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PRETORIA MOUNTS A RAID IN ANGOLA ON NAMIBIA REBELS

MOVE CALLED PRE-EMPTIVE

Military Chief Says Insurgents Planned to Strike Targets in South-West Africa

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Special to The New York Times

JOHANNESBURG, Sept. 16 — South African forces raided Angola today in what was described as a pre-emptive strike against guerrillas fighting Pretoria's control of South-West Africa.

The raid came less than three months after a South African raid into Angola in which 57 insurgents were reported killed and 5 were captured.

Details of the latest raid were sketchy this evening. The South African military chief said the action had been undertaken after "intensive reconnaissance" revealed that the South-West Africa People's Organization planned to bomb military bases and attack "soft targets" in the north-central part of South-West Africa, as well as larger towns and residential areas in the territory.

Account of Rebels' Plans

In announcing the raid, the military chief, Gen. Constand Viljoen, said reports of the guerrillas' plans had been confirmed when "two disguised terrorists were arrested at a shop" in South-West Africa, a former German colony that is widely known as Namibia.

General Viljoen said the men were members of the Eighth Battalion of the South-West Africa People's Organization, known by the acronym SWAPO, "and intended to set the shop alight after they had bought supplies."

'Irrefutable Evidence'

"After their arrest, they admitted they were part of a reconnaissance-sabotage team," he said in a brief statement. "In the light of this irrefutable evidence of SWAPO's plans directed at the inhabitants of South-West Africa and their contempt of repeated warnings to cease their violence, the security forces are left with no other al-

ternative than to continue with this operation."

Officials said that it was difficult to predict how long the operation would last, but that they hoped it would end within a week.

The raid seemed to display South Africa's readiness to look after its perceived security interests no matter what the international repercussions. South Africa administers South-West Africa in defiance of United Nations resolutions and has been fighting the insurgents there for two decades.

South Africa was internationally condemned for earlier raids into Angola and Botswana and for installing an interim government in South-West Africa in June — an administration that critics characterized as a front for continued South African dominance. The South-West Africa People's Organization is excluded from the territorial administration.

General Viljoen said the Angolan military had been told of today's operation and had been asked not to interfere.

He said the action, carried out by troops from South Africa and South-West Africa with assistance from the South African Air Force, followed months of intelligence-gathering in areas where the insurgents were present.

"Intensive reconnaissance also showed that SWAPO, using its Eighth Battalion and other special forces, planned stand-off bombardments on military bases and attacks on soft targets" in Ovamboland, in the north-central part of the territory, he said.

"SWAPO also intended to attack larger towns and residential areas in South-West Africa," he asserted.

A military official estimated that the Eighth Battalion could include 400 to 800 men but said they were now "well dispersed" within southern Angola.
