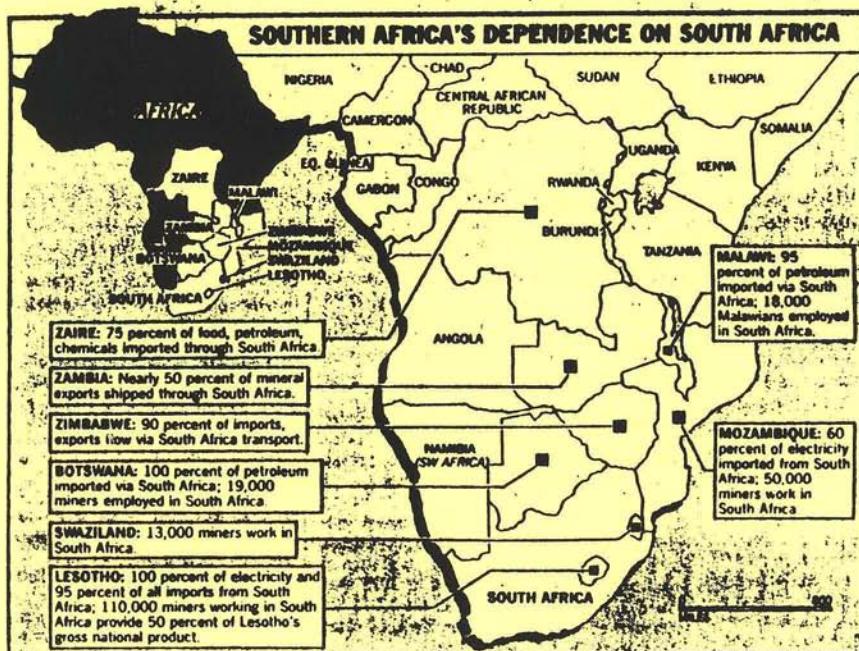


DESTABILIZING SOUTHERN AFRICA

APARTHEID'S WAR ON THE FRONT LINE STATES

During the colonial era Zimbabwe (then Rhodesia), the Portuguese colonies of Angola and Mozambique and the other nations in the Southern Africa region developed a close dependency on the South African economy and its transportation routes. With the liberation of Angola, Mozambique and (later) Zimbabwe this dependency was turned into a weapon by South Africa which it combined with repeated military incursions to destabilize the newly independent states in the region. When the African states in the region joined together in 1980 to form the Southern African Development Coordinating Conference (SADCC) in order to minimize this dependency, Apartheid South Africa escalated the military and economic destabilization campaign. Not only is South Africa concerned about the support which neighboring states can give to internal liberation forces like the ANC, SWAPO and PAC but it also wants to destroy the example that these countries would represent to the disenfranchised black majority in South Africa. South Africa's continued military and economic domination over the region therefore forms one of the cornerstones of Apartheid.

The fight against Apartheid must emphasize South Africa's attempted tutelage over the region and any attempt by governments to aid South Africa in this destabilization campaign has to be exposed as the support for Apartheid that it really is. In order to understand Apartheid in South Africa it is necessary to understand it in the geographical context of Southern Africa and in the historical context of colonial Africa.



The following is a synopsis of some of the major military and economic destabilization campaigns lodged by South Africa and its surrogate forces against the newly independent African nations of the region. It emphasizes events in the last year and the support given to South Africa in this destabilization campaign by Western nations, in particular the U.S. and Britain.

-1975- Thousands of South African troops invade recently independent Angola from the South. At the same time the FNL (supported by Secretary of State Kissinger and the CIA) invade from the North. Angola calls for assistance from Cuba and Cuban troops help repel the invasions and prevent the installation of a South African puppet government. South Africa hands over strategic areas to UNITA which, under the leadership of Jonas Savimbi fought with the Portuguese in the last years of the war of liberation against the MPLA (the current government of independent Angola). Major invasions by South African troops (supported by UNITA forces) are repeated in 1977, 1981 and even as recently as June 1986, a large number of S.A. troops now occupy parts of Southern Angola permanently. Angola has stated that Cuban troops can withdraw when there is no longer any threat of South African invasion i.e. when Namibia is independent. South Africa goes ahead with forming an unrepresentative provisional government in Namibia in defiance of the United Nations. South Africa links free elections and the ending of its illegal occupation of Namibia with the precondition of withdrawing Cuban troops from Angola. By echoing Apartheid's call for linking Cuban troop withdrawal from Angola with independence for Namibia the Reagan administration shows that its priorities in the region consist of helping South Africa overthrow the Communist government of Angola before helping Namibia to independence.

-1978- South Africa attacks a SWAPO refugee camp at Kassinga in Southern Angola- 900 women, children and men are massacred.

-Late 1970's- The MNR is set up by Ian Smith's racist government of Zimbabwe (then Rhodesia) to attack bases used by Zimbabwean liberation forces in Mozambique. With independence in Zimbabwe South Africa takes over the stewardship of the "armed bandits" as they are called by Mozambicans. The MNR is used to continually destroy vital rail and road links to Mozambican ports (e.g. Beira and Maputo) which could be used as alternatives to South African ports for the region. The MNR also torture rural residents, steal their food and destroy their crops, schools and health clinics.

-December 1982- South African commandos kill 42 people in Lesotho (12 Lesotho civilians and 30 ANC refugees).

-January 1983- South African commandos kill 13 ANC members in Mozambique.

-May 1983- A jam factory in Mozambique is destroyed in a bombing raid killing

6 people only one of whom had any connections with the ANC.

-1980's- Repeated attacks on the Zimbabwe-Beira railway and pipeline and on oil storage facilities at Beira. At one point South African commandos and the MNR attack a passenger train with machine guns killing 46 innocent passengers.

-January 1986- Jonas Savimbi, leader of UNITA, comes to the U.S. and leaves with Reagan's assurance for \$15 million in covert aid for sophisticated weaponry. The attention given to Savimbi by the administration and the media is greater than that given to any African head of state visiting the U.S. Savimbi's past associations with Maoist communism are called into question but he remains a model African anti-communist in the eyes of the administration and the Right-wing lobby. Savimbi has stated that South Africa is his best friend.



-January 1986- South Africa completely closes the border with Lesotho (which is surrounded by South Africa)- the disorder resulting from the lack of imports and exports precipitates a coup which many feel was engineered by South Africa-immediately after the coup the borders are re-opened.

-May 1986- South African commandos attack the ANC offices in the capitals of the three independent African nations of Zimbabwe, Botswana and Zambia.

-July 1986- British and U.S. intelligence cooperation with the South African secret services are revealed- they provide information on the movement of South African "dissidents" to South Africa.

-October 1986- President Samora Machel of Mozambique is tragically killed in an air crash inside South Africa. South Africa claims the crash is due to bad weather but satellite photos show a clear sky at the time of the crash. South Africa had recently threatened Machel and Mozambique with an invasion and many South African experts believe that South Africa simply carried out their threat. Although South Africa has released no information about the crash many believe it used sophisticated electronic equipment to guide the plane off its intended course and into South African territory.

The above are just some of the examples of South Africa's extensive destabilization tactics against its neighbors and of how it employs surrogate forces such as the MNR and UNITA to carry out some of its intimidation and sabotage. It is ironical that South Africa should complain about the recent imposition of sanctions when it has practised sanctions on the rest of Southern Africa for some time by using and reinforcing (by military attacks when needed) its monopoly on transport and the economy in Southern Africa. Clearly it is not any perceived Soviet interference or Cuban troops but the Apartheid regime which is the real destabilizing force in the region. It is time that the Reagan administration and other Western governments show their real opposition to Apartheid by withdrawing their support for this destabilization campaign and by adopting more comprehensive sanctions.

The MSU Coalition To Build A Shanty
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