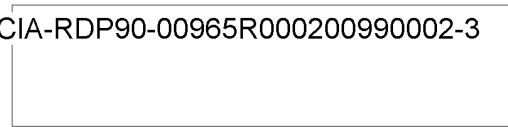


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MARCHING FOR PRETORIA

Over the last two decades, South Africa has assembled the most powerful armed forces on the continent. Yet the military's most decisive victories have been won not on the battlefield but within the government bureaucracy.

The South African soldiers arrived at the banks of the Zambezi River at dusk. They were tired and dusty after a long day's reconnaissance mission in the Caprivi Strip, a strategic finger of land controlled by Pretoria that juts east like a knife into the heart of southern Africa. The troops made camp near Katima Mulillo, the northernmost outpost of white power on the black continent and an important staging point for South Africa's military raids against its black-ruled neighbors. It grew dark quickly, and each of the soldiers settled around the fire with a helping of *boerewors*, the traditional Afrikaner sausage, to listen to the evening broadcast on South Africa's state-run radio. The lead story concerned the growing mood for economic sanctions in the United States, and one South African commentator after another warned the international community of the consequences of trying to push the government too far.

The news turned from the world scene to the results of a South African rugby tournament, and there was an awkward silence as the soldiers regarded with a mixture of anger and exasperation the lone American who had been assigned to them over the last week. Finally, a young counterinsurgency specialist, wearing a long beard reminiscent of his Boer farmer ancestors, addressed me with the light of the campfire blazing in his eyes: "Don't you Americans understand that we're fighting the Communists here? All over Africa the Marxists have won, destroying what the whites

have built. But we will never go down, not like the Rhodesians. We Afrikaners will fight, regardless of what the West thinks, to preserve our Christian way of life." He stoked the fire with a stick for emphasis and continued on as the flames leapt toward the African night sky: "We'll take on the whole goddamned continent if we have to, and you can be sure that if we ever *do* go down, we'll drag the whole bloody place down with us."

Like the foot soldiers patrolling South Africa's borders, Afrikanerdom's senior military leaders are preparing to make a final stand to preserve white hegemony on the southern tip of Africa. Over the last two decades, South Africa has assembled the most powerful armed forces on the continent. Yet the military's most decisive victories to date have occurred not on the battlefield but within South Africa's decision-making bureaucracy. While South Africa has continued to slip toward civil war over the last two years, Pretoria's military and intelligence elite have emerged as the dominant forces in the formulation and execution of government policy. In dramatic contrast to the despair and pessimism found in South Africa's business community and among some black activists, there is an eerie confidence along Pretoria's corridors of power.

Military spokesmen speak

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about a further escalation of domestic repression and regional destabilization to counter what is seen as a Communist-inspired "total onslaught" against the last outpost of white civilization. At the ruling Nationalist Party Congress in August, South African defense minister Gen. Magnus Malan warned that "those who chant loudest in the chorus for sanctions and condemnation should take note — we have not even started to use our muscle and capabilities." Indeed, it is South Africa's muscle — its highly motivated armed forces, ruthlessly efficient intelligence services, extensive domestic arms industry born of past sanctions, and even its nuclear know-how — that will play a critical role in the widening war to determine the country's destiny.

Currently, South Africa's military is waging operations on three separate fronts. Elite divisions of the army and air force are staging combined operations against rebel groups and the front-line states to the north with devastating results. The generals in Pretoria are likewise fighting competing factions in the government to gain control over the decision-making process. Finally, contingents of the army have been deployed in the townships since the first state of emergency nearly two years ago. And while the security forces have largely accomplished their objectives in the first two theaters of operations, it is in this third arena of conflict — inside the ungovernable black cities like Soweto — that South Africa's military power has failed to quell the rising tide of black unrest. While South Africa has the firepower to meet most any regional contingency, there is a sense among military analysts and diplomats that the ultimate test of the military's weapons, objectives, and tactics will be inside South Africa's black townships.

The South African Defense Force (SADF) is made up of several distinct services, including the army, navy, air force, and the South-West Africa Territory Force, which is responsible for military actions in Namibia, as the territory is known. Of all the various branches of the defense force, the army, air force, and the Department of Military Intelligence are the most important. There are currently more than 100,000 active servicemen in the South African armed forces, togeth-

er with nearly 325,000 reservists, all with extensive military training and experience, which can be mobilized in a matter of days. Although whites make up less than one-sixth of South Africa's population, the SADF is made up largely of whites, and all male South Africans of "European descent" are conscripted into the security forces. Conscripts, who make up nearly two-thirds of the regular forces, normally serve two years' full duty followed by 12 years of active reserve duty. One young soldier stated simply that "military service up on the border is now just part of what it means to be a South African."

In sheer manpower, the SADF can field more soldiers than Angola, Zambia, Botswana, Zimbabwe, and Mozambique combined. As a former British military attache in Pretoria remarked, "South Africa is clearly the military superpower in the region and on the continent. In terms of the training and motivation of her troops, you would need to go to Israel or Europe to see something comparable."

In addition to the size and fighting spirit of its army, South Africa has assembled a formidable arsenal for its security forces. In the wake of the 1961 Sharpsville massacre of township residents by security police, the United Nations voted a mandatory arms embargo against South Africa. Yet rather than succumbing in the face of international pressure, South Africa set out to establish what is today one of the most powerful military industries in the southern hemisphere. South Africa's state-supported arms company, Armscor, produces what is arguably the world's finest 155mm howitzer and a wide range of guns, tanks, and sophisticated electronic equipment. While South Africa is by no means able to produce all of its military hardware domestically, Pretoria has, in shadowy deals with Israel and West Germany in particular, been able to acquire what it needs from friendly governments and international arms merchants.

The clearest measure of South Africa's technical expertise can be seen in the republic's clandestine nuclear program. According to a senior US Defense Department official, "There can be little doubt that South Africa possesses the technical know-how and materi-

als to construct some sort of crude nuclear device." South Africa's nuclear potential raises serious concerns, not only for the politically disenfranchised black population, but for the country's neighbors and the international community.

There has been a good deal of apocalyptic speculation about how South Africa might use its bomb. Some observers have warned that Pretoria would use its nuclear power against the front-line states (all the black-ruled countries to the north), and Nobel Prize-winner Bishop Desmond Tutu has declared that the white authorities "would use any and all means, including nuclear weapons," to cling to power inside South Africa.

Officials in Pretoria have been conspicuously silent on the whole issue of South Africa's nuclear program, but as early as 1977, former minister of information Connie Mulder ominously warned: "Let me just say that if we are attacked, no rules apply at all if it comes to a question of our existence. We will use all means at our disposal, whatever they may be."

South Africa's military capabilities are most visible in Namibia, a vast arid desert with a population approximately that of a medium-sized Midwestern city. My trip to Namibia's border, the so-called operational area, was in a vintage DC-3 Dakota that flew just above the treetops. The pilot, a veteran of hundreds of bush flights in the region, explained, "Flying low is the best defense against a surface-to-air missile attack, and occasionally a band of terrorists manages to get through our perimeter and take a shot at one of our aircraft. I don't plan to let those bastards have an opportunity to squeeze off a shot against me." The flying SADF Dakota, obsolete by any standards, is a good example of the military's atti-

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tude about weaponry. "This plane is nearly 40 years old," the pilot said, "but we make use of everything that flies until it's either shot down or falls apart."

In South Africa every piece of military equipment is utilized, whether purchased illicitly from an international patron, hijacked from enemy forces in the region, or manufactured domestically. Consequently, South Africa has an eclectic armory of British tanks, French fighter aircraft, Soviet missile launchers, and locally produced artillery pieces. Yet more and more, South Africa is moving toward military self-sufficiency and even emerging as a major exporter of some weaponry in Third World arms markets. Several months ago the government proudly unveiled a new attack helicopter and a jet fighter, as proof of South Africa's ability to beat sanctions.

The South Africans have had many years to hone their fighting skills and weaponry on the battlefield in Namibia. Since 1966, Pretoria has waged what military commentators term "a low-intensity conflict" against the South-West African People's Organization (SWAPO), a group that is seeking independence for Namibia. The SADF also uses the large bases on the Cunene River in northern Namibia as jumping-off points for its annual major foray into Angola. Beginning in 1975 with operation Savannah, South Africa has launched raids with exotic code names like Protea, Egert, and Askari across the frontier into southern Angola. The objectives have varied, ranging from so-called hot-pursuit raids against SWAPO training facilities to providing air cover and logistical support for Jonas Savimbi's guerrilla organization UNITA (Union for the Total Independence of Angola) and, most ambitiously, to directly challenging Angola's army along with its Cuban troops and Soviet advisers.

In northernmost Namibia, the army and air force stage combined operations against

SWAPO bases and patrols. The border separating Angola and Namibia is nothing more than an arbitrary boundary on a map, a legacy of European efforts to carve up the continent. South African patrols on search-and-destroy missions range with impunity far across the Angolan border. The "troopies," young border soldiers who patrol the bush in armored vehicles that resemble mechanized rhinoceroses, are the modern equivalents and descendants of the Boer *kommandos* who defeated the Zulu, Xhosa, and challenged the British Empire. Indeed, the very term *kommando* was an invention of the Boers during their war with Britain at the turn of the century, and the modern South African army employs some of the same quick-strike tactics pioneered by its predecessors. Like their ancestors who carried a Bible in one hand and a rifle in the other, the soldiers of Afrikanerdom see themselves as custodians of a promised land, ready to use all their strength without scruple against encircling foes.

The morale of the white soldiers on the border is surprisingly high, given the current controversy on South African campuses surrounding the whole issue of conscription. There is little apparent hesitation, particularly among young Afrikaners, about fighting to preserve their own African heritage. One young troopie, his skin tanned and leathery from the many hours spent on patrol in the desert, proudly proclaimed, "We are not Westerners but, rather, Africans. We may look like Europeans, but we have an attachment to this land — it's like our hunting ground. The Afrikaner is the white tribe of Africa."

The biggest surprise for an American prepared only for the stark contrasts between white and black, soldier and civilian, is the relatively large and growing number of blacks the SADF has armed, trained, and brought into its ranks. There are whole

battalions made up of black conscripts serving under white officers. South Africa has been careful to accentuate tribal divisions among the black battalions as part of its strategy of divide and rule. In South Africa's quest for regional hegemony, Pretoria has taken a page from imperial European history. Just as Great Britain created the Gurkhas in Nepal to fight its battles in Asia, so has South Africa, also an empire of sorts, established colonial armies to prosecute its policy of regional destabilization.

On my trip through the Caprivi Strip, our troop made camp one evening at Omega Base, the home of the South African army's 201st Battalion. The 201st is formed exclusively of native bushmen from the arid regions of Angola and Namibia. These diminutive soldiers wear the emblem of the white-breasted crow on their uniforms (the white spot on the crow's breast represents the white officer corps that commands the battalion). The popular film *The Gods Must Be Crazy* was filmed less than 100 miles to the east of Omega Base, but the bushmen soldiers of the 201st, outfitted in full combat gear, bore little resemblance to the gentle bushmen depicted in the movie. One of the white officers proudly explained, "Any one of my bushmen could track you down in the open desert, steal your water, and slit your throat. You'd never know what killed you."

The South Africans have also formed the 202d Battalion from the Kavango people of southern Angola. Originally, the Kavango was one of the most peaceful tribes of Africa, with no word for "kill" in its native vocabulary, but in the past several years South Africa has transformed the Kavango into modern warriors. Together with other tribal regiments, the bushmen and Kavango battalions make up a sort of South African foreign legion, which can be unleashed in the region with few domestic or international consequences.

After many years of enlisting tribesmen and, in general, developing and perfecting its style of warfare, South Africa has managed to curtail the military operations of SWAPO guerrillas. South African soldiers boast that "we've managed to do in Namibia what you Americans were unable to do in Vietnam — contain an insurgency war." However, the military has adopted a chilling and dubious measure of success from the Vietnam experience: the body count. And South Africa is not shy about trotting out macabre figures to illustrate the military's effectiveness. Col. D. Ferreira, a regional commander in Namibia, stated plainly that "since 1966 we have killed 10,385 SWAPO terrorists, as of last Wednesday." By using severe methods of interrogation and intimidation inside Namibia, South Africa has managed to secure its position and "pacify" the territory, but in the process it has turned Namibia into a militarized desert. Bishop Tutu has called the SADF the "real terrorists" in Namibia.

Although South Africa's military has emerged as the undisputed dominant force in the region, the SADF's most impressive gains over the last several years have been in the policy making arena in Pretoria. Two studies, Philip Frankel's *Pretoria's Praetorians* and Ken Grundy's *The Militarization of South African Politics*, have appeared in recent years, and both describe the increasing importance of the military's counsel in the formulation of state policies, both foreign and domestic. The State Security Council (SSC), the powerful and secretive Cabinet committee dominated by senior military officials, has emerged as the crucial actor in all security-related planning. It is within the elite Secretariat of the State Security Council that the most important decisions concerning national security are made. The SSC's Secretariat, like the Soviet Politburo, meets in secret, but it is known that the military exercises its influ-

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ence to set the agenda and often has the last word.

Some military analysts even claim that the generals have gained power in Pretoria after a bloodless and quiet coup. Peter Vale, a professor at Rhodes University in South Africa, describes the military as "a government within the government, able to exert a dominant influence both in the back rooms and on the battlefield." However, Vale argues that "there has been no military coup in a crude sense, because President Botha, who was, before his rise to power, the defense minister for 12 years, has taken special care to see that the military gets what it needs."

Gen. I. R. Gleeson, chief of the defense force staff and a senior member of the SSC, takes a different view of the military's role in the current situation in South Africa. The general, of medium build, 60-ish, and wearing the olive-green khakis of an infantryman, has that unmistakable air of a commander who has shouldered the burden of sending countless young men into battle. Gleeson is something of an anomaly in the Afrikaner-dominated hierarchy of the armed forces, being of English descent and Roman Catholic faith, but in his position he is largely responsible for the coordination of military intelligence and operations. "It is true that the SADF plays a major role in foreign policy at this juncture," Gleeson explains, "but I don't see this as unusual or in any way sinister. We live in a conflict-ridden society and a turbulent region. It is only natural that our military's advice carries extra weight. However, those fanciful accusations about a military clique that runs South Africa are most unfortunate."

When questioned about the new-found power and prestige of the military within the SSC, Gen. Gleeson replies that "there are good reasons for the security forces to play a reasonably prominent role at this stage." But he quickly adds,

"We do so with circumspection." Nevertheless, American diplomats stationed in Pretoria have applied the techniques of Kremlinology to try to gauge the influence of the new soldier-statesmen inside the SSC. A senior staff member on the US Senate Select Committee on Intelligence confirms that "we probably know more and are indeed more concerned about what goes on within the chambers of the SSC than we currently know of the [African National Congress]." Indeed, US intelligence operatives routinely monitor the movements of senior military figures and carefully evaluate the many rumors that circulate through official Pretoria about infighting within the SSC's chambers.

Gen. Gleeson's spartan office is located at the headquarters of the SADF, set off a jacaranda- and bougainvillea-lined avenue in Pretoria only a few steps from the state prison that houses the convicted white opponents of apartheid. (Ironically, racial separation is enforced in South Africa's prisons, just as in its residential areas.) The SADF headquarters, like all sensitive military facilities in Pretoria, has been surrounded by makeshift barricades and patrolled by army detachments since an African National Congress (ANC) bomb damaged the facade of the air force building in 1983. The ANC bombing, with many civilian casualties in a crowded urban setting, ushered in a new phase in the domestic struggle to seize power from the white authorities.

Yet Gen. Gleeson does not shrink from the challenge posed by the ANC: "The ANC is a Communist organization, coordinated from Moscow and wholly committed to indiscriminate terrorist acts. The military is tasked to repel the 'total onslaught' set against us by international communism, and to achieve this goal, South Africa is prepared — in the words of your late president, Kennedy — to bear any burden." One of the glossy pamphlets of the public affairs office of the SADF has this to say about the "total onslaught" confronting South Africa: "The ultimate aim of the Soviet Union and its allies is to overthrow the present body politic in the RSA and to replace it with a Marxist-oriented form of government." The USSR is accused of directly instigating "social and labor unrest, civilian resistance, terrorist attacks against the infrastructure of the RSA and the intimidation of black leaders and members of the Security Forces." The tract ends ominously with a warning that all critics of apartheid are inadvertently playing into Moscow's hands.

Philip Nel, a Soviet specialist at the University of Stellenbosch, describes the military obsession with communism as "a fervent belief that when the men in the Kremlin sit down to discuss

global strategy, South Africa is consistently the most important issue on the agenda, not Poland, Afghanistan, China, missiles in Europe, or arms control with the Americans." As a result, South Africa is, in the words of President P. W. Botha, involved in a life-or-death struggle "between the powers of chaos, Marxism, and destruction on the one hand and the powers of order, Christian civilization, and the upliftment of the people on the other." The bottom line is that in Pretoria's two-camp world view, there is no middle ground or gray area between friend and foe, and it is the job of South Africa's military to punish the increasingly vocal group of the latter in the region.

During the Reagan administration, the United States has continued to try to build bridges to the South African military, but with uncertain results. As one CIA analyst observed, "These guys just fundamentally distrust foreigners and particularly Americans." In 1983, senior military members of the SSC were flown to Washington to hear a generally more balanced CIA assessment of Soviet ambitions in South Africa. However, the officers who participated in the briefing left thinking that "even Reagan had gone soft on the communists." As the anti-apartheid movement has gained momentum in the United States, contacts between Washington and South Africa's military have become less frequent.

A few days before the interview with Gen. Gleeson, Secretary of State George Shultz, in response to allegations in the press that over the years the CIA had provided South Africa with information on the ANC, publicly stated that there were no military or intelligence links between Washington and Pretoria. Gleeson had strong words for the State Department disclaimer: "As you no doubt know, American support has been quite uneven, and it is becoming more and more difficult to do business with your country. There are even some among us who argue that South Africa should break with the West to avoid the unwanted intrusions into our internal affairs. Of course, there has been a degree of security cooperation between our countries, and the message the US sends when it denies these contacts is not lost on us. South Africa has been burned before by the US,

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and we will continue to be wary."

Indeed, the failure of the United States to support South Africa's invasion of Angola in 1975, after Secretary of State Henry Kissinger had privately pressured Pretoria to intervene in the conflict, is deeply etched on the military and overshadows every American initiative. In the wake of the recent Senate vote for mandatory sanctions, President Botha declared that South Africa was now facing a new, insidious challenge from the capitalist West rather than the communist East.

However, despite the mutual suspicion and distrust, South Africa and the United States are currently cooperating to assist Angola's Jonas Savimbi. South Africa has for many years provided the charismatic Savimbi with the lion's share of his military assistance, and it is in Angola that the United States and South Africa have joined to establish a limited strategic alliance. With South Africa's assistance, UNITA has been waging a guerrilla war against the ruling Marxist regime, which is supported by 25,000 Cuban combat troops. In March 1985, the Reagan administration announced that the United States would provide Savimbi's troops with \$15 million worth of military equipment, including advanced, hand-held, surface-to-air missiles (Stingers). To ensure that the high-tech cargoes arrived safely, the US government has often relied on South African intelligence or logistical support for the arduous journey to Savimbi's camp. (Ironically, although South Africa has helped facilitate the supply of Stingers to Savimbi, US law forbids any transfer of US military equipment to South Africa.)

Angola's brushfire war is another conflict that alternatively has raged and dragged on outside the world's attention, due to the lack of Western reporting from the scene. The

military is openly encouraging a greater US commitment for Savimbi. One South African field officer concluded that "with just a little more materiel support for Savimbi, we can hit the Russians where it hurts in Angola and put Savimbi on the throne in Luanda." Yet Pretoria appears to be mindful of the risks of overcommitment, at this time choosing to destabilize the existing regime rather than install its own. Or, as another intelligence officer translated it to Africa's circumstances, "It's easier to be a poacher than a gameskeeper." Regardless, it is the current limited clandestine cooperation and the hopes, though fading, of a US-South African axis against communist encroachment in the region that keep the military talking to American visitors.

While the world's attention has focused on the fighting in the townships over the last two years, there has been a tendency to overlook the fierce bureaucratic battles in Pretoria between the uniformed military and the pinstriped diplomats at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Assistant secretary of state for African affairs Chester Crocker's embattled policy of constructive engagement was intended to coax Pretoria away from an indiscriminate policy of destabilization aimed at surrounding states. Crocker applied what he terms a "sustained and nimble diplomacy" toward the region, trying to break South Africa out of its isolation on the continent. Crocker's principal interlocutor in Pretoria has been Foreign Minister Pik Botha, the leader of the so-called *verligte* (enlightened) wing of the Nationalist Party. Although Crocker's efforts to bring about Namibia's independence have gone unrewarded, the strategy appeared to be bearing fruit after the signing of the Nkomati accord between apartheid South

Africa and Marxist Mozambique in 1984. Each country pledged to discontinue its support of efforts to destabilize the other. However, South Africa has continued to arm the antigovernment rebels inside Mozambique. There is also continued speculation that South Africa was somehow involved in the death of Mozambique's president Samora Machel, killed in an airplane crash last October in the northern Transvaal.

It was the view of the South African Defense Force chief, Gen. Constand Viljoen, and the head of military intelligence, Gen. Piet van der Westhuizen, that South Africa had no business making deals with Marxists to suit "Pik Botha's cocktail-party friends." Willem Steenkamp, the respected defense correspondent at the *Cape Times*, offered that "the military was absolutely repelled with the notion of South Africa's defense being somehow dependent on the goodwill of Communists. . . . The officers' increasing involvement was spurred from a profound belief that the politicians and diplomats have been giving away too much."

According to Tom Lodge, lecturer in politics at the University of Witwatersrand, "While just a few months ago there were those who publicly spoke of the possibility of sitting down at the negotiating table with the ANC, currently there are no prominent government figures calling for moderation, compromise, or accommodation." Indeed, there are no longer any doves in the Nationalist Party government for the United States to court, only the traditional hawks and the soaring eagles of the SADF.

In place of a US-favored policy of regional dialogue and domestic negotiation, South Africa has instead chosen to bring to bear its military power, both at home and beyond its borders. Pretoria has set out to create a shield of instability in the black-ruled states to the north, with

devastating results. South African *kommandos* have in the last year raided each of the front-line states, sabotaging oil refineries, transport links, and military facilities. In addition, Pretoria stepped up its support to a collection of rebel groups, including Savimbi's forces, which have wreaked havoc in the surrounding region. As one US diplomat in Zimbabwe observed, "The region has paid a steep price for its anti-South African rhetoric. The front-line leaders have tended to get caught up in the excitement of the sanctions movement, and they have most certainly underestimated Pretoria's ability to hurt them. What's more disconcerting, we haven't begun to see the worst of it."

Yet even with all the military's prowess, there are clear signs of trouble ahead for the soldiers of apartheid. The one major Achilles' heel in the otherwise Herculean dimensions of South Africa's military power is the continuing need for the SADF to police the townships. For instance, the army has been deployed in Crossroads, the sprawling and miserably poor township outside of Cape Town, for nearly a year. In stark contrast to the *esprit de corps* apparent up on the border, the young soldiers that patrol the squalid streets of South Africa's besieged townships are angry and confused. "Every day the children throw rocks at our vehicles, and we constantly worry that one of these rocks will turn out to be a hand grenade," confided a new conscript. Members of the military are uncomfortable with their new role as township soldiers, and Gen. Gleeson states bluntly that "we wouldn't want to see the army in the black urban areas indefinitely." Nevertheless, many observers, such as professor Dean Fourie of the department of strategic studies at the University of South Africa, believe that the SADF will be required to serve in the

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townships for the foreseeable future: "The police are incapable of handling the magnitude of the disturbances among the urban blacks. Presently, the army is the only force prepared to deal with that sort of thing."

However, even the vast arsenal available to the SADF along with its new-found power and prestige in Pretoria has not helped to quell the mounting unrest among black South Africans. The ANC, the principal opposition to the white government, would be no match for the security forces in any direct clash, but the urban guerrillas snipe away at key government and military targets, undermining confidence in the regime to maintain order. The tanks and jets of the security forces are ill-suited for fighting an internal war. Even South Africa's nuclear bomb has little or no military utility inside the country apart from a desperate and suicidal use of nuclear power in a final act of white revenge. As one military expert in Pretoria remarked, "You cannot use a nuclear bomb as you would a scalpel, cutting away what you don't want and leaving the rest unaffected."

In response to the growing international condemnation and internal turmoil, the government has threatened with increasing frequency and urgency to form a *laager*, a legacy of the

military tactics employed by the *voortrekkers*. The early Boer pioneers who left the British-controlled Cape to settle South Africa's interior would circle their ox wagons when attacked by hostile natives. This formation that helped a handful of determined Boers stave off the attacks of vast African armies has come to represent the attitude of Afrikaners toward adversaries. Not long ago, South African foreign minister Botha threatened that the government would react to sanctions and domestic strife by forming a late 20th-century equivalent of the *laager*. This time, South Africa faces a hostile world not with ox wagons and flintlock rifles but with the most powerful and feared security forces on the continent. However, the greatest challenge to the preservation of white minority rule comes not from external threats, but rather from inside the circled wagons formed by the SADF. When and if the *laager* is ultimately drawn, the defense forces have the will and capability to pulverize the surrounding states. But it is inside this militarized perimeter, in the townships and the cities, that the SADF will face its deciding test. •

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