

Jaster, Robert A. *South Africa in Namibia: The Botha Strategy*. Lanham, Maryland: University Press of America, 1985.

Leonard, Richard. *South Africa at War: White Power and the Crisis in Southern Africa*. Westport, Connecticut: Lawrence Hill & Company, 1983.

Rotberg, Robert I. (editor). *Namibia: Political and Economic Prospects*. Lexington, Massachusetts: Lexington Books, 1983.

Steenkamp, Willem. *Borderstrike! South Africa into Angola*. Durban: Butterworths Publishers, 1983.

Since 1966 the South West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO) of Namibia has been engaged in a low-intensity guerrilla war against the Pretoria regime to secure African majority rule in a unified Namibia. This quest for an internationally recognized independence actually antedates 1966 and has involved several United Nations organs, including the International Court of Justice, as well as the Western and African states. The conflict, in its legal and political dimensions, has attracted the attention of the Western permanent members of the Security Council in addition to the Federal Republic of Germany and Canada. As members of the Western Contact Group, the British, Canadian, American, West German, and French diplomats sought to moderate the demands and allay the anxieties of SWAPO, the South African Government, and the more vocal opponents of continued white rule in Southern Africa. The multilateral negotiations attempted to involve yet another grouping — termed the Front Line States (Angola, Mozambique, Botswana, Zambia, and Tanzania) — which could provide contiguous pressure on the African nationalists of SWAPO. Yet the twin Western and African coalitions were unable to arrange a mutually acceptable pathway for Namibian independence and a graceful exit for the Afrikaner proconsuls. Namibia remains under South African physical control, although such control is devoid of international legitimacy and recognition.

At the domestic level, the South African goal has been to fashion a pliable counterweight to SWAPO and thus insure that local white and conservative Namibian interests would be institutionalized and protected once South Africa withdrew its defensive umbrella. These subnational groups, and their patrons in Pretoria, challenged SWAPO's rhetorical monopoly of the concept of self-determination. Such ethnic ensembles, which used narrow-based political parties, were devoted to preserving vested economic privileges or superior racial status. Dr. Robert Rotberg, a frequent writer on Southern Africa based at M.I.T., has provided the beginning student with a well documented and crisply written set of essays on the present and possible future of this disputed land. Roughly half of the text of the book is devoted to Wolfgang Thomas's carefully organized analysis of the Namibian economy. Dr. Thomas, an economist at the University of the Western Cape, provides a thoughtful analysis of the human and non-human resources that have been consumed in, and are likely to be available after, the armed conflict in the territory. He argues that the longer the war lasts, the more radical will be the economic

restructuring of the country (p. 89). Two other authors (Kate Jowell and Stanley Uys) consider the constraints upon a post-independent Namibian economy and the nature of the dependent linkages that bind Namibia (and other African majority-ruled states, such as Swaziland) to South Africa. Independence is thus not the equivalent of the absence of dependence.

The work by Richard Leonard is less dispassionate than the Rotberg volume, although it is thoroughly documented and deftly organized. The title of the book is somewhat overstated. What the author conveys, however, is a sense of the South African garrison state and the extent to which large sectors of South African society are mobilized as part of what the Government refers to as "the total strategy," which reflects the scope and depth of the response to African nationalist mobilization inside and outside the state. Mr. Leonard considers both the nature and strength of the African nationalist movement and the South African defense establishment. His lively and captivating study provides the larger view against which to view the specialized Rotberg volume and the supplementary account by Robert Jaster.

Robert Jaster, who has written for the International Institute of Strategic Studies, considers the nature of conflict management in Namibia by the current President of South Africa, Mr. P.W. Botha. The Botha style, as observers have noted, tends to reflect more of the military managerial values which he absorbed in his tenure as Minister of Defense. Yet the Botha policy attempts to shore up the ever-weakening position of the resident conservative white establishment in Namibia while moving to protect his right flank in Pretoria against the intransigent whites who are turning increasingly to the Conservative Party. The situation facing President Botha bears some striking resemblance to that of President DeGaulle when he was faced with trying to retain power and to shed Algeria with its politically vociferous *colons*. To date, few analysts have ever compared the Namibian and the Algerian exercises in decolonization. Both occasioned long drawn-out, expensive, and enervating counterinsurgency wars.

Solid accounts of that war in northern Namibia are few and far between, so one welcomes the work of Willem Steenkamp, who serves as the defense correspondent of *The Cape Times*. His account, which has been vetted by South African censors, provides a richness in detail that only an observer-participant can furnish. His earlier *Adeus Angola* (Cape Town: Howard Timmins, 1976) is such a personal record, as a reserve officer called to active duty, of the South African thrust into Angola in 1976. Steenkamp's 1983 work is a more thorough, rigorous study of cross-border incursions into Angola and Zambia in the 1978-1980 period. He freely acknowledges that his is not a wholly objective work of reporting (p. [xiii]), so the student of Southern African conflict will eagerly await the view according to the People's Liberation Army of Namibia, the military wing of SWAPO.

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