Page 2 ("Lang Hendrik" denies Existence of a BOSS Hit Squad)

Soweto when a policemen shot and killed a suspect in the petrol-bombing of a spy who allegedly testified against the ANC. He alleged that the men from the Z-squad were people "who were willing to use the edge of the sword". According to Winter the Z-squad consisted of five people.

In his book Winter referred to various incidents that allegedly could be linked to the Z-squad. He mentioned the 1974 death of Abraham Tiro - a member of the South African Students' Organisation - who fled to Botswana in 1973. Tiro died when a parcel exploded while he was opening it. According to Winter the parcel bomb was sent to Tiro by the Z-squad who used an old parcel from the International University Exchange Fund based in Switzerland. Winter alleged that the wrapping was obtained and the parcel bomb posted by a BOSS agent based in Geneva.

Another parcel bomb killing attributed by Winter to the Z squad include the 1974 killing of "Boy" Mvemve, alias John Dube, in Zambia. In his book he also mentioned and questioned various other mysterious deaths of enemies of the former government, including the 1978 murder of the Natal University's political science lecturer, Dr Richard Turner

Recently, not only the Smit murders, but also another incident has been attributed to the Z-squad. It has been alleged that the Z-squad was responsible for an incident in which a Dakota aircraft was burnt out on a runway in Gaborone.

The Sunday Independent has found it extremely difficult to obtain more information as many former BOSS agents and former members of the security forces are very reluctant to talk about the Z-squad and BOSS and so far no one has admitted to have been a member of the Z-squad. However, this could be because according to the latest allegations only one Z-squad member is still alive today.

Another interesting factor that has featured, is the letters "RAU TEM" that were spray-painted on the walls of the Springs home of Dr Robert Smit and his wife during their murders in 1977. The Independent has been told that these letters were seen in Cape Town long before the Smit murders. It was spray-painted as graffiti on a wall at the University of Cape Town. According to some sources the graffiti was spray-painted by a rightwing group: "the Scorpio gang". However, according to Winter's book several incidents that were later blamed on the "Scorpio gang", could have been the work of the Z-squad and the security police.

Recent media reports alleged that the letters "RAU TEM" were also seen near Oshakati shortly before the Smit murders and in Angola where the letters were spray-painted in a hotel room when a certain "Costa" was assassinated in his hotel room.



Page 3 ("Lang Hendrik" Denies Existence of a BOSS Hit Squad)

These allegations could give new meaning to the interpretation of the letters over the past 20 years. Since the Smit murders various explanations have been given to these letters, but the letters were always only interpreted against the background of the Smit murders. Now it seems as though it should be read against the broader background of action taken by the former security forces against "enemies of the state" in the 1970's.

Meanwhile, it has come the The Independent's attention that the Transvaal Attorney General's Special Investigation Team is aware of the allegations on the BOSS hit squad. According to sources the Z-squad is also being investigated as part of the team's investigations into the Smit murders.

Ends 04-07-97

