

ment would soon collapse. In Namibia, a new internal settlement plan was put forward and attacks against SWAPO forces stepped up.

However, Mozambique provided the key to Pretoria's real intentions. Surprised and embarrassed by the vigour of Mozambique's implementation of the Nkomati Accord, the South African government was divided over how to proceed. It is now clear however that covert support for the MNR was maintained while Pretoria sought to use the Nkomati Accord to force a political settlement between MNR dissidents and Mozambique's FRELIMO government. South African-sponsored proximity talks produced the October 1984 "Pretoria Declaration" by FRELIMO, the MNR and South African government, which seemed to herald a ceasefire and the beginnings of such a political solution. Foreign Minister Botha announced that South African troops would monitor the ceasefire and "be used in an emergency role to tackle socio-economic problems" in Mozambique.¹⁹

COLLAPSE OF THE TOTAL STRATEGY

The Pretoria Declaration marked the high point of the Total Strategy. It came to nothing however. The South African army was unwilling to abandon the MNR, and the MNR leaders refused to accept the relatively modest role in the coalition which Pretoria mapped out for it. Mozambique was unwilling to negotiate the sharing of power with what it called "kidnappers, bandits and criminals."²⁰ Barely six weeks later President Samora Machel publically accused Pretoria of consistently violating the Nkomati Accord, and the war in Mozambique grew more intense.

In August 1985 Mozambican and Zimbabwean forces seized the main MNR base. Captured documents confirmed uninterrupted South African strategic and logistical assistance after Nkomati.²¹ Pretoria was now forced to admit what it called "technical violations" of the Accord.²² These included:

- supplying the MNR with new radios and maintaining constant radio contact with SADF headquarters;
- ferrying MNR commanders in and out of Mozambique by submarine;
- regular air drops of humanitarian supplies to MNR forces in Mozambique;
- various clandestine visits by a South African cabinet minister to MNR bases in Mozambique, while South Africa commandos secured the area.

By early 1985 Pretoria abandoned all pretense of seeking regional political solutions, and overtly resumed its assault against its neighbours. In May 1985 SADF commandos were captured attempting to blow up US-owned Angolan oil installations. Large-scale incursions into Angola were resumed in September 1985. Pretoria now admitted its long-standing support

for UNITA.²³ The SADF attacked Botswana in June. At the end of 1985 a clandestine South African hit squad killed nine people in the capital of Lesotho on the same day that a rare public statement by the State Security Council warned that six neighbouring countries would pay a heavy price unless they accepted South African representations about the ANC.²⁴

The Total Strategy had always been a relatively sophisticated package of carrot and stick tactics geared towards a combination of short, medium and long-term objectives. By the end of 1985 this package had given way to the simple, brutal exercise of force. Pretoria was unable to deliver on any of the positive aspects of the Total Strategy. Its very successes in early 1984 revealed its always flawed premises, sharp contradictions and real limits. Despite the rhetoric of peaceful coexistence, in the final analysis, Pretoria could not live in peace with independent black governments.

This had a clear domestic parallel. The Nkomati Accord coincided with the last promised domestic reforms. The opening of the new tricameral parliament in 1984 made it clear that the envisaged power-sharing was simply modernized *apartheid*. Nothing more was on offer. Domestically the Total Strategy ended with more sophisticated white domination, just as the culmination of the Total Strategy in Southern Africa ended in the unchecked use of brutal force.

However by far the most important factor highlighting the limits of South African regional strategy was the two-year urban uprising which began in South Africa just six months after the Nkomati Accord. The Total Strategy was first formulated in the mid-1970s as a response to the four important developments, described above. By mid-1985, each was far more aggravated than in 1977:

- 1) a vast, urban uprising seemed to threaten the very existence of white rule in South Africa;
- 2) South Africa was more isolated than ever and sanctions were now a reality;
- 3) the regional balance of power had shifted fundamentally and only the routine use of overwhelming force against its neighbours preserved Pretoria's position;
- 4) the South African economy confronted its worst ever recession. The Rand had collapsed and Pretoria was soon forced to default on part of its foreign debt.

From the perspective of the Botha regime, what it defined as reform at home and peacemaking in the region had not achieved their fundamental goal of forging political stability. For the generals who dominated the State Security Council, and the former Minister of Defence who presided over it as State President — all of whom were fundamentally incapable of entertaining a negotiated dismantling of *apartheid* — a military solution was the only possible domestic and regional alternative.