

SOUTH AFRICA'S LAND FORCES, 1912-2012

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Abstract

The South African (SA) Army's history can be traced back to 1912, when South Africa's first defence force was established. In this article a review is provided of the development and deployment of South Africa's land forces in the course of a hundred years (1912-2012), with the emphasis on the role played by these land forces in the First World War (for example in the suppression of the Afrikaner rebellion, in the conquest of German South West Africa, the campaign in German East Africa, on the Western Front in France and in Belgium, and in Palestine), the Second World War (for example in Abyssinia, North Africa, Madagascar, and in Italy), in the war in the north of South West Africa (Namibia) and in Angola (1966-1989), as well as in the efforts to keep law and order in South Africa itself. The developments in transforming the Army of the old South African Defence Force (SADF), together with other armed forces, into a new Army in the post-apartheid South African National Defence Force (SANDF), are also briefly discussed. Throughout, historiographical matters are mentioned by means of references, either in the text or in footnotes, to the most important available sources. For obvious reasons, this is merely a broad introduction to an extensive topic.

Keywords: Union Defence Force(s); South African Defence Force; South African National Defence Force; South African Army; First World War; Second World War; Border/Bush War/Namibian War of Independence; Angola.

Sleutelwoorde: Unieverdedigingsmag(te); Suid-Afrikaanse Weermag; Suid-Afrikaanse Nasionale Weermag; Suid-Afrikaanse Leër; Eerste Wêreldoorlog; Tweede Wêreldoorlog; Grens-/Bosoorlog/Namibiese Vryheidsoorlog; Angola.

1. INTRODUCTION

After Jan van Riebeeck established a refreshment station at the Cape in April 1652, the first permanent structure he erected was a fort. The garrison initially consisted of 70-170 men, in due course augmented by a burgher (citizen) guard. The latter later evolved into a type of commando system. In 1679 the castle was completed, and the old fort was demolished. In the course of the 18th century, the Cape Colony

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rapidly expanded eastwards, and the commando system evolved into an elaborate system of defence for the sparsely populated colony.²

The fate of South Africa has always been inextricably linked to events in other parts of the world. In an effort to ensure that Napoleon Bonaparte's France would not occupy the Cape, Britain sent an occupation force, and after a few brief skirmishes, the Dutch garrison surrendered on 16 September 1795.³

From 1803-1806 the Dutch once again wielded control over the Cape in the form of Batavian rule, but a renewal of the Napoleonic Wars brought a new British expeditionary force to the Cape, and after the battle at Blaauwberg (8 January 1806), the Dutch – once again – surrendered.⁴ In the meantime, the first Cape Colony Frontier War (1779-1781) had already been waged, followed by eight other such wars (1789-1793, 1799-1803, 1811-1812, 1819-1820, 1834-1835, 1846-1849, 1850-1853, 1877-1878) with their concomitant destruction.⁵ The British garrison in the Cape Colony was supported by local burgher commandos, and later other local units such as the Cape Mounted Riflemen and the Frontier Armed and Mounted Police.⁶

The Great Trek of the 1830s led to clashes between the white Voortrekkers and black tribes in the interior, for example the Matebele and the Zulus, and later also with British forces.⁷ After the British occupied the Voortrekker republic in Natal (1842), new Boer republics were in due course established in the interior, namely the Zuid-Afrikaansche Republiek (ZAR, i.e. Transvaal) and the Orange Free State (OFS). In the ZAR the Boers fought several wars against local black tribes,⁸ while the OFS became involved in three wars against the Basotho.⁹ And, in

2 See, for example, D Sleigh, *The forts of the Liesbeeck frontier* (Cape Town, 1966); BJ Barker, *The Castle of Good Hope from 1666* (Cape Town, 2003). For an overview of how wars and soldiers shaped South Africa, see TJ Stapleton, *A military history of South Africa: from the Dutch-Khoi wars to the end of apartheid* (Santa Barbara, 2010).

3 See, for example, T Potgieter and A Grundlingh, "Admiral Elphinstone and the conquest and defence of the Cape of Good Hope, 1795-96", *Scientia Militaria: South African Journal of Military Studies* 35(2), 2007, pp. 437-453; HF Nel, "Die Britse verowering van die Kaap in 1795", *Archives Year Book for South African History* 35(2), 1977, pp. 167-291; PW Marnitz and HD Campagne, *The Dutch surrender of the Cape, 1795* (Cape Town, 2002), *passim*.

4 See, for example, DW Krynauw, *Beslissing by Blouberg: triomf en tragedie van die stryd om die Kaap* (Cape Town, 1999); MRD Anderson, *Blue Berg: Britain takes the Cape (s.l., 2008)*.

5 See, for example, JS Bergh and JC Visagie, *The Eastern Cape frontier 1660-1980: a cartographic guide for historical research* (Durban, 1985), p. 8 *et seq.*

6 See in general, for example, G Tylden, *The armed forces of South Africa with an appendix on the commandos* (Johannesburg, 1954).

7 See, for example, CFJ Muller, *Die Britse owerheid en die Groot Trek* (Cape Town, 1990); CFJ Muller, *Die oorsprong van die Groot Trek* (Cape Town, 1974).

8 See, for example, JPN Moolman, *Die Boere se stryd teen die swart stamme in en om die ZAR, 1864-1871* (DLitt et Phil, University of South Africa, 1982).

9 See, for example, SPR Oosthuizen, *Die verskuiwende grens tussen die Vrystaat en Basoetoland, 1840-1868* (MA, University of the Free State, 1969), pp. 164-201, 291-318.

1879, the British were involved in the costly Anglo-Zulu War.¹⁰ In 1877 the British annexed the Transvaal, which led to the Transvaal War of Independence (1880-1881).¹¹ But the most devastating war fought between whites in the region known today as South Africa, was the Anglo-Boer War (1899-1902), albeit that black and brown people also served in various capacities on both sides, and the war affected all inhabitants in the war zone.¹² The whole of “South Africa” was now under British control, and although they still stationed garrisons in various locations in the area, local defence units gradually took up more responsibilities; for example, the Bambatha rebellion in Natal (1906) was put down by local forces.¹³

On 31 May 1910, the Union of South Africa, comprising the four former British colonies, was established. Initially the country did not have its own defence force, but on 1 July 1912, the Union Defence Forces¹⁴ (UDF) were established. The South African Defence Act (Act 13 of 1912) made provision for a UDF that would be comprised of a Permanent Force, a Coast Garrison Force, an Active Citizen Force (ACF) and the Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve (South African Division) (RNVR(SA)), as well as any other defence arm that might in future be established to meet the defence requirements of the Union of South Africa.¹⁵

Against this background, the aim of this article is to provide a review and analysis of the history of South Africa's land forces, 1912-2012. Although the emphasis will be on the South African (SA) Army, reference will also be made – albeit only cursorily – to defence matters in general with regard to the UDF, and later the South African Defence Force (SADF) – as the re-designated UDF was known as from 1957 – and its successor, the South African National Defence Force (SANDF). Throughout, the emphasis will fall mainly on operational and other

10 See, for example, DR Morris, *The washing of the spears* (London, 1968); A Greaves, *Rorke's Drift* (London, 2003).

11 See, for example, JH Lehman, *The First Boer War* (London, 1972); FA van Jaarsveld *et al.* (eds), *Die Eerste Vryheidsoorlog: van verset en geweld tot skikking deur onderhandeling, 1877-1884* (Pretoria, 1980); MC van Zyl, *Majuba: die onafhanklikheidsoorlog van die Transvaalse Afrikaners (1880-1881)* (Pretoria, 1980).

12 See, for example, JH Breytenbach, *Die geskiedenis van die Tweede Vryheidsoorlog in Suid-Afrika, 1899-1902* 1-6 (Pretoria, 1969-1996); LS Amery (ed.), *The Times history of the war in South Africa 1899-1902* 1-7 (London, 1900-1909); JF Maurice (ed.) and MH Grant, *History of the war in South Africa 1899-1902* 1-4 (London, 1906-1910); T Pakenham, *The Boer War* (London, 1979); A Wessels, *The Anglo-Boer War 1899-1902: white man's war, black man's war, traumatic war* (Bloemfontein, 2011).

13 See, for example, S Marks, *Reluctant rebellion: the 1906-1908 disturbances in Natal* (Oxford, 1970).

14 Union Defence Forces (plural). When the South African Defence Amendment Act was promulgated in 1922, the “s” fell away.

15 *Statutes of the Union of South Africa 1912* (Cape Town, 1912), pp. 190-290. See also CL Grimbeek, *Die totstandkoming van die Unieverdedigingsmag, met spesiale verwysing na die verdedigingswette van 1912 en 1922* (DPhil, University of Pretoria, 1985).

developments, and not so much on structural, personnel and administrative matters. Historiographical matters will be addressed in the text and/or in footnotes.

2. THE GREAT (FIRST WORLD) WAR, 1914-1918¹⁶

By the time the UDF was established in 1912 – mainly thanks to the initiative of General Jan Smuts – war clouds were already gathering in Europe. The SA Army was by implication the UDF's first fighting force as from 1 July 1912, but the Permanent Force was only formally established on 1 April 1913, while the Coast Garrison Force, Special Reserves and Active Citizen Force (ACF) all came into being on 1 July 1913. By the end of 1913, the ACF already had some 23 400 members, while defence rifle associations soon had some 42 000 members (many of whom were former Boer commando members).¹⁷ The UDF had its baptism of fire on 4-5 July 1913, when some of its members were deployed against striking mine-workers in Johannesburg; and its intervention was required again in January 1914.¹⁸ However, in general, the UDF was not ready to take part in a world war.

On 28 July 1914, Austria-Hungary declared war against Serbia (in the wake of the assassination of the Austro-Hungarian crown prince, Franz Ferdinand, and his wife, in Sarajevo on 28 June 1914), and soon almost all of Europe (followed in due course by many other parts of the world) was embroiled in what became known as the Great (later First World) War. As early as 6 August 1914, Britain accepted the Union of South Africa's offer to take over the British garrison's responsibilities in the country, so that the British troops could be deployed elsewhere. The UDF was also mobilised to take action in German South West Africa (GSWA; today Namibia). On 10 September 1914, the South African parliament indeed voted 91-12 (House of Assembly) and 24-5 (Senate) in favour of South Africa participating in the war on the side of the Allies.¹⁹

But before the UDF could go into action in GSWA, the South African government first had to deal with an Afrikaner rebellion. The reasons for this armed revolt have been dealt with in several sources²⁰ and need not be discussed

16 This section overlaps to some extent with an earlier chapter by A Wessels, "The Empire goes to war: South Africa and the First World War, 1914-1918" in PB Boyden *et al.* (eds), *Ashes and blood: the British Army in South Africa 1795-1914* (London, 1999), pp. 116-131.

17 CJ Nöthling, *Gesiedenis van die Suid-Afrikaanse Weermag* 1 (Silverton, 1995), p. 18.

18 *Ibid.*, p. 20; TRH Davenport, *South Africa: a modern history* (Basingstoke, 1991), pp. 242-245.

19 See, for example, BJ Liebenberg and SB Spies (eds.), *South Africa in the 20th century* (Pretoria, 1993), pp. 94-98; Union of South Africa, *Debates of both Houses of Parliament (s.l., s.a.)*, columns 57-64, 81-89, 112-114.

20 See, for example, Union of South Africa, *Report of the judicial commission of inquiry into the causes of and circumstances relating to the recent rebellion in South Africa* (UG 46-16, Cape Town, 1916); Union of South Africa, *Judicial commission of inquiry into the causes of and circumstances relating to the recent rebellion in South Africa: minutes of evidence, December*

here. Famous former Anglo-Boer War commanders such as Generals CR de Wet, CF Beyers, SG Maritz and JCG Kemp led the rebellion – after General JH de la Rey was killed in an unrelated shooting incident on 15 September 1914.²¹ The government, under Prime Minister Louis Botha and his Minister of Defence, JC Smuts (both also former Boer generals), proclaimed martial law and swiftly and decisively acted against the rebels. The rebels under Beyers (who resigned his post as commandant general of the ACF on 15 September 1914) were defeated; and Beyers died on 8 December while trying to flee by swimming across the Vaal River. In the OFS, De Wet's commando was likewise defeated, and the old Boer/rebel general was captured in the Kuruman district in the northwestern Cape on 1 December.²²

In the meantime, Maritz had crossed into GSWA with a rebel force and joined the Germans, while Kemp trekked with a rebel commando all the way from the Western Transvaal to GSWA. Maritz and Kemp, along with their German allies, initially succeeded in defeating UDF units on two occasions (Nous, 21 December 1914, and Lutzputs, 18 January 1915), but were then themselves defeated at Upington (24 January 1915); and their commandos surrendered on 2 February 1915. Kemp surrendered together with his followers, but Maritz eventually found his way to Angola.²³ Only 2 998 Transvaalers, 7 123 Free Staters and 1 251 Cape Afrikaners rebelled; 190 were killed and approximately 325 wounded, while many were captured. Approximately 32 000 UDF soldiers were used to crush the rebellion, of whom 132 died and 242 were wounded. Only 281 rebels were brought to trial, and those who were found guilty received minor sentences.²⁴ Henceforth, republican-minded Afrikaners would think twice before joining the UDF, and for the next decade the UDF would become even more English-orientated.

1916 (UG 42-'16, Cape Town, 1916); A Grundlingh and S Swart, *Radelose rebellie? Dinamika van die 1914-1915 Afrikanerrebellie* (Pretoria, 2009).

- 21 HJ May and I Hamilton, *The Foster Gang* (London, s.a.); M Brien, *An uneasy anger: De la Rey and the Foster Gang* (Cape Town, 2009).
- 22 MCE van Schoor, *Christiaan Rudolph de Wet: krygsman en volksman* (Pretoria, 2007), pp. 249-279; PW Möller, *Generaal C.F. Beyers se rol in die rebellie van 1914* (MA, University of Pretoria, 1976), *passim*; GD Scholtz, *Die rebellie 1914-15* (Johannesburg, 1942), *passim*.
- 23 MCE van Schoor, *Generaal J.C.G. Kemp en die epiëse woestyntog* (Pretoria, 2006), *passim*; M Maritz, *My lewe en strewes* (Pretoria, 1938), pp. 62-75; SB Spies, *The rebellion in South Africa 1914-1915* (MA, University of the Witwatersrand, 1962), pp. 127-149.
- 24 For more on the rebellion in general see also, for example, Union of South Africa, *Report of the select committee on the rebellion* (SC 1-'15, Cape Town, 1915); Union of South Africa, *Report on the outbreak of the rebellion and the policy of the government with regard to its suppression* (UG 10-'15, Pretoria, 1915); PJ Sampson, *The capture of De Wet: the South African rebellion 1914* (London, 1915).

With order restored in the Union, the UDF could now focus on their real opponent, namely Germany. As early as September 1914, a small UDF force had landed near Lüderitz, and at the end of December 1914, Swakopmund was occupied. In March 1915, the UDF's GSWA campaign started in earnest, with four UDF forces deployed in various sectors. Aus was occupied on 1 April, and from there the South African forces advanced via Keetmanshoop to Windhoek (the capital), which was occupied on 11 May. *En route*, several clashes with German troops took place, but most of the German garrison fled northwards, which forced Botha (who personally led the UDF in the field) to launch a campaign northwards on 18 June. The campaign was successful, and the German forces formally surrendered on 9 July 1915. It was the first major Allied success of the war. The UDF (which deployed a total of some 67 000 men in GSWA) lost 266 dead (88 killed in action, 25 died of wounds, 56 killed in accidents and 97 died from disease) and 311 wounded (including 48 of those taken prisoner), while another 612 were captured unhurt. The Germans, whose garrison numbered some 6 000 soldiers, lost just more than 100 killed in action and 4 740 captured (either taken prisoner or surrendered at the cessation of hostilities).²⁵ In due course, GSWA, now known as South West Africa (SWA), became a Class C mandate under the League of Nations, but administered by South Africa; albeit that in practice, SWA was regarded as an integral part (fifth province) of South Africa. The *de facto* "colonization" of SWA by South Africa would in due course lead to a fierce war of liberation, and more than 50 years after the original occupation in 1915, South African troops would once again see action in that territory – see Section 6, *infra*.

After the conclusion of the GSWA campaign, the UDF could turn its attention to German East Africa (later Tanganyika; today Tanzania), where a force commanded by Maj. Gen. Paul von Lettow-Vorbeck²⁶ tenaciously resisted the Allies with a force of 260 white and 4 700 black troops, in due course expanding to include some 3 000 white and 11 000 black troops. By March 1916 several UDF units had already been sent to East Africa, with some 43 000 South African soldiers

25 For more on the GSWA campaign see, for example, *The Union of South Africa and the Great War, 1914-1918: official history* (Pretoria, 1924), pp. 27-60; TR Ungleich, *The defence of German South-West Africa during World War I* (MA, University of Miami, 1974), pp. 40-74, 84-236; JJ Collyer, *The campaign in German South-West Africa 1914-1915* (Pretoria, 1937), *passim*; G L'Ange, *Urgent imperial service (South African forces in German South-West Africa 1914-1915)* (Johannesburg, 1991), *passim*; RJ Bouch (ed.), *Infantry in South Africa/Infanterie in Suid-Afrika, 1652-1976* (Pretoria, 1977), pp. 53-71; CJ Nöthling (ed.), *Ultima ratio regum (The last argument of kings): artilleriegeskiedenis van Suid-Afrika/artillery history of South Africa* (Pretoria, 1987), pp. 95-97; B Nasson, *Springboks on the Somme: South Africa in the Great War 1914-1918* (Johannesburg, 2007), pp. 62-87.

26 For more on this charismatic soldier see, for example, PE von Lettow-Vorbeck, *Mein Leben* (Biberbach an der Riss, 1957); PE von Lettow-Vorbeck, *My reminiscences of East Africa* (London, *s.a.*).

eventually being deployed, under the command of Gen. JC Smuts, supported by, *inter alia*, Maj. Gen. JL van Deventer and Brig. Gen. CAL Berrangé. In due course, some 300 000 Allied troops were deployed in East Africa. The South Africans won a few hard-fought battles, but were sometimes also defeated, and suffered even more losses owing to tropical diseases. By 1918 the war in East Africa had degenerated into a guerrilla war, with former Boer guerrilla fighters, and others, now having to wage a counter-guerrilla campaign against elusive German guerrilla fighters. Although Von Lettow-Vorbeck could no longer win the campaign, he was never totally defeated in the field, and only surrendered with his remaining 111 white and 3 400 black troops on 25 November 1918, i.e. two weeks after the war in Europe had formally ended on 11 November 1918. More than 12 000 South African soldiers had to be sent home owing to illness; and at least 502 had been killed in battle or died of wounds, while at least 1 109 died from disease.²⁷

While some UDF soldiers prepared to go to East Africa, others, under the command of Brig. Gen. HT Lukin, were sent to Britain to be trained for service on the Western Front in France and Belgium. Members of the 1st South African (SA) Infantry Brigade began to arrive in Britain in September 1915, but in December 1915 the Brigade was sent to Egypt to assist the Allies in defeating the Senussi (Sanusi), a religious brotherhood (and their Turkish allies) who had launched an invasion from Libya into Egypt. By the end of February 1916, Lukin had defeated the Turkish-Senussi forces, and the South African Brigade departed for their original destination: the Western Front in France.²⁸

The 1st SA Infantry Brigade arrived at Marseilles on 20 April 1916, and was sent to the Somme sector on the Western Front in France as part of 9 Division, just in time to take part in the massive Allied Somme offensive which started on 1 July. On 15 July the South Africans were ordered to support the attack on Delville Wood, near the village of Longueval. Of the at least 3 153 South Africans who went into battle, just over 600 emerged unscathed on 20 July: 763 had been

27 For more on the UDF's role in German East Africa see, for example, JJ Collyer, *The South Africans with General Smuts in German East Africa 1916* (Pretoria, 1939), *passim*; FB Adler *et al.*, *The South African Field Artillery in German East Africa and Palestine 1915-1919* (Pretoria, 1958), pp. 17-77; A Buchanan, *Three years of war in East Africa* (London, 1919), *passim*; JA Brown, *They fought for King and Kaiser: South Africans in German East Africa 1916* (Johannesburg, 1991), *passim*; *The Union of South Africa and the Great War 1914-1918: official history*, pp. 61-92; Nasson, pp. 88-122; Bouch (ed.), pp. 72-83; Nöthling (ed.), pp. 101, 103-107; FJ Jacobs *et al.*, *Suid-Afrikaanse Seinkorps/South African Corps of Signals* (Pretoria, 1975), pp. 23-24; C Birkby, *Springbok victory* (Johannesburg, 1941), *passim*; R Anderson, *The forgotten front: the East African campaign 1914-1918* (Stroud, 2004), pp. 101-299; A Sampson, *Britain, South Africa and the East Africa campaign, 1914-1918* (London, 2006), *passim*.

28 *The Union of South Africa and the Great War 1914-1918: official history*, pp. 93-96; Bouch (ed.), pp. 84-99; PKA Digby, *Pyramids and poppies: the 1st SA Infantry Brigade in Libya, France and Flanders 1915-1919* (Johannesburg, 1993), pp. 43-81.

killed or had died of wounds in these few days of vicious fighting, with the others either being wounded (1 476) or captured (297).²⁹ The decimated brigade had to be reorganised, and reinforcements were acquired. By 23 August 1916 the brigade could once more be deployed, this time in the Vimy area. It later also saw action in the Butte de Warlencourt area (October 1916), in the Arras sector (April-May 1917) and at Ypres, in Belgium (June-November 1917); and in the course of 1918 it was deployed at several places, taking part in many battles. In the German attacks near Haudicourt on 24 March 1918, the remnant of 1st SA Infantry Brigade was almost totally destroyed. Although still a brigade in name, in practice it could only muster a battalion, consisting of only three companies (some 450 men in total). Reinforcements continued to replace the losses, and the brigade soldiered on until the Armistice on 11 November 1918, as did the South African Heavy Artillery Corps, which had also taken part in several Western Front battles. In line with their Allies, the South Africans suffered appalling losses on the Western Front: of the more than 30 000 soldiers who were deployed, the 1st SA Infantry Brigade alone lost 4 454 who were killed or died of wounds, as well as more than 10 000 wounded.³⁰

In the meantime, the South African (SA) Field Artillery saw action against the Turks in Palestine. They participated in the Allied advance to Jerusalem (1917), and from there northwards (1917-1918), taking part in many clashes with the enemy. When German reinforcements arrived in support of the Turks, the South African government once again mobilised 1 Battalion Cape [i.e. “coloured”] Corps (which had previously served with distinction in East Africa) and sent them via Egypt to Palestine, where they saw action alongside other Allied units. This Corps, as well as the SA Field Artillery, served in the field until the Turkish surrender at the end of October 1918.³¹ In the course of World War I, 254 666 South Africans served in uniform: 146 897 white people, 82 769 black people,³² and some 25 000 brown people and people of Asian origin. Of these, 8 325 whites, 3 136 blacks,

29 For more on the battle at Delville Wood see, for example, R Cornwell, “Delville Wood: the South Africans in France”, *Militaria* 7(2), 1977, pp. 1-55; I Uys, *Roll call (The Delville Wood story)* (Johannesburg, 1991), *passim*; I Uys, *Delville Wood* (Johannesburg, 1983), *passim*; *The Union of South Africa and the Great War 1914-1918: official history*, pp. 99-210; Digby, pp. 121-138; Bouch (ed.), pp. 100-103; Jacobs, pp. 25-27.

30 For more on the role of the South African Forces on the Western Front see, for example, J Buchan, *The South African forces in France* (Nelson, 1920), *passim*; Bouch (ed.), pp. 103-124; Nöthling (ed.), pp. 117-135; Digby, pp. 93-314; *The Union of South Africa and the Great War 1914-1918: official history*, pp. 97-182; Nasson, pp. 123-156.

31 Nöthling, pp. 32-33; Nöthling (ed.), pp. 109-114; Adler, pp. 80-110.

32 For more on black participation, see in particular A Grundlingh, *Fighting their own war: South African blacks and the First World War* (Johannesburg, 1987), *passim*; I Gleeson, *The unknown force: black, Indian and coloured soldiers through two world wars* (Johannesburg, 1994), pp. 1-8, 24-92; N Clothier, *Black valour: the South African Native Labour Contingent 1916-1918 and the sinking of the Mendi* (Pietermaritzburg, 1987), *passim*; Nasson, pp. 157-170.

709 coloureds and 184 Indians died – in many cases owing to disease. Thousands of South African soldiers were decorated for the services they had rendered during the war, including two soldiers who received the Victoria Cross.³³ The UDF had made a small but nevertheless significant contribution towards the Allied war effort; and South Africa had shown that it would side with those powers who were prepared to combat aggressive nationalism.

3. THE INTER-WAR YEARS, 1919-1939

As in the case of other armies, the end of the war meant demobilisation for the UDF and the down-sizing of permanent forces. But more responsibilities had to be assumed after the last British troops left South Africa at the end of 1921. Henceforth, the Union would have to take responsibility for its own defence. In the meantime, the post-war economic depression led to industrial action, with the great Rand mine-workers' strike (or revolt) of 1922 posing the most serious threat to security. Army units were mobilised and played a crucial role in restoring order. At least 39 strikers, 43 UDF and 86 police members, and 42 civilians died. Four strike-leaders were later executed.³⁴ Shortly afterwards, the UDF had to send units to South West Africa to assist in putting down a revolt by the Bondelswart tribe. The rebels surrendered on 2 June 1922.³⁵

In the light of economic problems, the UDF was drastically restructured in the years 1922 to 1926. The Permanent Force was reconstituted on 1 February 1923, with the establishment of 13 Permanent Force units, albeit that the number of Permanent Force members decreased. And in 1926, the number of military districts was reduced from 16 to six. The great depression (1929-1933) led to the disbandment of 56 ACF units, but also to the establishment on 1 May 1933 of the Special Service Battalion (SSB) to provide work and training for young (white) people who could not find other employment. When the economy started to pick up again in 1934, the defence budget was increased; eight new ACF infantry regiments were established, and the Minister of Defence (Oswald Pirow) announced a five-year development plan for the UDF. The commando system was expanded; and in 1937, a Directorate for Operations and Intelligence was established.³⁶ But, after

33 Nöthling (ed.), p. 79; Liebenberg and Spies, p. 117.

34 See, for example, AG Oberholster, *Die mynwerkerstaking Witwatersrand, 1922* (Pretoria, 1982); FJ van Heerden, *Die Randse staking van 1922* (MA, Potchefstroom University for Christian Higher Education, 1965).

35 See, for example, GLM Lewis, *The Bondelswarts rebellion of 1922* (MA, Rhodes University, 1978).

36 Nöthling, pp. 41-43; Bouch (ed.), pp. 127-133. As far as the SSB is concerned, see L Barnard, *Pantser in aksie: 1 SDB 1933-1993* (Bloemfontein, 1993); W Otto, *Die geskiedenis van die Spesiale Diensbataljon, 1933-1939* (Pretoria, 1972).

Smuts was defeated at the polls in 1924, many competent officers left the UDF. In some instances they were replaced by more conservative and (Afrikaner-) nationalistic-minded men, and consequently the quality of the senior officer corps dropped in the course of the 1930s.³⁷ In the meantime, war clouds were, once again, gathering in Europe – and their effect would soon be felt in South Africa.

4. THE SECOND WORLD WAR, 1939-1945³⁸

When the Second World War broke out on 1 September 1939, South Africa was entirely unprepared. For several years, Gen. JBM Hertzog's United Party (UP) government had indicated that in the case of a new world war, South Africa would remain neutral. When war indeed broke out, Hertzog took the matter of participation or neutrality to parliament, where his neutrality motion was defeated by 80 votes to 67 on 4 September. Gen. JC Smuts was asked by the governor general to form a new government, and on 6 September South Africa declared war against Nazi Germany. (Later, on 11 June 1940, South Africa declared war against Italy, and on 9 December 1941 against Japan.)³⁹ At that stage, the SA Army's Permanent Force only had 352 officers and 5 033 other ranks, while the ACF had 918 officers and 12 572 other ranks. The available equipment consisted of two old tanks, two armoured cars and some 70 old field artillery pieces.⁴⁰ As in 1914, there were Afrikaans-speaking people who were opposed to South Africa actively taking sides against Germany, and they founded organisations such as the Ossewa-Brandwag (OB), the New Order and the Gryssemde (Grey Shirts), but this time around there

37 I van der Waag, "Smuts's generals: towards a first portrait of the South African high command, 1912-1948", *War in History* 18(1), 2011, p. 56. With regard to the South African military in the inter-war years, see also I van der Waag, "The Union Defence Force between the two world wars, 1919-1940", *Scientia Militaria: South African Journal of Military Studies* 30(2), 2000, pp. 183-219.

38 Quite a lot has been written on South Africa's participation in World War II (see footnotes 42-52 below). For events on the home front see, for example, HJ Martin and N Orpen, *South Africa at war: military and industrial organization and operations in connection with the conduct of war, 1939-1945* (Cape Town, 1979); J Crwys-Williams, *A country at war 1939-1945: the mood of a nation* (Rivonia, 1992). See also FL Monama, "The Second World War and the South African society, 1939-1945" in T Potgieter and I Liebenberg (eds), *Reflections on war: preparedness and consequences* (Stellenbosch, 2012), pp. 47-63. See in general also P Joyce, *South Africans in World War II* (Cape Town, 1989); M Leigh, *Captives courageous: South African prisoners of war, World War II* (Johannesburg, 1992); A le Roux, *Propaganda and popular mobilization in the Second World War: galvanizing support for the Union of South Africa's war effort – with particular reference to the role of visual communication* (MA, Stellenbosch University, 2011).

39 FD Tothill, "Why General Smuts won on 4 September 1939", *Kleio* 19, 1987, pp. 5-28; PW Coetzer and JH le Roux, *Die Nasionale Party 4* (Bloemfontein, 1986), pp. 259-272; *Daily News*, 12 June 1940, p. 1; *The Star*, 10 December 1941, p. 2.

40 Martin and Orpen, p. 27; J van Wyk, "Die Unieverdedigingsmag op die vooraand van die Tweede Wêreldoorlog (1939-1945)", *Militaria* 6(4), 1976, p. 32.

was no large-scale rebellion. The sabotage activities conducted by the Stormjaers and Robey Leibbrandt were soon brought under control.⁴¹

From 22 September 1939, ACF units could accept new recruits on a voluntary basis, and before the end of the year some 140 000 new recruits had joined up. On 20 May 1940, 1 SA Infantry Brigade was mobilised, and it left for Kenya on 16 July 1940, commanded by Brig. DH Pienaar. The South African troops had to stem the southward advance of the Italian forces that had earlier conquered British-Somaliland. On 16 December 1940 the South Africans achieved their first noteworthy victory, when they defeated the Italians at El Wak. In the meantime, two more brigades, comprising 1 SA Division under Maj. Gen. GE Brink, also arrived in East Africa. The South African forces were tasked to invade the Italian-occupied Abyssinia (today Ethiopia). The South Africans achieved success in all sectors in East Africa, and rolled back the Italians. Mogadishu was occupied on 25 February 1941, and Addis Ababa on 5 April 1941. Pienaar's 1 SA Infantry Brigade was tasked to pursue the fleeing Italians. At Dessie (26 April) they took some 8 000 prisoners; and on 19 May 1941 the remaining 5 000 Italian soldiers in Eritrea surrendered, together with the Duke of Aosta (their commanding officer and the Italian viceroy of Italian East Africa). Other South African units defeated the 40 000 Italians left in the Gallo Sidamo province. In East Africa, the South African ground forces only lost 73 soldiers killed in action, while 197 others died from various other causes.⁴²

The UDF now shifted its attention to North Africa, where the German Afrika Korps under Field Marshal Erwin Rommel had achieved great success.⁴³ 1 SA Division was redeployed from East Africa to Egypt in North Africa, where they were joined, in June 1941, by 2 SA Division (Commanded by Maj. Gen. IP de Villiers) from South Africa – all part of the British 8th Army. On 17 November 1941, after undergoing intensive training in desert warfare, 1 SA Division crossed into Libya as part of the Allied efforts to relieve a British force that was under siege in Tobruk. Soon 2 SA Division was also in action. The South

41 See, for example, GC Visser, *OB: traitors or patriots* (Johannesburg, 1976); JFJ van Rensburg, *Their paths crossed mine: memoirs of the Commandant-General of the Ossewa-Brandwag (s.l., 1956)*; PJ Furlong, *Between crown and swastika: the impact of the radical right on the Afrikaner nationalist movement in the fascist era* (Johannesburg, 1991); I Hattingh, *Nasionaal-sosialisme en die Gryshemp-beweging in Suid-Afrika* (DPhil, University of the Orange Free State, 1989).

42 N Orpen, *East African and Abyssinian campaigns* (Cape Town, 1968), *passim*; N Orpen and HJ Martin, *Salute the Sappers 1* (Johannesburg, 1981), pp. 32-200; Bouch (ed.), pp. 140-146; Nöthling (ed.), pp. 153-169; Nöthling, pp. 46-48; JA Brown, *The war of a hundred days: Springboks in Somalia and Abyssinia, 1940-41* (Rivonia, 1990), *passim*; FJ Jacobs *et al.*, pp. 55-64; H Klein, *Springboks in armour: the South African armoured cars in World War II* (Cape Town, 1965), pp. 1-136; C Birkby, *It's a long way to Addis* (London, 1942), *passim*.

43 See, for example, KJ Macksey, *Afrika Korps* (London, 1968), pp. 6-40; D Young, *Rommel* (Collins, 1950), pp. 88-186.

Africans took part in several battles against Axis forces, including near Sidi Rezegh, where almost the entire 5th SA Infantry Brigade was lost, with 224 of its members being killed, 379 wounded, and some 3 000 taken prisoner. The South Africans also assisted the Allies in capturing Bardia (2 January 1942), Sollum (12 January) and Halfaia (17 January). In these operations, 2 SA Division suffered some 500 casualties, but the Allies took approximately 14 000 prisoners of war (POWs). The siege of Tobruk was relieved, and from 27 March 1942, 2 SA Division became the new garrison of that strategic port city – as from 14 May 1942 under the command of Maj. Gen. HP Klopper.⁴⁴

On 26 May 1942, Rommel launched a counter-offensive, which saw the 8th Army hastily retreat to the Egyptian border. The Axis forces surrounded Tobruk on 17 June, cutting off the South Africans and other Allied troops from their main support base in Egypt. German aircraft and artillery bombarded the besieged garrison, while two armoured divisions led the ground attacks against Klopper's men. Soon the Germans broke through the Allied defences and overran their other positions; and on 21 June 1942, Klopper surrendered. Amongst the approximately 33 000 Allied POWs were 10 722 South Africans. 2 SA Division ceased to exist. News of the defeat was received with shock in South Africa, but the remaining South African units continued to assist the other Allied forces in the defence of Egypt.⁴⁵

Rommel followed up his success by continuing his advance eastwards, capturing Mersa Matruh on 29 June 1942. 1 SA Division, together with other Allied forces, fell back to El Alamein, where defensive positions were taken up. Rommel was, notwithstanding several efforts, unable to break through; and on the night of 23-24 October 1942, the 8th Army, commanded by Field Marshal Montgomery, launched its elaborate offensive against the German forces. In the course of that night, the German forces were subjected to a heavy bombardment, with the South African 25-pounder guns alone firing some 62 000 rounds. Allied infantry and

44 N Orpen, *War in the desert* (Cape Town, s.a.), pp. 1-276; JAI Agar-Hamilton and LCF Turner, *The Sidi Rezegh battles, 1941* (London, 1957); Bouch (ed.), pp. 147-157; Nöthling (ed.), pp. 173-190.

45 *Daily News*, 22 June 1942, pp. 1, 5 and 23 June 1942, p. 1; Orpen, *War in the desert*, pp. 277-325; AJ Groenewald, 'n *Kritiese ontleding van die faktore wat gelei het tot die oorgawe van die Suid-Afrikaanse magte by die slag van Tobruk* (DPhil, University of the Orange Free State, 1991), *passim*; JAI Agar-Hamilton and LCF Turner, *Crisis in the desert, May-July 1942* (Cape Town, 1952), *passim*; K Horn, "Narratives from North Africa: South African prisoner-of-war experiences following the fall of Tobruk, June 1942", *Historia* 36(2), November 2011, pp 94-112. See also EP Hartshorn, *Avenge Tobruk* (Cape Town, c.1960); A Stewart, "The Klopper affair: Anglo-South African relations and the surrender of the Tobruk garrison", *Twentieth Century British History* 17(4), 2006, pp. 516-544 and A Stewart, "The atomic despatch: Field Marshal Auchinleck, the fall of the Tobruk garrison and post-war Anglo-South African relations", *Scientia Militaria: South African Journal of Military Studies* 36(1), 2008, pp. 78-94.

armour attacks followed, which led to a general German retreat. South Africans were the first to once again occupy Tobruk (12 November). By the end of that month, the Axis forces had been driven out of Libya. At the beginning of 1943, 2 SA Division returned to South Africa. The UDF's land forces suffered 23 625 casualties in North Africa, including 2 104 killed in action, 3 928 wounded and 14 247 POWs.⁴⁶

In the meantime, South African forces took part in the invasion and conquest of the French island colony of Madagascar ("Operation Ironclad"). The Allies feared that the Japanese – after their entry into the war in December 1941, and their successes in the Pacific Ocean and adjoining areas – might attack this strategic island. On 25 June 1942, 7 SA Infantry Brigade (Brig. GT Senescall) – some 5 000 men strong – went ashore at Diego Suarez and in due course took part in the operations against the Vichy-French defenders. The Allies rapidly moved southwards, with the island's topography and tropical diseases being the main obstacles. By the time the last Vichy forces surrendered on 2 November 1942, the South African forces had only suffered 18 battle casualties, including four killed in action.⁴⁷

On 1 February 1943, South Africa's first-ever armoured division, namely 6 SA Armoured Division (Maj. Gen. WH Evered Poole) was established, to be deployed in Italy. From 18 April 1943 the Division was transported in ships to Suez, and after a year of training in Egypt, they eventually reached Italy in April 1944. As part of the Allied 8th Army, the South Africans saw action against the German Gustav Line (in the vicinity of Monte Cassino) and entered Rome on 6 June 1944. The advance northwards continued, with the South African forces taking part in several battles, and entering Firenze (Florence) on 4 August 1944. After a well-earned rest of some six weeks, 6 SA Armoured Division continued its advance to the Apennine Mountains, where strong German resistance was encountered. The River Arno was crossed on 1 September and the German Gothic Line attacked. Vicious fighting took place in the mountains during the winter months of 1944-1945. By April 1945 the Germans were retreating across the Po Valley. The South Africans reached

46 N Orpen, *War in the desert*, pp. 326-476; Bouch (ed.), pp. 161-163; Nöthling (ed.), pp. 196-204; JA Brown, *Retreat to victory: a Springbok's diary in North Africa – Gazala to El Alamein, 1942* (Rivonia, 1991), *passim*; CJ Jacobs, 'n *Evaluering van die Eerste Suid-Afrikaanse Infanteriedivisie tydens die eerste slag van El Alamein, 1-30 Julie 1942* (MA, Stellenbosch University, 1988), *passim*; Macksey, pp. 112-121. For the role of the South African sappers in the North African campaign, see Orpen and Martin, 1, pp. 201-462 and 2 (Johannesburg, 1982), pp. 1-54.

47 See, for example, JEH Grobler, "Die Geallieerde besetting van Madagaskar in 1942, met spesiale verwysing na die rol van die Unieverdedigingsmag in die operasies", *Militaria* 7(4), 1977, pp. 1-18, 8(1), 1978, pp. 39-54, 8(2), 1978, pp. 15-40, 8(3), 1978, pp. 52-72 and 8(4), 1978, pp. 69-78; WS Churchill, *The Second World War* 4 (London, 1953), pp. 189-202; Bouch (ed.), p. 164; Nöthling (ed.), pp. 168-171; Jacobs *et al.*, p. 82.

Milan on 2 May 1945, i.e. the day on which the German forces in Italy officially surrendered – followed by the general German surrender in Europe on 7 May. The UDF's casualties in Italy amounted to 5 176, including 753 killed.⁴⁸

As was the case during the First World War, black and brown South Africans also served in the Second World War.⁴⁹ The Native Military Corps was established on 1 July 1940 and in due course enlisted some 77 000 black people, who were employed as, *inter alia*, drivers, construction workers and medical orderlies. In the meantime, the Cape Corps (for brown people) was established on 8 May 1940 and the Indian Service Corps on 26 June 1940. The latter's name was later changed to the Indian and Malay Corps, and from October 1942 it also included the Cape Corps. Although "non-whites" were used in combat on a few occasions, they were most of the time deployed in a non-combatant capacity, including in East Africa and in Abyssinia.⁵⁰ Some 25 000 white women also served in uniform, including 4 000 nurses. Women served in the Union, in North Africa and in the Middle East.⁵¹

A total of 334 324 full-time volunteers of all race groups served in the UDF in the course of the war: 211 193 whites, 77 239 blacks and 45 892 coloureds and Indians. Of these UDF members, 12 046 died while in service, including 4 347 who were killed in action or died of wounds, while 14 363 others were wounded and 16 430 captured or missing.⁵²

5. THE POST-WAR SOUTH AFRICAN ARMY, 1945-1966

As was the case after the First World War, the end of the Second World War also led to the massive demobilisation of most of the UDF's members, with white members being much more substantially rewarded for their services than their fellow "non-white" members.⁵³ The future Permanent Force would consist of 1 SA Infantry Division and 6 SA Armoured Division, albeit that these forces were soon scaled down. The National Party's election victory of May 1948 heralded the apartheid

48 N Orpen, *Victory in Italy* (Cape Town, 1975), *passim*; J Bourhill, *Come back to Portofino: through Italy with the 6th South African Armoured Division* (Johannesburg, 2011), *passim*; J Kros, *War in Italy: with the South Africans from Taranto to the Alps* (Rivonia, 1992), *passim*; WL Fielding, *With the Sixth Division: an account of the activities of the 6th South African Armoured Division in World War II* (Pietermaritzburg, 1946), *passim*; Bouch (ed.), pp. 165-175; Nöthling (ed.), pp. 206-234; Jacobs *et al.*, pp. 83-98.

49 See, in general, LWF Grundlingh, *The participation of South African blacks in the Second World War* (DLitt et Phil, Rand Afrikaans University, 1987). See also Gleeson, pp. 100-257.

50 Nöthling, pp. 57-58.

51 *Ibid.*, pp. 58-59.

52 See, for example, "SA forces in the Second World War", *Militaria* 19(3), 1989, p. 47; South African National Defence Force Archives Depot (Pretoria): Roll of honour World War 1939-1945.

53 JS Mohlamme, "Soldiers without reward: Africans in South Africa's wars", *Military History Journal* 10(1), June 1995, pp. 33-37; Gleeson, pp. 264-265.

era in the history of South Africa – and also had implications for the UDF, as the NP implemented what can, with hindsight, be regarded as Afrikaner/apartheid “affirmative action”. In due course, some pro-Smuts/UP and English-speaking officers would be sidelined, and many left the UDF.⁵⁴ The Coloured Corps, which was re-established as a unit of the Permanent Force on 4 July 1947, was disbanded on 14 April 1949, although a coloured support corps, along with other similar “non-white” support services, was established in 1950.⁵⁵ According to the Defence Amendment Act (Act 39 of 1947), (white) women could henceforth follow a career in the UDF's Permanent Force, albeit only in a non-combatant capacity. This led to the establishment of a Women's Defence Corps on 28 November 1947. However, in 1948, the new NP Minister of Defence, FC Erasmus, took office; and he had other views with regard to women in uniform. As a result, the recruitment of women ceased as from May 1949, albeit that the Corps lingered on until it was formally disbanded on 1 May 1971. In the meantime, an elaborate commando system was established, as well as an Army Gymnasium to train new recruits for the Army.⁵⁶

The new regime also affected the UDF in other ways. Certain ranks were “Afrikanerised”, and insignia that had a British connection were changed to reflect a South African character. On 1 April 1950 the Military Academy was established – and since 1 January 1961 it has been a faculty of the University of Stellenbosch.⁵⁷ In an effort to ensure a sufficient number of members for the ACF, a ballot system was introduced in 1953. ACF units were also reorganised; and as from 1 November 1958, in terms of the 1957 Defence Act (Act 44 of 1957), the UDF was renamed the South African Defence Force (SADF).⁵⁸

For many years after the end of the Second World War, the SA Army was trained to be able to assist friendly Western powers to fight a war in, for example, the Middle East. However, in due course the Army's role was redefined as being geared towards South Africa's inward defence. Nonetheless, the SA Army was re-equipped with modern weapons; for example, 26 Comet cruiser tanks were obtained from the United Kingdom (UK) in 1954. In addition, 203 Centurion main battle tanks were acquired – also from the UK (June 1952 – September 1956, albeit that 100 of them were re-sold to Switzerland in 1961). Wheeled armoured vehicles were deemed to be more suitable for South Africa's needs, and consequently 280 Saracen

54 Van der Waag, “Smuts's generals”, p. 61.

55 CJ Nöthling, *Geskiedenis van die Suid-Afrikaanse Weermag 2* (Silverton, 1996), p. 5. See in general also J de Villiers, “Die militêre tradisie van die kleurling”, *Militaria* 13(3), 1968, pp. 180-185.

56 See, for example, Bouch (ed.), pp. 179, 261-262.

57 For more on the history of the Military Academy at Saldanha Bay, see GE Visser, “Die geskiedenis van die Suid-Afrikaanse Militêre Akademie, 1950-1990”, *Supplementa ad Scientia Militaria* 1, 2000, *passim*.

58 Nöthling, 2, pp. 7-9.

armoured personnel carriers and 234 Ferret scout cars were bought – all from the UK (1952-1956). The first Panhard AML-60 and AML-90 armoured cars were acquired from France in 1962, with a total of some 1 300 eventually being built, most of them in South Africa, and locally known as the Eland-60 and Eland-90.⁵⁹

In the meantime, South Africa became a republic – outside of the British Commonwealth – on 31 May 1961. By that stage, the country's international position had been seriously tarnished by the implementation of the racially-based policy of separate development (apartheid) and the concomitant reaction against this policy, which culminated in the riots at Sharpeville and elsewhere in March 1960 (which left 69 people dead and 180 wounded, and which led to an international outcry), the resultant banning of the two most prominent anti-apartheid organisations, namely the African National Congress (ANC) and the Pan-Africanist Congress (PAC) – and the establishment of underground armed wings of these organisations, namely the ANC's uMkhonto weSizwe (MK) and the PAC's Poqo (later African People's Liberation Army, APLA).⁶⁰ Acts of sabotage and other attacks occurred, placing the white government and its security forces under pressure. The fact that no fewer than 17 African countries became independent in 1960 – with more to follow in the course of the 1960s and beyond – also led to a reconsideration of the Republic of South Africa (RSA)'s military-strategic position. In the light of the threat of international sanctions, efforts were also made to resuscitate the country's armaments industry. Many more ACF units were also established, and defence spending was increased. And in 1963, a training centre for the new SA Coloured Corps was established at Eersterivier near Cape Town. (In 1972 the corps was renamed the South African Cape Corps.)⁶¹ The Army also took cognisance of the possibility that a future war might be unconventional and of a counter-guerrilla nature. Soon, the SADF would indeed become embroiled in such a war, with the SA Army, of necessity, having to do most of the fighting.

6. THE WAR IN NAMIBIA AND IN ANGOLA, 1966-1989

In 1966, the SA Army had some 19 000 soldiers, and it was equipped with approximately 240 tanks (100 Centurions, 100 Shermans and 40 Comets), 700 armoured cars (450 Eland-60/Eland-90, 50 M-3s and 200 Ferret scout cars),

59 See, for example, H-R Heitman, *South African arms and armour: a concise guide to the armaments of the South African Army, Navy and Air Force* (Cape Town, 1988), pp. 42-46, 54-55.

60 See, for example, R Williams, "The other armies: a brief historical overview of Umkhonto We Sizwe (MK), 1961-1994", *Military History Journal* 11(5), June 2000, pp. 173-185. See in general also R Kasrils, *'Armed and dangerous': my undercover struggle against apartheid* (Oxford, 1993); G Mbeki, *The struggle for liberation in South Africa: a short history* (Bellville, 1992).

61 Nöthling, 2, pp. 13, 16; J Harknes, "Suid-Afrikaanse Kaapse Korps", *Suid-Afrikaanse Panorama* 28(9), September 1983, pp. 32-33.

250 Saracen armoured personnel carriers, and more than 1 000 guns of various types (for example, 140 mm, 25-pounders, twin 35 mm anti-aircraft guns, 40 mm anti-aircraft guns, 3,7-inch anti-aircraft guns and 17-pounder anti-tank guns).⁶² The expansion of the SA Army, which had started around 1961, continued. On 1 January 1968, compulsory national (military) service for all white males was instituted. And in March 1968, the Development and Production Armaments Corporation was established, which in 1977 became the Armaments Corporation of South Africa.⁶³

In the meantime, what should be called the Namibian War of Independence (1966-1989) – also known as the Border War or the Bush War – broke out, a war that in due course spilled over into Angola and Zambia. The South West African People's Organisation (SWAPO) was originally established in 1958 as the Ovamboland People's Congress. In 1965, SWAPO decided to launch a guerrilla campaign in an effort to liberate the people of South West Africa (SWA; today Namibia) from white (RSA) domination; and during the next year, SWAPO's military wing, the People's Liberation Army of Namibia (PLAN), established a base camp at Ongulumbashe in Ovamboland. On 26 August 1966, members of the South African Police attacked this camp and defeated the insurgents.⁶⁴ Three other PLAN groups also infiltrated SWA in 1966-1967, but were forced to retire. Counter-insurgency operations continued in 1968, with the South African security forces building on previous successes.⁶⁵ The war that eventually dragged on until 1989 is discussed in some detail by, for example, W Steenkamp, *South Africa's Border War, 1966-1989* (Gibraltar, 1989); J Breytenbach, *They live by the sword: 32 'Buffalo' Battalion. South Africa's Foreign Legion* (Alberton, 1990); G Cawthra, *Brutal force: the apartheid war machine* (London, c. 1986); and H-R Heitman, *War in Angola: the final South African phase* (Gibraltar, 1990).

Meanwhile, at the "home front", the first women started training at the new SA Army Women's College in George as from 1 February 1971. On 1 October 1972, the SA Army's first Special Forces unit was established. Commando service was extended, and in 1968 national service was standardised to one year of initial training for all white males, followed by five camps of 19 days each. Effectively from 1 January 1978 onwards, national service was extended to two years' initial training. National servicemen indeed formed the backbone of the SADF in the war years. In the meantime, on 21 January 1974, the first training centre for black

62 See, for example, *The military balance 1965-1966* (London, 1965), p. 36, as well as the following annual editions of this publication.

63 JP McWilliams, *South Africa's arms merchant* (London, 1989), pp. 5-6.

64 PJ Els, *Ongulumbashe: where the Bushwar began* (Wandsbeck, 2007), pp. 53-158.

65 SL Barnard, "'n Historiese oorsig van die gewapende konflik aan die noordgrens van SWA/Namibië 1966-1989", *Acta Academica* 23(1), March 1991, pp. 112-113; Nöthling, 2, pp. 18-19; "Kort kroniek van militêre operasies en optredes in Suidwes-Afrika en Angola (1914-1988)", *Militaria* 19(2), 1989, p. 7.

Permanent Force members was established. In 1978, the SA Army Battle School was founded at Lohathla in the Northern Cape. In the second half of the 1970s, the SA Army took delivery of its first-ever infantry fighting vehicle, the Ratel (of which a total of 1 381 were built, 1974-1988), as well as the G5 gun/howitzer (72 built from 1982 onwards), the self-propelled G6 gun/howitzer (43 built 1987 onwards), and the upgraded Centurion tank, henceforth known as the Olifant.⁶⁶

The SADF had deployed to SWA in support of the SA Police, but in 1973 the SA Police handed over the responsibility for the defence of SWA to the SADF, and soon the SA Army would, for the first time since World War II, be involved in active military operations. South Africa had strong ties with Portugal, and the RSA relied on that country to contain communist infiltration into SWA. When Angola gained its independence from Portugal on 11 November 1975, and it became clear that the pro-communist Movimento Popular de Libertação de Angola (MPLA) would form the new government, the SADF launched Operation Savannah and sent troops to Angola in support of the pro-Western Frente Nacional de Libertação de Angola (FNLA) and União Nacional para a Independência Total de Angola (UNITA). The SA Army's Task Force Zulu occupied the south-western section of Angola, and then continued its successes northwards, while Battle Group Foxbat also achieved several successes (including at Ebo), and Battle Group X-Ray (later known as Battle Group Orange) achieved success at Luso. A combined Task Force Zulu and Battle Group Foxbat also defeated their opponents at Bridge 14 on the Nhia River. The South Africans then captured Cassamba and Almeida, and were in a good position to take Luanda and control the greater portion of Angola, when the South African government decided to halt the advance. The United States of America (USA), which initially supported the RSA's actions, withdrew its support, and the South African government did not wish to become bogged down in a Vietnam-type war in Africa. On 27 March 1976, the last SA Army forces left Angola.⁶⁷

With Angola now governed by a party sympathetic to its cause, SWAPO could intensify its efforts to liberate SWA. On 27 October 1977, some 90 PLAN cadres crossed into Ovamboland, but security forces drove them back to Angola, pursued them north of the border, and destroyed two of their bases. Other incursions into SWA followed. This led to the launching of a number of semi-conventional cross-border operations by the SADF, for example Operation Reindeer (4 May 1978), in which SWAPO bases at Cassinga (Camp Moscow) and near Chetequera (Camp

66 Heitman, *South African arms and armour*, pp. 42-43, 47-53, 78-79; information supplied to the author by Dr S Nell, 18 February 2013 and 4 March 2013 (e-mails); Nöthling, 2, pp. 20-22; IB Greeff, "South Africa's modern Long Tom", *Military History Journal* 9(1), June 1992, pp. 1-8. As far as national service in general is concerned, see EM Meyers, "Drie eeue van militêre diensplig in Suid-Afrika", *Militaria* 16(2), 1986, pp. 1-19.

67 FJ du T Spies, *Operasie Savannah: Angola 1975-1976* (Pretoria, 1989), *passim*; Barnard, pp. 114-116; Nöthling, pp. 21, 24-25.

Vietnam) were destroyed. SWAPO's losses amounted to more than a thousand killed, while the SADF only lost six killed; but the Cassinga attack elicited a great deal of criticism in the light of allegations that the casualties were all civilians – the debate in this regard continues.⁶⁸

In those years, South Africa embarked on a nuclear armament project: for reasons of prestige, and also to discourage any possible attacks by communists or Afro-Asian countries. There was cooperation with Israel in this regard. Six and a half nuclear devices were built by South Africa, but were later dismantled.⁶⁹

On 23 August 1978, ten SA Army soldiers died when the PLAN bombarded their base at Katimo Mulila. Two SA Army combat teams then crossed into Zambia in a hot-pursuit operation. Two similar operations followed in March 1979: Operation Safraan (in which SWAPO bases in Zambia were destroyed) and Operation Rekestok (in which bases in Angola were attacked). Operation Sceptic was launched on 25 May 1980, which led to the first serious clashes with the MPLA's military wing, namely the Forças Armadas Populares de Libertação de Angola (FAPLA), as well as with SWAPO's mechanised forces. (By this time, the logistical systems of SWAPO/PLAN and FAPLA had become inextricably intertwined.) The war in SWA/Angola escalated, and as PLAN/FAPLA posed an ever-increasing threat, the SADF launched Operation Protea (August-September 1981), which included the SA Army's largest mechanised operation since World War II, and which led to heavy PLAN/FAPLA losses, as well as losses among their Soviet and Eastern Block advisers. Many other operations followed, for example Operation Super and Operation Mebos in 1982.⁷⁰ In the meantime, the South African government also became involved in the civil war in Mozambique, a country which had gained its independence from Portugal on 25 June 1975. The RSA clandestinely supported the Resistência Nacional Moçambicana (RENAMO) against the Frente de Libertação de Mozambique (FRELIMO) government. The Nkomati Accord of 16 March 1984, at least to some extent, normalised the RSA's relationship with Mozambique.⁷¹

68 See, for example, L Barnard, "The battle of Cassinga, 4 May 1978: a historical reassessment", *Journal for Contemporary History* 31(3), December 2006, pp. 131-160; JD Breytenbach, "Airborne assault on Cassinga base, 4 May 1978", *Journal for Contemporary History* 34(1), February 2009, pp. 141-163.

69 See, for example, S Polakow-Suransky, *The unspoken alliance: Israel's secret relationship with apartheid South Africa* (Johannesburg, 2010), pp. 136-153, 222; M Murphy, "Historical highlight of the rise and demise of South Africa's nuclear capability", *Africa Insight* 40(4), March 2010, pp. 121-135.

70 Barnard, pp. 117-119; Nöthling, pp. 26, 37-39; "Kort kroniek ...", pp. 8-10.

71 See, for example, CJ Jacobs, "Conflict between South Africa and Mozambique, 1975-1989, within the framework of the Cold War and regional tensions", *Journal for Contemporary History* 34(1), February 2009, pp. 281-297.

Inside the RSA, tension was mounting on the “home front”. In the wake of the Soweto and other riots of June 1976, unrest continued sporadically in certain areas. From 1978 onwards, MK became active again and terror attacks gradually increased, including the planting of land-mines in what is known today as the Limpopo Province. The NP’s reforms fuelled, rather than extinguished, the flames of discontent within the ranks of the black majority in the RSA; the United Democratic Front (UDF) was established in 1983, and as black opposition organisations started to jostle for positions, black-on-black violence increased. SA Army soldiers were called up (some 35 000 as early as 1985) to assist the SAP in trying (to a large extent unsuccessfully) to keep the peace, and henceforth the SADF had to fight on two fronts: “up north” and “on the border” in SWA and in Angola, as well as on the “home front” in the RSA. In those years, the NP regime propagated the notion of a “total onslaught” against the RSA, in order to galvanise (especially white) support for its war effort and policies. But gradually, opposition against the apartheid regime also grew amongst the ranks of white people, as manifested, for example, by the End Conscription Campaign (ECC), which targeted the system of compulsory national (military) service.⁷² The apartheid regime had to rely on the military, rather than on the police, to uphold law and order. The RSA had indeed “progressed” from a police state under BJ Vorster to a military state under PW Botha.

In the meantime, “up north”, SWAPO launched a new offensive in February 1983, but the SADF’s operation Phoenix drove them back (309 PLAN guerrillas killed; 27 SADF members killed). On 6 December 1983, the SADF launched Operation Askari, which was aimed at disrupting PLAN’s logistical and command infrastructure. PLAN’s allies, including a large number of Cuban soldiers, joined in the fighting, but were defeated. By the time Askari ended on 13 January 1984, both sides were more willing than before to start negotiations. According to the Lusaka Accord (February 1984), the SADF would withdraw from Angola (completed: April 1985), while SWAPO and the Cubans were not supposed to occupy those areas evacuated by the South Africans. But SWAPO soon renewed its operations, and the SADF obviously reacted swiftly and decisively – as evidenced, for example, by Operation Boswilger and Operation Egret (both conducted in 1985). When FAPLA and its allied forces advanced on UNITA’s strongholds at Mavinga and Jamba in 1987, the SADF launched Operation Modular (1 July–15 December 1987). It was during this operation that, for the first time since World War II, the SA Army used tanks in action. Then followed Operation Hooper (January–March 1988). In these operations, the SADF defeated the FAPLA and allied forces at the Lomba River and in other battles. The FAPLA and allied

72 MW Phillips, *The End Conscription Campaign 1983-1988: a study of white extra-parliamentary opposition to apartheid* (MA, University of South Africa, 2002), *passim*; Nöthling, p. 37.

forces were pinned down in the Cuito Cuanavala area. The exact outcome and implications of the Cuito Cuanavala operation are still in dispute.⁷³

On the “home front”, the political violence continued, but the SA Army also played an important role in several humanitarian and disaster-relief operations, for example, assisting flood victims on several occasions in various areas.⁷⁴ In Angola, Operation Hooper was followed by Operation Packer (March 1988) and Operation Displace (April–August 1988). In the meantime, negotiations were resumed, which led to an agreement regarding the SADF’s withdrawal from Angola by 1 September 1988. (The last troops indeed left Angola on 30 August 1988.) From 1966 up to the end of 1988, SWAPO had lost 11 335 guerrillas killed in action, while the SADF lost at least 608 members who were killed in action or who died from other causes in the operational area.⁷⁵ On 1 April 1989, a large-scale invasion by some 1 500 PLAN cadres took place, which led to a final nine days of fighting – which left 27 security members and 32 PLAN members dead.⁷⁶ On 21 March 1990, SWA at long last became independent as Namibia. In the meantime, the Cold War had ended; and soon even the Soviet Union would be no more. And in South Africa, dramatic political changes were also taking place.⁷⁷

On a tactical level, the SADF won many battles in the war “up north”, but strategically the RSA was outmanoeuvred: to some extent in SWA and in Angola, and eventually also in the RSA itself – particularly by the ANC, which was supported by the majority of the population. The Namibian War of Independence can rightfully be described as the most protracted war of its kind in Africa. Over and above the works by FJ du T Spies and Steenkamp already referred to,⁷⁸ there were initially not many publications on this drawn-out conflict. However, in the last ten years, there has been a steady stream of new books on the subject, as many of those who were involved in the conflict try to come to terms with it.⁷⁹ See in this regard, for example, C Blake, *From soldier to civvy: reflections on national service* (Cape

73 See, for example, L Scholtz, “Cuito Cuanavale: wie het werklik gewen?”, *Scientia Militaria* 28(1), 1998, pp. 16-61; *Beeld*, 29 February 2012, p. 16; *Sunday Argus*, 20 November 2011, p. 4.

74 Nöthling, p. 31; *Die Burger*, 5 February 1981, p. 1; *Evening Post*, 23 July 1980, p. 1.

75 Nöthling, pp. 41-42; J Geldenhuys, *Dié wat gewen het: feite en fabels van die Bosoerlog* (Pretoria, 2007), pp. 266-320; *Die Burger*, 9 August 1988, p. 1 and 31 August 1988, p. 18; *The Windhoek Advertiser*, 3 August 1988, p. 1; *The Star*, 6 August 1988, p. 1; *Pretoria News*, 9 August 1988, p. 1; *The Citizen*, 10 August 1988, p. 1 and 30 August 1988, p. 2.

76 See, for example, P Stiff, *Nine days of war* (Alberton, 1989).

77 For Pres. FW de Klerk’s watershed speech in Parliament on 2 February 1990, the unbanning of the ANC, PAC and other organisations, and the release of Mr Nelson Mandela and other political prisoners see, for example, *Evening Post*, 2 February 1990, pp. 1-2; *The Argus*, 2 February 1990, pp. 1-2; *Die Transvaler*, 2 February 1990, pp. 1-2.

78 See p. 245 and footnote 67, *supra*.

79 For an excellent review of publications that appeared in print until c.2005, see I van der Waag and D Visser, “War, popular memory and the South African literature of the Angolan conflict”, *Journal for Contemporary History* 34(1), February 2009, pp. 113-140.

Town, 2010); A Diedericks, *Journey without boundaries: the operational life and experiences of a South African Special Forces small team operator* (Durban, 2007); A Feinstein, *Battle scared: hidden costs of the Border War* (Cape Town, 2011); S Kamango and L Bezuidenhout, *Shadows in the sand: a Koevoet tracker's story of an insurgency war* (Johannesburg, 2011); G Korff, *19 with a bullet: a South African paratrooper in Angola* (Johannesburg, 2009); M Malan, *My life with the SA Defence Force* (Pretoria, 2006); and G Shubin *et al.*, *The memoirs of veterans of the war in Angola* (Moscow, 2008). See also K Kubiak, *Wojna graniczna w Angoli 1975-1985* (Zabrze, 2010) – a Polish publication on the war. And then there are also studies with regard to the development of the SA Army in the course of the years 1966 to 1989,⁸⁰ and specifically the role played by South African armour;⁸¹ as well as studies dealing with strategic issues.⁸² Other important sources that deal with the South African society and politics in the years of conflict from an academic point of view, include PH Frankel, *Pretoria's praetorians: civil-military relations in South Africa* (Cambridge, 1987); KW Grundy, *The militarization of South African politics* (Oxford, 1988); J Cock and L Nathan, *War and society: the militarization of South Africa* (Cape Town, 1989) and A Seegers, *The military in the making of modern South Africa* (London, 1996).

7. A NEW ARMY FOR A NEW SOUTH AFRICA, 1990-2012

In several publications, the transformation of the military in South Africa in the years since 1990 has been discussed – see in this regard, for example, J Cilliers (ed.), *Continuity and change: the SA Army in transition* (Monograph Series 26, Halfway House, 1998) and J Cock and P McKenzie (eds), *From defence to development: redirecting military resources in South Africa* (Cape Town, 1998). At the end of the war “up north” in 1989, the SA Army had approximately 77 500 personnel (including 58 500 white national servicemen and 17 400 Permanent Force men – including 400 black and coloured soldiers), 250 Olifant 1A and 1B tanks, 1 300 Ratel infantry fighting vehicles, 1 200 Eland-60 and -90 armoured cars, 1 500 Buffel, Casspir, Bulldog, Hippo, Rhino, Hyena and Lynx armoured personnel carriers, 120 Valkiri multiple rocket launchers, 155 guns (30 G-1 25-pounder/88 mm, 75 G-2 5,5-inch/140 mm, 40 G-5 155 mm, ten G-6 self-

80 L Scholtz, “Die ontwikkeling van die SA Leër in die Grensoorlog, 1966-1989”, *Journal for Contemporary History* 31(3), December 2006, pp. 112-130.

81 E Jordaan, “The role of South African armour in South-West Africa, Namibia and Angola: 1975-1989”, *Journal for Contemporary History* 31(3), December 2006, pp. 161-186.

82 See, for example, the articles by H-R Heitman (“The other edge of asymmetry: South Africa's Bush War strategy”) and A Esterhuysen (“The strategic contours of the South African military involvement in Namibia and Angola during the 1970s/1980s”) in the *Journal for Contemporary History* 34(1), February 2009, pp. 1-15 and pp. 16-35.

propelled 155 mm), 120 120 mm mortars, 4 000 81 mm mortars, 120 ENTAC anti-tank missile systems, 20 Cactus and 54 Tigercat surface-to-air missile systems, and more than 100 anti-aircraft guns (including GDF-002 twin 35 mm, ZU-23-2 self-propelled 23 mm and GAI Ystervark self-propelled 20 mm).⁸³

As from 1990, national service was reduced from two years to one year. The last intake of national servicemen took place in July 1993. The SA Army also underwent dramatic rationalisation (“down-sizing”). Eight units were disbanded, others were amalgamated, and 3 000 uniform personnel, as well as civilian personnel, were laid off. In the meantime, the SA Army continued to play a role in the efforts to stabilise the security situation in strife-torn areas of the country (for example, in the Pretoria-Witwatersrand-Vereeniging area, and in certain areas in Natal) – sometimes as many as 10 000 soldiers were deployed nation-wide. On 5 January 1994, a National Peace Force, comprising members of the SADF and non-statutory forces, was established to keep law and order in the run-up to, during and after the April 1994 elections – but it was not very successful, and was disbanded soon after the elections. In March 1994, 14 000 troops and armoured and other vehicles “invaded” Bophuthatswana to restore order in this so-called independent state, shortly before it was reincorporated into the RSA. During the RSA’s first-ever truly democratic election in the last week of April 1994, some 20 500 soldiers were employed to ensure a peaceful political transition.⁸⁴

On the eve of the elections, at midnight on 26-27 April 1994, the old SADF ceased to exist, and was replaced by the new South African National Defence Force (SANDF), consisting of the SADF, the defence forces of the four former so-called independent homelands (Transkei, Bophuthatswana, Venda and Ciskei), MK and APLA. In addition, certain members of the former Inkatha Freedom Party Self-Protection Units, also referred to as the KwaZulu Self-Protection Force (KZSPF), were later also incorporated into the SANDF, but they enlisted as new recruits in 1996.⁸⁵ There is an interesting parallel between the formation of the new SANDF, and the establishment of the UDF in 1912, when military units of the former colonies of the Cape, Natal, Transvaal and Orange Free State – whose members

83 *The military balance 1989-1990* (London, 1989), p. 139; Heitman, *South African arms and armour*, p. 42 *et seq.*

84 Nöthling, pp. 28, 43-52; G van der Westhuizen and L Barnard, “Die ‘Slag van Mmabatho’: die einde van regse weerstand teen die nuwe Suid-Afrika?”, *Journal for Contemporary History* 31(2), September 2006, pp. 163-177, 32(1), June 2007, pp. 54-68 and 32(2), December 2007, pp. 130-143; AH Sparks, *Tomorrow is another country: the inside story of South Africa's road to change* (Chicago, 1996), pp. 197-239.

85 RM Williams, “Integration or absorption? The creation of the South African National Defence Force, 1993-1999”, *African Security Review* 11(2), 2002, pp. 22-23. See in general also L Nathan, *The changing of the guard: armed forces and defence policy in a democratic South Africa* (Pretoria, 1994).

had in some cases fought against one another in the Anglo-Boer War – had to be integrated into a new national military force.

The SA Army's order of battle in 1994 consisted of approximately 47 000 soldiers, 250 tanks, 1 300 armoured cars, 1 300 infantry fighting vehicles, 1 660 troop carriers, 155 guns/howitzers, 180 multiple rocket launchers, and some 300 anti-aircraft guns.⁸⁶

In April 1994, the SANDF was only an integrated force on paper, with huge differences, in practice, between the military culture and training of, for example, MK and APLA on the one hand, and the old SADF on the other hand. The British Military Advisory and Training Team (BMATT) played a very important role in ensuring that the integration process from 1994 onwards proceeded relatively smoothly.⁸⁷ Challenges faced by the SA Army – as well as the SANDF in general – since 1994 include the reduction in the amount of money allocated by the government for defence spending (for example, a mere 1,3% of the gross national product (GNP) in 2004, compared to 4,7% in 1989; or a reduction in real terms by some 50% from 1989 to 1997); a top-heavy structure (too many generals); politically driven and ideologically tainted “affirmative action”, which has led to many white personnel leaving the SANDF and very few whites enlisting for a career in – especially – the Army; ill-discipline, with the most disturbing incident being the violent protest of some 3 000 soldiers in Pretoria on 26 August 2009, and the most tragic events being shooting incidents in which black personnel killed white superiors (fortunately isolated incidents, sometimes with racial undertones, but committed by individuals suffering from particular problems); the scourge of HIV/AIDS; and the “old-age syndrome” (a situation which has, fortunately, gradually improved).⁸⁸

Since 1994, the SANDF has undergone structural transformation; new rank insignia have been adopted; the commando units have been disbanded; and civilian control over the SANDF has been restored. On 1 July 1998, Lt Gen. Gilbert Ramano became the first black commanding officer of the SA Army, soon after Gen. Siphwe Nyanda (a former MK Chief of Staff) became the first black South African to become Chief of the SANDF.⁸⁹ Ramano was succeeded as Chief of the

86 *The military balance 1993-1994* (London, 1993), pp. 217-218.

87 See, for example, R Brownlee and I Liebenberg, “Reflections on the integration of the military in South Africa”, *African Security Review* 4(2), 1995, pp. 26-31.

88 For more details with regard to developments from 1994 to 2009, see, for example, Williams, pp. 17-25, and the three articles by A Wessels, “Die Suid-Afrikaanse Nasionale Weermag, 1994-2004” (published as two articles) and “The South African National Defence Force, 1994-2009: a historical perspective” in *Journal for Contemporary History* 29(3), December 2004, pp. 168-183, 30(1), June 2005, pp. 103-118, and 35(2), September 2010, pp. 131-152.

89 *The Star*, 30 April 1998, p. 1 and 15 July 1998, p. 5; *Sowetan*, 16 July 1998, p. 6; *The Mercury*, 30 April 1998, p. 1; *SA Soldier* 18(2), December 2011, p. 14.

SA Army by Lt Gen. Solly Shoke in 2004, who in turn was succeeded by Lt Gen. Vusumuzi Masondo in 2011.⁹⁰

In the course of the past 18 years, the SANDF has also taken part in several peace-keeping operations in Africa, for example in Burundi, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and in the Sudan.⁹¹ The most controversial SANDF “peace-keeping” operation was its involvement in Lesotho (Operation Boleas:1998-2000).⁹² In the second half of 2011, a committee (under the chairmanship of Mr Roelf Meyer) was appointed by the Minister of Defence and Military Veterans (as the Department of Defence has been known since 2009), Ms Lindiwe Sisulu, to draw up a new defence review for the SANDF. The last defence review was conducted in 1996. The new defence review will probably determine the shape, size and tasks of the SANDF for the foreseeable future. Hopefully it will also ensure more funds for the SANDF.⁹³

8. CONCLUDING PERSPECTIVES

According to the authoritative publication, *The military balance 2012*, the SA Army today (2012) has approximately 37 000 uniform and 6 500 civilian personnel; 34 Olifant 1A tanks (with 133 1Bs in store); 176 Rooikat armoured cars (including 94 in store); some 800 Ratel infantry fighting vehicles (IFVs) (of which about half are in store); 370 Casspir and 440 Mamba armoured personnel carriers; 43 G-6 self-propelled 155 guns (most in store), 72 G-5 guns (most in store) and 75 G-2 140 mm guns (all in store); 26 Valkiri Mk I multiple rocket launchers (all in store), 25 Bataleur multiple rocket launchers (some in store); 1 190 81 mm mortars, 36 120 mm mortars; 52 ZT-3 Swift anti-tank missile units (most in store); 100 M-40A1 106 mm recoilless rifles; 36 twin 23 mm Zumlac anti-aircraft guns and 40 twin 35 mm GDF-02 anti-aircraft guns.⁹⁴ As far as soldiers and tanks are concerned, compare the SA Army's 37 000 and 167, respectively, with the Brazilian army's 190 000 and 267 (with 172 more on order), India's 1 103 000 and at least 3 233, Russia's 305 000 and more than 2 800 (with an additional 18 000 tanks in

90 *Rapport*, 11 July 2004, p. 23; *Beeld*, 30 September 2011, p. 4.

91 See, for example, T Neethling, “The SANDF as an instrument for peacekeeping in Africa: a critical analysis of three main challenges”, *Journal for Contemporary History* 36(1), June 2011, pp. 134-153; T Neethling, “Southern African military interventions in the 1990s: the case of SADC in Lesotho” in L du Plessis and M Hough (eds), *Managing African conflicts: the challenge of military intervention* (Pretoria, 2000), pp. 287-331.

92 *Cape Times*, 23 September 1998, pp. 1, 3-4; JS Kotze, “Some unresolved military ethical dilemmas at the turn of the century: an introspective look at South Africa's recent military history”, *Journal for Contemporary History* 27(3), December 2003, pp. 178-181.

93 See, for example, *Volksblad*, 29 July 2011, p. 6; *SA Soldier* 19(5), May 2012, p. 8 and 19(7), July 2012, p. 16; the draft new defence review at <www.sadefencereview2012.org>.

94 *The military balance 2012* (London, 2012), pp. 452-453.

store), the People's Republic of China's approximately 1 600 000 and more than 8 200, and the USA's 640 000 and 5 855.⁹⁵ It is clear that the armies of the other BRICS countries, as well as the land forces of the USA, are much stronger than the SA Army, something that can impact on South Africa's international standing.

In terms of Army Vision 2020, a number of procurements are planned; for example, the Army's Ratel IFVs will be replaced in the course of the next few years by 264 Badger (based on the Finnish Patria) IFVs (of which 40 will be built in Finland and the rest in South Africa),⁹⁶ but strictly speaking, many more procurements should be made. The Army will also in due course have to replace its tanks; over and above the G-5 and G-6 guns, a lighter (105 mm) gun is also needed, as well as surface-to-air missile systems. Many logistical vehicles need to be replaced, and base facilities upgraded. The Army must be able to take part in peace-keeping and related operations, without neglecting its ability to fight a conventional war. And it must also be able to patrol South Africa's borders.

Since 1912, South Africa's land forces have experienced times of success (1914-1918), neglect (1919-1939), success once again (1939-1945), followed by some development (1946-1975), success (1975-1989), followed by dramatic transformation in the wake of the political changes that have taken place in South Africa since 1990. Since 1994, the SA Army (as in the case of the SANDF) has faced several challenges, but – all things considered – it is still a force with vast potential, and indeed a force to be reckoned with; a force with a history that dates back to 1912, and with roots that go back much further.

95 *Ibid.*, pp. 55-56, 193, 234, 243-244, 376. See in general also CF Foss, *Jane's armour and artillery 2010-2011* (Coulson, 2011), *passim*; JC O'Halloran (ed.), *Jane's land-based air defence 2011-2012* (Coulson, 2011), *passim*.

96 *The Star*, 18 May 2007, p. 1; *Daily Dispatch*, 18 May 2007, p. 11.