

MANDELA'S PASSING AND THE LOOMING THREAT OF A RACE WAR AGAINST SOUTH AFRICA'S WHITES.

As a widow mourns the latest murdered Afrikaner farmer, a chilling dispatch from a nation holding its breath

Andrew Malone In Pretoria



The death of former South African president Nelson Mandela was mourned not just in South Africa but all over the world.

- Roelof du Plessis, 46 shot on his farm outside Pretoria by gang of black intruders
- Fears rise that killings are part of a systematic bid to drive white people out of South Africa
- President Jacob Zuma known to sing 'struggle song' about killing white Afrikaners

The horror started just before midnight on Wednesday this week.

After listening to the latest television news about the health of Nelson Mandela, a South African family living not far from the former President's hospital unit turned in for the night.

But Roelof and Laura du Plessis, a married couple with four children who live on a heavily **fortified** farm outside Pretoria, did not have a peaceful night's rest.

In fact they were about to become the latest victims of what white pressure groups in this troubled nation say is nothing less than a savage war against them.

Hearing noises outside their home, Mr du Plessis, 46, got out of bed and ran outside.

To his horror, he found his 19-year-old son being held with a gun to his

head by a gang of five armed black attackers.

Father and son were ordered to lie on the ground. The invaders did not ask for money or the keys to the expensive vehicles in the drive. They were there only to terrorise and kill.

Hearing voices outside, Laura, 44, came out of her bedroom to investigate – and her torch **illuminated** an awful scene as the gang pointed guns at her husband.

Her son managed to get up and sprint off into the darkness when the men were confused by the flashlight. But Du Plessis was not so lucky.

The intruders opened fire at once, shooting him six times through the throat, lungs and **abdomen**.

As he writhed on the ground in agony, the men ran off into the night leaving empty bullet cartridges littering the yard.

fortified forskanset
illuminated oplyste
abdomen maven

privations afsavn
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In the darkness, Laura attempted heart massage on her husband, who could still talk despite his appalling injuries, but to no avail.

When I arrived at the farm on Thursday and was invited in by Mrs du Plessis, I found her with blood still caked under her fingernails after she'd cradled her dying husband.

'He was shot through the lungs and I was doing CPR,' she told me, between huge sobs. 'He said "please go and fetch the car and take me to hospital". But he was too badly hurt and he died in my arms.'

In the morning, when white friends from neighbouring farms followed the trail of the raiders, they discovered the men had carefully cut through fences and skirted areas with security patrols suggesting how closely they had planned their route of attack.

'It is definitely coming down to a race thing,' Laura du Plessis told me as she was comforted by her family. 'They hate white people. We have never had a fight with any black people. I always stop and give others a lift. We employ black people.'

'My husband fought for me. I am grateful that he wasn't tied up and forced to watch me being raped before he was killed. He was an amazing man. He was my life.'

A friend of the family, who asked not to be named, told me he was certain that the killings are part of a sinister, systematic bid to drive white people and, in particular, farmers – out of South Africa.

'If this was happening in any other country, the military would be deployed to protect us,' said the friend. 'There are gangs moving around the country targeting white people.'

Of course the violence and **privations** South Africa's blacks faced under apartheid were just as unforgiveable. Certainly, there would have been more bloodletting after the white government fell in the Nineties were it not for Mandela's message of **reconciliation**.

But now, as he nears death, fears are growing that a wave of violence will be unleashed against the white population.

The statistics – and the savagery of the killings appear to support claims by these residents that white people, and farmers in particular, are being targeted by black criminals.

Little wonder that what unfolded on the Du Plessis homestead has sent **tremors** of fear through the three-million-strong white community.

Last month alone there were 25 murders of white landowners, and more than 100 attacks, while Afrikaner protest groups claim that more than 4,000 have been killed since Mandela came to power – twice as many as the number of policemen who have died.

It is not just the death toll, but the extreme violence that is often brought to bear, that causes the greatest fear in the white community.

Documented cases of farm killings make for gruesome reading, with children murdered along with their parents, one family suffocated with plastic bags and countless brutal rapes of elderly women and young children.

These horrors have prompted Genocide Watch a respected American organisation which **monitors** violence around the world – to claim that the murders of 'Afrikaner farmers and other whites is organised by racist communists determined to drive whites out of South Africa, nationalise farms and mines, and bring on all the horrors of a communist state'.

Indeed, a disturbing number of whites are terrified that Mandela's passing will lead to **an outpouring of violence** from black South Africans, no longer contained by

the sheer power of the great man's presence, which endures today even though he stood down as president in 1999.

For its part, the ruling ANC party dismisses claims that such murders are part of any sinister agenda, pointing out that South Africans of all colours suffer violent crime, and that wealthy whites are simply more likely to be targeted.

Perhaps. But white nerves have not been soothed by the disturbing behaviour of Jacob Zuma, the ANC's leader and the country's third black president since Mandela.

At a **centenary gathering** of the African National Congress last year, Zuma was filmed singing a so-called 'struggle song' called Kill The Boer (the old name for much of the white Afrikaner population).

As fellow senior ANC members clapped along, Zuma sang: 'We are going to shoot them, they are going to run, Shoot the Boer, shoot them, they are going to run, Shoot the Boer, we are going to hit them, they are going to run, the Cabinet will shoot them, with the machine-gun, the Cabinet will shoot them, with the machine-gun ...'

Alongside him was a notorious character called Julius 'Juju' Malema, a former leader of the ANC youth

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centenary gathering
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league, who is now Zuma's bitter enemy and is reportedly planning to launch a new political party after Mandela's death.

A bogeyman to white South Africans, Malema is popular among young blacks, and has also been an enthusiastic singer of Kill The Boer and another song called Bring Me My Machine-Gun.

Polls this week showed a huge surge in support among young black South Africans for his policies, which he says will ignore reconciliation, and fight for social justice in an 'onslaught against [the] white male monopoly'.

With chilling echoes of neighbouring Zimbabwe, where dictator Robert Mugabe launched a murderous campaign to drive white farmers off the land in 2000, Malema wants all white-owned land to be seized without compensation, along with nationalisation of the country's lucrative mines. Ominously, Malema, 32, who wears a trademark beret and has a fondness for Rolex watches, this month promised his new party will take the land from white people without recompense and give it to blacks.

'We need the land that was taken from our people, and we are not going to pay for it,' he said. 'We need a party that will say those who

were victims of apartheid stand to benefit unashamedly, and those who **perpetuated** apartheid must show remorse and behave in a manner that says they regret their conduct.'

Enthusiastically backed by Winnie Mandela, Nelson's second wife – who is still hugely popular in South Africa despite her suspected role in several murders – Malema is a charismatic figure who once threw a BBC correspondent out of a press conference for asking about his wealthy lifestyle.

His words have done nothing to allay the fears of white communities, some of which have taken extreme measures to protect themselves.

This week I visited Kleinfontein in Pretoria, a white-only community of 1,000 men, women and children who live behind high fences, with a gatehouse manned by men in military fatigues, who also carry out regular patrols of the grounds to prevent black intruders entering.

Anyone without an appointment with an official resident is refused entry. If they are Black, they will not get in at all.

Inside, there is a shopping mall, while the town has its own water supply and sewage system. All manual work is carried out by white residents.



Julius "JuJu" Malema.

There is a rugby pitch, **opulent** homes overlooking miles of open countryside where antelope and zebra roam, and a hospital for the elderly residents.

Most crucially of all, in a country with 60 murders a day, there is no armed robbery, murder or rape in Kleinfontein. 'An old lady can draw money here without any fear,' says Marisa Haasbroek, a resident, mother of two teenage girls, and my guide for the morning.

'It's safe, quiet and peaceful. It's not racist – it is about protecting our Afrikaner cultural identity.'

Like all the residents, she is descended from the first Afrikaners, the Dutch settlers who came to South Africa and were driven into

the African interior on the famous Great Trek during the war with the British from 1899 to 1902.

opulent luksuriöse
/ rige

Kleinfontein has been in existence since Mandela's first presidency in 1994 but its existence remained largely unknown until reports last year that black police officers had been barred from entry to the property.

To get round race laws, Kleinfontein insists its criteria for entry are not based on skin colour. It claims to exist to protect distinct Afrikaans-speaking people and culture, and that English-speaking white people are also banned, so the community is non-racist.

The Afrikaners, of course, were those who devised and presided

inundated
oversvømmet

over apartheid, a gruesome social experiment that did so much to divide the nation and subjugate the black population.

With Mandela on a life support machine, the founders of this community in the so-called 'Rainbow Nation' were this week being **inundated** with requests by other whites to join them.

'I think there will be trouble,' Anna, an elderly lady tending her garden inside the all-white compound, tells me.

'There may be tribal warfare first between the black races. Then they might turn on us.'

Standing near a sign written in Afrikaans stating 'ons is hier om te bly' (we are here to stay), Marike, another resident, was convinced that there is a sinister plot to kill all whites.

'You don't attack farms and rape 80-year-old women with broken bottles and kill their husbands for a mobile phone,' Marike says. 'People say it's not genocide – but it is.'

Such uncertainty about the future has been given added credence by the tawdry, shameful scenes surrounding Mandela's death bed – where his family were last night continuing to squabble over where

he should be buried and who should get the most loot from tourists visiting the grave.

Despite all the arguments about the future direction of the country, the truth is that only one thing has stayed the same in South Africa before and after Mandela's presidency: the mutual fear and distrust between some blacks and whites, particularly in rural areas away from the cosmopolitan cities of Johannesburg and Cape Town.

Yet as one acquaintance of mine, a black security guard named Pietor, told me yesterday: 'The whites said they would be slaughtered when Mandela came to power, and thought they'd be killed when he stood down as President.'

'Now, they're saying they will be slaughtered when Mandela dies. Black people just want jobs and a decent life, not killing.'

Nelson Mandela dreamed of a South Africa that was at peace with itself – and warned that the black population taking vengeance on whites would only deepen old enmities.

Whether the Black leaders who are following him can muster an ounce of his authority or humanity remains to be seen.
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