

Central Intelligence Agency



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Options and Scenarios for South African Actions Against Its Neighbors

South Africa's economic and military dominance of the region provides it with a broad range of options for actions against its neighbors, many of which it has exercised repeatedly. Pretoria's regional policy under State President P. W. Botha, who came to power in 1978 after 13 years as Defense Minister, has been especially prone to coercive measures, ranging from "economic pinpricks" such as recently restricted supplies of lubricants for Zimbabwean diesels to full-fledged support for Angolan insurgents. This memorandum:

- Provides a menu of South African economic and military options for each of Pretoria's neighbors, with actions listed in order of severity, including the probable impact on the country, the country's probable response, and an estimate, where possible, of the costs to the United States and the West of compensating a country for damage.
- Formulates several scenarios, starting with a baseline assessment, that project Pretoria's probable regional reaction to alternative US and Western initiatives toward South Africa, indicates the options and targets the South Africans are likely to choose, and assesses the impact on US and Western interests.
- Outlines briefly our understanding of the general priorities and factors that affect Pretoria's policies toward its neighbors.

We begin by examining the forces that affect Pretoria's calculus, reflecting our judgment that the evolving crisis inside the country has caused Pretoria to take an increasingly demanding and coercive stance in the region. [REDACTED]

Section I

The View From Pretoria

We doubt that South Africa proceeds within the region from any "grand strategy" but rather believe that leaders in Pretoria react to events and seize opportunities as they present themselves. Nevertheless, the Botha government's decisions on dealing with individual black states appear to fall within a framework of general objectives and priorities. We believe, however, that several key factors, many of them reflecting domestic political conditions, critically affect how Pretoria implements its regional policy [REDACTED]

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F(b)(3)
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Attacking Anti-South African Insurgents. Pretoria's hostility toward a neighbor is directly influenced by the extent to which it supports—or is perceived to support—the African National Congress (ANC), the South-West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO), and the Pan-Africanist

Congress (PAC). Pretoria appears determined to attack these groups' external links, either by forcing its neighbors to crack down on their activities or, as appears to be the case more recently, taking direct action themselves to crush what they see as outside subversives. We believe there is a strong psychological dimension driving this prime objective of South African regional policy: since Pretoria's suspicions about its black neighbors reflect its severe anxieties about its black majority, no independent black state, except possibly Swaziland, can ever do enough to satisfy Pretoria's demands on the ANC issue. Even Botswana's determined, albeit unsuccessful, efforts to eliminate ANC activity within its borders has won it little relief from South African saber rattling, assassination teams, and cross-border raids. The Botha government, moreover, has often played to white concerns—whether over rising domestic unrest, recent ANC attacks, or the “too rapid” pace of reform—by attacking ANC facilities across its borders or punishing its neighbors for their actual or putative support for the ANC [REDACTED]

Maintaining Regional Supremacy. Pretoria's profound skepticism about the longer term possibility of peaceful coexistence with neighboring black states, in our judgment, has led it to adopt a second major regional priority: keeping its neighbors—particularly those it regards as most hostile—weak and dependent. Pretoria has maintained its status as the region's superpower by creating instability and dependency throughout southern Africa: by backing insurgencies and dissidents in Angola, Mozambique, Zimbabwe, and Lesotho; by its ready use of economic and transportation leverage to undercut regional efforts to reduce the dependence of black-ruled states on South Africa; and by conducting covert operations, such as the 1982 attack on Zimbabwe's Thornhill Airbase, that preempt challenges to South African power. Pretoria's realpolitik regional policy is reinforced, in our judgment, by a deeply rooted belief that, in order to maintain power over an increasingly restive black majority, Pretoria must demand respectful behavior from its black-ruled neighbors. For example, normally compliant Botswana's close security liaison relationship with South Africa still falls short of Pretoria's desire for a formal security pact. Most white South Africans, including the often prickly State President, also appear particularly sensitive to verbal and diplomatic slights from neighboring countries. We suspect that the ruling Afrikaner's traditional need to show who is “baas” will increasingly be acted out on its black-ruled neighbors as Pretoria's frustration with its inability to suppress domestic unrest grows [REDACTED]

The Racial Struggle in South Africa. As our preceding analysis suggests, we believe that white attitudes and perspectives formed during three centuries of white minority rule and now under increasing pressure from the black majority are critical to predicting Pretoria's future regional moves. Some white South Africans undoubtedly remain unrepentant racial supremacists who find the thought of sharing political power—let alone living under a system based on political equality—unthinkable; others clearly recognize that the “numbers” are against them and that whites must move to accommodate black aspirations. White South Africans of all political persuasions, however, have been reared in a society built on racial dominance. Intensified pressure from growing black unrest and deepening international isolation, in our view, will sharpen divisions among whites, strengthen polarizing tendencies that fuel both rightwing extremism and white emigration, and cause Pretoria to follow more reactive, emotional, and seemingly irrational foreign policies. The growing siege mentality in Pretoria reinforces the independent Afrikaners' traditional preference for a “go-it-alone” strategy and is likely to bring a more unconstrained transference of white anxieties and impulses into harsh actions against its black neighbors. [REDACTED]

Attitude Toward the West. In this climate, the white South Africans' long-held love-hate relationship with the West is likely to intensify. On the one hand, whites identify with the Western, Christian, and democratic values, often pointing with pride to particular parallels between their country and the United States. On the other hand, they strongly resent Western opposition to apartheid, frequently dismissing it as hypocritical meddling in their internal affairs. Nevertheless, we believe that the Botha government has often recognized the tactical utility of cooperating with the West, such as when Pretoria shifted from its tough, coercive posture in 1982 and most of 1983 to its participation in early 1984 in US-brokered diplomatic accords with Mozambique and Angola. However, these periods of relative amity—when concerns over possible Western reaction have sometimes restrained Pretoria's hand with its neighbors—usually have been short lived. As unrealistic South African expectations about the West's tolerance for apartheid are dashed in the wake of Western public reaction to a new outburst of domestic turmoil, Pretoria has tended to swing drastically in the other direction, adopting a defiant, hostile, anti-Western stance. In this mode, South Africa has often appeared intent on attacking its neighbors to spite the West, rather than simply in spite of Western reaction. [REDACTED]

South Africa—Deep in the Laager. Our reading of the principles and factors affecting South Africa's regional policy suggests that Pretoria is now on an increasingly harsh tack against its neighbors—even in the absence of further "Western provocations" (that is, sanctions) or "Western meddling" (that is, initiatives). Despite its imposition in June of a nationwide state of emergency and the estimated detention of well over 5,000 black activists and leaders, domestic unrest shows no signs of abating. ANC attacks are increasing, becoming more indiscriminate, and beginning to claim white casualties. At the same time, Pretoria must contend with political challenges from an increasingly strident white right wing and harsher antiapartheid rhetoric from South African blacks and neighboring states. South Africa feels pressed on all sides at home. Last year's imposition of limited sanctions by the United States and the politically inspired run on the rand that forced Pretoria to declare a debt moratorium provoked a new wave of hostility toward the West and the United States in particular. In our judgment, these trends are likely to persist and all suggest that Pretoria will choose liberally from its broad list of economic and military options for attacks on its neighbors. [REDACTED]

Section II

South African Economic and Military Options Against Its Neighbors

South Africa's range of economic and military options is organized by country and ordered roughly by degree of severity. For each option, in a series of text tables that follow, we have estimated its impact on the recipient and the likely response that the affected country may take. In some cases, where practical, we have tried to gauge what it might cost the West to take remedial action, largely through direct compensation. We have not attempted an assessment of US choices in the face of each South African option since they range from public condemnations through various partial compensation measures to replacement in full, a subject too complex and unwieldy to be treated in these tables. [REDACTED]

We recognize that South Africa has numerous small economic options—"economic pinpricks" as it were—that are primarily aimed at irritating the recipient without inflicting significant damage. These measures are subsumed within broader categories. Such measures include delaying or misrouting rolling stock, special lubricants, and jet fuel. [REDACTED]

Figure 1
South African Options Against Selected Economic and Military Targets

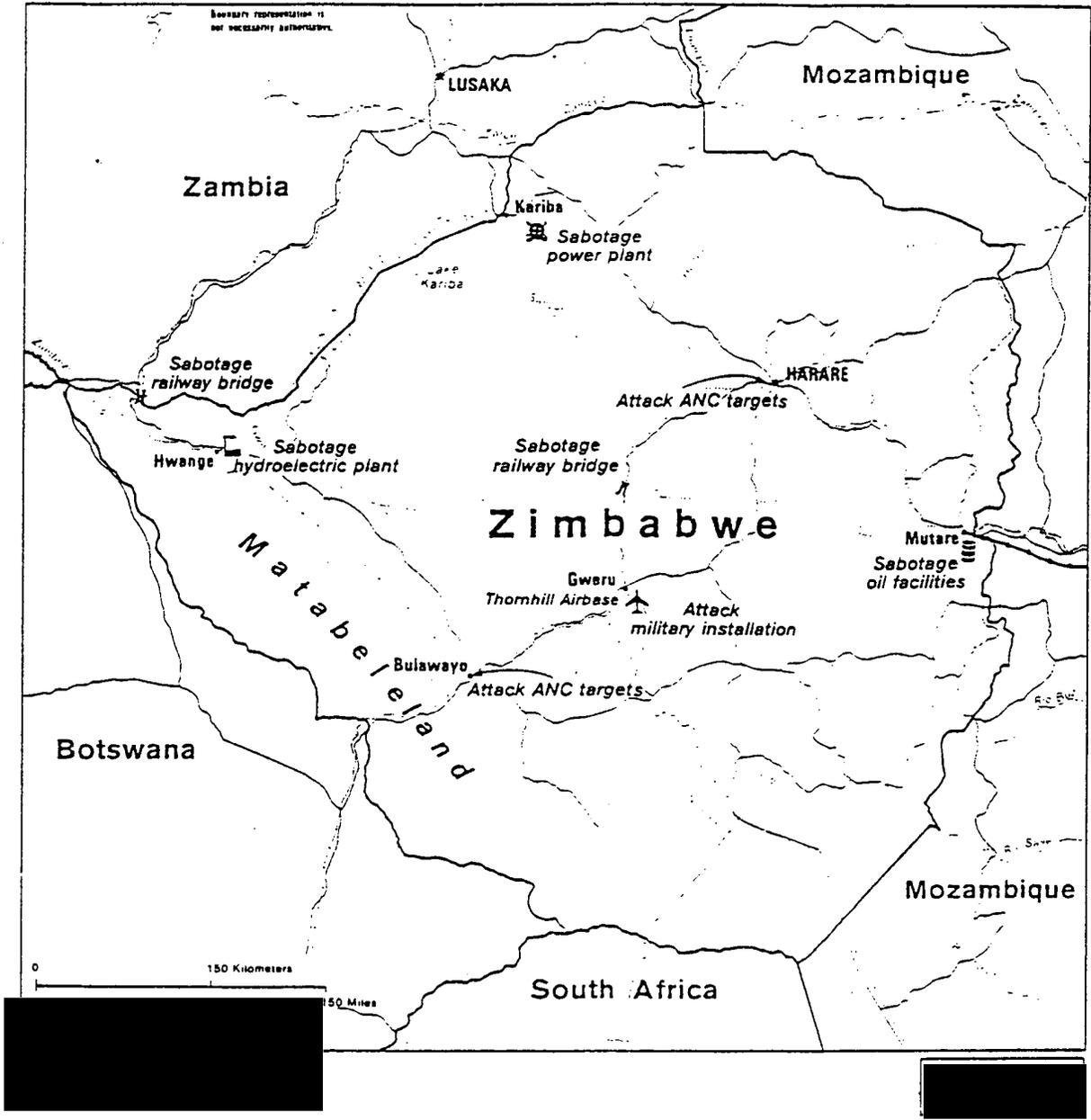


Figure 2
Selected Economic and Military Targets Vulnerable to South African Attack

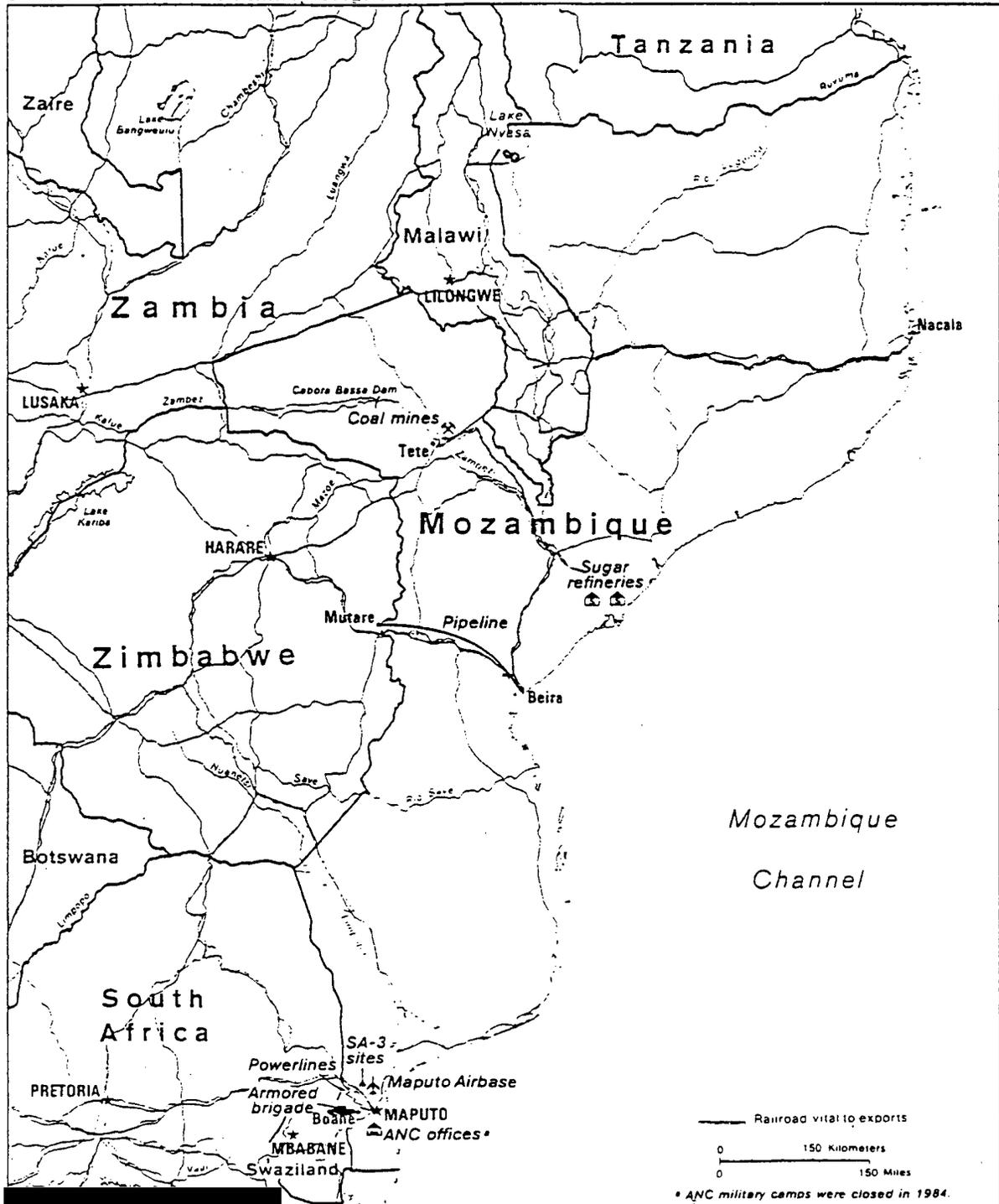


Figure 3
South African Options Against Selected Economic and Military Targets

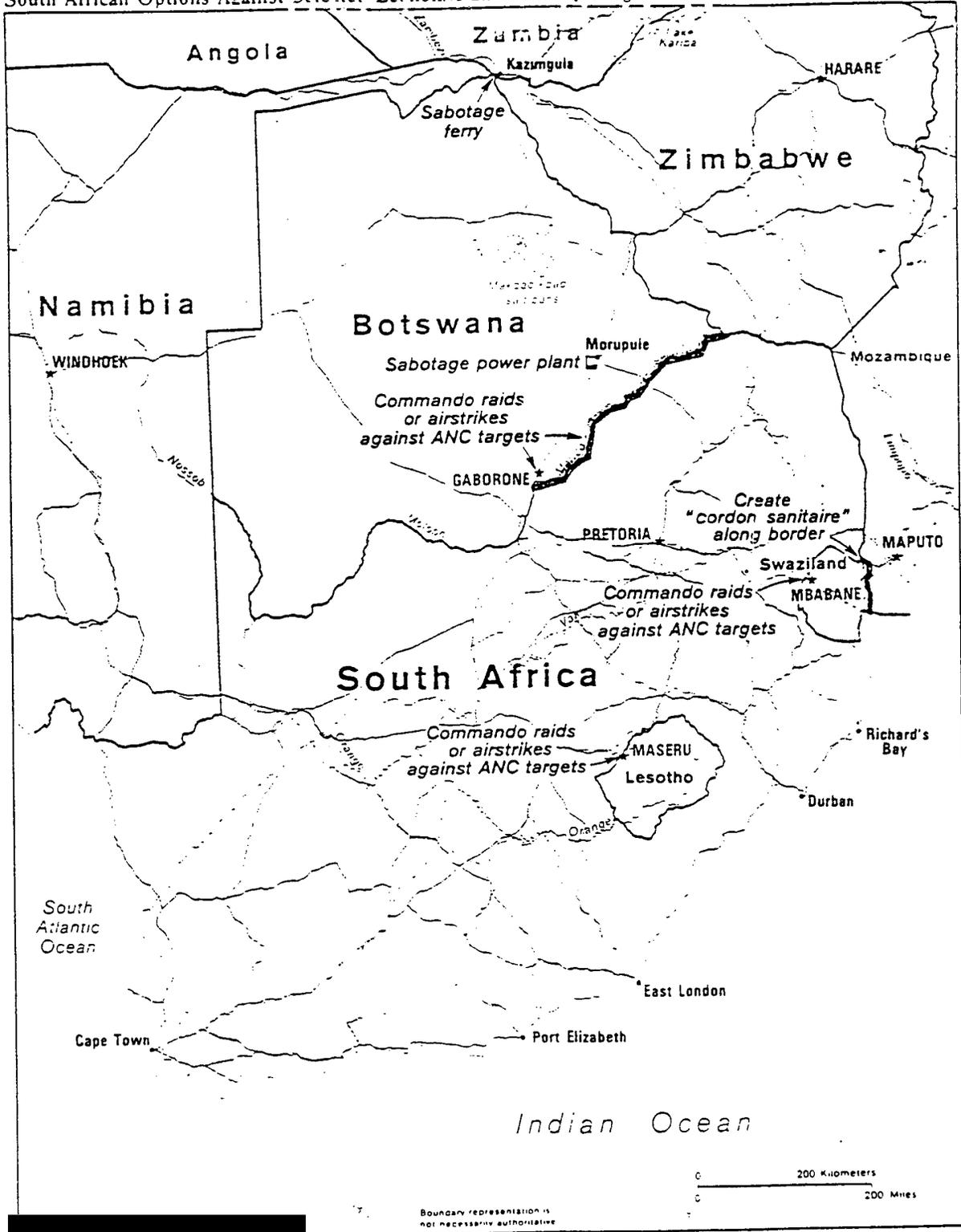


Figure 4
South African Options Against Selected Economic and Military Targets

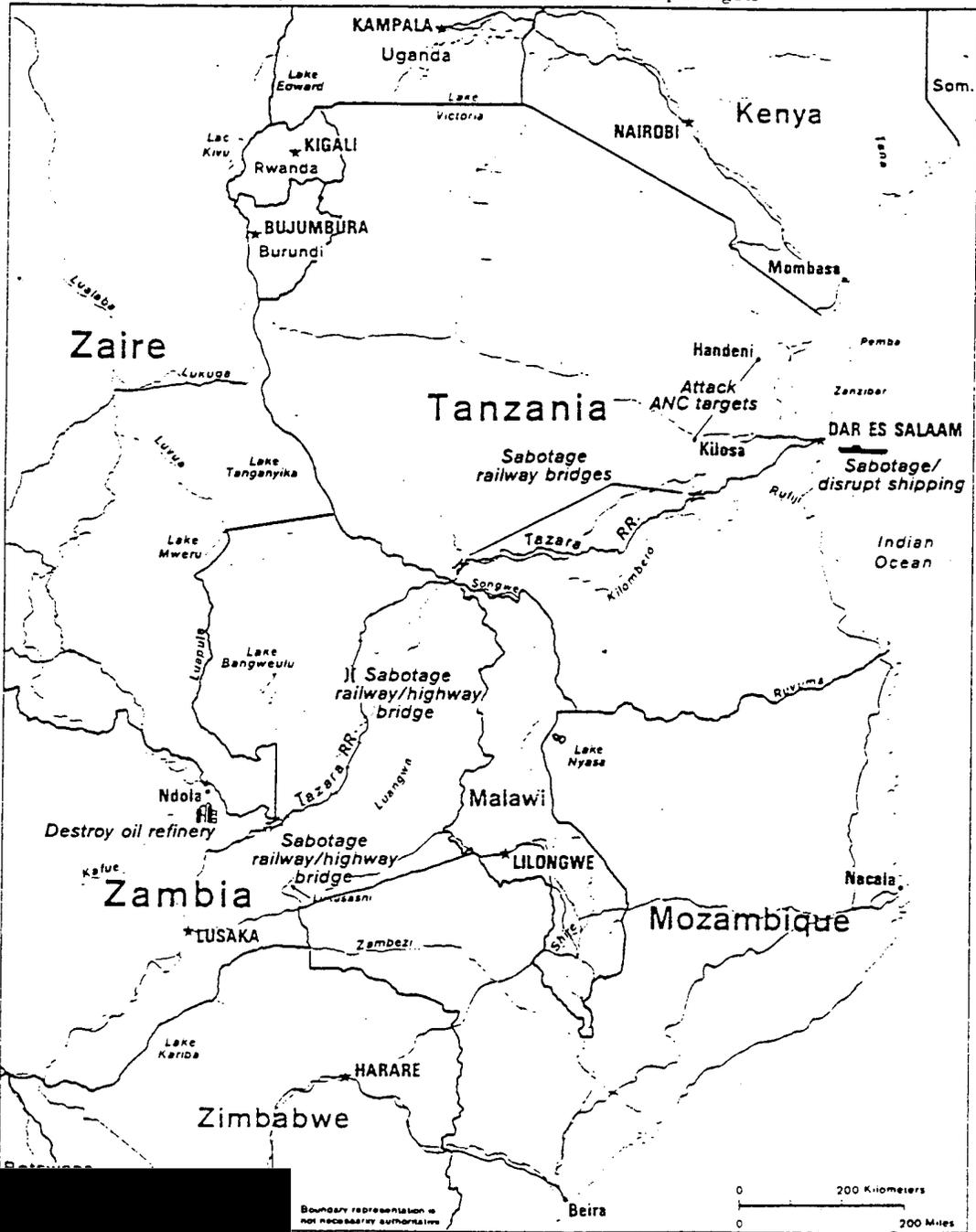


Figure 5
South African Options Against Selected Economic and Military Targets

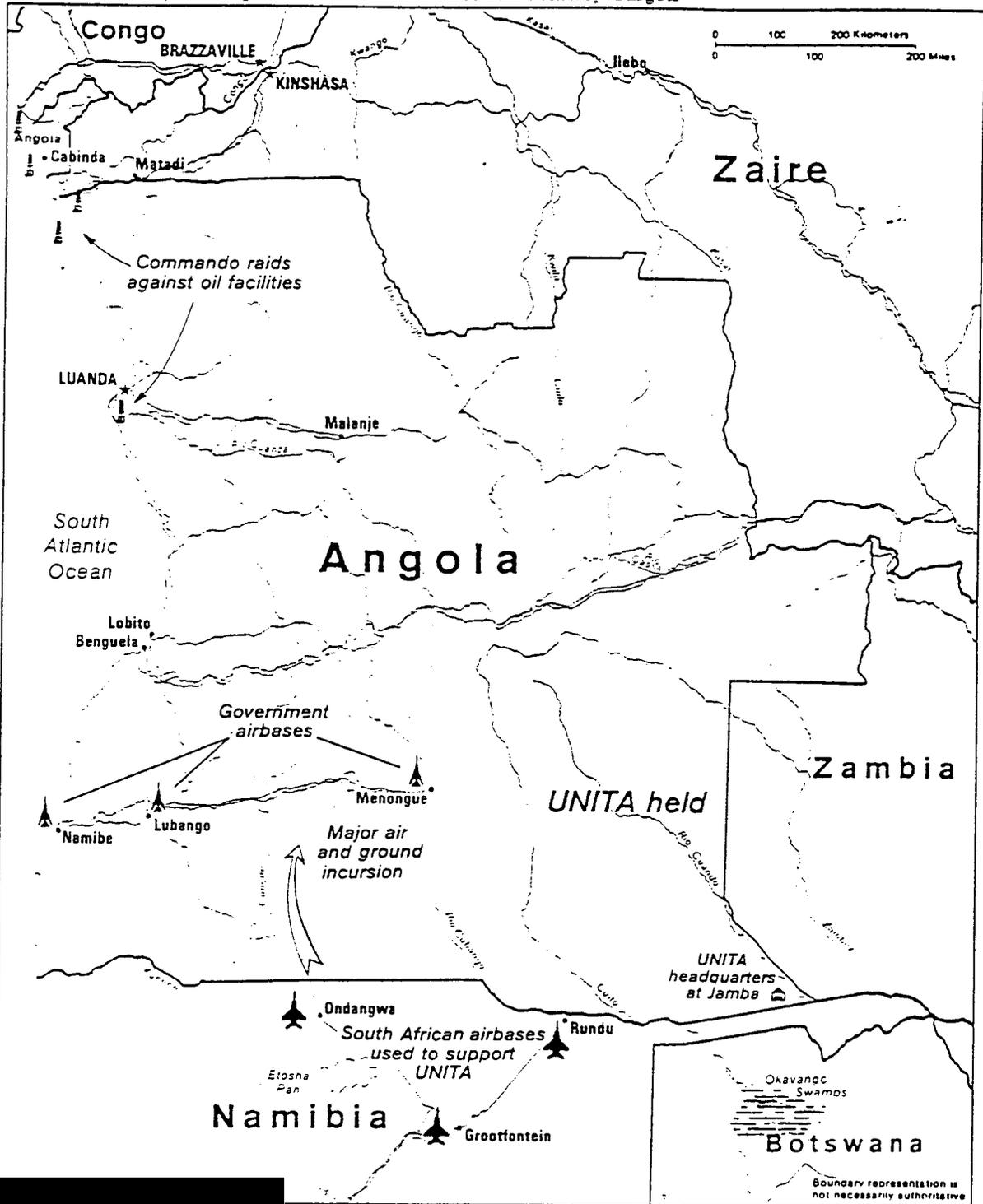
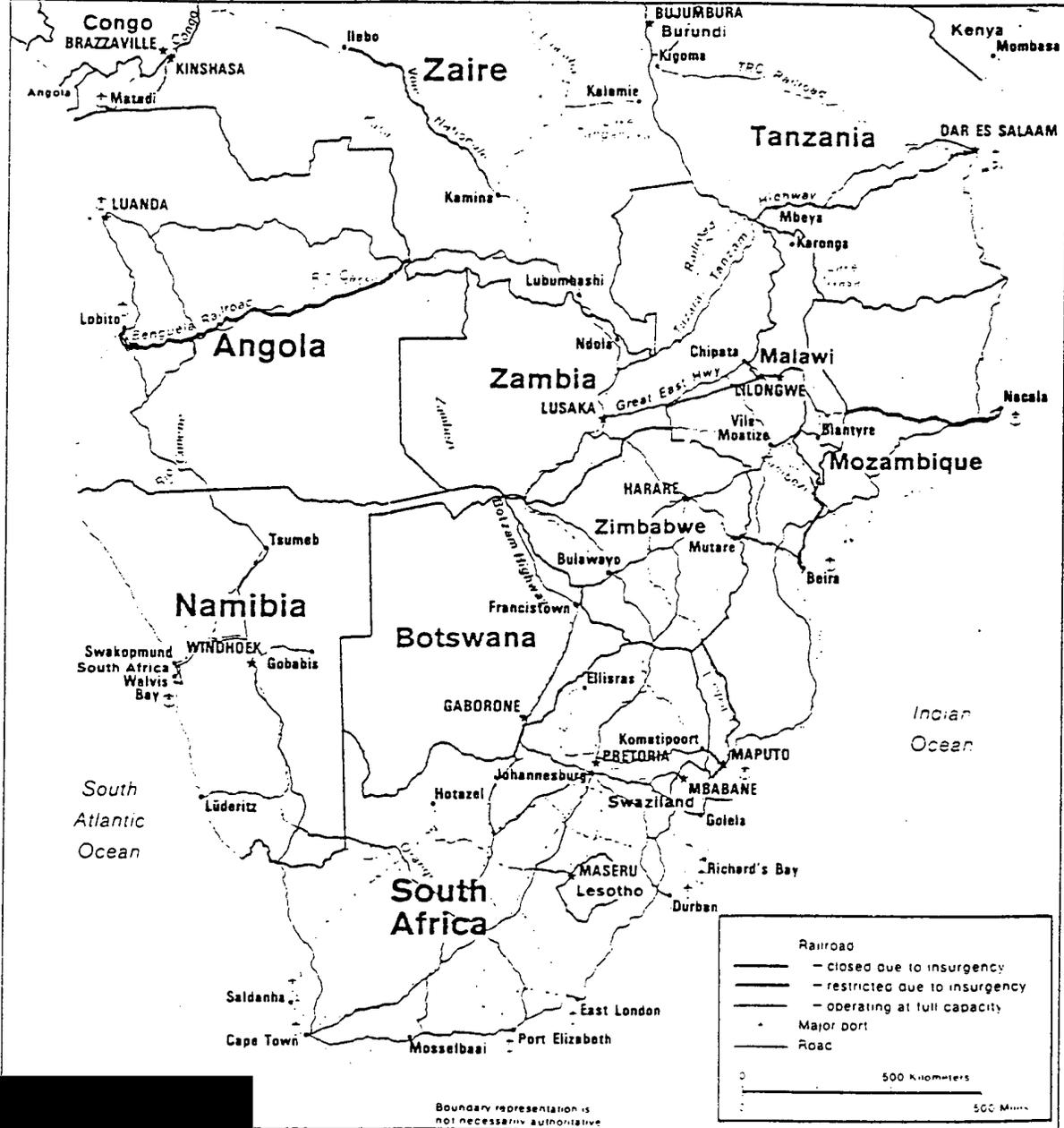


Figure 6
Major Transportation Links in Southern Africa



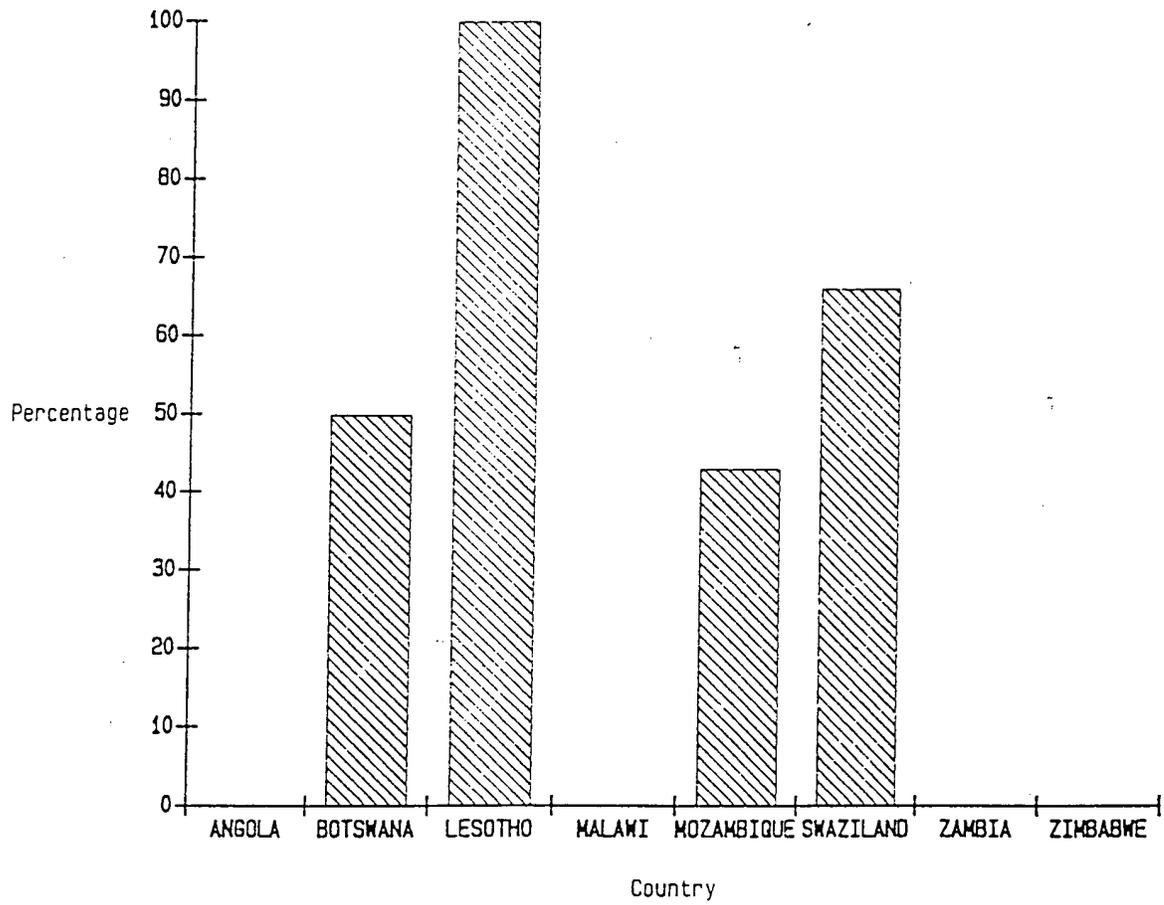
Section III

Scenarios

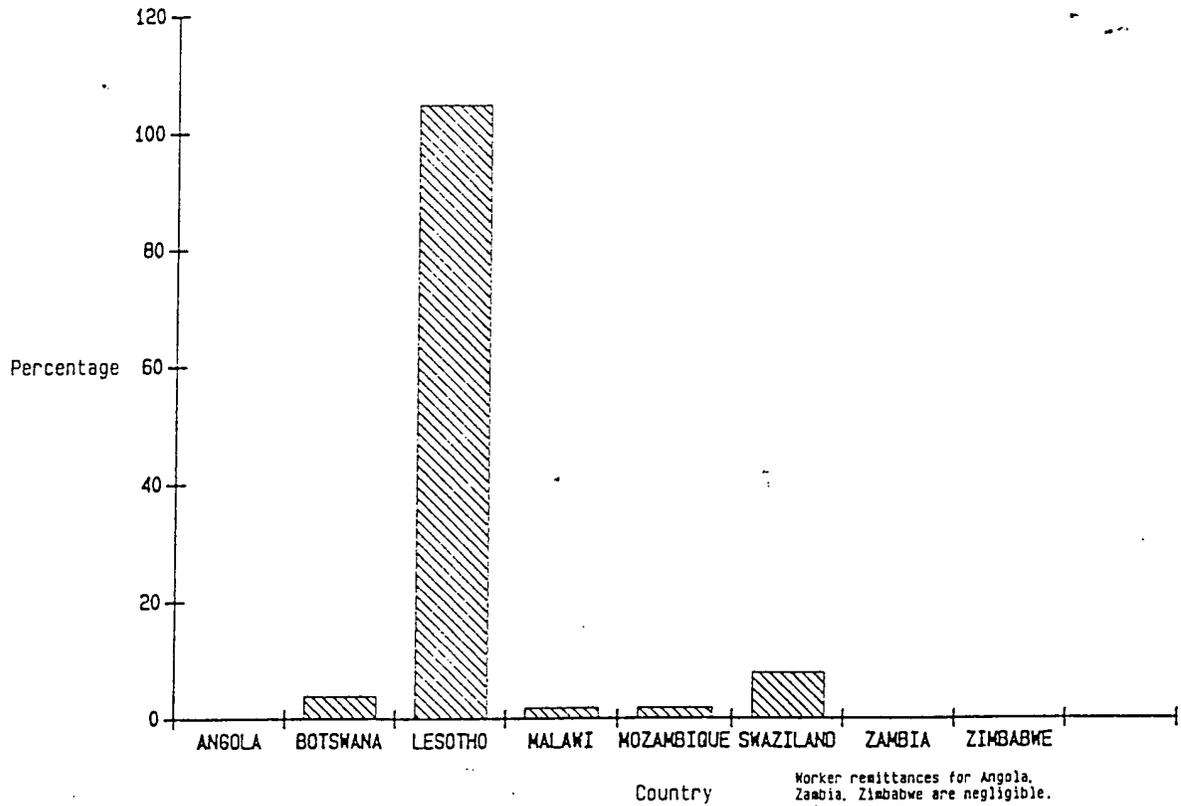
Our scenarios for probable South African actions toward its neighbors begin with a baseline scenario, namely our reading of a South Africa deep in the *laager* and girding itself for fairly strong sanctions. The scenario briefly sketches the principal factors affecting Pretoria's regional policies, provides a tactical assessment of those options Pretoria is likely to or could take, and evaluates their implications for US and Western interests. We then provide three additional scenarios intended to gauge differences in probable South African reactions to alternative US/Western initiatives to South Africa:

- In the event the United States and the European Community adopt limited sanctions, South Africa's reaction may be relatively restrained, limited to some economic muscle flexing. The passage of only limited sanctions might reawaken Pretoria to the benefits of tactical cooperation with the West, possibly having a moderating impact on its dealings with its neighbors.
- In the event that the United States imposes strong unilateral sanctions, while the United Kingdom and the EC adopt only a limited package, South Africa's ire probably will be reflected in anti-US actions, both at its presence in South Africa and at countries involved in US initiatives.
- In the event that the United States and its allies develop a comprehensive package that combines limited sanctions and positive programs reaching out to black South Africans and the black-ruled states in southern Africa, we believe that South Africa's resentment over Western interference and attempts to reduce Pretoria's regional supremacy will overwhelm its relief at escaping strong sanctions, leading Pretoria to exercise options that would undermine new Western initiatives. [REDACTED]

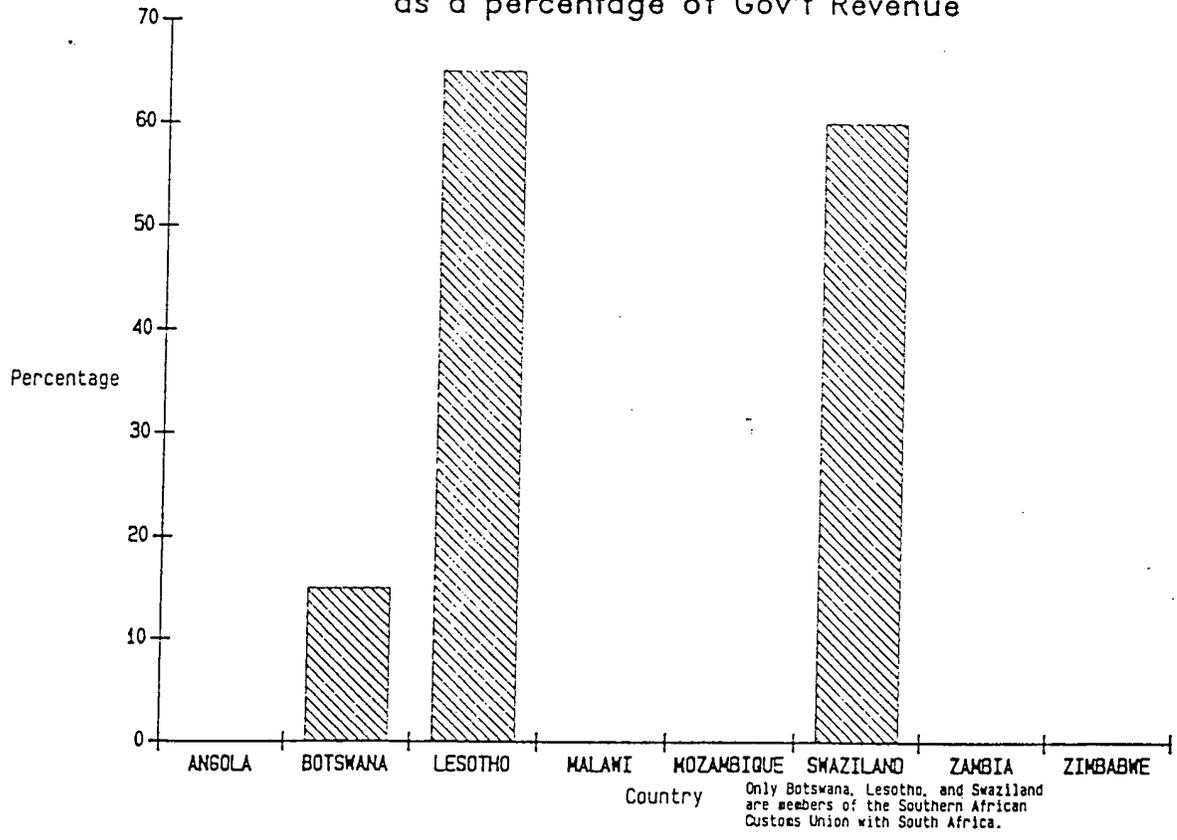
Percent of Electric Power from South Africa



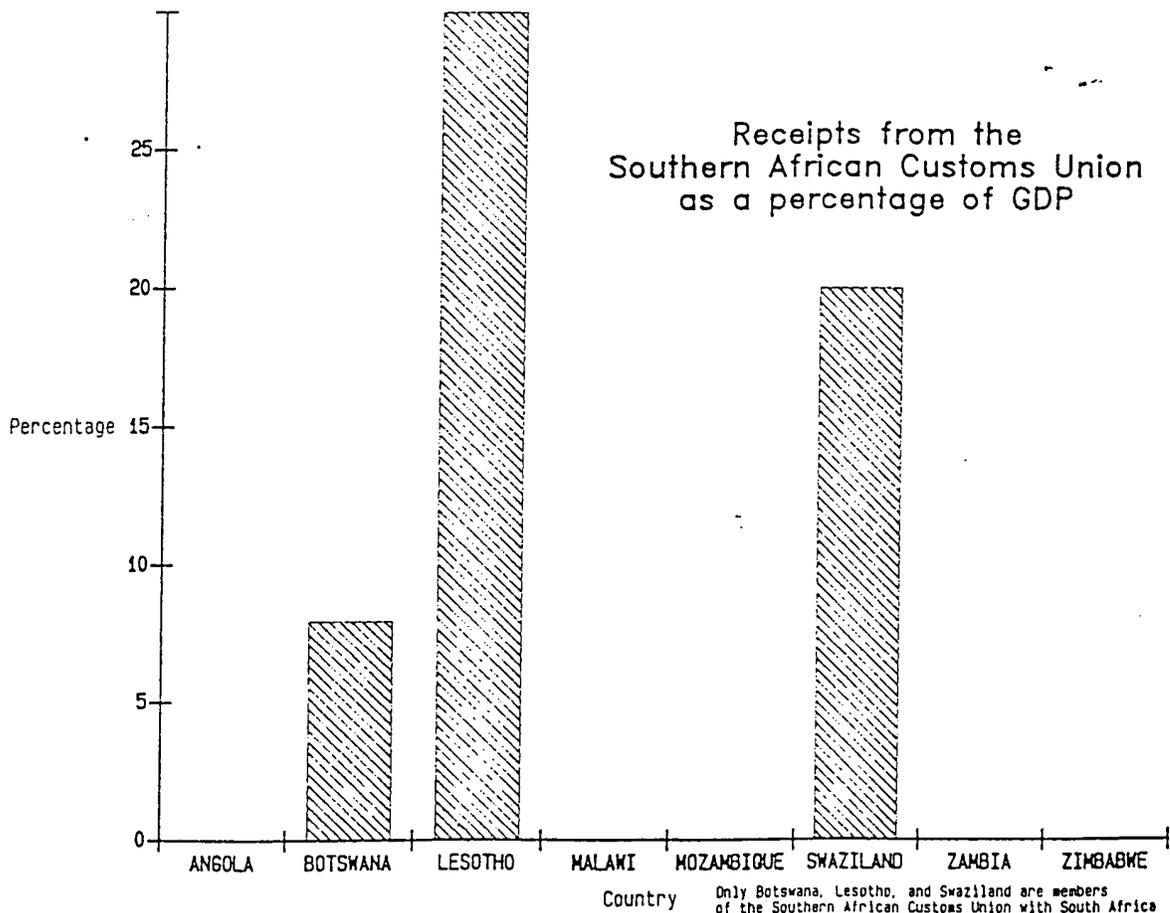
Remittances from Workers in
South Africa
as a percentage of GDP



Receipts from the
Southern African Customs Union
as a percentage of Gov't Revenue



4 18
11 9



TAB 6:
SUMMARY OF U.S. STRATEGIC MINERALS POSITION

The Commerce Department has assessed the consequences of a U.S. decision not to purchase various South African metals. Four metal products were evaluated: the platinum group metals (PGM), chromium, ferrochromium and manganese. Given the numerous alternate sources of South Africa's other mineral exports, changes of purchasers were assumed to be possible without significant price impact. South African mineral production was also assumed to continue at present levels.

Platinum Group Metals

A switch from South African dominated PGM to an all non-South African PGM pattern could: require the United States to purchase more than \$640 million of PGM metals from the Soviet Union annually; cause a gap of 20,000 ounces between U.S. rhodium requirements and the amount of Soviet rhodium available for purchase; cause a ban on foreign car imports (for they could contain South African PGM in their catalytic converters); and cause the Clean Air Act to be suspended (there would not be enough non-South African PGM available to equip all U.S. manufactured cars with converters).

Chromium

Were the United States not to purchase South African chromium, the immediate to short-term consequences would be little more than shifting to one of several alternative non-South African suppliers. Only over the longer term -- by 2020 and increasingly as we near 2050 -- will the consequences become significant for U.S. manufacturers. During those 30 years, the other chrome producers will have come to the end of their reserves and the only country with reserves left -- sufficient to last to the 51st century -- will be South Africa.

Ferrochromium and Manganese

For ferrochromium and manganese, the added costs of manufacturing each ton of steel are estimated at \$5.40 and \$.24, respectively. An extensive network of bilateral agreements may be necessary to assure that no foreign produced steel or steel product containing South African chromium, ferrochromium or manganese would be allowed into the United States. There could, lastly, be a concurrent technological cost to U.S. steel producers, who would be forced to revert to using out-dated and costlier low-carbon ferrochromium produced by the non-South African ferrochrome producers.

Mineral	Present Stockpile	Present Goal*	Administration Goal/Supplemental Reserve	U.S. Total Consumption	World Production	South Africa Production
Ferrochromium (short tons)	778,000	350,000	200,000/594,000	400,000	3,230,000	1,000,000
Ferromanganese (short tons)	676,000	439,000	0/200,000	492,000	6,132,000	422,000
Platinum Group (troy oz)	1,734,000	4,400,000	0/0	3,195,000	7,400,000	3,200,000
Vanadium (short tons)	771	8,700	0/722	10,900	71,000	30,000

* As mandated by Congress in the Supplemental Appropriations Act of 1985

The U.S. imported 55% of its Ferrochromium from South Africa, 11% from Zimbabwe Other sources: Yugoslavia, Turkey. No domestic production.

The U.S. imported 39% of its ferromanganese from South Africa Other sources: Gabon (via France), Mexico, Norway. No domestic production.

45% of U.S. Platinum imports come from South Africa. 16% from the U.K. (probably transshipped from South Africa) Other sources: USSR, Canada, Belgium. Some domestic production (about 8% of total requirements.)

38% of U.S. vanadium imports come from South Africa. 25% from the EC (probably transshipped from South Africa) Other sources: Canada, Finland. U.S. produces about 45% of domestic needs. Historically has produced more.

Current stockpile legislation permits disposals from the stockpile only under certain circumstances: e.g. to fund other stockpile transactions, in time of war or when the President determines the release is required for the national defense. As now constituted it is a defense not an economic stockpile and additional legislation would be required to change this.