

The ultimate objective of South African government policy is safeguarding the apartheid system. On the domestic front, Pretoria is attempting to stabilize the system by a strategy of repression which of late has been increasingly accompanied by-systemntic efforts of cooptation of parts of the black majority.

Equally, Pretoria's foreign policy is dominated by efforts to safeguard the apartheid system: while intensive economic relations with Western industrial states help to secure the material basis for maintaining the minority regime, primarily military and strategic considerations determine South Africa's policy towards Africa. The centre of South African policy with regard to the independent Frontline States is the objective to dominate the region politically, economically and also militarily and to neutralize the liberation struggle in the region.

In order to achieve these objectives, Pretoria has been pursuing a long-term strategy. Although the means of South Africa's African policy may vary in intensity and form from country to country, there is one mnre or less uniform pattern in the intervention policy directed against the neighbouring states: In the first phase, the minority regime tries to weaken the neighbouring states which reject apartheid and to systematically sabntege their efforts of economic and social liberation. In a second phase, the South African government then - after the Frontline States have been subjected to permanent military and economic pressure through destructive South African actions - proceeds to force them to give up or not even start any support for the South African liberation struggle. In a third phase it is intended to force the Black African governments which are economi- cally dependent on South Africa and after they have been brought to heel to finally accept the apartheid policy by de facto approving the bantustnn policy.

At present, Pretori; has in fact largely implemented the first two stages of this policy: several Frontline IStetes are on the brink of economic desaster. The Apartheid republic managed to conclude international treaties with three states (Swaziland, Angola and Mozambique)

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And the smallest and weakest black states in South Africa's sphere of influence --Lesotho and Swaziland - are under immense pressure to establish direct relations with the puppet leaders of the bantustans.

The example of Angola: War and Occupation

Since 1975 Angola permanently has been the victim of South African aggression: South Africa's war against this country is a model for military escalation and at the same time a shocking example for South Africa's power politics against the independent states in her neighbourhood.

Although the war in Angola does not have any immediate connection with the South African liberation struggle and has more to do with the future of Namibia which is illegally occupied by South Africa, the development of this conflict is to show the reckless determination of the Apartheid regime to escalate the situation militarily and to use all means to maintain the Status quo in Southern Africa. The systematic ravaging of large parts of the country and well-aimed sabotage of the Angolan economy has led to a situation in which the country is economically ruined. Hundreds of thousands of Angolans are refugees in their own country because of South African aggression.

Until recently, large parts of Southern Angola were under permanent South African occupation. At present, the Angolan population is still being terrorized by the South African backed UNITA. That Angola - after years of unrelenting and sacrificing support for the Namibian liberation struggle - has had to accept a disengagement agreement with Pretoria is a telling example for the country's situation which - after ten years of South African destabilisation policy - is practically ruined.

Mozambique: Pretoria's second victim

In October 1981 Pretoria's Minister of Defence Malan spoke of Mozambique as South Africa's second front'. Today we know, that the People's Republic of Mozambique has become the second victim of South Africa's destabilisation policy. Within a relatively short period of time Pretoria has succeeded to create 'Angolan conditions' in Mozambique; South Africa has reaped the fruits of her violent policy a few months ago by concluding a non-aggression pact - the Nkomati Accord - with Mozambique. _ 3 _

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This agreement which is bound to change the political situation in the region only came about because Pretoria followed the pattern already tested in the case of Angola: South Africa set up a reliable and effective sabotage group which already had been in the service of the Rhodesian settler regime, the MNR (also known as Renamo or RNM). Although the 'bandidos', as they are being called in Mozambique, - in contrast to their Angolan counterparts - have never indicated to follow a clear-cut strategic concept, they conscientiously 'implemented the orders of their bosses in Pretoria who supplied them with money and weapons. Only rarely, the South African Defence Force, which controlled them, had to intervene directly and attack Mozambique with its own personnel.

MNR attacks on civilians terrorized the rural population of Mozambique; all over the country schools, shops and health centres were destroyed. The MNR saboteurs took a special liking to attack infrastructural installations, mines were planted on roads, bridges were blown up and rail tracks destroyed. i

It is important to note that these attacks not only were directed against the infrastructure of Mozambique as a Frontline state; Pretoria's policy of destruction and sabotage pursued a much more ambitious objective. It aimed at violently undermine the strategy of nine Black African states cooperating in the framework of SADCC (Southern African Development Coordination Conference) to dissociate themselves from South Africa. The success of this strategy of dissociation largely depends on the efficiency of the transport routes which go through Mozambique. For the landlocked SADCC countries Swaziland, Zambia, Malawi, Zimbabwe and Botswana which are heavily dependent on their exports, the Mozambican ports of Nacala, Beira and Maputo present the only viable alternative to an almost total dependence on South Africa. Only if you consider these regional factors it is understandable why South Africa in recent years has tried so hard to destroy large parts of Mozambique's infrastructure.

Zimbabwe: the strategy of intimidation

According to Zimbabwe's Prime Minister Robert Mugabe, South Africa is trying to bring us into a situation which Mozambique is experiencing today. Although the South African military so far has not tried to

destabilize its Northern neighbour in the 'Angolan' or 'Mozambican' way, it has nevertheless indicated in no uncertain terms that any 'misbehaviour' on Zimbabwe's part against the apartheid state would have disastrous consequences for the newly-independent country. South Africa's policy with regard to Zimbabwe can thus be termed a strategy of intimidation with the threat of massive sanctions. Zimbabweans already have tasted a bit of what South African military circles have in stock for them: in the Northern Transvaal-Pretoria maintains a well-trained sabotage unit, set for action in Zimbabwe. This soldatesca is made up of former 'auxiliaries' of Bishop Muzorewa's elements of Ian Smith's settler army and also ill-advised and misguided fighters of ZIPRA, the guerilla army formerly led by Joshua Nkomo.

Although it is difficult to evaluate the exact extent of South African involvement in the bush war in Zimbabwe's Southwestern Matabeleland, it seems to be certain that at least some of the so-called dissidents do receive some degree of logistic support from South Africa via Botswana. According to Zimbabwean Security Minister Munangagwa about 100 rebels trained in South Africa are permanently based in troubled Matabeleland. Even though these fighters have never presented any serious threat to the government, they are likely to remind those responsible in Harare that Zimbabwe's room of manoeuvre with regard to its powerful neighbour in the South is extremely limited.

Botswana Lesotho Swaziland: Pretoria's hostages
Almost 20 years ago, a book was published in England which carried the appropriate title: "South Africa's hostages". It dealt with Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland. Now, in the second decade of these countries' independence, this term 'hostages' is even more valid with regard to these states' relations to South Africa than it was then. Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland are integrated into the South African economy by means of the 'Southern African Customs Union'.

Even though these countries have tried over the years to dissociate partially from South Africa, South Africa has always used every means at its disposal to maintain the colonial structure of dependence. In line with the strategy of economic integration, the South Africans have in addition attempted to bring the BLS states in line politically and to incorporate them into their

concept of a 'constellation of states'. In this respect, those in power in Pretoria have also aimed at forcing these states to give up any support For the South African liberation struggle, even if it only takes the Form of humanitarian assistance. The objective was mainly pursued by means of economic pressure and harrassement; in the case of Lesotho, however, also South African military power was used. In December 1982 South African commando units attacked Lesotho's capital Maseru and massacred more than 40 civilians, most of them refugees from South Africa. Even before, South Africa had unsuccessfully tried to force the government of the landlocked country into acceding to Pretoria's intentions. In the meantime it has become known that Pretoria is trying to convince Lesotho to sign a 'non- aggression pact' ; among other things, the South Africans want to see to it that Maseru will extradite to South Africa any exiles which the Apartheid regime does not like.

As far as it has become known, the South Africans have used less overt means of pressure against Swaziland, although these have in actual Fact achieved the desired results. Only recently it became known that Pretoria had already concluded a 'non-aggression pact' with Swaziland in spring 1982. Ever since, the Swazi authorities have hunted down ANC cadres.

Botswana is suffering a similar fate. The government of this country is under enormous pressure to follow the example of Mozambique and Swaziland and sign a non-aggression pact with Pretoria. At the end of March 1984 a government delegation led by Foreign Minister A. Mogwe came to Cape Town to discuss 'mutual questions of security' with South Africa's strategic planners. At the time of writing it remains unclear whether and in which Form the South Africans will be able to reach their objectives with regard to Botswana.

Looking at this situation from an African perspective, political and military developments in Southern Africa in the early 80's must appear as a series of defeats or at least setbacks. Indeed the South African destabilisation policy in the region has almost reached all its objectives. But despite all these successes, which Pretoria's Foreign policy seems to have scored in the region, it should not be forgotten that the main threat to the apartheid regime does not come from beyond its borders but is coming From the very structure of the system itself.

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The suppressed black majority within South Africa is to continue its resistance as long as the root cause of oppression in South Africa has not been removed.