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THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA:  
STRATEGIC GOLDMINE OF WESTERN SECURITY

BY

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A paper submitted to the Faculty of the Naval War College in partial satisfaction of the requirements of the Department of Operations.

The contents of this paper reflect my own personal views and are not necessarily endorsed by the Naval War College or the Department of the Navy.

Signature Fred Geisler

21 June 1991

SEMINAR 8  
CAPTAIN DUNN  
COMMANDER CODNER  
LIEUTENANT COLONEL PIZZANO



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ABSTRACT

SOUTH AFRICA: STRATEGIC GOLDMINE OF WESTERN SECURITY

This paper attempts to analyze the strategic importance of the Republic of South Africa to the West in the context of 1991. The paper examines the geographic importance of South Africa and its role in the economic order of the world. The paper also reviews the concept of strategic minerals and the importance of South Africa to the West in terms of naval facilities. Although the question of racial policies often guides foreign policy relationships with South Africa, the issue will not be discussed within the framework of this study. The primary focus of this paper will be to argue for closer ties between the West and post-apartheid South Africa as an insurance policy for the future.

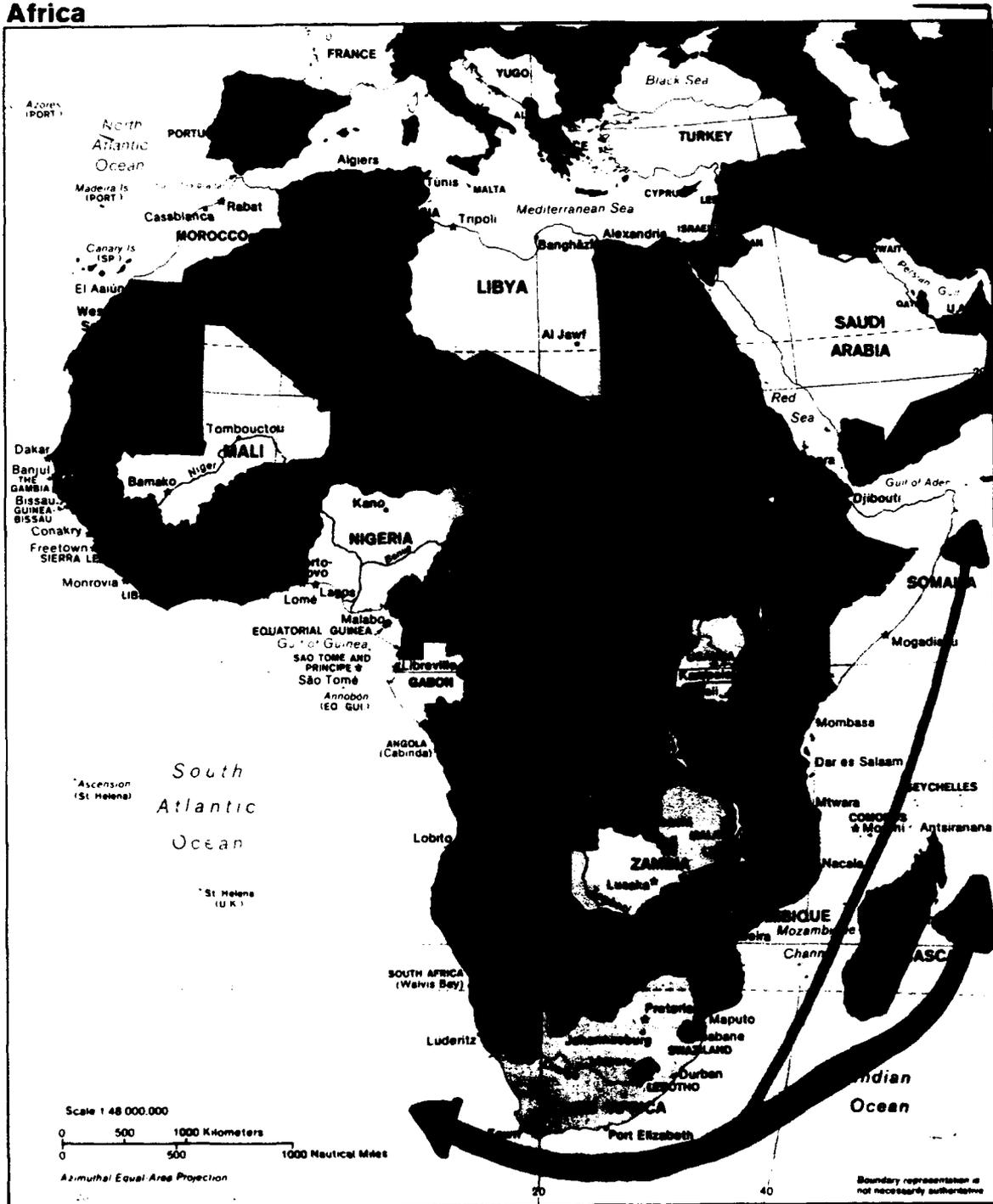
## PREFACE

The racial policies of the Republic of South Africa have led to a great deal of negative attention being focused upon the apartheid nation. In this clamor South Africa has been isolated within the world community and forced to turn from its pro-Western stance into one of survival. Lost in these discussion has been the strategic importance of South Africa to the West. Although many classified estimates have been written on this subject, this paper attempts to address the issue in an unclassified forum using various sources. The information from these sources in conjunction with the analysis contained within this work is an attempt to focus attention on the true value of South Africa to the West.

## GEOGRAPHICAL SETTING

The Republic of South Africa (R.S.A.) is located at the southern extremity of the African continent and contains an area of 1,221,040 square kilometers (land area of 1,221,040 square kilometers), which includes the Namibian exclave of Walvis Bay, Marion Island, and Prince Edward Island. In comparison, the Republic is slightly less than twice the size of Texas. The RSA completely surrounds Lesotho, and almost surrounds Swaziland. South Africa has a coastline of 2,954 kilometers and total land boundaries of 4,973 kilometers; Botswana 1,840 kilometers, Lesotho 909 kilometers, Mozambique 491 kilometers, Namibia 1,078 kilometers, Swaziland 430 kilometers, and Zimbabwe 225 kilometers. The nation consists of a vast interior plateau rimmed by rugged hills and a narrow coastal plain, with only ten percent of the land being arable. The climate is predominantly semiarid, but subtropical along the coasts. Lack of important arterial rivers and adequate lakes requires extensive water conservation and control measures. The July 1990 population was 39,549,941, with an annual growth rate of 2.7 percent.

MAP 1 -  
Africa



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**CAPE SEA ROUTE**

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## CHAPTER I- INTRODUCTION

The advent of conflict in the Persian Gulf in January of 1991 has once again demonstrated to the world community the fragile nature of world order. Just as the Persian Gulf has become a synonym for oil, southern Africa and in particular the Republic of South Africa, has become a synonym for strategic and critical minerals.

...a region increasingly referred to as the Persian Gulf of Minerals, ...herein lies massive reserves of platinum, manganese, vanadium, cobalt and chrome -- minerals vital to the economic well-being of the United States. Within that region lies 86 percent of the world's reserves of manganese, 64 percent of the world's reserves of vanadium, 95 percent of the world's reserves of chromium, and 52 percent of the world's reserves of cobalt. Yet the significance of the area to America and to the Western world is belied by the scant attention devoted by the United States to that region, not just as a focal point of political uncertainty, but as a vital source of <sup>2</sup> strategic and critical minerals.

The 1991 war in the Persian Gulf has also once again demonstrated the susceptibility of world commerce that moves through the Suez Canal. As the threat of danger in the canal area and Red Sea increased, so did the insurance premiums for ships plying the canal. More shippers are avoiding the canal and turning to the Cape Sea Route as the principal waterway. The Cape of Good Hope, at the tip of South Africa, is a strategic waterway that is also a potential chokepoint that is of vital importance to the maritime commerce of Western nations.

In an effort to call attention to the importance of

southern Africa, and in particular South Africa, to the national security of the United States, President Bush in March of 1990 stated:

Africa is a major contributor to the world supply of raw materials and minerals and a region of enormous human potential.

We continue to press for a rapid and complete end to South Africa's apartheid. We support negotiations leading to a democratic, non-racial South Africa that would enhance long term stability in the country and the region. We are encouraged by the progress that has been made, particularly the release of Nelson Mandela and the unbanning of political organizations. We look to all parties to continue to take the steps necessary to create a climate in which productive negotiations can take place.

In an age where foreign military basing rights are being threatened it may be wise for the West to look at the possibility of establishing such a facility in South Africa. The country has several excellent harbors and facilities that could easily meet the needs of a naval force.

In 1948 the government of South Africa instituted the laws of apartheid that would eventually so anger the world community that the United Nations levied severe sanctions upon the nation. On the first day of February in 1991, South African President F.W. De Klerk announced his intent to continue the reforms initiated by his administration that would ultimately completely repeal the apartheid laws. In this context it will behoove the West, especially the United States, to re-examine its

relationship with South Africa in order to once again openly recognize the contribution that the Republic makes to the security of the West.

TABLE 1  
SOUTH AFRICA'S RESERVES OF SELECTED MINERALS

Mineral	South Africa's Share of World Reserves (Percent)	South Africa's Rank in World Reserves
Antimony <sup>1</sup>	7	3
Asbestos <sup>2</sup>	15	3
Chromite <sup>3</sup>	91	1
Coal <sup>4</sup>	5	6
Copper <sup>1</sup>	2	17
Diamonds <sup>2</sup> (Industrial Stones)	8	6
Gold <sup>1</sup>	51	1
Iron Ore <sup>1</sup>	1	13
Manganese <sup>1</sup>	53	1
Platinum Group Metals <sup>1</sup>	82	1
Uranium <sup>5</sup>	16.3 (Free World)	2
Vanadium <sup>1</sup>	47	1

1-Data derived from US Bureau of Mines, Minerals Facts and Problems, 1980.

2-Data derived from US Bureau of Mines, Mineral Commodity Summaries, 1983.

3-Data derived from US Bureau of Mines, Mineral Commodity Profiles-1983-Chromium.

4-Data derived from US CIA Handbook of Economic Statistics, 1983.

5-Data derived from US Department of Energy Statistical Data on the Uranium Industry, January 1, 1982.

## CHAPTER II -STRATEGIC AND CRITICAL MINERALS

According to the Strategic and Critical Minerals Stock-Piling Act of 1979, the United States Government currently defines strategic and critical minerals as those that (a) would be needed to supply the military, industrial, and essential civilian needs of the United States during a national emergency, and (b) are not found or produced in the United States in sufficient quantities to meet such needs.<sup>4</sup> It is important to note that for the most part there are no short term substitutes available for these minerals.

There are four minerals that are deemed essential to the national security of the United States and its Allies. These four minerals, which are often referred to as the Strategic Four,<sup>5</sup> are chromium, manganese, cobalt, and the platinum group. For these four minerals the West is virtually totally dependent upon overseas sources of supply, which are both concentrated and susceptible to disruption.

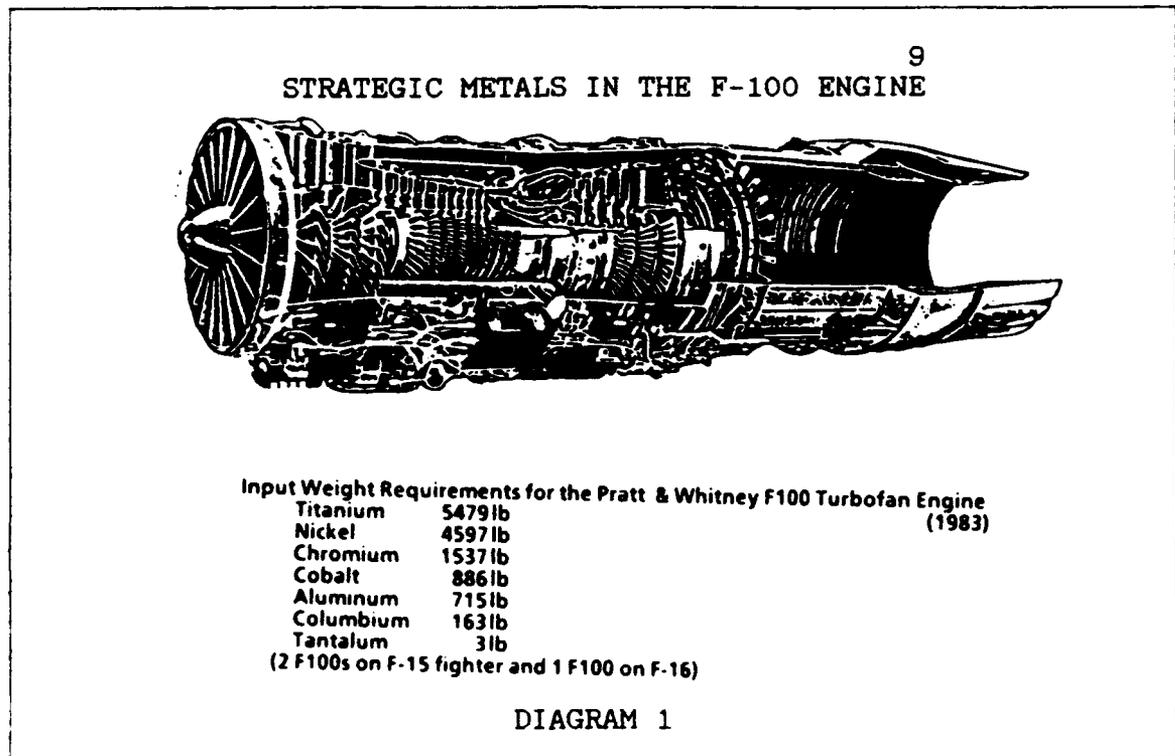
TABLE 2 - Distribution of World Reserves of the Strategic Four <sup>6</sup>

Mineral	Country
Chromium	South Africa 91 %, Zimbabwe 7%, Other 2 %
Manganese	South Africa 41%, USSR 37%, Gabon 11%, Other 11%
Platinum	South Africa 79%, USSR 19%, Canada 1%, Other 1%
Cobalt	Zaire 40%, Zambia 13%, New Caledonia 8 %, Cuba 7 %, Other 32%
<p>Source: U.S. Bureau of Mines, <u>Mineral Commodity Summaries</u> (Washington, D.C.: Department of the Interior, 1985) and various interviews with U.S. Bureau of Mines Commodity specialists and mineral industry leaders in Zimbabwe, Zaire, and South Africa.</p>	

As can readily be determined from Table 2 South Africa contains the vast majority of the world reserves of three of the Strategic Four minerals. In order to better link the importance of these minerals to national defense it is useful to briefly describe how the minerals are utilized in modern industry.

Chromium is a required element in the production of stainless steel and is also widely used in a variety of special purpose alloys, in heat resistant linings for electric furnaces, and as a pigment and plating agent in the chemical industry. Its use in the aerospace industry is critical because there are no satisfactory substitutes for chromium in alloys providing high corrosion resistance at the extremely high temperatures reached by jet aircraft engines. <sup>7</sup> For example, the F-100 jet engine

which powers the F-15 and F-16 fighters, requires over 1,600  
8  
pounds of chromium.



In 1988 the apparent U.S. consumption of chromium was  
10  
419,000 tons. South Africa possesses chromite reserves of  
approximately 3 billion metric tons. This could sustain mine  
11  
production for over 900 years at current output levels.

Manganese is mainly used in the production of steel in  
order to remove oxygen and sulfur from the end product. It also  
12  
strengthens, hardens, and adds resiliency to the steel. Many of  
these hybrid steels are used within the defense industry, and

there are no known substitutes for manganese. In 1988 the estimated U.S. consumption was 554,000 short tons.

The platinum group of metals consist of platinum, palladium, iridium, osmium, rhodium, and ruthenium, which are used in a wide variety of domestic applications.<sup>14</sup> The most strategic uses of platinum are in petroleum refining,<sup>15</sup> petrochemicals, and in the telecommunications industries. One of the most common known uses of platinum is in catalytic converters to control automobile emissions. With the recent acquisition of environmental awareness in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union catalytic converters will likely be introduced and the demand for platinum will increase dramatically.<sup>16</sup> In 1988 the U.S. consumption was 2,282,626 troy ounces.<sup>17</sup> Work continues in the field of developing ceramic substitutes for platinum.

Cobalt is an essential alloying agent in the electrical and aerospace industries. The superalloys which require cobalt cannot be made with substitutes and constitute its most critical use. Each F-100 engine requires 910 pounds of cobalt for its ability to withstand stress of up to 20,000 pounds per square inch and temperatures of 1,800 degrees Fahrenheit. Substitution for cobalt in superalloys cannot be accomplished without a loss of effectiveness and ceramic substitutes will not be available for some time.<sup>18</sup> The 1988 U.S. consumption was 8,020 tons.<sup>19</sup>

TABLE 3

WORLD PRODUCTION OF SELECTED MAJOR STRATEGIC MINERALS-1988

<u>MINERAL</u>	<u>U.S.S.R.</u>	<u>SOUTH AFRICA</u>	<u>U.S.A.</u>	<u>WORLD</u>	<u>S.F. PROD AS A OF WORLD PROD</u>
ANTIMONY short tons	10,600	7,600	W	78,196	10
ASBESTOS metric tons	2,600,000	145,405	18,233	4,357,742	.03
CHROMITE metric tons	3,240,000	4,200,000	W	11,665,717	36
COPPER thousands metric tons	640	170.1	1,419.7	8,453.4	2
GOLD troy ounces	9,000,000	19,881,126	6,459,539	58,453,814	34
IRON ORE thousands metric tons	138,000	15,906	36,468	539,655	3
LEAD thousands metric tons	440	91.3	394	3,426.3	3
MANGANESE ORE thousands short tons	3,000	1,568.00	--	9,175	17
MERCURY 76-LB Flasks	67,000	--	W	166,520	--
MICA thousands pounds	110,000	--	286,400	595,600	--
NICKEL short tons	209,000	--	38,400	920,016	--
PLATINUM GROUP troy ounces	3,900,000	4,285,000	W	8,667,633	49
SULFUR thousands metric tons	10,700	700	10,746	58,398	1
TIN metric tons	17,000	1,399	1,467	204,340	.007
TITANIUM short tons	11,000	61,000	W	1,902,000	3
ZINC thousands metric tons	963	85	329.8	7,109.2	.012

SOURCE: U.S. Department of the Interior-Bureau of Mines,  
MINERALS YEARBOOK-VOLUME I-METALS AND MINERALS  
(WASHINGTON, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office,  
1990).

W - Information not released

The United States and its allies became aware of the criticality of strategic minerals during World War I and World War II. However, the true awareness of dependency came to public attention in 1975 when the late Leonid Brezhnev let it be universally known that, in Moscow's judgement, there are two great international "treasure houses" upon which the advanced nations of the West depend: The Arabian Peninsula and Persian Gulf setting atop a wealth of petroleum; and the southern reaches of the African continent containing war reserves of equally indispensable non-fuel minerals and metals. <sup>20</sup> Historically, in an attempt to deal with the anticipated shortage of strategic minerals the U.S. government passed the Strategic and Critical Minerals Act of 1946. The act, in part states:

That the natural resources of the United States in certain strategic and critical materials being deficient or insufficiently developed to supply the industrial, military, and naval needs of the country for the common defense, it is the policy of Congress and the purpose and intent of this Act to provide for the acquisition and retention of stocks of these materials and to encourage the conservation and development of sources of these materials within the United states, and thereby decrease and prevent wherever possible a dangerous and costly dependence of the United States upon foreign nations for supplies of these <sup>21</sup> materials in times of national emergency.

In 1949 the responsibility of the strategic stockpile was transferred to the General Services Administration, and the Defense Production Act of 1950 stated that:

In view of the present international situation and in order to provide for the national defense and regional

security, our mobilization effort continues to require some diversion of certain materials and facilities from civilian use to military and related purposes. It also requires the development of preparedness programs and the expansion of productive capacity and supply beyond the levels needed to meet civilian demand, in order to reduce the time required for full mobilization <sup>22</sup> in the event of attack on the United States.

Prior to 1962 the stockpile objectives and holdings were kept secret. On July 1, 1979, the stockpile program was taken over by the Federal Emergency Management Agency [FEMA]. In 1988 the responsibility for the National Defense Stockpile (NDS) was transferred to the Department of Defense, which immediately classified the program. Within DoD, the Defense Logistics Agency is handling the buying, selling, and storing of strategic materials. <sup>23</sup> The NDS has been beset with problems. Probably the most serious flaw in the program has been the degree of worth placed upon the effort by subsequent administrations.

Some individuals, including members of Congress, have voiced a point of view that the United States should stop all imports from South Africa and buy as many strategic minerals as possible from the Soviet Union. The argument is that such action would further punish South Africa for apartheid while at the same time rewarding the Soviets for their moves towards democracy in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union.

Through the years South Africa has kept the price of its mineral supplies at very competitive rates and has steadfastly

TABLE 4. U.S. NATIONAL DEFENSE STOCKPILE INVENTORY  
OF SELECTED STRATEGIC AND CRITICAL MINERALS  
( as of September 30, 1980)

<u>MATERIAL</u>	<u>1980 Goal</u>	<u>INVENTORY</u>
Chromium Group		
Chemical Grade Ore	675,000	242,414
Metallurgical Grade	3,200,000	2,488,043
High Carbon Ferro	185,000	402,696
Low Carbon Ferro	75,000	318,892
Chromium Metal	20,000	3,763
Cobalt	85,400,000	40,802,393
Manganese Group		
Chemical Grade Ore	170,000	221,044
Metallurgical Grade Ore	2,700,000	3,378,713
High Carbon Ferro	439,000	599,978
Platinum Group Metals		
Iridium (troy ounces)	98,000	16,991
Palladium (troy ounces)	3,000,000	1,255,003
Platinum (troy ounces)	1,310,000	452,640

SOURCE: U.S. Federal Emergency Management Agency, Stockpile Report to the Congress, April-September 1980.

refused to join a mineral cartel. The South Africans have also proved to be an extremely stable supplier of minerals throughout the years. On the other hand, supplies from the Soviet Union have been sporadic and have been halted during times of tension, such as the 1962 Cuban missile crisis, and during the Vietnam conflict.

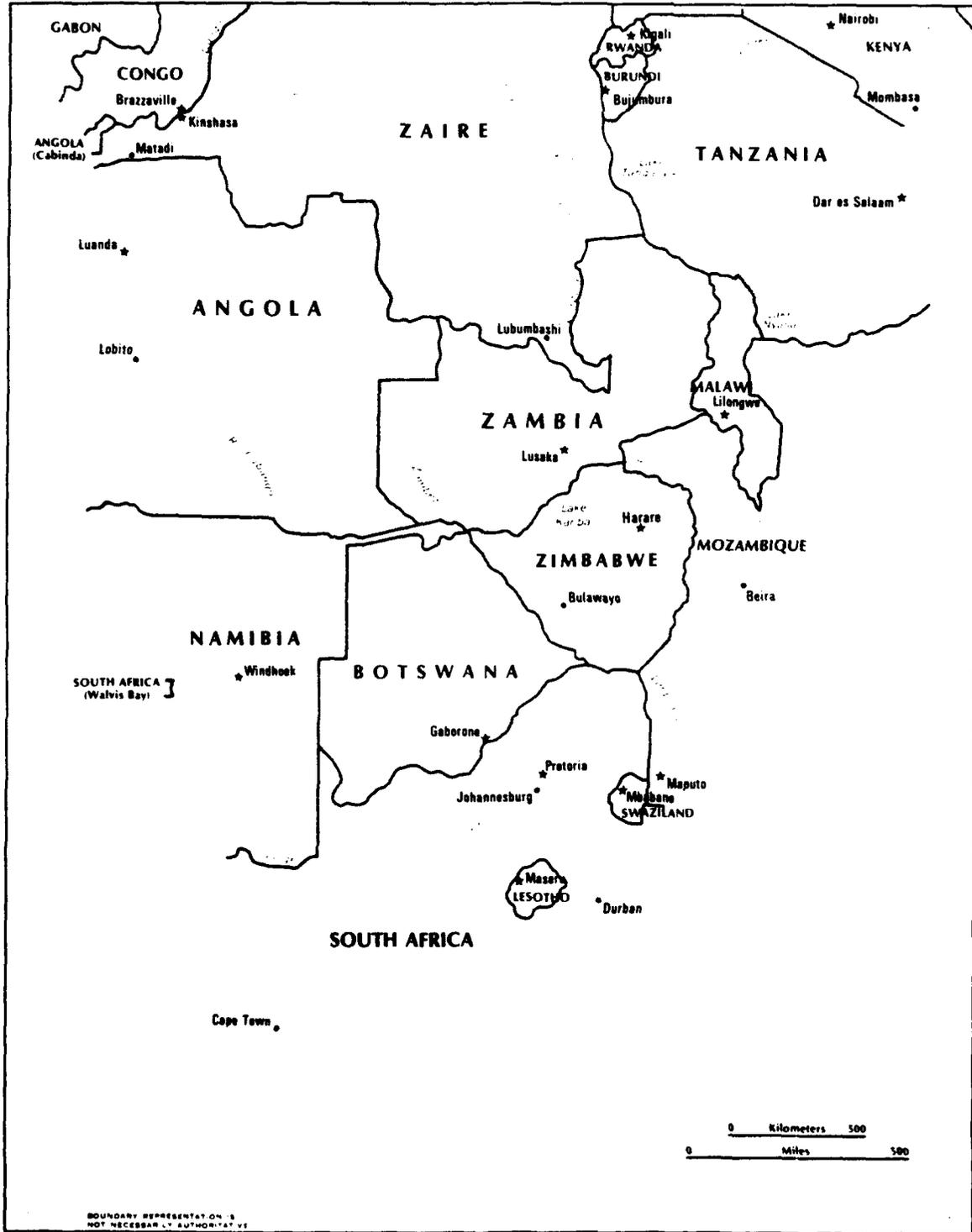
Even as relations between the Soviets and the West have improved, a very strong argument can be made against relying upon the Soviets for our supplies of strategic minerals. Such a situation could lead to the potential blackmail of the West by a Soviet regime.

It is of critical importance to the continued national security of Western nations that relations with South Africa be maintained so that the flow of strategic minerals is not interrupted. It also in the best interest of the West to foster a close relationship with post apartheid South Africa so that the world order in strategic minerals is not upset during any transitional period.

### CHAPTER III - THE QUESTION OF NAVAL BASING RIGHTS

In 1955 the British government entered into an agreement with South Africa to further develop and utilize the Simonstown Naval Base. As a result Simonstown became the largest and most modern permanent base in Africa south of the Sahara, and the only true naval base in Southern Africa.<sup>25</sup> In 1974 British Vice Admiral Henry Leach was in command of a Royal Navy task force that had departed the United Kingdom on its way around the Cape of Good Hope in order to participate in an exercise in the Indian Ocean. Admiral Leach intended for his naval force to make a port call at Table Bay, Cape Town.<sup>26</sup> As soon as this was made public an immediate political debate erupted in the British Parliament over the visit of a Western naval force to the apartheid South Africa. The visit was canceled, and less than nine months later in 1975 the British ended their operations at the Royal Navy Dockyard- Simonstown, and ended their historic usage of all South African ports. Ironically, it was the same Sir Henry Leach who was the First Sea Lord when Britain went to war with Argentina over the Falkland Islands. It has been reported that Leach then realized the importance of the Simonstown facility, since he was forced to base his operations out of Ascension Island, some 1,000 miles more distant from the area of operations than the facility in South Africa.

MAP 2 -  
**Southern Africa**



The United States Navy has historically realized the importance of port calls at South African ports, a practice which had began when the first U.S. warship arrived at Cape Town in 1798.<sup>27</sup> In 1965 the aircraft carrier U.S.S. Constellation departed Norfolk (Virginia) bound for combat operations in the Tonkin Gulf off Vietnam. The South African's cooperated in refueling the carrier at sea off Cape Town.<sup>28</sup> The United States officially ended naval port calls in 1965, although none had occurred for some time prior to that.

In addition to the excellent naval facility at Simonstown, South Africa has several other ports that are by far the most efficient ports in Africa. The following is a list of six other ports that deserve a closer look:

DURBAN- Located on the southeast coast of Natal province. The country's largest port and the busiest on the continent. Durban handles 25 percent of South Africa's overseas trade. The port has a large container facility, and is a major processor of regional trade. Freight forwarding agencies in Durban represent most of the Black African countries to the north<sup>29</sup> and efficiently coordinate their overseas trade.

Cape Town- Located on the southwest coast in the Cape Province. The port is known as the major fruit export site and has extensive precooling facilities. Ship repair is a viable part of the port economy which has one of the world's<sup>30</sup> largest drydocks. The port is underutilized.

Saldanha Bay- Located 112 kilometers northwest of Cape Town in Cape Province. This port has been developed as a iron ore bulk<sup>31</sup> facility and is a superb natural harbor.



Richard's Bay- Located 200 kilometers north of Durban it is one of the leading coal terminals in the world. It was designed as an industrial port for the import and export of ores and processed minerals. The potential for port growth is substantial and a large industrial area has been planned for nearby. Currently, virtually all of South Africa's chromite and <sup>32</sup> ferrochromium are shipped from this port.

East London- Located 225 kilometers northeast of Port Elizabeth on the Indian Ocean, this is the river port through which Zambian and Zairian ore exports pass. East London is the chief port for the export of minerals <sup>33</sup> from Botswana, Zaire, and Zambia.

Walvis Bay- With the granting of full independence to Namibia in 1990, South Africa retained control of this Namibian enclave. Walvis Bay is the only developed port for Namibia, and is located 700 miles north of Saldanha Bay.

Virtually all of South Africa is connected by the most extensive rail and highway network on the continent. Of the 93,000 kilometers of rail line on the entire continent, South Africa accounts for 24,500 kilometers, or some 25 percent <sup>34</sup> of the total. The economic importance of South Africa to the trade of the Southern African region cannot be overstated. South Africa transport handles 85 percent of the combined imports and <sup>35</sup> exports of Zaire, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Botswana, and Malawi.

As part of the British withdrawal from the Indian Ocean the United States in 1975 was granted the use of the island of Diego Garcia. The island is barely large enough to provide defensible naval repair facilities and is extremely limited in <sup>36</sup> terms of expansion potential.

The Soviet Union currently has basing rights or agreements with several African nations to include an airbase at Conarky, Guinea, and a naval facility at Berbera in Somalia.<sup>37</sup> The Soviets also have access to facilities at Pointe Noire (Congo), Lobito and Luanda (Angola), Maputo (Mozambique), Dar es Salaam (Tanzania), Diego Suarez (Madagascar), and facilities in India and at the Maldive Islands.

Meanwhile the only port where Western naval forces might be welcome in Southern Africa or the Indian Ocean is Mombassa, Kenya. The United States has explored the possibility of establishing naval facilities in the Seychelles, Mauritius, and the Comoro Islands. The stability of the indigenous governments and the massive construction that would be required at any of these locations make their usefulness questionable.

The Republic of South Africa has been a staunch supporter of the West. During World War II South African forces supported the Allied war effort by sending forces to North Africa, Europe,<sup>38</sup> and by liberating the island of Madagascar. The Republic showed its solidarity with the West by taking part in the Berlin Airlift, and by dispatching an air force squadron to fight in the Korean conflict.<sup>39</sup> South Africa was also the first nation to recognize the state of Israel upon its formation on 14 May 1948. The Israeli Air Force was organized with South African assistance

and the first Israeli pilot to be killed in action was a  
volunteer <sup>40</sup>  
on loan from South Africa. During the 1973 war at least one  
jet fighter of South African origin was shot down over the  
<sup>41</sup>  
Suez Canal.

South Africa has been a constant supporter of the West  
and could provide excellent port and basing facilities for  
Western naval forces. The government has indicated that it would  
look favorably upon any such requests. In addition to the ports,  
the South African listening and reconnaissance station located at  
Silvermine could be potentially exploited on a joint basis.

#### CHAPTER IV - THE CAPE SEA ROUTE

The Governors of the British East India Company realized the importance of the Cape Sea Route in 1781 when they stated that " whatever power possesses the Cape will also rule India." <sup>42</sup> American naval strategist Admiral Alfred T. Mahan once predicted that whoever controls the Indian Ocean dominates Asia and also predicted that during the 21 st century the destiny of the world will be decided within its waters. <sup>43</sup> An indispensable part of this notion is the importance of the Cape Sea Route.

South Africa controls 2,954 kilometers of coastline, which remains essential to the ongoing security of the strategic maritime trade around the Cape of Good Hope. The West depends on the Cape Route for stability and economic growth. The strategic minerals discussed in Chapter II are shipped via this route. The most strategic commodity plying the Cape waters is petroleum. The 1967 Arab-Israeli war caused the closing of the Suez Canal and forced oil shipments to be routed via the Cape. Even after the reopening of the Suez waterway in 1975 the Cape Route continued during the early 1980's to carry 28 percent of the petroleum consumed in the United States and 65 percent of <sup>44</sup> Europe's total oil consumption.

The strategic importance of the Cape Route is often compared with other vital waterways such as Gibraltar, Red Sea,

and the Panama and Suez Canals. A South African Minister of Foreign Affairs went on record to state that:

South Africa's strategic position in the world cannot be denied. Occupying the southern most part of the African continent its strategic location is immediately evident, a sentinel to the world's most important canal. Indeed it is no exaggeration to state that the closing of this gateway, midway between the two oceans, would have a devastating effect on the side against whom the closing is directed. We find ourselves midway between the East and West, geographically speaking. This geographical fact might in the future assume greater significance. Our shores are washed by both the Indian and Atlantic Oceans. It is as if we are destined either to brave the stormy seas of both oceans or to enjoy <sup>45</sup> the tranquility of our shores divorced from both.

The distance between the Cape and the ice of the south polar region is approximately five-hundred miles. However, most ships that traverse the region tend to hug as close to the coast as possible in order to avoid the violent sea conditions and unpredictable weather to the south.

South Africa has the potential to develop into a regional maritime power. As a result of sanctions the South African Navy has currently withdrawn from the responsibility of protecting the Cape sea route. The Navy's primary objectives at this time are the protection of the sea lines of communication and maritime infrastructures. The focus is upon the protection of coastal <sup>46</sup> waters, harbors, territorial waters, EEZ, and fisheries zones.

Although sanctions have hampered the development of naval forces, the South African Defense Force (SADF) is the largest

military force in sub-Saharan Africa with a total available personnel strength approaching one-half million men. The SADF is well trained and motivated with substantial combat experience accruing from its lengthy tenure on the Angolan border. Many of its weapons are of high quality, domestically produced by

\*  
Armcor. Though somewhat lacking in fighter aircraft, the SADF is more than a match for the combined forces of the neighboring  
47  
states.

The security of the Republic of South Africa is closely associated with the security of the West. The West should recognize the contributions that South Africa has made to world security and utilize the indigenous assets that South Africa possesses to strengthen the security of Southern Africa and the Cape Sea Route.

\* Armcor - the South African Armaments Corporation that produces many of the armaments used by the SADF.

## CHAPTER V - CONCLUSION

The Republic of South Africa is one of the cornerstones upon which the security and stability of the Western nations depend. Unfortunately for all concerned, South Africa's policy of apartheid has alienated the country within the world community and has obscured its strategic importance.

South Africa possesses many strategic minerals that are critical to the economic and military survival of the West. The four most important minerals that are often referred to as the Strategic Four are: Chromium, Manganese, Cobalt, and the Platinum Group of Metals. For these four minerals the West is virtually totally dependent upon foreign supplies. There are no acceptable substitutes for these minerals. Besides the four minerals named there are numerous others which South Africa is the West's principal supplier.

Western security is often dependent upon the availability of foreign naval basing rights. South Africa has several excellent ports that could be utilized by Western navies. Besides the modern facilities at Simonstown there are good ports at Durban, Cape Town, Saldanha Bay, Richards Bay, and at Walvis Bay.

The West is also strategically dependent upon the Cape Sea Route for economic growth and stability. The 1991 war in the Persian Gulf has again demonstrated the vulnerability of the

Suez Canal and the importance of the Cape Sea Route.

Without a doubt, the Republic of South Africa is the Strategic Goldmine of Western security. As the era of apartheid comes to an end it is time to welcome South Africa back into the Western family of nations and to recognize the strategic importance of the Republic.

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