

Southern Africa

There is a war going on over there

THERE IS A WAR ON IN SOUTHERN AFRICA, a war to decide whether it will be ruled by the majority of the people living there or by a small minority. Canada is, in effect, helping the minority.

The war, with its economic ramifications and its implications for international politics, displays all the complexity, but none of the neatness, of a higher mathematical problem. The basic issue, however, is as simple as it is stark.

Southern Africa, an area more than one-half the size of China, includes a population of roughly four and a half million whites and about 36 million non whites, the vast majority of them black. Its eight countries are ruled — either officially or in practice — by whites and their rule is harsh.

The whites occupy the best land, are relatively wealthy, well-fed and well-educated. The Blacks are poor, relatively — in many cases shockingly — ill-fed and ill-housed, and what education they receive amounts by and large to the training required for menial tasks.

President Julius Nyerere of Tanzania summed up the view of Africans who oppose the status quo in the southern part of the continent when he spoke last fall at the University of Toronto.

"The common objective of the African people," he said, "is self-determination for the peoples of southern Africa. . . and an end to the official propogagation and practice of racialism in our continent. That is all.

"We are not anti-white terrorists wishing to impose a reverse racialism; we wish to uphold human equality and to give human dignity and non-racialism a chance to grow in our lands."

To many southern African whites, the issue is equally simple. Consciously or otherwise, they know that black rule would spell the end of their high standards of living, indeed of their whole way of life, and they are afraid.

Already black liberation forces conduct regular campaigns in large parts of the Portuguese colonies of Mozambique and Angola and FRELIMO, the insurgent organization in Mozambique, claims effective control of the two northernmost provinces of that country.

In Rhodesia, two organizations, the Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU) and the Zimbabwe African Peoples' Union (ZAPU) are conducting sabotage, recruiting followers, and — when they are forced to — fighting, sometimes with telling effect. ZAPU and ZANU are assisted by the African National Congress (ANC) of South Africa, which, within its own borders, confines itself mainly to reconnoitering future bases and arms caches.

In South-West Africa, a UN trusteeship territory which the Republic of South Africa has taken as its own, the Peoples' Organization (SWAPO), with the help of the ANC, engages in hit and run raids.

Altogether in southern Africa, the Economist of Britain reported last year, some 26,000 guerillas are arrayed against government forces totalling nearly 250,000 men well-equipped with aircraft, ships and weapons.

Southern African whites are afraid, not primarily of the guerillas facing their forces, but rather of the sheer proximity of overwhelming numbers of potential enemies. They respond with increasing repression, with unceasing efforts to build up their economies, and with attempts to hold and increase outside support.

So far, and for the foreseeable future, there is no question that the whites are, overall, getting the best of the conflict. They will probably be able to hold on to most of what they have as long as they continue to enjoy the support — tacit or open — of North America and Western Europe.

The support that southern African whites need — and receive — from the Atlantic community comes in two forms: 1) foreign trade and investment, which provides the economic basis for the maintenance of the white-dominated regimes, and 2) military assistance, much of which is provided by members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. Canada is directly involved in the first category of support and, as a member of NATO, it is at least concerned with the second.

Some aspects of Canadian involvement in foreign trade and investment present a clear picture, while others, perhaps more important ones, remain shrouded. Trade in commodities is a straightforward item. A glance at Dominion Bureau of Statistics figures shows that Canada does a brisk trade with South Africa, Portugal and Angola and a

small amount of business with Mozambique. Here is a brief rundown:

South Africa: Canada imported \$39.3-million worth of South African commodities in 1968, including \$16.4-million worth of sugar. It exported some \$68.3-million worth to that country, including more than \$2-million worth of aircraft and more than \$22-million worth of motor vehicles.

Since the DBS does not count gold — a major South African export — as a commodity, there is probably a great deal missing from the figure for imports from South Africa.

Portugal: Angola's and Mozambique's colonial master sold us \$12.3-million worth of goods in 1968 and bought \$6.3-million worth.

Angola: Canada imported \$7.7-million in goods — most of it was coffee — from Angola and exported \$376,637 worth in 1968.

Mozambique: Canada bought \$579,422 worth of tea from Mozambique in 1968 and not much else. We sold \$1.8-million worth of goods.

That is the clear part of the picture. Among the murky parts, an outstanding one concerns Rhodesia. Since the white government of that country unilaterally declared its independence of Britain in 1965 in order to avoid giving the vote to black citizens, it has been the object of a boycott and embargo recommended by the United Nations.

The DBS figures would have us believe that Canada does almost no business with Rhodesia. It is widely accepted, however, that Rhodesia circumvents the boycott by routing its trade through other countries, especially South Africa. The figures, therefore, do not reveal the extent to which Canadian goods are bought by Rhodesians and Rhodesian goods by Canadians.

Another area that remains murky is that of foreign investment. A scattering of information is available from various sources. For example, the

Rand Daily Mail of South Africa carried an article in 1967 about a speech by the chairman of Alcan Aluminum of South Africa to a group called the Canadian-South African Businessmen's Association.

The Alcan chairman reported that his company planned to double Canadian investment in South African aluminum by 1972. Alcan, the Daily Mail noted, supplied 75 per cent of South Africa's aluminum ingot requirements.

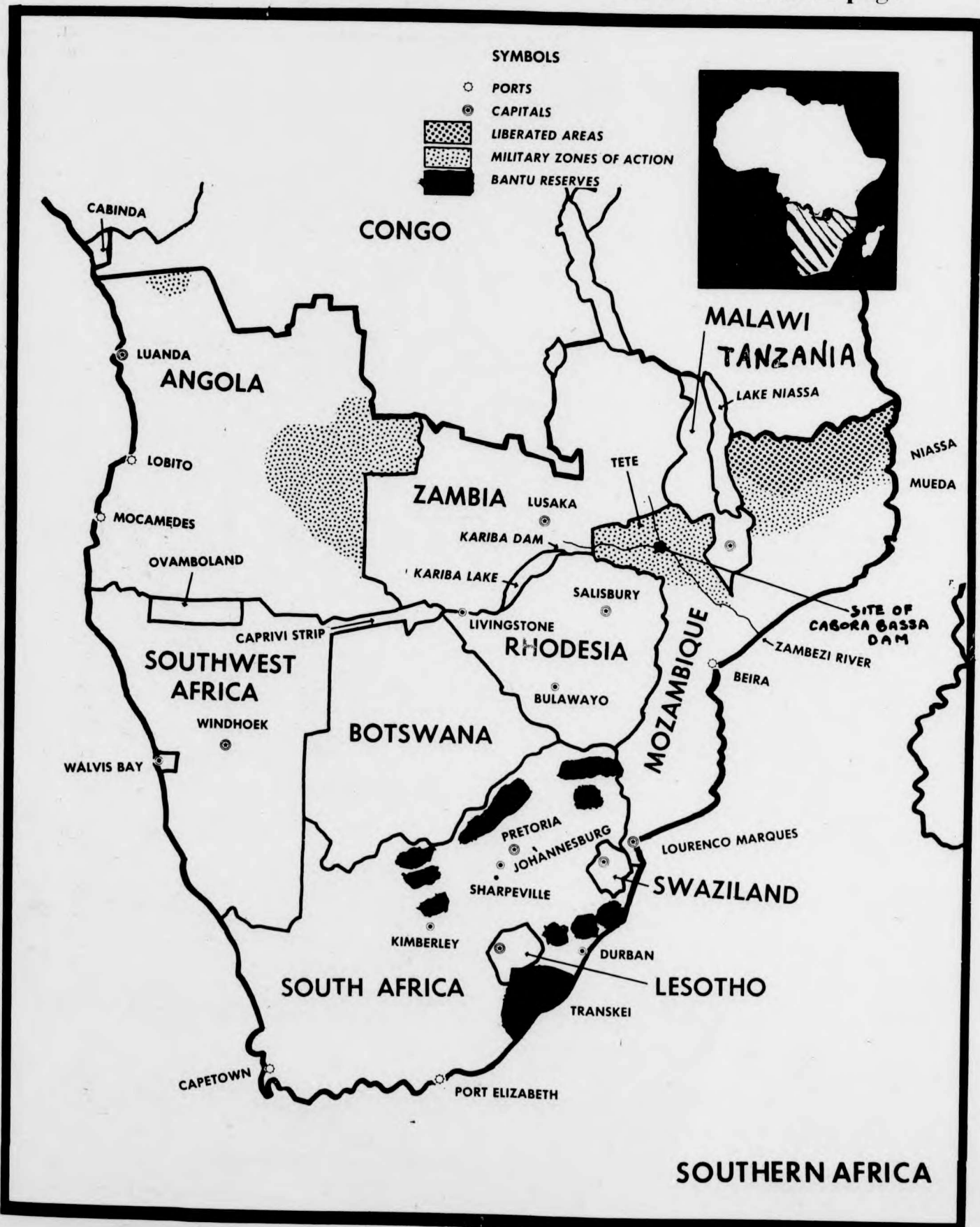
The African National Congress says the ninth largest farm machinery plant in the world belongs to Massey Ferguson of South Africa. "This typifies the rapid expansion of this company in South Africa and its steady acquisition of other companies," the ANC publication Sechaba says.

"However," Sechaba adds, "while the Canadian Massey-Ferguson provides technical advice and research, it has severed its formal ties with the South African company so as not to endanger its other international investments. Another Massey-Ferguson plant . . . exists in Southern Rhodesia." The ANC says that the International Nickel Company of Canada is also active in South Africa.

It is not only private Canadian investment that is active in South Africa. According to the Toronto Star, Polymer Corporation, Canada's publicly owned synthetic rubber producer, owns a 20 per cent interest in the Synthetic Rubber Company of South Africa.

It would be possible to go on dropping gems of information, but all of them combined would not begin to add up to a clear and comprehensive picture of Canadian-southern African investment activities. In the absence of a prodigious research effort, it would not be possible to estimate the extent of those investments, nor — more important —

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