



Mandela's Messianic Image: The Rest of the Story

There was never any question where the American media stood on the South African elections. They have been madly involved in a torrid love affair with Nelson Mandela and his "movement" at least since his release from prison in 1990. For many members of the fourth estate, the illicit relationship started long before. However, when it comes to describing the so-called "news coverage" of the run-up to the election and the election itself, words like "biased" and "slanted" don't begin to do justice. The Establishment press made the event into a blatant, shameless propagandafest, plain and simple.

For quantity, magnitude, and viciousness, the lies, inventions, distortions, shadings, twistings, and glaring omissions of the media's "Elect Mandela" campaign will be difficult to top. The campaign included the following elements:

- Continue the sanctification of Mandela and associates to establish their moral claim to the throne.
- Present a Mandela/ANC victory as a *fait accompli* by establishing them as the overwhelming favorites; flood the print and broadcast media with Mandela's image.
- Minimize or ignore any embarrassing Mandela/ANC actions, statements, or policies that might jeopardize their victory.
- Cover up or explain away the dominant influence of the South African Communist Party (SACP) in the ANC.
- Play down the ANC's continued terror campaigns against its opposition.
- Present F.W. de Klerk's National Party as the only significant and legitimate opposition. Present all other opposition parties as inconsequential or outright evil.
- Ignore or justify all illegal and unfair use of government force against ANC opposition.
- Report that the blatantly biased election commissions, monitors, and procedures are "impartial and fair."
- Psychologically prepare world opinion for the probable "necessity" of using international military force against "violent" and "obstructionist" opponents.

Invading the "Bop"

The ANC/SACP had long targeted the independent tribal homelands for takeover. During the first two weeks of March, some 40,000 to 50,000 ANC supporters were bused into the Bophuthatswana homeland. These were mostly Zulu- and Xhosa-speaking ANC people and clearly not Tswana residents. They started a week-long spree of rioting, arson, murder, and pillaging in order to justify sending in the new ANC-dominated National Peacekeeping Force to remove anti-communist President Lucas Mangope.

Yet, the *Chicago Tribune* called the invaders "pro-democracy demonstrators," "the people of Bophuthatswana," and "jubilant residents," and Bob Drogin of the *Los Angeles Times* wrote: "... the spontaneous protests spread quickly to a general anti-Mangope uprising." Bill Keller at the *New York Times* reported the Bop riots as a "popular uprising" that "appeared to be spontaneous and even disorganized." *Newsweek's* Richard Lacayo wrote that Mangope suffered "a stinging rebuke from his own people." It was much the same for the rest of the print and broadcast media.

Next, the campaign moved to the Ciskei homeland, where Brigadier Oupa J. Gqoso was overthrown in



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similar manner. Like Mangope, he was vilified in the American press as a corrupt stooge. No one in the media bothered to ask why General Bantu Holimisa, dictator of the Transkei homeland, or Brigadier Gabriel Ramushwana of the Venda homeland, both of whom came to power through ANC-supported military coups and cannot even offer a pretense of democratic legitimacy, were not also replaced. Perhaps it is because Transkei has long been a base for launching ANC terrorist attacks on surrounding farmers, villages, and cities. And Ramushwana has been so supportive of the revolution that the ANC/National Party coalition named him commander of the National Peacekeeping Force.

Following the “pacification” of Ciskei, top communist Joe Slovo remarked on March 23, “Two down, one to go.” That “one to go” referred to Chief Buthelezi and King Goodwill Zwelithini of KwaZulu. The communists’ plan for the Zulus was already out of the bag long before that, however. An ANC/SACP document, entitled Prepare the Anvil for the Coming Hammer, had already slipped out. It sets forth the ANC’s strategy to destroy KwaZulu. The plan is almost identical to that used against the Bop and Ciskei. One part of the plan states:

Efforts must be made to persuade civil servants that job security and their pensions can only be secured by a people’s government and not by tribal despots. Combined with mass action ... a situation of ungovernability could reproduce itself fairly rapidly *It is important, however, for this crunch movement to have an appearance of spontaneity and popular support. Direct ANC involvement must be played down* [Emphasis added].

The ANC/SACP needn’t have worried; the press has been only too glad to “play down” the involvement — so much so that almost no one in America has even heard of the document. All most Americans know is that this Chief Buthelezi guy and his Inkatha Zulus are really bad news. They’ve had help in forming that opinion from a surfeit of nasty charges like that leveled by *New York Times* columnist Anthony Lewis in a March 30 piece entitled “Pride of Buthelezi Comes Before the Fall: He can do a lot of damage in the meantime.” Lewis describes the Zulu chief as “a man undone by his overweening pride” and refers to his alleged “paranoid streak” and “his vanity.” The Timesman condemns “armed Inkatha toughs” and “Inkatha hit squads” and, in virtually the same breath, offers homage to the late “great black leader, Robert Sobukwe” — the father of South African ultra-violence. Finally, he says, “Buthelezi’s strength lies in violence. A few well-armed thugs can spread a lot of terror.”

In the same vein, the *Los Angeles Times* offered up a heavy piece on April 10 by Michael Clough, a senior fellow at the Council on Foreign Relations (CFR), entitled, “For Roots of South Africa’s Violence, Look to Buthelezi.” “The current battles are outgrowths of Buthelezi’s continuing effort to carve out a political role for himself in a post-apartheid South Africa,” said Clough. And he warned that “an attempt must be made to calm the Zulu passions that Buthelezi has aroused.” He continues: “South Africans and the international community must come to terms with the fact that many Inkatha warlords are unlikely to compromise. Forcing them to accept the reality of a democratic South Africa will be a long, and probably violent process....” Yes, the UN may have to invade.

Selective Outrage

One of the most extraordinary coverups surrounds the murder of over 50 Inkatha Zulus by ANC snipers in broad daylight in the heart of Johannesburg’s financial district. The outrage occurred on March 28 as thousands of Zulu demonstrators marched past Shell House, the former oil company headquarters that now serves as headquarters for the ANC. According to many media reports, “shots rang out” and it just happened that all of the dead and wounded were Zulus. No blame, just one of those things.



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Richard Ellis, Johannesburg reporter for the *Sunday Times* of London, has provided some welcome balance to the blatant pro-ANC bias overwhelmingly displayed by most of the “liberal” international press corps. His story in the April 3 issue of the *Times* cast a much different — and more believable — light on the incident. According to Ellis, “Without warning, the ANC guards opened up with automatic weapons on the largely unarmed [Inkatha] crowd.” Ellis quoted eyewitnesses who own or are employed in nearby shops who watched the ANC open fire without provocation. Tony Dias, working in his family’s restaurant opposite the ANC headquarters, stated that the Inkatha marchers “were doing their own thing, they were not breaking anything or threatening anybody,” when Mandela’s thugs started shooting down on them from the upper floors of Shell House. “Later,” reported Ellis, “the ANC would claim that the Zulus had been shot while attempting to storm their HQ, even though they were gunned down at the side of the building, far from any entrance.”

There are other obvious problem’s with the ANC’s “self defense” explanation:

- If ANC shooters were simply trying to repel an invasion of their building, why did witnesses report seeing ANC security personnel running and shooting marchers in the street?
- Why did the ANC snipers shoot Zulus in the garden of the Johannesburg library and in the streets blocks away from Shell house — people who couldn’t be considered a threat by any stretch of the imagination?
- Why did even a top ANC official at the scene acknowledge that the marchers had been killed “in cold blood”? (Bet you never heard about that from any of your “news” reports.) The *Sunday Times* reported that a “senior ANC politician,” a woman on the organization’s national executive council, who watched the carnage from the fourth floor of Shell House conceded the violence was ANC-instigated.
- Why did ANC thugs continue the slaughter long after the marchers dispersed? Ellis reported: “As the demonstration broke up in disarray, bands of marauding ANC youths began hunting down Zulus.” He then reported in gruesome detail the stoning murder of a lone Zulu youth about 20 years old by some 20 ANC gangsters in a park near Shell House. A *Sunday Times* reporter and four photographers tried to protect and help the man but were overpowered by the killers. After ten minutes of pulverizing the hapless victim with rocks and kicks, reported Ellis, “Finally, a comrade came up and delivered the coup de grace: using two hands to hurl a jagged rock the size of a paving stone, he split the man’s head like a pumpkin.”
- What about the “rule of law” Mandela and his supporters continually prattle about? When police obtained a search warrant to look for weapons and gather evidence at Shell House, Mandela personally prevented the police from entering the building. This made clear some very important points, namely: Mandela and his thugs consider themselves above the law that they prescribe for others; and Mandela’s forces at that time were already in de facto control of much of the government. The Shell House incident is especially important because it was not an incident in which the identity of the assailants is in question, or one which can be passed off as the work of some low-level “hot heads” acting on their own. It involved the ANC headquarters staff.

On April 18, just a little over a week before the election, another incident reemphasized these same points. It came to light that five Inkatha supporters (four men and a boy) were imprisoned in a torture cell in one of the ANC’s buildings in the middle of downtown Johannesburg. One of the men had escaped and brought police back to free his captive cohorts. It was obvious the cell couldn’t have been constructed and the torture operations carried out without official ANC approval, but the ANC was



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allowed to brush the scandal aside with a mere pledge to “investigate.” And the media “watchdogs” were perfectly content to drop the story. Had the roles been reversed — had ANC comrades been found tortured in an IFP cell — is there any doubt that the press would have made it a page-one event for days or weeks, demanding an international investigation?

“Free and Fair” Elections

When it came to the election process and the elections themselves, the international press corps again showed an amazing lack of curiosity. A host of “imbalances” and “irregularities” were given short shrift, if noticed at all, such as:

- Judge Johann Kriegler, chairman of the highly-touted “impartial” Independent Electoral Commission, is a founding member of the left-wing Lawyers for Human Rights and an ANC supporter. The rest of the commission was weighted overwhelmingly toward the ANC and the National Party
- Many election monitors at polling centers openly wore ANC pins and hats and “coached” voters.
- Heavily armed “National Peacekeepers” at some IFP strongholds scared off many voters.
- Inkatha Freedom Party stickers were left off of hundreds of thousands of ballots.
- Many polling booths were left closed resulting in tens of thousands being unable to vote.
- There were numerous reports of ballot boxes being tampered with, and reports of young ANC children voting, using obviously fraudulent documents.

With a few telephone calls to various points throughout South Africa, *The New American* was able to cross check and make a preliminary confirmation of many of these charges. But the major prostitute press was in a hurry to pronounce the elections “free and fair.”

Final Benediction

To add a final benediction on the election, the press turned to Mandela’s old comrade, Bishop Desmond Tutu. The Red Bishop basked in the massive media glow on election day. The *New York Times*’ lead editorial for April 30, “South Africa, Reborn,” quoted the blissful clergyman on the joy of casting his vote for the new ANC/SACP regime: “It’s an incredible experience — like falling in love.”

Christopher Matthews, Washington bureau chief of the *San Francisco Examiner*, provided a May 1 op-ed column from Cape Town entitled “The Prayers of Desmond Tutu.” “For Tutu, the man of God, Wednesday, April 27, 1994, would be a day of deep religious significance, a day of transfiguration for the blacks of South Africa.” Before going to vote, said Matthews, Tutu prayed in his private chapel and “asked God to transfigure those right-wing whites who were trying to stop the South African elections with terrorism: ‘We pray that you turn the hearts of those who want to use evil methods.’”

Yes, this is the same good bishop who has been steadfastly unable to direct the same concern and energy toward converting his terrorist ANC comrades from their evil methods. The same saintly cleric who said, “I think the West, for my part, can go to hell.” The same “man of God” who, in a 1979 speech, said, “I am a socialist — I detest capitalism. Capitalism is exploitative and I cannot stand that.” And who, in 1984 said: “What I know is that if the Russians were to come to South Africa today, then most blacks who reject communism as atheistic and materialistic would welcome them as saviours.” The same “Reverend” Tutu who has had kind words for Red China, Cuba, and every other communist dictatorship and terrorist “liberation movement,” and who once boasted, “I have never hidden the fact



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that I meet with the leaders of the liberation movement when I go abroad.”

Accompanying the Matthews piece was an illustration of the praying Tutu, head bowed reverently, his lips touching his folded hands. Matthews continued: “Now came the chase.... He could not wait to cast his vote. ‘He prays three times a day,’ American divinity student Michael Battle explained as we raced to catch up with the bishop.”

The radical prelate’s saintliness thus established once again, his support for the ANC is presented as the ultimate imprimatur of the “new order” of Mandela. We shall see if it be the heavenly order promised.

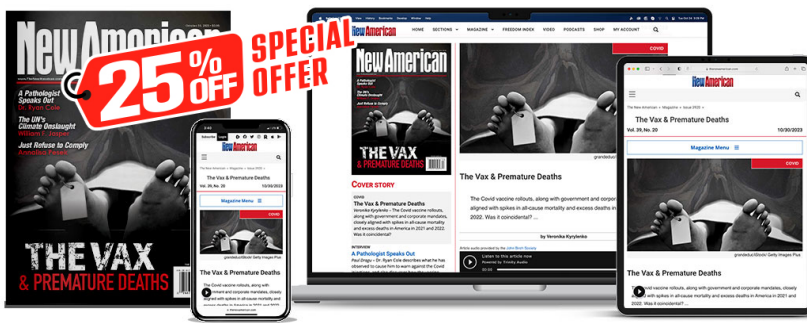


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