



**ESCAPING THE WRATH** An Inkatha Freedom Party supporter runs back from the dividing line between political factions after emptying his AK-47 ammunition clip at the homes of ANC supporters in Umlazi Township

The 1990s were a strange and dislocated time in our recent history – years of hope and fear, of confusion and new beginnings. Pulitzer prize-winning photographer **Greg Marinovich** documents some of his work through the lens

# THE DEAD ZONE

**T**he great epoch of apartheid was slipping away; most of the petty laws had disappeared. Those ridiculous European versus non-European signs had disappeared. All those park benches were repainted, suddenly without racial currency. The dompas had lost its cruel power over people. It was a time of joy and hope. Yet it was laced with a poison unlike any we had seen. It was a toxin that was a noxious mix of political rivalry, racial hatred, ethnic animosities and greed masquerading as principle. It played itself out in an extended spasm of death. The 1990s was a decade of massacres, some infamous, others unrecorded.

A Wikipedia search some years ago tells us of just four massacres that took place during the 1990s in South Africa: Boipatong June 17 1992; Bhishe September 7 1992 (41), St James Church July 25 1993 (11); and Shell House March 28 1994 (19).  
● Greg Marinovich's exhibition at the public gallery of the Constitutional Court offers a wide-ranging visual history of the internecine conflicts and violent strife that engulfed large parts of South Africa in the 1990s. This followed the unbanning of 33 political parties and the release of political prisoners in the protracted lead-up to nonracial elections in 1994. The photographs bear unflinching witness to the pain of becoming of a democratic nation.



**IN THE LINE OF FIRE** The Boipatong shooting of 1992 when the cops opened fire at point-blank range at fleeing people



**SCARRED FOR LIFE** Scar Shobashobane, a young ANC supporter, was shot through the face at the Christmas Day massacre in 1995. He returned to his home which was torched when about 600 men attacked the area, killing 18 people and wounding many more



**IN SUPPORT** Riot police help a colleague injured by a grenade during clashes between security forces, and ANC and Azapo supporters in Bekkersdal in February 1994, two months before the democratic elections



**UNDERCOVER** ANC supporters at Khalanyoni Hostel at the southern end of Khumalo Street. The hostel was overrun early in the war by ANC fighters, most of whom were Xhosa from the adjacent Phola Park shanty town. These warriors were called 'blanket men' by police as they wore their blankets to fight, hiding sticks, spears and guns under the heavy wool folds



**HEADING HOME** A family carries home its belongings after months spent in a tented refugee camp for ANC families from the Sonkombo area from which they had fled because of attacks by the rival Inkatha Freedom Party



**ON THE LOOKOUT** Child soldiers in the Mandela Section Self-Defence Unit check for Inkatha enemies holding territory in Thokoza Township. Mandela Section was one of the most isolated areas of ANC turf abutting Thokoza's no-man's-land



**SMOKING GUN** ANC supporters, mourners and activists are tear gassed by police during a funeral procession through the streets of Thokoza