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Hearings on Southern Africa
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Hunting Reality

One of the major problems for anyone trying to understand United States-South Africa policy and relationships is the long established tradition of double talking. To find the truth it is necessary to penetrate behind the coded language and to recognize a series of myths which serve to cloak a far more unpleasant reality.

The primary myth perpetuated by South Africa is that it is changing. Critics who call for radical international responses to South African racial oppression and exploitation have for many years been met by the "But things are changing" argument. The initial myth-maker is of course South Africa...but the device is most useful because it is so eagerly seized upon by powerful forces such as the United States government, seeking to justify a policy of perpetual tolerance for what is in fact, for those who suffer under it, an intolerable situation. Secretary Newsom articulated such a view very precisely in a 1971 speech. He said:

"We believe change will come in southern Africa. Economic and demographic pressures make this inevitable. In South Africa itself there is a lessening of rigidity. Change is a central theme of discussion; there is psychological and intellectual ferment within the Afrikaner community; there have been isolated instances of acceptance of multi-racial activities; there

is a growing realism among businessmen that Africans are important to them as skilled workers and as a market. They are beginning to focus on the need for improvement of working conditions for non-whites. We cannot expect change to come quickly or easily. Our hope is that it will come peacefully."

The system has shown itself capable of considerable flexibility in the past decade. Ten years ago Prime Minister Verwoerd was proud to think of himself as a man of granite. Today's pragmatic South African leaders recognize that building in rock does not meet the needs of a rapidly expanding industrial economy.

At issue is not whether changes are occurring both inside South Africa, and in that country's attitudes to Africa and the world. The argument revolves around the nature and purpose of those changes. It is at this core level that there seems to be dangerous confusion. Perhaps it is necessary to re-state, at this point, the basic situation that calls for change.

The 'problem' in South Africa is that of the dispossession of a majority black population and the total usurpation of all economic, political and social power by a white minority. The 'problem' is a system - the apartheid system - deliberately designed to use blacks for the creation of wealth and then guarantee the exclusive benefits of that wealth to the whites. The primary purpose of the whole network of South African law and administration is the protection of this system, which produces for the whites, who benefit from it, the highest average standard of living in the world and for the blacks, who suffer under

it, a life of perpetual poverty, violence and humiliation.

The statistics which reflect this situation are well known - I quote only a few of them.

There are less than four million whites in South Africa, they provide only 20% of the country's economically active population - but take home over 76% of the wealth created every year; the blacks, who provide 8 out of every 10 workers, are left with only 23% of all the wealth they played a major role in producing.

White workers earn on average eight times as much as their black fellow workers.

White workers can work anywhere, at any job they please, move about freely, live with their families, organize trade unions, strike legally. Black workers are restricted by a cast iron system of controls. They cannot move freely, are regimented by the pass laws, prevented from living with their families, forbidden to strike, forced to work as migrant workers, always under the white supervision - at unequal jobs for unequal pay.

Current South African policy as laid out in what is mockingly called a 'homelands' plan aims at ensuring that Africans be denied permanent residence in the "white areas" (which comprise 87% of total land area and include all major towns and cities). The design intends to make Africans in such area migrants - living without their families. By 1971 the proportion of economically active African men living in single accomodation

(ie.labor barracks) in the five main cities of South Africa was as follows: Cape Town, 85%; Durban, 55%; Johannesburg, 49%; Pretoria, 47%; Port Elizabeth, 20%.

The changes that are currently being made are not intended to alter this pyramidal structure in which blacks, the majority, stand always at the bottom, supporting the whole society on their backs. Even a cursory glance at the continuing black/white wage gap, increasing population regimentation, endless political repression and hollowness of Bantustan independence, should indicate the futility of any belief in current government-directed change. It is a mistake to confuse self-interested flexibility with radical social change.

White South Africa is currently dealing with a very complex situation. Already the most highly industrialized country in Africa, accounting for 22% of the whole continent's GDP and 40% of its industrial production it now has to adjust to internal pressures generated by continued economic expansion, and at the same time confront a rapidly changing situation just beyond its frontiers.

The increasing sophistication of the economy has for instance shifted the nature of the demand for labor - and so there are announcements that Black workers are to be upgraded - what this means is that the pool of unskilled black labor is no longer useful and is to be replaced by a pool of semi-skilled black labor.

The landless, voteless, rightless non-person status of the Blacks remains unchanged. Changing labor demands may even bring in their wake some measure of unionisation and more permanent urbanisation - but the rate and direction of all such changes will be controlled by the whites - who will move cautiously to avoid generating dangerously irreversible trends. There are daily reminders of this truth in the South African press. The Cape Times of June 13th reports Deputy Minister of Bantu Education, Mr. T.N.H. Janson as saying "The Government would train the Blacks, but it would not train them to be destroyers of the way of life in South Africa... one thing that was sure was that nobody wanted a recurrence of an Angola or Mozambique in South Africa." The June 24th Cape Times carried an assurance from Minister of Labour Marais Viljoen that "so-called white jobs now being given to Blacks would revert to the Whites if the worst came to the worst and South Africa suffered a depression... 'If it becomes necessary the Government will not hesitate to take the necessary steps to give the White workers the protection to which they are entitled", he said.

Internal economic development brought with it also a need for change in relationships to the world outside. South Africa now seeks external markets for its manufactured goods as well as for the vast stream of raw materials which still continue to flow to major industrial countries, making ^{it} a valuable member of the "Western world". The rational place to find such markets is close by, in Africa.

This thrust coincides with a second important set of South African priorities which devolve on its politico/strategic requirements. For the last ten years South Africa has been carefully developing a 4 pronged external policy designed to consolidate and protect its stability.

While working hard to build powerful friendships in the world South Africa has also sought to achieve three ends in Africa: Firstly, the extension of almost complete control over the so-called captive states - e.g. Lesotho, Swaziland, Secondly, neutralization of the independent African States, using where possible, the economic inducements associated with what was once Dialogue and is now Detente. (Where neutralization could not be achieved in a 'friendly' manner South Africa was prepared to use the tougher techniques of economic strangulation and political subversion.) Thirdly, there was the attempt to construct a solid Southern Bloc, involving a close-knit alliance with Portugal and Rhodesia. In this way South Africa attempted to ring itself with a series of buffer states, hoping that the combination of a ruthlessly efficient internal security police and border buffers would prevent successful black organization or guerrilla incursion.

Now the buffer states are vanishing rapidly. Indeed Mozambique is not just a country with an independent black government, but one with a very directed political philosophy which will no doubt soon begin to be translated into a living model of an

alternative society.

In the face of such far reaching upheavals South Africa has already shown signs of considerable re-thinking. It seems clear that the coming period will see attempts to win by political and economic activity what can not be won militarily. Hence the pressure on Rhodesia's Ian Smith to move towards some sort of 'settlement'; hence the generally very 'correct' attitude towards the new Mozambique, with great restraint placed on those who might normally have been expected to fulminate about black savages, red perils and the need for intervention; hence also the tremendous drive towards Detente in Africa.

At the same time, looking realistically into the future South Africa has also embarked on a crash program to double and re-double its military strength, and to cement its international alliances.

In fact this dual response is more closely interconnected than might first appear. In attempting to project a new image of increasing reasonableness and flexibility, coupled with a constant emphasis on its potential role as a bulwark against communism, South Africa seeks to provide the major powers of Europe and America with greater incentives (and justification) for a continued policy of overt where possible, covert where necessary, alliances.

South Africa's Military Build-up - who are the enemies?

South Africa has doubled the size of its direct military budget in two years, expenditure rising dramatically from R470m (\$658m) in 1973/4 to R700m (\$980m) in 74/75 and a planned R948m

(\$1,327m) for 75/76. In fact a decision was made in 1974 to complete the ten-year plan in five years. This expenditure now represents something of the order of 18% of the entire budget, 3.7% of GNP and an estimated per capita expenditure of \$28, according to P.W. Botha, Minister of Defense.

Minister Botha's arithmetic seems alarmingly weak. Total South African population in 1974 was just under 25 million; this would mean a per capita expenditure of R37.90 (\$53.00). In fact, a far more realistic way of looking at this expenditure is in terms of white per capita expenditure, because this money is obviously being spent to defend a privileged white society against its black members. On that basis per capita expenditure reaches R237.00 (\$331.80) -a figure higher than that for the United States during the Vietnam years.

According to the Defence White Paper tabled in Parliament in March 1975, the main reasons for the increase in expenditure are the need to counter all forms of insurgency and to maintain "a credible and balanced conventional force". Land forces are to be re-organized into a counter-insurgency force and a conventional force, and the Air Force is to be similarly restructured. The budget reflects this pattern, indicating particularly big jumps in expenditure on arms for land defense.

South Africa is not only spending much more on its defense but is also pushing very hard to develop self-sufficiency in the production of weapons, aircraft and ships. Using

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much imported technology, via licencing arrangements and specialised personnel, as well as internal "know-how", the South Africans now claim to be practically self-sufficient in the production of ammunition and rifles. Aircraft, armoured personnel carriers and radio equipment are all being made internally, and Minister Botha recently announced that South Africa is to begin building tanks, and six corvettes for the navy. This self-sufficiency, which gives South Africa considerable independence and a great tactical advantage, has been deliberately fostered via the ten year old Armaments Board, and the state-controlled Corporation - Armscor - which is responsible for over-seeing the production of all military equipment. South Africa has long sought to make itself relatively safe against the consequences of possible international actions such as an effective arms embargo, and has apparently succeeded to some extent.

South Africa's Defense Philosophy.

It seems relevant to speculate at this juncture on the purpose of this continuing escalation of military might. As can be seen from the reference to Appendix 1, South Africa already has a military force vastly superior to the combined force of most of Sub-Saharan Africa.

According to the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute's handbook for 1974, South Africa is the only country in Africa to have an indigenously designed missile system. The system is described as being air to air, with a solid propellant power plant and high explosive war-head. The design was begun in 1966 and production

began in 1972. According to the same source, South Africa is also the only country in Africa which manufactures, under licence, foreign designed major weapons, including both aircraft and armoured vehicles.

Under licence from Italy, South Africa produces the MB-326 M (Impala) trainer, a light strike aircraft, jet powered, with a speed of 800 km/hr; production was begun in 1967, the craft is 70% indigenous manufacture and by 1973 South Africa had 200 of these planes. A second licence obtained from Italy in 1973 will enable South Africa first to assemble and later produce the light strike, jet powered MB-326 K, with a speed of 890 km/hr; production is reported to have begun in 1974. Licences have also been obtained from France for the assembly and subsequent manufacture of the jet powered Mirage F1 fighters, with initial plans for a run of 100, and the SA 330 Puma utility helicopter, of which 20 had been produced by 1973.

There are other significant areas in which South Africa is building a military capacity that seems either greatly in excess of any African threat, or totally irrelevant to countering such a threat. The increasing South African interest in nuclear development is one such area; other striking examples include the development of a complex communications center at Silvermine, in the Cape - designed to maintain surveillance

of a vast area stretching from the Indian Ocean to the southern Atlantic - and finally the expansion of facilities and construction of a submarine base at Simonstown, decided on despite the recent cancellation of the U.K. agreement involving the use of that port.

South African military strategy is in fact aimed at two fronts - an internal and an external one. Internally and on its borders the South African government is facing an increasingly threatening situation. Thus much military expenditure is designed to enable greater internal control and South Africa is concentrating on developing counter-insurgency capabilities very rapidly. There are numerous reports of regular 'COIN' practice operations, and as has already been indicated there is growing expenditure on equipment suitable for such operations - armoured cars, light aircraft, helicopters, etc. Growing pressure from SWAPO, the Namibian liberation movement has forced South Africa to replace the police that were defending the Caprivi strip with army units. A special volunteer corp is being established to take over the increasingly serious task of guarding the borders - and such border units will be paid special bonuses!

It seems likely that South Africa sees independent Africa as threatening primarily in this context - i.e. insofar as it provides a base for "internal disorder". It is also probably true that South Africa fears a peasant rebellion in Pondoland

more than it does a Chinese or Russian invasion.

Capetown - a new Gibraltar?

If it is not to be used for repelling an 'All African Army of Liberation' on Russian invaders, what then is the purpose of the rest of South Africa's military capacity? It is at this point that we see the coalescence of South African and Western interests - and must pause for a moment to consider a second myth.

The official U.S. position has long been that it "abhors apartheid" and has no common military or other interests with the white minority regime. In fact of course the reality has been very different. The wide publication last year of the NSSM 39 document served only to confirm the observations of those who had warned that the U.S. was in fact closely linked economically, politically and strategically to the white racists and colonialists in Southern Africa.

The South Africans themselves have used their knowledge and understanding of Western strategy to push for alliances, and are now concentrating heavily on their potentially crucial role as defender of the gateway to the Indian Ocean, and watchdog of the Southern Atlantic.

They have been quick to recognize the implications of America's Vietnam experience, realizing that U.S. strategic planners will have to rely on building strong regional alliances for the maintenance of U.S. interests, rather than on direct intervention. In particular South Africa seems eager to capitalize on U.S. interest in the Indian Ocean, seeing the Pentagon eagerness to

fortify Diego Garcia as a hopeful sign for future joint working arrangements.

It is in this context that ACOA wishes to express alarm at the current direction of U.S. policy, particularly as it relates to military linkages and the arms embargo.

NATO and South Africa

press

In May 1975 the South African[^] reported the eruption of a storm in the NATO defense and planning committee over American Defense Secretary Schlesinger's proposal that a major monitoring installation be established in South Africa for NATO intelligence purposes. The proposal that such an installation be used to monitor all Soviet fleet movements in the Indian Ocean met with a violent reaction from the Dutch Defense Minister, who threatened to pull Holland out of NATO if there was any cooperation with the South African Government.

Already in 1974 work done by Sean Gervasi and others had made it clear that the Defense Planning Committee of NATO had issued a secret instruction in June 1973 to the Supreme Allied Command, Atlantic (SACLANT) to undertake contingency planning for the defense of the southern African region and the Indian Ocean, although this was outside the NATO area. The justification for such a decision was the need to protect the southern entrance to the Persian Gulf, and the sea routes used by the oil tankers serving European and American ports. The secret plans reportedly

concentrated on the development of air-naval task forces which would operate in the Indian Ocean and around the Cape and would stand ready to assist South Africa in case of need.

Most recently in June 1975, the British Anti-Apartheid Movement released information alleging that several NATO members including the United States, the United Kingdom, France, the Federal Republic of Germany, Holland and Denmark had been engaged in the planning and development of Project Advokaat, a naval surveillance system established by South Africa at Silvermine, which allows South Africa to keep under surveillance an area stretching from South America to Bangladesh. According to the Anti-Apartheid Movement, Advokaat has permanent channels linking it in with the United Kingdom admiralty and the United States Navy. The Anti-Apartheid Movement released documents showing that orders for parts of the system had been placed with companies in all the above mentioned countries, including the United States. Apart from any implications relating to NATO's role in this matter, it seems to us that the provision of electronic equipment for such a military communications system is a clear violation of the arms embargo. Yet apparently at least ten United States firms have been allowed to supply highly specialised devices to this project. The names of some of the Corporations involved in supplying equipment for Advokaat from the United States are now known.

It is impossible in so short a time to give more than a shorthand reference to a few of the other many indications of a growing American network of sympathetic contacts and linkages with the minority power in South Africa. There have been high ranking South African military and Government leaders visiting Washington with increasing frequency. 1975 has seen both Democratic and Republican Congressmen, several perhaps co-incidentally on the House Armed Service Committee, visiting South Africa, its Simonstown naval base, Silvermine Communications Center and Atlas Aircraft Corporation. Melvyn Laird, former United States Secretary of Defense, also went to South Africa this year. One might even play with other, more sinister connections - such as the growing collaboration between the United States, Iran and South Africa.

Finally I would call this Committee's attention to what is probably the simplest - and perhaps also the most disturbing - evidence of the long range direction of United States policy in South Africa. Despite all assurances to the contrary the United States has allowed a situation to develop in which American aircraft, supplied to South Africa after the imposition of the 1963 embargo, are being used by the military for purposes that cannot, by any stretch of the most bureaucratic imagination, be described as non-military.

Breaking The Arms Embargo - US Airplanes In South African Skies.

In 1971 I testified before the House Subcommittee on Africa on the question of the arms embargo. I pointed out at that time that one of the major items of trade between South Africa and the US was an increasing number of light aircraft. Commenting on such sales in that year Secretary Newsom explained US policy as follows:

"There has been no change in the arms embargo which we have maintained since 1963 on the sale of military equipment to South Africaand which, among other things, precludes the sale of any aircraft to South Africa for military purposes, including military training and reconnaissance. However, normal trade with South Africa in civilian - type goods for non-military purposes continues, and we are prepared to consider licensing for VIP transport purposes limited numbers of small un-armed executive civilian - type aircraft which will not strengthen South Africa's military or internal security capacity."

I argued that such sales of "civilian" aircraft to South Africa showed the fallacy of the licensing system under which aircraft are sold for "non-military purposes". This is little more than a polite legal fiction; any aircraft can be easily converted for military use and in South Africa the existence of a para-military group such as the Air Commandos makes it possible for the military to use civilian aircraft while maintaining the legal fiction.

The Commandos

The all white Air Commandos, established in 1964, can best be described as a flying militia, made up of volunteers using their own planes.

These men are not members of the regular military forces but are paid by the government when they fly in times of emergency or war. The establishment of 12 squadrons was authorized in 1964. The Commandos attend an annual two-week training camp, during which all their expenses are paid by the government. Their training entails radio co-operation with army and mobile police striking forces, reconnaissance, practice

bombing and general cooperation in maintaining the internal security of both South Africa and South West Africa. Many of these Commando members fly U.S. light planes, such as Pipers and Cessnas.

Thus, even if the licensing procedures were adhered to technically in the sense that no planes were sold to the military, such planes would become available to the military, and, most important of all, form part of the "security planning" of the government.

Recent reports from various South African sources, including the military journal, Paratus, indicate that the South Africans are now concentrating very seriously on training their military forces to cope with what they term "anti-insurgent" operations so that the importance of the Commando role is increasing. One such recent operation, held in the Kwa Zulu Bantustan in 1974 went on for 8 days, involving the Army, Air Force, Navy and Police; The exercise covered the following aspects of counter-insurgency operations:

Integration of Citizen Force, Commando, SAAF, SA Navy and SA Police elements in operations. Intelligence processing at unit and group HQ level.

Co-operation with local authorities and other departments.

At unit level:

1. Employment of armored cars.
2. Employment of light fixed wing aircraft.
3. Road movement.
4. Search and destroy operations.
5. Patrolling, road blocks, ambushes, counter penetration operations along a coastline. Follow-up operations.

According to the Paratus report the air arm was provided by a squadron of Citizen Force volunteer pilots with their own aircraft. They were used for visual recce, contact recce, evacuation of casualties, communication flights and special operations.

It is now increasingly clear that there have been even more serious erosions in the formal arms embargo, and that both light aircraft such as Cessnas and heavy transport planes, such as the Lockheed Hercules C 130 have been provided directly to the South African Government for military use, long after the supposed imposition of an embargo in 1963.

According to the International Institute for Strategic Studies (see App. I) there are now at least 7 C-130's operating in transport squadrons of the South African Airforce. Cessnas are used in a squadron assigned to the army, and in both the Reserve squadrons and the Air Commando squadrons.

These aircraft play a direct military role in operations quite openly described by the South Africans in their publications. Thus, in an article depicting the role of Aircraft on the Border Paratus refers both to the usefulness of the C130s and to the invaluable role played by the Cessna, commenting that:

"Without these aircraft, the helicopter, Cessna and Dakota, Problems of supplies and communication would be insurmountable."

Among the tasks performed by these planes are:

"Reconnaissance: Low-level visual reconnaissance with a pilot and observer is done with the Cessna because of its manoeuvrability and low fuel consumption. These small aircraft keep the one thousand mile border under constant surveillance"

"Aerial observaion post: Cessnas can be used to control ground fire onto specific targets and to report subsequent enemy movement." (see App. II)

Thus US aircraft are being built into South Africa's system of military repression in the most direct way possible. It is these aircraft that will be in the forefront of the inevitably bloody suppression of any Black attempt to oppose continued white minority rule. It should be remembered that in South Africa a terrorist is defined, by law, as anyone who attempts to embarrass the affairs of state. Thus even peaceful demonstrators or striking workers might find themselves the targets of these US built airplanes, and it is certain that in any development of a liberation war such as that just ended in Mozambique, American planes would be used to search out and destroy African freedom fighters.

SOUTH AFRICA

Population: 24,490,000 (4,000,000 white).
 Military service: 9-12 months in Citizen Force.
 Total armed forces: 15,700 regular, 31,750 conscripts.
 Estimated GNP 1973: \$26.9 billion.
 Defence expenditure: 1974-75: 500 million rand (\$750 million).
 \$1 = 0.667 Rand (1974), 0.672 Rand (1973).

Army: 7,000 regular, 27,500 conscripts.†
 3 inf bdes, each of 1 tk, 1 inf and 1 arty bn.
 100 *Centurion* Mark 5, 20 *Comet* med tks; 1,000 AML-60 and AML-90 and 50 M-3 armed cars; 50 *Ferret* scout cars; 250 *Saracen*, about 100 V-150 *Commando* APC; 25 pdr gun/how, 155mm how; 35mm L-70/40 and 3.7 inch AA guns.
 3 batteries of 18 *Cactus (Crotale)* SAM.
RESERVES: 60,000 Citizen Force, in 9 territorial commands. Reservists serve 9 days a year for 9 years.

Navy: 3,200 regular, 1,250 conscripts.
 3 submarines.
 2 destroyers with *Wasp* ASW helicopters.
 6 ASW frigates (3 with *Wasp* ASW helicopters).
 1 escort minesweeper (training ship).
 10 coastal minesweepers.
 5 seaward defence boats.
 1 fleet replenishment tanker.
 7 *Wasp* helicopters (10 more on order).
RESERVES: 9,000 trained reserves in Citizen Force (with 2 frigates and 7 minesweepers).

Air Force: 5,500 regular, 3,000 conscripts; about 100 combat aircraft.
 1 bbr sqn with 6 *Canberra* B(I) Mk 12, 3 T Mk 4.
 1 lt bomber sqn with 10 *Buccaneer* S Mk 50.
 2 fighter sqns with 32 *Mirage IIIEZ* and 8 *IIIDZ*.
 1 fighter/recce sqn with 16 *Mirage IIICZ*, 4 *IIIBZ* and 4 *IIIRZ*.
 2 MR sqns with 7 *Shackleton* MR3, 9 Piaggio P-166S *Albatross* (11 more P-166S on order).
 4 tpt sqns with 7 C-130B, 9 Transall C-190Z, 23 C-47, 5 C-54, 1 *Viscount* 781 and 4 HS-125 *Mercurius*.

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NIGERIA

Population: 60,960,000.
 Military service: voluntary.
 Total armed forces: 210,000.
 Estimated GNP 1973: \$7.5 billion.
 Defence budget 1974-75: 336 million naira (\$548 million).
 \$1 = 0.613 naira (1974), 0.658 naira (1973).

Army: 200,000.
 3 infantry divisions.
 3 reconnaissance regiments.
 3 artillery regiments.
 3 engineer regiments.
 3 garrison troops.
Saladin and 20 AML-60/90 armd cars; *Ferret* scout cars; *Saracen* APC; 25-pdr, 105mm and 122mm guns; 40mm AA guns. (*Scorpion* lt tks and *Fox* scout cars on order.)
RESERVES: 10,000.

Navy: 5,000.
 1 ASW/AA frigate.
 2 corvettes.
 5 seaward defence boats.
 4 patrol craft.
 1 landing craft.
RESERVES: 2,000.

Air Force: 5,000; 42 combat aircraft.
 1 bomber squadron with 6 Il-28.
 2 FGA squadrons with 21 MiG-15/17.
 1 COIN squadron with 15 L-29 *Delfin*.
 2 med tpt squadrons with 6 C-47, 6 F-27.
 1 lt comms squadron with Do-27.
 1 SAR hel sqn with 3 *Whirlwind* and 4 Bo-105.
 3 training/service sqns with 20 SA *Bulldog*, 5 P-149D, up to 28 Do-27/28A/B and 4 Piper *Navajo*.

TANZANIA

Population: 14,730,000.
 Military service: voluntary.
 Total armed forces: 14,600.
 Estimated GNP 1973: \$1.7 billion.
 Defence expenditure 1974-75: 300 million shillings (\$42 million).
 \$1 = 7.16 shillings (1974), 7.02 shillings (1973).

Army: 13,000.*
 1 tank battalion.
 4 infantry battalions.
 20 Chinese T-59 med, 14 T-62 lt tks; BTR-40 and -152 APC; 120mm Chinese mor; 24 ex-Soviet 76mm guns; 8 122mm how; 14.5mm AA guns.

Navy: 600.
 6 patrol boats (ex-Chinese *Shanghai* class).

Air Force: 1,000; 24 combat aircraft.
 1 fighter sqn with 12 MiG-19 and 12 MiG-17 (ex-Chinese).
 1 transport sqn with 10 DHC-4 and 1 AN-2.
 2 AB-206A and 2 Bell 47G hel.
 7 Piaggio P-149D trainers.
Para-Military Forces: A police marine unit.

ZAIRE REPUBLIC

Population: 24,680,000.
 Military service: voluntary.
 Total armed forces: 50,000.
 Estimated GNP 1973: \$3.1 billion.
 Defence expenditure 1974: 52 million zaires (\$104 million).
 \$1 = 0.50 zaires (1974), 0.50 zaires (1973).

Army: 49,000.
 1 armoured car regiment.
 1 mechanized battalion.
 14 infantry battalions.
 7 parachute battalions.
 7 'Guard' battalions.
 The above, together with support units, form 1 parachute division and 7 brigade groups.
 100 AML armd cars; M-3 and 30 *Ferret* scout cars (less than half operational).

Coast, River and Lake Guard: 200.
 1 river boat.
 1 patrol boat.
 6 patrol craft.

Air Force: 800; 33 combat aircraft.
 1 fighter wing with 17 MB-326GB, 6 AT-6G and 10 T-28 armed trainers.
 1 tpt wing with 9 C-47, 4 C-54 and 3 C-130.
 1 training wing with 8 T-6 and 12 SF-260MC.
 1 hel sqn with 20 *Alouette II/III* and 7 SA-330 *Puma*. (17 *Mirage V*, 3 C-130H on order.)

Para-Military Forces: 12,000; 8 National Guard and 6 Gendarmerie battalions.

(South Africa continued)

4 hel sqns: two with 20 *Alouette III* each; one with 20 SA-330 *Puma*; one with 15 SA-321L *Super Frelon* (one flight of 7 *Wasp* naval-assigned).

(1 army-assigned lt ac sqn with Cessna 185A/D and A185E to be replaced by AM-3C.)

Trainers incl *Harvard*; 160 MB-326M *Impala* (some armed in a COIN role); *Vampire* FB Mk 6, Mk 9, T Mk 55; TF-86; C-47 and *Alouette II/III*.

(15 MB-326K on order.)

RESERVES: 3,000 Active Citizen Force.

8 sqns with 20 *Impala*; 100 *Harvard IIA, III, T-6G (Texan)*; 20 Cessna 185A/D, A185E.

12 Air Commando sqns (private aircraft).

Para-Military Forces: 75,000 Commandoes organized and trained as a Home Guard.

* Spares are short and not all equipment is serviceable.

† Some South African troops are operating in the Caprivi Strip in Namibia (South West Africa).

Aircraft on the Border

THE prevailing topographical and climatic features on the northern borders of South Africa necessitate the use of a number of types of aircraft for various purposes. They undertake regular flights conveying supplies which could not be adequately transported by surface from Pretoria to bases serving the border areas.

THIS is of particular value during the rainy season when roads become impassable. Air-lifted supplies are off-loaded at the large central bases where they are stored and subsequently flown to smaller and more remote bases by helicopter, Dakota or Cessna.

Other than this basic freight work, for which they are designed (the C130 and C160's being famous for their ability to take off and land from extremely short run-aways), these aircraft do no other border work and are based and maintained at Pretoria.

The most practical aircraft used in the primitive bushveld found on the border is the helicopter. They are based at the two main camps with the necessary pilots and maintenance crews, all of whom are members of the Permanent Force or extended-service National Servicemen who have been trained for their various jobs. Pilots and crew serve stints of duty of two or three months, after which they rejoin their base units.

Helicopters are used in the following ways:

Casualty evacuation. Because of the size and ruggedness of the surrounding country, an otherwise minor casualty on the border can lead to serious complications. Often patrols are taken deep into the bush, and even in many of the camps themselves medical facilities, although adequate for everyday mishaps, cannot cope where surgery is required. Here the helicopter comes to the fore through its ability to land in small spaces, or even to winch up a casualty from the bush without landing. Inside the helicopter are attachments for stretchers and adequate room for a doctor and assistant to work while the patient is in transit.

Transportation and re-supply of troops. To patrol the vast open spaces between border posts, troops need to travel great distances. Where roads are bad or non-existent, this takes time. In these conditions the helicopter is used to ferry troops to various points in the bush, to return for them later. These troops are landed from the helicopter, or, if no open space is available in the bush,

dropped by winch. At the end of the patrol, at a pre-arranged time and place, they are picked up in a similar manner. If need be, they can be re-supplied with water and food and ammunition during the course of their patrol.

Reconnaissance. Although not normally used for reconnaissance, the helicopter is indispensable when used in conjunction with ground patrols, as it can reach the border in the immediate vicinity for signs of enemy movement and then give aerial support to the patrol if necessary. They have also been used successfully searching for lost troops . . .

Maintenance. Each pilot has his own particular aircraft and, with his ground crew, looks after it with parental assiduity. Spares are scarce and help far away. Whatever goes wrong must be repaired on the spot with the equipment available. Facilities, however, are good and the aircraft are kept in excellent condition. A helicopter needs servicing every five flying hours, so pilots and crew are kept busy, sometimes working through the night and all week-end to prepare their aircraft for service.

The aircraft which matches the helicopter's versatility and indispensability on the border is the Cessna. Used first in 1966, their landing field was the main dirt road in front of the local police station. These pilots also serve stretches of two to three months at a time.

Cessnas are used in the following ways:

Reconnaissance: Low-level visual reconnaissance with a pilot and observer is done with the Cessna because of its manoeuvrability and low fuel consumption. These small aircraft keep the one thousand mile border under constant surveillance.

Light transport: All border posts have some kind of airfield or runway, but the majority consist mainly of a strip cleared of bush and levelled. These dirt runways turn into veritable quagmires in the wet season and at times it takes all the pilot's skill to reach take-off speed

on the water-logged field, and landing can give the aircraft a mudbath from tip to tail! Personnel, rations and equipment are flown wherever they are required, often to settlements and camps too small to be honoured with a name on the map. A book, listing conditions of each runway, has entries which often look like this:

Markings	.....	NIL
Wind Indication	.....	NIL
Clearways	.....	NIL
Taxi Tracks	.....	NIL
Dispersal Area	.....	NIL
Facilities	.....	NIL
Drainage	.....	Natural!

Casualty evacuation: Special fittings for stretchers, drip and other medical equipment are fitted into each Cessna. One pilot informed me that a woman had even given birth in his Cessna while she was being rushed to hospital.

Aerial observation post: Cessnas can be used to control ground fire onto specific targets and to report subsequent enemy movement.

Road reconnaissance: The Cessna is used to check on the condition of roads before a convoy sets off. Also, when large convoys are in transit, the distance between the leading and trailing vehicles can be as much as ten miles. The Cessna flies above the convoy and reports all required information to the convoy leader by radio.

Radio relay posts: Because of the flatness of the terrain radio aeri- als cannot be placed on natural outcrops to augment their height. Radio communication is therefore at times difficult. Use is made of the Cessna to relay important radio messages, its height overcoming the ubiquitous topographical problem. Again, as with the helicopter, each pilot has his own aircraft and close attachments are formed. Each aircraft is given a name, usually terms of endearment, such as "Baby Jumbo", "Bukes' Baby", etc., and with the dedicated work of the ground crew all aircraft are kept in excellent flying shape. No matter what time the Cessna comes in, it is always welcomed by its crew who check and secure it for the night, always looking after its affairs before their own.

When writing about aircraft on border duty, some mention must be made of that old work-horse the Dakota. Flying long hours and heavy freights, this versatile aircraft is a great asset to any border camp. It lands and takes off on the same bad runways, does work that no other self-respecting aircraft would do, but always keeps its head high with a little coaxing from pilot and crew.

Without these aircraft, the helicopter, Cessna and Dakota, problems of supplies and communication would be insurmountable. It is through them that the continued presence of our troops is guaranteed and life on the border made a little easier. ●