

Somewhere on the border (of credibility)



Moustachioed

Moustachioed, smooth brown hair well clear of his collar, Rocco de Wet strides across embattled landscapes, muscles bulging, (cardboard) machine gun at the ready, steely eyes slitted for the kill... the ultimate incarnation of the macho South African man, **GRENSVEGTER**.

In dingy cafes, grimy supermarkets and slummy newsagents nationwide, photo comics grow like toadstools on damp shelves. They offer escape for the weary or witless into a land where their every fantasy is illustrated with blurry pictures and ungrammatical captions. Among those offered are love stories (*Dr Konrad Brand*), semi-nude secret agents (*Tessa*), Transvaal Westerns (*Die Swart Luipeerd*) — and **GRENSVEGTER**.

Somewhere in each of his adventures, Grensvegter aids a female in distress. She usually finds herself in the Caprivi Strip or the "Rhodesian" jungle in high heels, stockings and eye make-up. Held captive by brutal "terrorists", she is inevitably rescued by our hero, before her hairdo begins to sag. Her speech bubbles are filled with squeals of terror or "O Rocco... dankie, dankie..."

Blacks put in only rare appearances. When they do, they serve merely as pawns of the cunning, greedy Cubans and Russians. The real conflict in Africa is between the lone crusader of Christian decency and the forces of communist imperialism. However, all right-thinking blacks have a champion in Rocco de Wet: "Afrika hou nie van Kubane en Russe nie... julle sal in Afrika deur swart en wit Afrikane vermorsel word!"

Yes, the blacks are simple souls who only want to be left in peace to supply labour and amusement. But

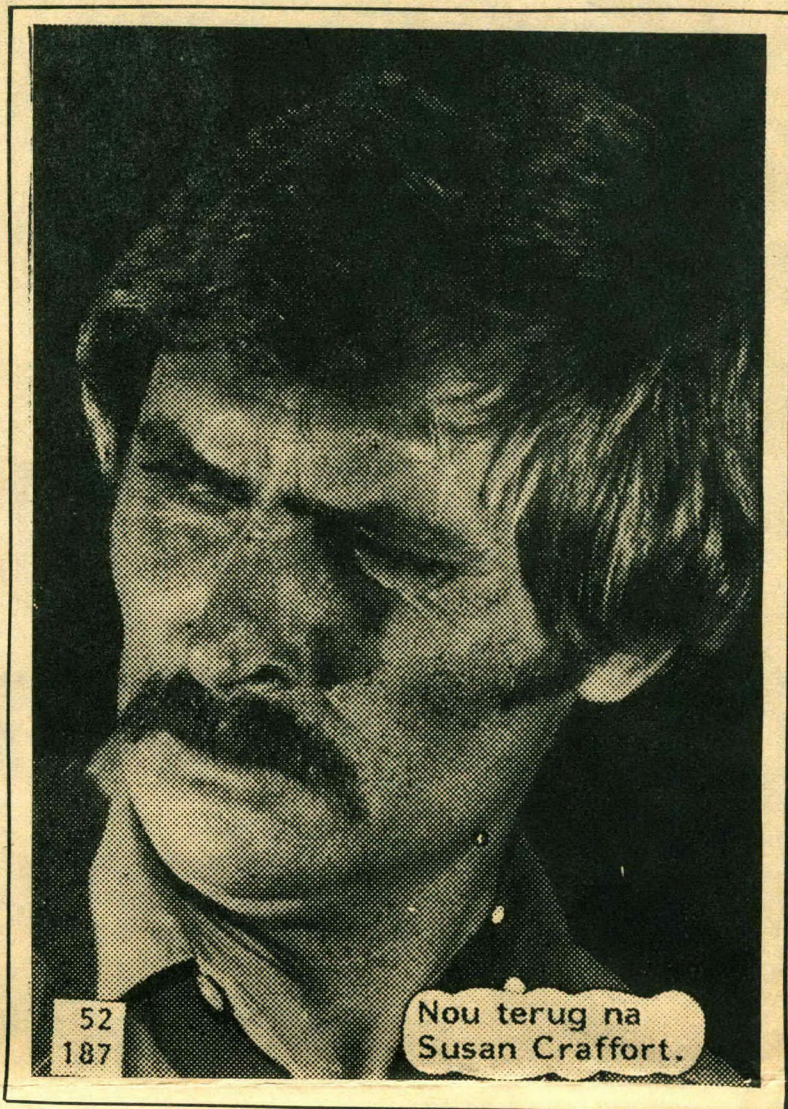
guess what? The Marxists, those hyenas who feed on the carcass of Africa (as Grensvegter so subtly analyses), are after our minerals! Just when you thought it safe to go back in the jungle, Prof. Rocco de Wet reveals that General Malan was right all the time. The Communists only desire to lob big bombs into our backyard!

With Grensvegter around, who needs the SADF? Well, Grensvegter is alone, like Pretoria. He fights for South Africa, as if on a recruitment poster, his moustache the envy of every sergeant-major. Grensvegter is the SADF!

But there's no blood or sweat, no screaming wounded soiling themselves, no civilians "accidentally" blown apart with anti-personnel bombs. Everything in the Grensvegter world is simple as the inside of a general's head. The baddies (who can't fight, nyah, nyah) are slaughtered, in the Koevoet T-shirt manner — **OUR BUSINESS IS KILLING AND BUSINESS IS GOOD!** The hero is praised and adored. We shall overcome.

Grensvegter has all the answers. It's a solid block of pro-SADF propaganda — spreading the stereotypes and beliefs without which the SADF might disintegrate.

It may seem entertaining — but so is the Info Song. And behind the ink-and-paper superman, so pure and sanitized, are real men with real guns aimed at all of us.



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