

# NEWS ANALYSIS: WHO STANDS TO GAIN FROM THE ARMING OF PRETORIA?

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In recent times the African and world press has been giving considerable attention to questions dealing with the military co-operation of the United States and a number of West European countries with South Africa. Even a superficial analysis of this information makes it easy to establish that over a number of years the South African armed forces are being deliberately and consistently equipped with the most sophisticated military hardware. In other words, the stepped up militarisation of the apartheid regime is under way.

What are the practical aspects of this militarisation? Firstly, one notices the rapid increase of Pretoria's military expenditure. This was achieved mainly due to the assistance of the United States and the International Monetary Fund (IMF). According to the Zimbabwe newspaper **Herald** (December 9, 1983), in 1982 alone the IMF allotted the South African regime more than 1 billion dollars. Comparative data, carried by the **Christian Science Monitor** (April 21, 1984), shows that in the 1972/73 fiscal year Pretoria's military expenditure comprised 344 million rands, whereas the respective figure for 1983/84 already exceeded 3 billion rands; and in the 1984/85 fiscal year (which ends on March 31, 1985) the country's military budget will be increased by yet another 21 per cent, topping the sum 3.6 billion rands. This rocketing military budget will, naturally, enable the racist regime to steadily build up the might of its armed forces. This is confirmed by the data released by the London-based International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS) and carried

by the Ghanaian **People's Evening News** (November 2-8, 1984). This newspaper reports, among other things, that the South African armed forces today boast of 500 tanks, more than 3,500 armoured cars and armoured carriers, 500 aircraft and helicopters, and more than 60 warship. Herein, practically all of this military hardware was built in the United States, France, Britain, and Israel, or is manufactured under licence in South Africa itself. Thus, Pretoria has received Centurion tanks, Mirage and Buccaneer planes, Alouette, Puma and Wasp helicopters, 106-mm recoilless guns, Daphne submarines, missile patrol boats, and other arms and military equipment.

As for the numerical strength of the South African armed forces, according to a book on the military forces of apartheid published in London, Pretoria is capable of raising a 500-thousand-strong army, and there are plans to increase the total strength of the South African army to nearly 1 million officers and men. It goes without saying that such a tremendous army calls for vast additional quantities of arms and equipment. And, despite the United Nations embargo, a continuous stream of this military hardware is secretly finding its way to South Africa, while some of the weapons are being manufactured in the country itself. In recent times the press has given considerable prominence to the acquisition by Pretoria of the American-Canadian 155-mm gun known in South Africa as the G-6. This, for example, was reported by the **Botswana Daily News** (October 14, 1983). While the Danish **Ekstra Bladet** recently carried details of

the shipment of French arms to South Africa by a Danish freighter with Panamanian registration.

However, this is by no means all. The Pretoria armed forces are being equipped with new and much more dangerous types of weapons - chemical, bacteriological, and nuclear weapons, and the corresponding delivery vehicles (shells and missiles). Thus, in 1983 African and other news media time and again mentioned the fact that South Africa was developing nerve gas artillery shells, and carrying out research in the military use of viruses and dangerous microbes. In November 1984 the **People's Evening News** reported that secret laboratories in the United States, Israel and South Africa were rapidly developing the so-called "ethnic weapon" harmless for the white race and lethal for the black race. And the newspaper added that the South African armed forces had already launched preparations for the use of this barbarous weapon.

However, even more dangerous is the co-operation of Pretoria with Washington and a number of other Western powers in the sphere of nuclear weapons and nuclear delivery systems.

In this connection it should be recalled that back in 1961 Pretoria set up a national nuclear research centre in Pelindaba. The bulk of the equipment for this centre was American-made. The first nuclear reactor - Safari-1 - set up at this centre was designed by American specialists. In 1977 the Safari-2 reactor became operational. The first South African uranium-concentrating mill was commissioned in 1975. The equipment for this plant was also brought



in from the United States. The first of the two reactors of the new nuclear centre in Koeberg was put into service early in 1984. This centre is being built with the assistance of American and French firms.

In April 1984 the American press reported that in the period between 1979 and 1982 178 pounds of enriched uranium were found to be "missing" at the Oak Ridge (Tennessee) Federal facility. There have also been other cases of the "mysterious" disappearance of uranium. The American press had made it unambiguously clear that every time uranium disappears under "inexplicable" circumstances in the United States, it should be sought in South Africa or Israel, which secretly receive raw materials necessary for the production on nuclear weapons. Thus, according to the **Washington Post**, in April 1983 alone two American corporations sent 100 kilograms of enriched uranium to South Africa through third countries.

So we see that the United States and a number of other powers help Pretoria to acquire everything necessary for the development of its own nuclear weapons. And the fact that South Africa is very close to the achievement of this aim is confirmed by the powerful light flashes registered in the South Atlantic in September 1979 and December 1980. Experts claim that these flashes were the result of the testing of nuclear devices built in South Africa. On August 12, 1983, the **New Nigerian** reported that Pretoria was preparing to carry out an underground nuclear test.

A group of top-ranking South African intelligence officers visited the United States in 1982 with the explicit purpose of discussing this test and the measures necessary to camouflage it. According to the newspaper, wells for underground nuclear tests had been drilled at the proving ground in the vicinity of Apington (in the Kalahari Desert), and all the necessary equipment was already in place.

As for nuclear delivery vehicles, the 155-mm howitzers acquired by the South African army can use both conventional and nuclear shells.

This was reported by the **Botswana Daily News** (October 1983) and the South African **Pretoria News** (July 1984). According to South African Foreign Minister R. Botha (**People's Evening News**, November 1984), an agreement has been signed between Washington and Pretoria on fitting out warship of the South African navy with launchers for nuclear missiles. The newspaper confirmed earlier reports on the joint development of a cruise missile by Pretoria and Tel Aviv. These cruise missiles will have a range of more than 1,500 miles (over 2,000 kilometres), and can be used against practically any country in the African south. It should be kept in mind that the sophisticated planes acquired by the South African air force can also be used as nuclear delivery vehicles. In addition, the Pretoria government has approved the construction of a missile testing range in the south of the country. According to the Johannesburg **Star**, this project should be completed in 1987-1988.

The further strengthening of South Africa's military might with the help of conventional, chemical, and bacteriological weapons, as well as missiles, presents a serious danger. However, if Pretoria's armed forces also acquire nuclear weapons, this can have disastrous consequences not only for the peoples of the African continent, but also for the adjacent regions and even for the Western powers. The nuclear weapon is an instrument of blackmail and military and political pressure on the African and Arab states in Africa, the Middle East, and the Indian Ocean. It poses a direct threat to the stability of these regions; and this, in principle, runs counter to the interests of the Western powers who have considerable investments in these areas. Both missiles and nuclear weapons are offensive weapons. In the hands of the white minority, which is in power in South Africa, these weapons can become an instrument for unleashing a major nuclear conflict. All this makes one give serious thought to the dangerous situation shaping out in the region and ask: who stands to gain from the violation of the UN Security

Council embargo (of November 4, 1977) on the delivery of arms and military equipment to the South African racists and the nuclear non-proliferation treaty of June 12, 1968? And what aims does such a violation pursue?

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## CALL BY SUDANESE REVOLUTIONARY COMMITTEES

**TRIPOLI, April 12, JANA**

Abdullah Zakaria, Secretary of the Sudanese Socialist Popular Front sent a plea to Colonel Garang, Commander of the Sudanese People's Liberation Army (S.P.L.A.) on the occasion of the victory of the Sudanese People's Revolution and the downfall of hireling Nimeiri. In his plea Abdullah Zakaria urged him to support the victorious popular revolution.

He went on to say all honourable men in Sudan have struggled to bring down the fascist blood leeching agent regime, with you playing a role to be remembered by the Sudanese people. Now that the popular masses have brought down the may dictatorship we should open our hearts to each other and unite our position to save our people who have been brought to the brink of starvation by the deposed regime indeed the brink of death. Let us drop our misgiving caused by the malicious spiteful tyrant we all toppled so that love and peace can prevail in our villages North and South and start a new era where the flag of green peace flies in our beloved Sudan. Until we meet in Khartoum, Khartoum of October and April, Khartoum of the masses, forward we march and the revolutionary struggle continues.