

South Africa, the richest and most powerful nation in the southern part of the continent. ANC has been outlawed by the Pretoria regime. Seven of its members were convicted of sabotage and treason and sentenced to hang this year.

According to the intelligence documents, Pretoria's assessment of the shifting Soviet strategy is based on the premise that Moscow's principal target in the region is really South Africa. The Soviets have supplied arms and "advisers" to rebel forces all over black Africa in recent years and now might be ready to move on South Africa, the secret reports say.

"Thus, it follows that the Kremlin has been assisting SWAPO, a guerilla movement in nearby Namibia, merely as a first step in a longer term design for subverting the Pretoria regime," the documents state.

"According to the initial Soviet plan, once SWAPO comes to power, Namibia would serve as a launching pad for terrorist strikes and sabotage operations inside South Africa," the documents said.

However, the Soviets have recently lost confidence in SWAPO, according to the documents.

As U.S. analysts now view the situation, Pretoria believes the reason behind Soviet disenchantment with SWAPO stems from disappointment over "the group's performance during recent raids by the South Africa Defense Force into southern Angola."

According to the U.S. intelligence reports, Pretoria claims that its across-the-border raids into Angola marked a serious defeat for the insurgents and resulted in the deaths of 1,000 SWAPO and Angolan military personnel, the seizure of 2,400 tons of arms and equipment and the destruction of about the same amount of materiel on the ground. Four Soviet military advisers were killed in the raids and one was captured.

The intelligence documents obtained by The Bulletin identify for the first time the captured Soviet military adviser as Nikolai Reodrovich Restretsov, a sergeant major in the Soviet army.

Restretsov, under questioning by South African authorities, reportedly gave information about the Soviet military mission operating out of Luanda, Angola's capital.

Restretsov identified Soviet Lt. Gen. G. Petrovsky as the head of Soviet forces in Angola. The chief deputy for political affairs is Maj. Gen. V. Kirsanov, according to the documents.

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The documents state that South African Defense Force intelligence believes SWAPO's failure in the field has persuaded Kremlin strategists to back away from the group and to redirect a greater share of Soviet resources to the ANC.

The Soviet strategy, according to the documents, reflects Pretoria's growing concern with the threat of internal terrorism posed by the ANC.

The intelligence documents also point to "the recent arrival of a large shipment of Soviet weaponry in neighboring Botswana as another factor contributing to the South Africa Defense Force concerns over the African National Congress."

"Moscow reportedly supplied Botswana with \$2.4 million in arms, including 28 BTR-60 and two BTR-40 armored personnel carriers, an unspecified number of SA-7 Grail missiles, and other unidentified military equipment," according to the intelligence reports.

The documents also point out that if the South African Defense Force analysis of Soviet strategy is accepted by decision makers in Pretoria, it could lead to a change in the country's internal policy.

For example, more domestic resources could be channeled into reinforcing the internal security apparatus in South Africa to deal with the perceived threat, the U.S. analysis said.

This heightened police activity could be politically costly and could raise the level of discontent among victims of police action as well as the level of criticism among prominent figures opposed to such tactics by the Pretoria regime, the analysis says.

Another consequence could be greater reliance upon preemptive military strikes by South Africa into neighboring countries to destroy ANC concentrations and to discourage host governments from providing further support and sanctuary to South African guerilla movements.

"Such attacks could result in even greater dependence by South Africa's neighbors on Soviet and Soviet-backed assistance," the documents say.

Some leaders of black African nations have voiced concern that the Third World nations in the south, which have large but mostly untapped mineral resources like uranium, will become a battleground between the super powers in the East and West.

Soviets aiding more rebels in South Africa

1981



Bulletin Map by Dave Webster

These black leaders have been watching closely the African policies of the Reagan Administration, particularly as they apply to the government in Pretoria and its continuing policy of apartheid, the institutionalized separation of races.

But some Western observers say that South Africa represents the principal force countering Soviet adventurism in the region.

The United States currently is involved with four other Western nations, South Africa and black African nations in formulating details for the eventual independence of Namibia.

The willingness of all sides to listen indicates they are willing, for the time being, to give Reagan a chance to bring about a violence-free independence for Namibia, according to U.S. State Department sources.

Control of Namibia, a sparsely populated but mineral-rich former German colony, was given to South Africa by the League of Nations following World War I.

The United Nations repealed that mandate in 1966, but South Africa refused to relinquish its control despite intense international pressure.

As a result, Namibia's 90,000 whites, with the backing of the South Africa Defense Force, have been

running a territory in which nearly 1 million blacks live.

There is speculation in diplomatic circles that if trouble develops in the negotiations for Namibian independence, the black African governments will remember that the United States vetoed a UN resolution last September condemning South Africa's military incursions into Angola.

But U.S. Secretary of State Alexander Haig said last month that South Africa and leading black African states have agreed on a UN Security Council resolution calling for Namibian independence by the end of 1982.