy of the ANC. In subsequent investigations of Webster's murder it emerged that he had probably been killed by the Civil Cooperation Bureau, the principal death-squad set up by the Special Forces of the South African Defence Force. An inquest failed to establish with precision the motive for Webster's murder, but one possibility appeared to be that, in the course of his field-work in Kosi Bay, a remote area along the border between KwaZulu, South Africa and Mozambique, Webster had stumbled across evidence of the ivory trade between Mozambique and South Africa and, it is alleged, of the role of South African security men in smuggling of weapons, ivory and rhino horn.⁶⁸

The Kruger Park: a Strategic Area

The pride of South Africa's conservation areas is the Kruger National Park, situated along the country's border with Mozambique. Since 1975, this border has been one of the most sensitive strategic areas in southern Africa for reasons arising from the politics of the region. In 1975, the victorious nationalist movement, the Frente de Libertação de Moçambique (FRELIMO), came to power as an opponent of the apartheid government in Pretoria. In international politics, FRELIMO was pro-Soviet. FRELIMO was prepared to offer military bases to guerillas of the military wing of the ANC and the South African Communist Party, *Umkhonto we Sizwe*. This was intolerable for the security chiefs in Pretoria since Mozambique shared a border not only with South Africa proper but also with KwaZulu, under the government of Chief Minister Buthelezi, whom the ANC still regarded as an ally at that time. The Mozambican border was only a few hours' drive from the Pretoria, Witwatersrand, Vaal region, the industrial heart of South Africa. Any guerilla force which had good bases in Mozambique could infiltrate across the border into the homeland of KwaZulu and could send saboteurs directly to Johannesburg, as was to happen at the time of the Sasolburg, Voortrekkerhoogte and Pretoria Air Force headquarters bomb and rocket attacks by *Umkhonto we Sizwe* in 1980-83, which were planned and executed from bases in Mozambique.⁶⁹

South African Military Intelligence responded to the threat posed by *Umkhonto we Sizwe* guerillas operating out of Mozambique in a number of ways, but most importantly by

66 BBC2 television, 'War on Peace', 10 March 1992.

67 *Weekly Mail*, 8-14 November 1991; on 121 Battalion, Frankel, *Pretoria's Praetorians*, p. 114.

68 *Weekly Mail*, 6-12 November 1992.

69 Stephen Ellis and Tsepo Sechaba, *Comrades Against Apartheid: the ANC and the South African Communist Party in Exile* (London and Indiana, 1992), pp. 105-111, 127.

alliance with RENAMO. The Mozambican rebel army had originally been formed by Rhodesian secret service officers in the mid-1970s. In 1980, when Rhodesia collapsed, the South African Military Intelligence Directorate took charge of RENAMO at the same time as Pretoria recruited entire sections of the Rhodesian intelligence and security apparatus. Many former Selous Scouts and Rhodesian Special Air Service men joined South African Special Forces, particularly Five and Six Reconnaissance Commando units which specialised in support work with RENAMO. Five Recce was based at Phalaborwa, on the edge of the Kruger Park. According to Zambian and other intelligence reports, some former Selous Scouts who had been deeply involved in the ivory trade in Rhodesia, and later worked with the South African security forces, continued in the ivory business also.⁷⁰ Some former officers of the Rhodesian Special Branch, Central Intelligence Organisation and other counter-insurgency specialists joined South African Military Intelligence. The South Africans, making use of ex-Rhodesian veterans, stepped up their support for RENAMO so effectively that by 1984 they had convinced the Mozambican government that it had no option but to make peace with Pretoria and expel *Umkhonto we Sizwe* from the country. By that time relations between Chief Buthelezi and the ANC had degenerated to the extent that Buthelezi had been forced to abandon his attempts to play off the ANC against Pretoria and to side decisively with the latter, in effect becoming a strategic ally of Military Intelligence.⁷¹ In short, by 1984 the South African security services had captured control of the Mozambican border. We may also add that people close to South Africa's Special Forces were reported to have taken control of the official marketing of Mozambican ivory, handled until 1992 by a South African company whose representative in Beira was a former Selous Scout, one of those who had pioneered the Rhodesia-South Africa ivory trade in the 1970s.⁷²

The Nkomati agreement of March 1984, which was intended to be a mutual non-aggression pact between Mozambique and South Africa, did not spell the end of South African support for RENAMO. Within a few months it had become clear that officers of Military Intelligence were still supplying RENAMO. Increasingly thereafter, the principal RENAMO rear supply-bases were situated only a few kilometres on the Mozambican side of the border with South Africa, apparently confirming reports that RENAMO guerillas sometimes trained inside South Africa and received supplies directly overland. The main supply-base for RENAMO in Mozambique's Gaza Province in 1992, for example, was at Ngungue, close to the boundary of the Kruger National Park on the Mozambican side.⁷³ There have been reports of RENAMO bases on the South African side of the border, including even allegations that RENAMO may have used the Kruger National Park.⁷⁴ The civilian managers of the Kruger Park are generally recognised to be competent administrators who are sincerely dedicated to conservation and do not have any hidden political agenda. But the civilian managers of the Kruger Park in the early 1990s did not have full control of the area, since the Park was patrolled by a military unit trained by instructors from the SADF's 111 Battalion. The military liaison officer until

70 Confidential document, 17 March 1989; Classified document, Department of National Parks and Wild Life Management, Lusaka, 23 August 1991; both in the possession of the author.

71 *Southscan*, 16 November 1990; Terence Ranger, 'War, Violence and Healing in Zimbabwe,' *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 18, 3, (1992), pp. 699-700.

72 Environmental Investigation Agency, *Under Fire*, p. 41.

73 *Weekly Mail*, 16-23 April 1992.

74 *Weekly Mail*, 16-22 March 1990.

late 1991 was Colonel G. P. Otto, a senior officer in Four Reconnaissance Commando, a unit specialised in destabilisation. He is renowned as one of the toughest of Special Forces officers, described by one of his colleagues as a 'diehard'.⁷⁵ Colonel Otto was known to maintain contacts with both RENAMO and FRELIMO forces on the Mozambican side of the border.⁷⁶

The New Environmental Discourse

The South African Defence Force, the largest single landowner in South Africa, has in recent years turned its attention increasingly to matters of conservation, lending land under its control to conservation and musing on its possible peacetime conservation role. This may be an admirably far-sighted policy. But, given the continuing strategic importance of the Mozambique-South Africa border, the political importance of KwaZulu, and other factors, it is not devoid of political implications. To judge from the presence of so many former senior army and police officers in the Afrikaner Volksfront (AVF), the main grouping of the far right which is led by Lieutenant-General Constand Viljoen, the commanding officer of the SADF until his retirement in 1985, many white military thinkers are much preoccupied with the necessity to control at least some territory in future as a means of guaranteeing the physical security of white South Africans. A *boerestaat*, as the AVF has argued for, would provide such a guarantee. If a future constitution does not include some form of white homeland, however, the most determined of the military men must find other means of securing the territorial control which is necessary to mobilise some form of military force. The closer the National Party comes to renouncing its monopoly of political power in South Africa, the greater becomes the strategic value of control of even limited territory.

To judge from the record, South Africa's toughest-minded securocrats will want to retain their capacity to destabilise South Africa at least until such time as they are convinced the country has a stable government in which white interests are adequately protected, in their opinion. But retention of a capacity to destabilise implies control of both territory and resources. Here the whole Mozambican border has the potential to play a crucial role since it is highly porous. There already exists an important weapons trade across the border.⁷⁷

In these circumstances, it is necessary to examine the political implications of some of the imaginative and well-publicised schemes currently being championed by the National Parks Board, the Southern African Nature Foundation and others. There are aims to quadruple the area devoted to national parks in South Africa and to double their number from 17 to 34.⁷⁸ The most ambitious plans of all are reserved for the Kruger National Park, which is to be extended across the border into Mozambique, increasing its size by some 40,000 square kilometres, making the whole park as large as Rwanda. Ultimately, the Kruger Park could even be integrated into similar parks in Mozambique and Zimbabwe as well as private nature reserves and other conservation areas, making an international wildlife paradise as much as 11 million hectares in size which would be a major tourist attraction. The plans for the Kruger Park extension have the support

75 Author's interview with former Special Forces officer, July 1991.

76 Confidential documents in the author's possession.

77 This was confirmed to the author by both security and conservation officials in interviews in September 1993.

78 Fred Bridgland, 'Breakout', *Leadership*, 10, (October-November, 1991), pp. 68-72.

of the United Nations Development Programme. The World Bank has already given funds to the Mozambican government to implement the project.⁷⁹ Anton Rupert is seen in conservation circles as the leading advocate of the expanded Kruger Park.⁸⁰

There is also much encouragement, in both official and unofficial conservationist circles in South Africa, for the creation of private game parks and official parks in the KwaZulu, kaNgwane and Gazankulu homelands adjacent to the Kruger Park and the Mozambican border, with the ultimate aim of linking the Kruger Park to the Gonarezhou park in eastern Zimbabwe, thus creating a vast park complex the virtual length of the South Africa-Mozambique border, and extending to the Mozambique-Zimbabwe border. In April 1992 the National Parks Board leased 14,000 hectares of the Kruger Park to the Conservation Corporation, a private game-park operator run by a leading financier, who is also a business friend of Buthelezi.⁸¹ Already, in keeping with the new, community-based management schemes now favoured in some conservationist circles, conservation areas have been established in KwaZulu in which local communities have a stake. These are known as community conservation areas (CCAs), land which is set aside and managed by local communities in KwaZulu with assistance from the KwaZulu Bureau of Natural Resources. The latter then helps the local community with management of the area and training of game scouts. In KwaZulu, this naturally translates into having leading members of Inkatha on the management boards of these areas, working with officials of the Bureau of Natural Resources, some of whom have backgrounds in the South African or Rhodesian Special Forces. Thus one such CCA at Matshenezimpisi in KwaZulu falls under the tribal authority headed by Chief Bhekisizwe Biyela – who is also Deputy Minister of Economic Affairs in the KwaZulu government.⁸²

Many dedicated conservationists in South Africa are enthusiastic about the changes taking place in the national parks, which they see as making the parks more modern, more attractive to local people, and better adapted to conserving wildlife. They hope that the parks will be a major tourist attraction in years to come, generating money and jobs which South Africa desperately needs. Some conservationists, however, argue that what is now required is not larger reserves, but better reserves, given the costs of conservation and the land hunger foreseen in some parts of Africa. Whatever the merits of the new parks in conservation terms, the fact remains that, in the foreseeable future, control of land remains a matter of crucial importance, especially when it is in such a strategically sensitive area as the South African-Mozambican border.

79 G.A. Robinson, 'Ecotourism as a Major Drawcard for Southern Africa: Promoting Tourism and protecting the Environment', (unpublished paper, no date).

80 Author's interview with Dr G. De Graaff, Pretoria, 10 September 1993.

81 *Financial Mail*, 12 June 1992; author's interview with Dr David Jones, director of London Zoological Society, 9 January 1991.

82 *Sunday Tribune*, 8 November 1992.