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FIGHTING FOR

APARTHEID:

A JOB FOR LIFE

European Citizens in the South African Defence Force

By Alman Metten, MEP and Dr. Paul Goodison

*In cooperation with Fons Geerlings of the Anti Apartheid
Movement Netherlands (AABN) in Amsterdam
and the Committee on South African War Resistance
(COSAWR) in London*

FIGHTING FOR APARTHEID : A JOB FOR LIFE

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Preface by Dr. C.F. Beyers Naudé

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Alman Metten is Member of European Parliament for the Dutch Labour Party, dr. Paul Goodison is his research-assistant.

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Preface

Apartheid society is increasingly falling under the spell of violence. There is a far-reaching process of militarization: the army takes action in the townships, is often even present in the schools, is present in Namibia and raids the frontline countries. This violence makes our society sick and claims numerous casualties.

The armed forces need more men to keep the situation "under control". Virtually all men, young or less young, are now deployed to maintain a hopeless situation.

Since a few years holders of foreign passports who live in South Africa are also conscripted into the South African Defence Force. By now the acts of war have reached the doorstep of every white house.

Every white family has become familiar with the war because either one of their sons is in the armed forces, or a cousin, or the boy next door.

Geographically remote as the war may seem to whites, it has come very near at the same time. When questioned later on about his physical involvement, nobody will be able to say: "I didn't know about it".

It is gratifying that a large number of young whites has been courageous enough to resist the war. They are those who do not report for their call up, who go into hiding or leave the country. They are the brave boys who come out for peace publicly; young men like David Bruce, like the 143 who refuse to take service. They follow their consciences. They refuse to point the barrels of their rifles at their protesting countrymen whom they do not consider their enemies. They are looking for a way out of racialism. They have made clear that they feel responsible for the future of the country. Imprisonment awaits them; the End Conscription Campaign is banned by now.

Their stand requires international solidarity and active support from Europe. Because as this book points out, one third of South Africa's whites consists of European nationals or people entitled to a European nationality. This publication shows the far-reaching consequences of conscription in South Africa and the hitherto unknown part played by holders of European passports. It makes clear that the violence in South Africa has equally become the responsibility of the governments in the countries of the European Community. Therefore I hope that Europe will support the brave men in South Africa and will take its own measures to prevent European subjects from fighting for Apartheid.

Dr. C.F. Beyers Naudé



1 INTRODUCTION

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Condemnation of Apartheid is in the civilised world almost an article of faith, adhered to by people of all political convictions. By now, however, we have passed the stage of condemnation in word only. For the sake of dismantling Apartheid, almost all countries in the world are applying economic sanctions against South Africa. The European Community, however, the world's largest commercial unit and South Africa's major trading partner and investor, is clearly lagging behind in the area of sanctions. In itself this is already an embarrassing situation for the Community, but this brochure will point out that the connections between the European Community and South Africa are much closer even than that.

Over one third of white South Africans are nationals of an EC country. In 1984 over 82% of this group are South African nationals at the same time. The remaining eighteen percent were nationals of an EC country only. Many of these European South Africans have fled to South Africa from Rhodesia, Mozambique and Angola. Nevertheless, because of their EC passports or their right to acquire one, they can easily return to the Community should things become too hot for them in South Africa. Such a mass return would mainly be a threat to countries like the United Kingdom and Portugal, but the other EC countries cannot afford to disregard this possibility. The implementation of the internal market will mean that these South Africans can settle down anywhere in the Community. The possibility that they will settle down in the European Community makes it even more relevant to know what is the part played by them at present in bolstering Apartheid.

This brochure will make clear that the South African government, because of its increasing need for sufficient manpower to curb black resistance at home and at the same time to keep Namibia occupied and to destabilise the neighbouring countries, has gradually incorporated the white holders of European passports into the South African armed forces. To the white male inhabitants, living and working in South Africa means lifelong military involvement in bolstering Apartheid. Between the age of 20 and 32 (after two years full-time conscription) they have to spend 16.6% of their working hours in the armed forces, after 32 years of age, a further 6.7%.

Because of this presence of European South Africans in the South African armed forces, by now over one third of these forces consist of whites who possess or are entitled to an EC passport. The actions by

the South African Defence Force in black areas, the illegal occupation of Namibia, the destabilising actions in the frontline countries and the permanent occupation of southern Angola have been condemned time and again by the EC governments, but a considerable part of all this is carried out by EC subjects!

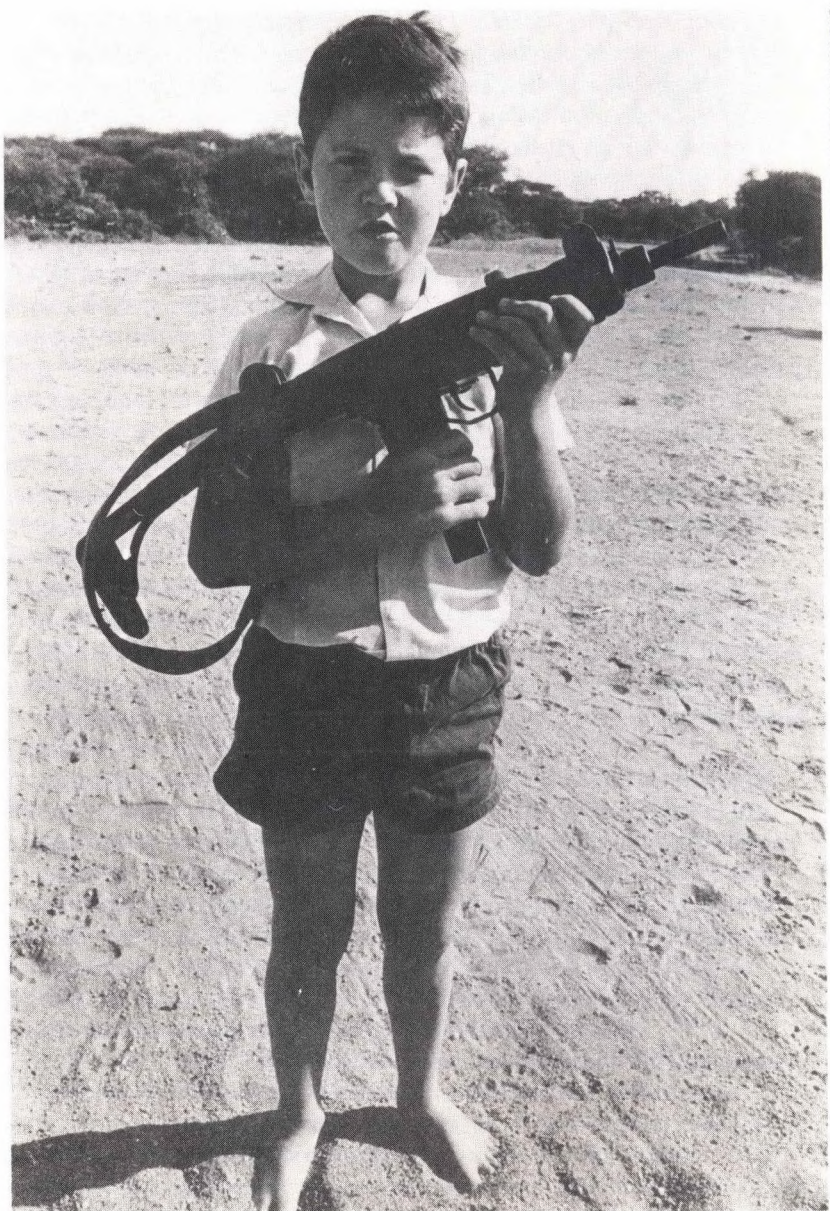
This paradoxical situation is at the least remarkable, but perhaps even more remarkable is that when these facts were revealed (e.g. in the European Parliament in February 1986¹) this did not prompt any action by member countries. The member countries prefer to disregard their responsibility. Thus the measures approved under considerable public pressure by the EC on 10 September 1985, specifically the "refusal to cooperate in the military sphere" with South Africa are meaningless, since it is hard to see how the mass participation of EC subjects in the South African armed forces could fail to fall under this heading. All this is even stranger as South Africa's destabilisation campaigns threaten and destroy development projects financed by both the Community and individual member states. Limited non-lethal military aid is now at last being rendered for the protection of these projects but those EC citizens who, as South African conscripts or professional soldiers, are responsible for this destabilisation, remain just as welcome in the Community, where they may reside with impunity.

The situation is yet more absurd. Several EC countries along with South Africa are co-signatories of a treaty which exempts dual nationals from military service if service has already been rendered in one of the countries to which the citizen owes allegiance. This means that the fulfilment of military service obligations in South Africa, or even Namibia, provides an exemption from military service in some European countries. These facts place the Community's condemnation of Apartheid and its poor package of sanctions in a very different light. If this is not malicious negligence, it is at least serious complicity.

This complicity applies to European companies as well. This does not refer to the compulsory payment of taxes, but rather to the voluntary supplementary payments that conscripts receive up to the level of their civil salaries. As South African men spend a considerable part of their economically active lives in the armed forces, significant amounts are involved. The voluntary supplementary payments by industry make sure that the South African armed forces keep contented recruits at their disposal. All this is not really "neutral" towards Apartheid. Nor does it provide the ideal case for arguing against disinvestment.

In this brochure we will investigate to what extent South African society has become militarised; the interests and involvement of European citizens and companies in the armed defence of Apartheid and in the war in the whole of Southern Africa; the reactions of European governments to this situation and the response from within South Africa itself.

(1) Official Journal, Debates of the European Parliament, no. 2-335 February, 1986, p. 257.



2 THE MILITARISATION OF SOUTH AFRICAN SOCIETY

2.1 Introduction

European citizens have been involved in the various components of the SADF for many years, be it as professional full-time soldiers, full-time or part-time conscripts or part-time commando volunteers. The various components of the SADF have been allocated specific, yet flexibly defined tasks which together form part of an integrated defence strategy. Prior to the extension of conscription in 1982 and 1984 few European citizens who were not also South African citizens showed any marked enthusiasm for serving in the SADF and voluntary participation rates were extremely low. Similarly, South African citizens who were not obliged to undertake military service showed a marked lack of enthusiasm for "weekend soldiering". This situation began to take on serious dimensions for the government, as resistance to the oppression of Apartheid mounted. As manpower constraints became increasingly apparent, so the South African government began to increase the level of compulsion to render military service. This applied in particular to two of the mainstay elements of the SADF, the Citizen Force and the Commando. It is to the various structures of the SADF that we now turn.

2.2 Structure of the South African Defence Force (SADF)

- a) a full-time **Permanent Force** of professional soldiers,
- b) a **Citizen Force** including those undergoing two year periods of full-time national service and part-time conscripts,
- c) a **Commando** system of localised militia groups initially consisting of part-time volunteers but since 1982 increasingly relying on conscription of older adult males.

In each of these elements of the SADF men with citizenship of a European Community member state and men eligible for citizenship of a Community Member State have been, and are increasingly, actively participating in the defence of Apartheid.

COMPOSITION OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN ARMY AFTER 1982

Permanent Force (PF) Regular full-time professional soldiers (volunteers).

Citizen Force (CF)	Conscripts undergoing their initial two years training and service (18-20 years of age), and a part-time force subject to conscription commitments (20-32 years of age). Legally this includes those doing their national service, but it popularly refers only to those doing periods of duty after they have completed their initial national service.
Commandos	Locally based militia's responsible for the defence of the area in which they are based. Until 1982 a largely volunteer force but since 1982 increasingly based on conscription (32-55 years of age).
Controlled National Reserve	All ex-SADF members and conscripts who have finished all previous service commitments will be transferred to this reserve until they are 65. To be called up in an emergency.

In 1983 during an exchange in the British House of Commons it was revealed that at least 300 former British soldiers were serving as professional soldiers in the Permanent Force of the SADF, including at least 50 Officers (this represented 2.5% of whites in the Permanent Force) many of whom retained their rank in the British Reserve Force.² In addition to these British soldiers (many of whom moved south after the independence of Zimbabwe) a substantial number of former Portuguese army personnel came over to the Permanent Force, following the collapse of Portuguese colonial rule in Mozambique and Angola. These former Portuguese military personnel have played an important role in South Africa's aggressive campaign of regional destabilisation.

Even prior to the extension of conscription to the white immigrant community in South Africa in April 1984, figures from 1976 indicate that on average some 1,765 non-South African citizens were undergoing voluntary national service at any one time³; with a number of them dying in defence of Apartheid often hundreds of miles beyond South Africa's borders in northern Namibia and southern Angola. Within the immigrant community however, only a small proportion (some 6%) of the under 30s were volunteering to fight in defence of Apartheid.⁴

2.3 Commandos for Area Defence

In many respects the attitude of the immigrant community was symptomatic of the attitude of that component of South African

(2) Sunday Tribune, 10.4.83. (3) Rand Daily Mail, 15.9.83.

(4) 1,765 out of 28,939 aged under 30, Rand Daily Mail, 15.9.83.

citizenry who until 1982 were not eligible for compulsory military service but who, on a voluntary basis, were expected to render service to what became increasingly the cornerstone of the military defence strategy, the Commandos. Prior to 1982 the Commandos had been composed largely of volunteers.

However, the self-image of the noble Afrikaner, gun in hand defending the Volk, was being seriously undermined by the undermanning of these Commandos. In 1982, on average Commando units had only 60% of their required manpower. In some of the more vital border areas the situation was even worse, with border depopulation leading to some Commandos having only 5% of their required manpower (Thabazimbi on the Botswana border, for example).⁵ The state of the Commandos became so bad that from 1979 an increasing number of conscripted national servicemen had to be allocated to the Commandos to bolster their volunteer strength.

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It is in the Commandos that the bulk of Community citizens and those eligible for Community citizenship will be drawn into the defence of Apartheid, for it is the Commandos which within the Apartheid regime's concept of "area defence" provide the first line of defence for the suppression of internal resistance. It is to the Commandos that area protection falls, freeing the Permanent Force and Citizen Force for a more offensive role.

The central role of the Commandos in the defence of Apartheid was laid out by the then Commander in chief of the SADF Constand Viljoen in 1982:

*"They (the ANC) are going to fight an area war... If we had to deal with this using the full-time force, the demands on the system would be too great. But we are going to deal with it by using Area Defence ... people living in the area must be organised to defend themselves. They must be our first line of defence. Our full-time force must be a reaction force. The first line of defence will contain any terrorist threat and the better equipped and trained reaction forces will deal with insurgents."*⁶

(5) M. Evans, 'Restructuring: The Role of the Military' in South Africa Review (Raven Press 1983), p. 45.

(6) G. Cawthra, Brutal Force (IDAF 1986), p. 229.

OFFICIAL SADF BREAKDOWN OF THE COMPOSITION AND ROLE OF THE COMMANDO FORCE

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Source: Star 8.11.82

Urban Commandos which can consist of two elements

An area protection force

A reaction force

Tasks:

- Supporting the SA Police with regard to hearth and home protection.
- Protection of National Key Points which do not have their own Industrial Commandos.
- Protection of vulnerable points.
- Intelligence.
- COIN action.
- Supporting of Reaction Forces.
- Assistance to civilian authorities.

Tasks:

- COIN operations in support of the SA Police, including:
 - Roadblocks.
 - Cordons.
 - Searches.
 - Crowd control
 - Curfew arrangements

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Rural Commandos which can consist of two elements

Industrial Commandos (only at National Key Points)

An area protection force

A reaction force

Tasks:

- Hearth and home protection.
- Protection of National Key Points which do not have their own Industrial Commandos.
- Intelligence
- COIN action.
- Support to the SA Police.
- Assistance to civilian authorities.

Tasks:

- Immediate support to the SA Police.
- Pursuit of the enemy.
- Patrolling.
- Strengthening the area protection force.

Tasks:

- Protection of National Key Points against terrorist attacks.
- Intelligence in respect of the external threat against National Key Points.

The problem for the military chiefs was that male South Africans were not responding in a voluntary manner to the perceived security needs of the state. Many army commanders complained that the average South African male prefers his social life, sport and work above defending their country. According to one army commander cited in the Rand Daily Mail:

“The attitude of the man in the street is that the Defence Force and the Police are responsible for the defence of the country for which they have to pay taxes. So why should they serve in the army?”⁷

In some areas an emergency mobilisation of the Commandos resulted in only 26 of the 218 men turning out, whilst elsewhere national servicemen returning from the operational area in Namibia had to be drafted in as a result of the poor voluntary turn out.⁸ Such an unreliable force could hardly constitute the cornerstone of the military’s “area defence” strategy, which the SADF leadership put forward publicly in 1982 in response to mounting popular resistance to Apartheid.

2.4 Mounting Resistance: Increased Repression

In 1981, according to the Head of the Security Branch, Major General Steenkamp, there were 55 military actions carried out by the ANC, nearly three times the 1980 level.⁹ In 1981 workers’ strikes and student militancy increased, whilst in the face of SWAPO’s ongoing liberation struggle General Magnus Malan admitted in Parliament that:

“the number of troops deployed in the various operational areas in South West Africa (Namibia) and South Africa increased by more than 5,000% between 1975 and 1981.”¹⁰

It was furthermore revealed that over the next three years South Africa intended to increase its military presence in Namibia, thereby placing further demands on the SADF’s manpower resources. This mounting resistance and increased repression in both Namibia and South Africa seriously overstretched the SADF’s existing manpower resources. As a result it became essential to draw into the active defence of Apartheid a larger number of white South African males.

In 1982 the Defence Amendment Act was passed. This act extended the period of service in the Citizen Force after two years of national service to twelve years, involving in alternate years three months and one month camps. It furthermore extended conscription into the Commandos. This affected older white men (between 30 and 55) who had missed the call up in the 1950s and 1960s. This measure made available an extra 800,000 men for conscription, doubling the existing

(7) Rand Daily Mail, 24.3.82. (8) *ibid.* (9) G. Cawthra, *op. cit.*, p. 217. (10) *ibid.*, p. 229.

number potentially available for conscription. It was this Act which extended active participation in the defence of Apartheid to the bulk of male European citizens resident in South Africa who hold dual nationality. At the time a SADF spokesman declared:

“We will not be taking 800,000 men out of the economy. What we are trying to do is keep the men involved in the economy while they do military service. A farmer, for example, could go home after doing eight hours of duty. A businessman will report for duty at times which will enable him to continue his business activity.”¹¹

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What this amounted to was a declaration that as a matter of routine all adult male South Africans would be required to bear arms in defence of Apartheid. From the spring of 1984, as resistance to Apartheid has escalated so European citizens have increasingly been thrown into the frontline in defence of Apartheid. (The reality of this deadly daily war will be illustrated in later sections.)

ESCALATING CONSCRIPTION

1957 Defence Amendment Act

Conscription by ballot system introduced.

1967 Compulsory System

9 months national service introduced for all young white men.

1972

Conscription extended to 12 months, with Citizen Force camps of 19 days per annum for five years.

1975

Emergency 3 month tours introduced for the Citizen Force. These have become a permanent feature of military service.

1982 Defence Amendment Act

Citizen Force participation extended to 12 years with three month and one month camps in alternate years. Conscription into the Commandos extended to older white men who missed the call up in the 1950s and 1960s.

Commandos become cornerstone of the area defence strategy.

1984 South African Citizenship Amendment Act

This introduced greater compulsion towards immigrants on the question of taking out South African citizenship and brought 46,000 immigrants into the National Service net.

(11) Rand Daily Mail, 25.3.82.

September 1984

Border duty extended from three months to six months at a stretch for national servicemen.

June 1985

Citizen Force call up of one month extended to two months with mounting popular resistance.

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GROWTH OF S.A.FORCES

	1977	1979	1981	1983	1985	1987
PF	28,000	40,000	50,000	55,000	60,000	65,000
NSM	27,000	60,000	62,000	65,000	65,000	65,000
CF	180,000	230,000	280,000	330,000	360,000	360,000
Cdos	120,000	150,000	140,000	160,000	280,000	400,000
Civils	12,500	14,000	15,000	16,000	17,000	18,000
TOTAL	367,000	494,000	547,000	626,000	772,000	908,000

ESTIMATED PERSONNEL STRENGTH – NOTES:

1. **1977 & 1979:** Figures are from IDAF's publication, 'The Apartheid War Machine', p. 41.
2. **PF:** Permanent Force – 1979 to 1981 increase was result of formation of black tribal units and mercenary recruitment, mainly from Zimbabwe. PF strength will continue to increase gradually with recruitment of blacks and white women. This recruitment programme is likely to be less successful than presently anticipated by SADF.
3. **NSM:** National Service – Annual intake of white male NS men will level out at about 32,500 a year. Two years' service means there are twice this number in service at any one time. This table does not take into account the possible conscription of white women and rules out the possibility of black conscription before 1983.
4. **CF:** Citizen Force – Under the new 12 year service conditions the CF will absorb about 30,000 conscripts who have completed their national service each year (This allows for about 2,500 to be transferred to the Commandos by their own request). CF strength will level out at about 360,000 – that is, 12 intakes of 30,000. After this number entering the CF each year will approximate the number leaving who have completed their commitments.

5. **Cdos:** Commandos – According to the SADF there are 800,000 potential conscripts for Commandos. It will not be practically possible to absorb all these people at a rapid rate. The estimates given represent a gradual absorption of new members.
6. **Civils:** Civilians in SADF employment – the numbers will go up as the larger military machine requires more administrative staff.

(Source: Resister no. 19, April-May 1982)

2.5 The Impact on the Immigrant Community

In the past some migrants to South Africa waited until they passed the age of 25 before applying for South African citizenship, military conscription. This caused considerable resentment amongst those South African citizens who as a result had to carry the main burden of conscription. It was in order to draw a larger number of foreign nationals (who also enjoyed South African citizenship) into the defence of Apartheid that the 1982 Defence Amendment Act was passed.

Under this act older men who had never done military service before were required to do 30 days training in the first year, followed by a maximum of 12 days per annum until the age of 55. This drew an extra 800,000 white males into the pool available for service in the Commandos, of which a substantial number enjoyed European citizenship on a dual nationality basis. Men from this pool would be called up if the local situation warranted it to man area defence systems against guerrilla attacks or other forms of resistance. This concept of area defence had been formulated in the face of increasingly effective resistance to Apartheid. According to General Viljoen the ANC's 'area war' would strain the available manpower and area defence offered the only solution if the Permanent Force and National Service Conscripts were not to be frittered away on guard duties throughout the country.¹² Indeed, according to Robert Jaster, as South Africa has moved onto a war footing since 1975 manpower constraints have been such that the Defence Force was unable to establish a Permanent Force Brigade to serve as the SADF's basic force in being.¹³ This may have served to constrain South Africa's aggression against the independent states of the region.

In 1983, Minister of Defence Malan estimated that every active soldier required infrastructural support from 7 other military personnel¹⁴; it was the hope that these administrative duties could increasingly be devolved to Commando Force personnel. It is through this releasing of

(12) Financial Mail, 2.4.82. (13) *ibid.* (14) cited in G. Cawthra, *op. cit.*, p. 117.

Permanent Force and National Service soldiers for more active duties that the participation of European citizens in the Commandos is making a major contribution to South Africa's repeated invasions of Angola; destabilisation of the region; continued occupation of Namibia and since 1984 heightened repression in the townships of South Africa itself. Thus it can be seen that behind the comic image of a 'Dad's Army' lies a serious and deadly intent which ensures that European citizens actively contribute to the perpetuation of Apartheid.

In 1984 European citizens were further embroiled in the defence of Apartheid through the South African Citizenship Amendment Act. This Act (see inset) increased the level of compulsion on young foreign nationals between the ages of 15 and 25 to take out South African citizenship with its concomitant obligation to do compulsory military service. In 1984 close on 10% of South Africa's whites were not citizens of South Africa. Of the 475,000 whites who were resident in the country but who were not citizens 24,700 were West Germans; 9,200 were Greeks, 18,000 were Italians, 20,500 Dutch, 49,400 Portuguese; 226,900 British and 28,400 other Europeans, a total of some 377,100 citizens of the Community.¹⁵

EUROPEANS IN THE SADF

Assuming the same age and sex distribution amongst European citizenship holders as amongst the general white South African population, and assuming the 1984 legislation compelled only 75% of non-citizens to take out South African citizenship, then one can calculate the numbers of European Community (EC) citizens affected by the different categories of military obligation.* The National Service and Commando obligations laid on white males affect respectively 13.5% and 20.3% of the total white population. Thus we would expect to find the following numbers from various citizenship holding groups affected by the various military service obligations:

	Holding both EC and SA citizenship	18-32 Age Group National Service	32-55 Age Group Commando Service
UK	443,575	59,883	90,046
Portugal	587,650	79,333	119,293
Germany	93,825	12,666	19,046
Italy	45,500	6,143	9,237
Holland	34,875	4,708	7,080
Belgium	25,000	3,375	5,075
France	8,000	1,080	1,624
Greece	77,700	10,490	15,773
Ireland	2,400	324	487
	1,318,525	178,002	267,661

(15) Star, 22.2.85.

As the inset on p. 21 shows there is a category of South Africans approximately numbering 732,600 that is eligible to a British, Dutch or Irish citizenship. This category is affected by military service obligations as well, possibly adding the following numbers of Europeans affected:

	Holding SA and eligible to EC citizenship	18-32 Age Group National Service	32-55 Age Group Commando Service
UK	500,000	67,500	101,500
Holland	160,000	21,600	32,480
Ireland	72,600	9,801	14,738
	<hr/> 732,600	<hr/> 98,901	<hr/> 148,718

* *Given migration patterns (younger people, predominantly male), immigrants that arrived in the past 25 years are likely to have a different age and sex distribution to the South African population as a whole (i.e. more males of working age in the immigrant community). As a result our calculations are likely to be an underestimation of the number of European citizens involved in each category of military service.*

The 75% estimate gives figures which approximate statements on the overall impact of the 1984 measures by the South African military. The distribution between different European nationalities may not be proportional however.

It was estimated that the extension of citizenship entailed in the South African Citizenship Amendment Act would make at least an extra 46,000 men eligible for conscription into the SADF almost immediately.¹⁶ This is equivalent to one and a half times the annual national service intake.

In January 1985 the first batch of immigrants eligible for conscription under the 1984 legislation were drafted into the SADF and it was announced that all immigrant males liable for national service under the provisions of the 1984 Act would be called up for their first initial training period within the coming year (which included the July 1985 and January 1986 call ups). This was in the words of Defence Minister Malan, the "small price to pay for the privilege of living in South Africa".¹⁷

2.6 Fighting for Apartheid: A Job for Life

What would the life of a 18 year old European citizen look like following his acceptance of South African citizenship and conscription into the SADF?

(16) Assuming a proportional representation amongst the nationalities of non-South African citizens, this would bring an extra 36,525 European citizenship holders into the SADF (of 475,000 non-citizens 377,100 EC citizens or some 79.4%) (17) cited in the Cape Times, 23.2.82.

SA Citizenship automatic by naturalisation

If you are living in the Republic of South Africa on permanent resident permits, this brochure contains important information *affecting you personally*, with regard to:

- the automatic acquisition of *South African citizenship*
- your *National Service obligations* when you become South African citizens.

Three groups are affected.

1. Persons to whom permanent resident permits were issued before 19 April 1978.

In terms of Section 11A of the South African Citizenship Act 1949 (Act 44 of 1949), amended by the South African Citizenship Amendment Act (Act 43 of 1984), as published in the Government Gazette of 11 April 1984, those persons who on 11 October 1984:

- a. are in the age group 15 years 6 months to 25 years
- b. received their permanent resident before 19 April 1978
- c. have been ordinarily resident in the Republic of South Africa for a period of at least five years,

will automatically become South African citizens by naturalisation on that date.

2. Persons to whom permanent resident permits were issued between the period 19 April 1978 to 10 April 1982.

Persons in this category fall within the provisions Section 11A of Act 44 of 1949 as it existed immediately prior to the amendment which came into force on 11 April 1984. They automatically became South African Citizens before or on the 10 April 1984 if on that date they were not older than 23 years and had been ordinarily resident in the Republic of South Africa for at least two years.

3. Persons to whom permanent resident permits have been issued since 11 April 1982.

Persons in this category will automatically become South African citizens by naturalisation if they are not younger than 15 years 6 months and not older than 25 years on the day they have been ordinarily resident in South Africa for five years.

National Service Commitments

In terms of the Defence Act (Act 44 of 1957) these new male citizens will be liable for National Service. They are also obliged to register for National Service within 30 days of becoming citizens. Those who are still at school may obtain the registration forms at their schools. Others must write to the Registering Officer at:

The Registering Officer
Private Bag X281
Pretoria
0001

Telephone : (012) 323 8911 or 323 9151.

In January 1985 he would begin two years full-time national service, during which time he would probably serve at least one six-month tour of duty in an “operational area”, in northern Namibia/southern Angola or along South Africa’s borders. Alternatively, he might be allocated to serve with the South African Police, which increasingly carries out paramilitary functions.

Having survived his two years national service (which is by no means a foregone conclusion, with some 250 National Servicemen dying through “accidents” each year and the rate of attempted suicide amongst conscripts increasing 17 fold in two years, to 429 in 1986), from January 1987 he would be a member of the Citizen Force for 12 more years during which time he would be expected to perform a full 720 days of service, This would be split between, in alternate years, camps of 90 days and 30 days duration, during which time he will once again see active service in an operational area, be it in Namibia or southern Angola, along the border or in the townships.

In 1999, at the age of 32 he would be transferred for five years to the active Citizen Force Reserve, where he would be called up as required for up to a further 120 days service every two years.

In 2004, at the age of 37 he would be transferred to the Commandos, where he would provide 12 days service per year until he reached the age of 55. On 1 January 2023, he would be transferred to the National Reserve, from which, if the situation warranted it, he could be called up once again to bear arms in defence of Apartheid. In 2033 he would finally find himself free from any commitment to bear arms in defence of Apartheid. In June 1986 the Commonwealth Eminent Persons Group (EPG) submitted its report on South Africa; it concluded that:

“once decisions involving greater violence are made on both sides, they carry an inevitability of their own and are difficult, if not impossible to reverse, except as a result of exhaustion through prolonged conflict”.¹⁸

It then went on to speak of the possibility of South Africa witnessing “the worst bloodbath since the Second World War”.¹⁹

In 2033 our European citizen, having been a party to this scenario, and having paid the small price of 15.6% of his life in armed defence of Apartheid “for the privilege of living in South Africa”²⁰, could leave his ravaged land and return to Europe where he will enjoy all the benefits accorded to citizens of Europe.

2.7 The Extent of Business Support for the SADF

2.7.1 Protection of National (Industrial) Key Points

The SADF is not merely an armed defender of the territorial sovereignty

(18) Mission to South Africa: The Commonwealth Report (Commonwealth Secretariat), p. 67-68.

(19) *ibid.* (20) Magnus Malan cited in the Cape Times, 23.2.82.

of South Africa. The SADF is an explicit supporter and defender of Apartheid. Not only is the SADF firmly committed to the government's policy of Apartheid but it is now also a major force in government policy formulation through its participation in the State Security Council.

Not only are individual white European citizens in South Africa a bastion of support for the SADF but also domestic South African and transnational corporations are extensively enmeshed in the repressive machinery which has been built up to crush popular resistance to Apartheid.

As ANC President Oliver Tambo pointed out to Business International in May 1987:

*"All companies in South Africa, including multinationals and subsidiaries of foreign concerns, are integrated into Pretoria's strategic planning and directly into the repressive machinery. This is done institutionally by their participation on committees and boards, by complying with legislation and by financial and other support."*²¹

In addition to paying taxes and purchasing Defence Bonds businesses are principally (though by no means solely) embroiled in the military defence of Apartheid through the National Key Points Act 1980. This Act empowered the Minister of Defence to declare any place or area a Key Point; to compel its owners to implement, at their own expense, security precautions as laid down by a government committee; and to prohibit publication of any information regarding security measures at a Key Point. Owners who failed to comply with the regulations faced prison sentences of up to 5 years and fines of up to R20,000.

Initially there was some resistance to the Key Points Act from companies which balked at being forced to pay for 'services' they regarded as the responsibility of government, but the South African monolith which the government wishes to create in defence of Apartheid, would not be denied and opposition soon waned. Despite the fears of some foreign owned companies that their increased involvement with the SADF and SAP entailed in the provisions of the Key Points Act would lead to accusations that they were openly collaborating in the armed defence of Apartheid, within a few months 85% of the 633 identified Key Points were fully cooperating with the government.

The importance of the provisions embodied in the Key Points Act was spelt out by the then head of the SADF Lt-General Constand Viljoen at the Pelindaba Nuclear Installation in 1980:

(21) 'South Africa at the Crossroads', Speeches delivered in May 1987 by President Tambo to Business International, (ANC Lusaka).

*“It is essential that industrial commandos should be raised as soon as possible so that part-time soldiers can assume responsibility for territorial defence. This will leave the regular forces for operations such as border protection and strikes at enemy bases.”*²²

A confidential memorandum leaked from General Motors revealed that these industrial commandos would be placed under direct army command in the event of an “emergency”.²³

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In many respects the Key Points Act merely formalised a relationship which had been in existence for some time. A government Committee of Inquiry into Riots on the Mines as early as 1976 was making recommendations on the security of these vital Key Points. These recommendations included the suggestion that every mine should have a properly trained security unit equipped with patrol dogs, teargas, batons and where possible an armoured vehicle, and that furthermore this unit should “practice regularly with units of surrounding mines and with the South African Police.” This and the other recommendations were put into force during the 1970s, before such obligations were statutorily laid on companies through the Key Points Act.

Foreign Companies frequently willingly complied with these types of government recommendations in order to prove themselves good corporate citizens and in order to ensure that they continued to enjoy the high profits which the labour repressive system of Apartheid allows. As resistance to Apartheid mounted however, a number of foreign companies feared the implications for their other concerns of too close an identification with the repressive side of their South African investments. As a result in 1984 the Key Points Act was amended to allow outside firms to guard Key Points sites. This enables the companies concerned to distance themselves from brutality exercised on their behalf by security forces in the suppression of workers’ protest actions and strikes.

7.2 Voluntary Supplementary Payments For Conscripted White Employees

Foreign companies wish to appear ‘neutral’ in their involvement in South Africa and often stress the benefits to black workers arising from their operations. European companies are however heavily embroiled in the military defence of Apartheid. This is not just through the Key Points Act and the obligations which this lays on them to set up industrial commandos and large security forces, but also through their direct wage subsidies to the SADF. The vast majority of foreign companies on a voluntary basis make “top-up payments” to white employees called up to perform national service obligations. This represents a major subsidy from the private sector to the SADF and its absence would lead

(22) Resister No. 50, June-July 1987.

(23) UN Centre Against Apartheid, Notes and Documents 12/84, August 1984.

either to additional financial burdens on the state or to considerable dissatisfaction amongst conscripts (who would have to take a drop in income as a result of their military commitments). At the time of the 1982 extension of the call up a number of business representatives questioned whether employers could afford to continue with top-up pay, if this were extended by an additional two or three months a year. They nevertheless continued to do so.

These supplementary payments to white employees to fight in armed defence of Apartheid contrast markedly with corporate treatment of black employees who may be detained for their opposition to the injustices of Apartheid. These black detainees receive no top-up pay, in fact they receive no pay at all. Their families receive no subsistence allowance. Instead they are almost automatically sacked, regardless of the suffering this may bring upon them and their dependants. Such is the 'neutrality' of European companies operating in South Africa.

A further major area of European corporate involvement in defence of Apartheid lies in their extensive involvement in the Apartheid regime's efforts to achieve self-sufficiency in the sphere of armaments production. Despite significant innovations over the years in the face of the international arms embargo the fact remains that the Apartheid regime could not maintain its current level of armaments without the collaboration of western companies, many of which are European. In this manner such household names as Marconi, Plessey, Philips, AEG-Telefunken, Siemens, BP and ICI are involved in sustaining the military capacity of the SADF to wage war in defence of Apartheid throughout the Southern African region.

WAGE SUBSIDY TO THE SADF: A BASIS FOR CALCULATION

Given the military obligations laid on the 18-55 male age group (18-20 full-time military service; 20-32 an average of 60 days per year military service; 32-55 an average of 9 days per year military service) and the fact that companies pay top-up pay to employees called up, one can calculate the wage subsidy to the SADF this constitutes.

In 1985:

20-32 age group constitutes 25.0% EAP (Economically Active Population)

32-55 age group constitutes 44.2% EAP

20-32 age group on average spend 16.6% of working time doing military service

32-55 age group on average spend 6.7% of working time doing military service.

This implies a loss of 4.15% of total white male waged labour time from the 20-32 age group and a loss of 3.0% of total waged labour time from the 32-55 age group. Giving a total loss of 7.15% of total waged labour time from the EAP as a result of military service obligations in the SADF.

Given existing pay scales for South African servicemen and assuming that the majority of conscripts remain as ordinary soldiers, then the average daily pay would be Rand 12. This would give an annual income of R4,380. Taking the average white wage in European companies to be approximately R21,000* then top-up payments by European companies to conscripts would be 80% of their normal pay. This would mean that fully 5.72% of the white male wage bill goes as a wage subsidy to the SADF.

This would mean that for every white male South African citizen employed by a European company a wage subsidy of some R1,201 per annum would be paid to the SADF.

The number of white South African citizens employed by European companies can be estimated by using the 1988 report on the EC Code of Conduct (period until 30.6.86).**

Non-black labour accounts for 31,048 employees in companies from Belgium, Denmark, Germany, Greece, Spain, France, the Netherlands and Portugal. Taking into account personnel on secondment, female and coloured labour, the male white force will be 18,629 (60%). This would lead to an annual wage subsidy supporting the SADF of R22,373,188 (ECU 10,123,867).

Italian and (mainly) British companies employ 75% of the total number of black labour hired by European companies. The Code of Conduct-report however does not give non-black labour employed in British and Italian companies. When the proportion of black and non-black labour is assumed to be the same in British and Italian as in other EC companies, then a further 93,123 non-blacks were hired by EC companies in South Africa. This might lead to a further 55,874 male whites in EC companies, and a further annual subsidy to the SADF of R67,104,433 (ECU 30,364,755).

In practical terms, this means that European companies from Belgium, Denmark, Germany, Greece, Spain, France, the Netherlands and Portugal together subsidise an equivalent of 1332 full-time South African soldiers. European companies from (mainly) the UK and Italy may subsidise a further equivalent of 3994 full-time soldiers.

* In 1986 the average white industrial wage was R21,252. It is assumed that most European investment is concentrated in the manufacturing sector (or the equally highly paid mining sector), hence the round figure of Rand 21,000 is used. In 1986 the average value of the Rand was .4525 ECU.

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