

Foreigners in the defence of South Africa

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Introduction

South Africa and the rest of the Free World is presently engaged in a concerted struggle against the Russian communists who seek to gain world power. The Soviet Union is striving to subject South Africa to a communist regime which would enable it to gain access to the country's geostrategic facilities as well as its mineral wealth. The physical assault against the Republic is conducted by Russian supported revolutionary and terrorist organizations whose aim it is to cause anarchy, chaos, dislocation and wide-spread violence. Additionally, Cuban and East German surrogate forces are operating in neighbouring countries to the north. These threats against South Africa are escalating in scope and intensity by the day and for this reason, it is obliged to muster the support of everyone in the country, including that of non-South Africans. In the past the defence of the Republic rested exclusively on the shoulders of South African-born young men whose selfless service was often sacrificed at the cost of their academic, professional and personal ambitions. Their military commitments, moreover, placed them at a disadvantage against non-citizens

who, exempted from duty, could pursue their tertiary educational careers unhindered. However, the newly-promulgated amendment to the Defence Act, which makes provision for the acquisition of South African citizenship by virtue of residence in this country, seeks to spread the defence burden more justly. New South African citizens have therefore been called upon since October 1984 to accept co-responsibility for military duty in the country.

The participation of foreigners in the defence of South Africa is by no means without precedent, historical evidence of this is readily available. As far back as the early days of Dutch rule in the country, soldiers from other European nations were employed to strengthen the Cape garrison. Subsequently foreigners also played a role in the suppression of marauding bands and aggressive Black tribes who attacked the settlers, while during the Anglo-Boer War, many Europeans joined the Boer forces fighting against British imperialism which threatened the independence of the Boer republics. With a few exceptions these aliens received no compensation and quite a few lost their lives for the cause they believed in.



Portuguese and Jewish South Africans of the July 1985 intake carrying out rifle drill.

The era of Dutch rule

During the 17th and 18th centuries Britain and France looked at the southern tip of Africa with covetous interest, causing the Dutch East India Company to be on the alert to ensure continued Dutch control of the Cape. The Cape garrison, assisted by citizen commandos, experienced a serious shortage of trained military personnel during this period. Consequently, the DEIC was obliged to employ mercenaries. The latter were, however, a motley crowd, of various nationalities and frequently of unsavoury character. A sufficient number among them nevertheless served honourably in the effort to weld the Cape garrison into a fighting force. In this respect the names of some Germans stand out, among them Hermann Rehemagen who was elected non-commissioned officer in the citizen force in 1660, as well as Hieronymus Kruse who was promoted from sergeant to military commander of the garrison in 1682. Others include Gabriel Dohmann, promoted to field cornet in 1718, Johannes Tobias Rhenius who was military commander from 1728 to 1738, as well as George Konrad K uchler who served as lieutenant of the artillery from 1785 to 1787.¹

The Here XVII also engaged the services of mercenary units from abroad. In addition to the German regiment W rttemberg and the Waldeck Battalion, the French regiments Pondicherri, Luxemburg and Waaldener, and the Swiss regiment Meuron, saw service at the Cape.² Their contributions had a decided impact on the improved efficiency of the Cape's defence.

The Eastern frontier

In contrast to the mercenary forces who were paid to protect the Cape, the involvement of other foreigners hereafter was characterized by spontaneous willingness. The 1820 British settlers in particular deserve mention. Positioned as buffer force against the Xhosa on the eastern border by the British authorities, the settlers helped to combat marauding tribesmen who had made life insufferable for the frontiersmen since the end of the preceding century. The settlers joined the local citizen force in its struggle to maintain law and order in the area and distinguished themselves in action during the Sixth Border War of 1834–35, when they fought shoulder-to-shoulder with the Boers and the British against plundering native tribes.³

A mutual feeling of respect and good fellowship

between local farmers (mostly of Afrikaans-speaking stock) and the British settlers evolved.

A telling example of this is exemplified by the donation of a Bible by the latter to the Trek leader Jacobus Uys, just prior to his departure from the Cape in 1837. The settlers were genuinely and deeply affected by the emigration of the Boers as is expressed in their farewell message to Uys and his group. These heartfelt words were addressed to the Trekkers:

"We offer this book to you as proof of our regard and with expressions of sorrow that you are going so far from us. We regret for many reasons that circumstances should have arisen to separate us for ever since we, the British Settlers, arrived in this Colony, now a period of seventeen years, the greatest cordiality has continued to be maintained between us and our Dutch neighbours; and we must always acknowledge the general and unbounded hospitality with which we have been welcomed in every portion of the Colony. We trust therefore that although widely separated, you will hold us in remembrance, and we wish that all will retain for each other the warmest sentiments of friendship."⁴

Somewhat less historical prominence has been accorded the roughly 2 200 German military settlers⁵ who temporarily settled in the Eastern Cape in 1857 under the leadership of General Richard von Stutterheim, to further bolster the defence against the Xhosa. These Germans, who were accompanied in part by their wives and children, came to the country at a time when the latest war was still fresh in the minds of the colonists and the White frontiersmen, and the establishment of military settlements in the territory known as British Kaffraria, was regarded as essential for the effective protection of the eastern frontier of the Colony. They were allotted settlements in the area between the Fish and the Kei Rivers. Here they formed several protective military settlements – among them Berlin, Potsdam, Hanover, Mariental, Wiesbaden, Breidbach, Greytown, Stutterheim, Keiskammahoek, Braunschweig and Frankfurt. Although their stay was of relatively short duration, they contributed markedly to the establishment of peace in these areas.⁶

The Great Trek

Just as they had done in the Cape, foreigners also shared in the well and woe of the White settlement pioneers in the interior. At the start of

the Great Trek a few foreigners decided to throw in their lot with the departing Trekkers to face the unknown and dangerous interior, there to seek their freedom and independence. Among the better-known must be counted the German schoolmaster Daniël Pfeffer and the Frenchman Izaak Albach. Both of them, the latter accompanied by his family, joined Louis Trichardt's trek when it left the Cape Colony in 1835. Another foreigner, a young Scot – William Cowie – also left with the Voortrekkers.⁷ All of them daily faced the hazards together with the Boers and had to fight for their survival.

In Port Natal the paths of the Trekkers crossed once more with those of British settlers and once again they joined sides to defeat a common enemy, this time it was the war-like Zulu chief-tain, Dingane. Most of the settlers who lived in that area together with their Black retinue, received the Voortrekkers most cordially upon the latter's arrival in October 1837. One of the leaders of the settlers was Alexander Biggar who was particularly well-disposed towards the Voortrekkers. He had already sacrificed much for his new fatherland, for in the Eastern Cape he was ruined during the Sixth Border War when he suffered heavy losses to his livestock, buildings

and equipment. He subsequently trekked to Natal. After the arrival of Piet Retief, Biggar and his sons, George and Robert, wholeheartedly supported the Boer cause. Alexander Biggar lost his two sons as well as his own life when the three of them joined forces with the Trekkers against the Zulu chief. George Biggar died during the Zulu attack on the laagers at Bloukransrivier on 17 February 1838 and when the British together with their Black followers, turned against Dingane in April of the same year, Robert fell at the Lower-Tugela.

Twelve settlers as well as approximately 1 000 of their Black followers died during that battle. Alexander Biggar died on December 27th, 1838 at the Battle of the White Umfolozi, shortly after he had joined Andries Pretorius's Win Commando with his small band of British settlers.⁸

During the Trekkers' short-lived stay in Natal they received support not only from the British, but from a group of Germans as well. At the Battle of Congella – the first engagement between the Boers and the British and the first in which the Boers encountered an enemy equipped with artillery – the guns on the Boer side were manned exclusively by Germans.⁹



Pres T.F. Burgers of the ZAR. In response to his call, the Rustenburg Schützen Corps and the Lydenburg Corps were established. (SADF Archives: no 761000138)

The Zuid Afrikaansche Republic and the Free State Republic

In the late nineteenth century foreigners played an increasing role in the maintenance of the independence and security of the two Boer republics of the Transvaal and the Orange Free State. Irrespective of whether or not these foreigners had been granted citizenship of the republics, they felt morally bound to contribute to the military defence of the land where they lived and prospered.¹⁰ Consequently, when President T.F. Burgers of the ZAR called on the citizens of the republic for the establishment of volunteer corps, the German immigrant, H.F. Schröder, was the first to respond with the formation of the Rustenburg Schützen Corps in August 1872. Schröder and his officers did much to inculcate a love of the fatherland and a sense of responsibility to it, in all members of their corps. Four years later, during the Sekhukhune War of 1876–77, Schröder's corps officiated as President Burgers's bodyguard and distinguished themselves by their bravery.¹¹ Among the other volunteer corps founded elsewhere in the Transvaal during that time, more foreigners deserve mention. The German, C.A. von Schlieckmann, founded his Lydenburg Corps in 1876. The gallant Von Schlieckmann gave his life during the Sekhukhune War. His final words, a message to the president, are witness to a high sense of military honour: "Little doctor, tell the President I was faithful to the last".¹²

After the founding of an organized ZAR artillery corps during the early 1870's, Germans played a prominent role in its expansion. This was due to the fact that the ZAR did not, at the time, have at its disposal sufficient numbers of qualified gunners. Captain Otto Riedl, who was recruited by President Burgers to serve in the newly-founded corps, became the Transvaal's first artillery instructor. Riedl subsequently took part in the expedition against Sekhukhune, thereafter he fought in the 1880–81 Anglo-Boer War. As lieutenant of the artillery, Riedl was assisted by among others, his countrymen F.C. Stiemens and A. von Levetzow.¹³

The artillery corps of the ZAR, which ultimately became known as the Staatsartillerie after numerous name-changes, was initially composed almost exclusively of foreign officers for reasons already mentioned. Like Riedl, A. Zboril, A.F.



P.C. Paff, a Dutch soldier who was in charge of the section field telegraphy which was incorporated with the artillery corps. (SADF Archives: no 781004571)

Schiel, A. Görlich and later P.C. Paff, T. Kroon, W.A. Baaij, H.W.C. Grothaus and F.W. von Wichmann can be named as pioneers in the military history of South Africa. Captain Zboril, a born Austrian, served as administrator to the Rijdende Artillerie en Politie (Mounted Artillery and Police), while Schiel joined as teacher in 1888 and six years later was promoted to adjudant of the above-mentioned corps. In this capacity he took part in several military expeditions. Second Lieutenant Paff, an efficient young Dutch soldier, was in charge of the section field telegraphy which was incorporated with the artillery corps in 1890. Captain Grothaus, artillery instructor, and F.W. von Wichmann, both Germans, served as

officers during the 1895 Jameson Raid as well as during the Anglo-Boer War between 1899 and 1902. Both saw the war through to its conclusion.¹⁴

Arnold Theiler was another well-known member of the Staatsartillerie. Swiss by birth and trained as a veterinarian, Theiler came to the Transvaal in 1891 as the first member of the profession in the ZAR. He became a naturalized citizen in 1894, and was appointed as the Staatsartillerie's first cavalry doctor in 1898.¹⁵ Another foreigner in the medical ranks of the artillery was Captain J.O. Hohls, son of a German missionary. He was promoted to first physician of the Staatsartillerie in 1899.¹⁶

The period following upon the Jameson Raid lists the names of L. Grünberg, former French artillery officer, as well as German engineer O.A.A. von Dewitz, and his countryman H.C. Werner. As a result of Jameson's treachery and the rebellious spirit that prevailed among Johannesburg's foreign population, the ZAR authorities decided to establish a ring of fortresses around its capital, Pretoria. Grünberg designed a plan for the city of fortifications based on the principle of overlapping range of fire-power. The plan was not, however, put into practice and Von Dewitz and Werner were consulted. They played a prominent part in the erection of three of the four forts surrounding Pretoria, namely Schanskop, Wonderboompoort and Klapperkop. The fort on Daspoortrand was built by Grünberg and Leon. Von Dewitz and Werner also worked on the two munitions magazines in Pretoria, named as the Central and Green Magazine. To this day these fortifications bear eloquent testimony of the role which foreigners played in the military security of Pretoria.¹⁷

As in the case of the Transvaal, the Free State artillery too had to depend on foreign help initially. After the founding of the Free State artillery in 1864, J. Goodman – formerly of the Royal Artillery – acted as its captain.¹⁸ The man however, who is credited as builder of the corps, is a Prussian officer, Major R.F.W. Albrecht, who was sworn in as its captain in 1880. Albrecht made the Free State his home and became a most efficient and loyal officer as he systematically reorganized the corps to increase its striking power. Additionally it was largely due to his untiring efforts that the *Rijddende Diensmacht* (Mounted Service), an outstanding police unit, was formed in 1889. Albrecht had an enriching



Maj R.F.W. Albrecht, a Prussian officer credited as builder of the Free State artillery. (SADF Archives: no 700017161)

influence, not only as regards the artillery, but the Free State defence system in general.¹⁹

The Anglo-Boer War 1899–1902

In addition to the invaluable part Albrecht and the many other foreigners in the Free State and Transvaal artillery, played in strengthening the South African military system and tradition, they also saw service in the conflict between Boer and British during which they made significant contributions to the war effort. The aforementioned Captain Hohls for example worked as artillery corps physician on the battle-field, while Theiler accompanied the corps to the front as veterinary officer.²⁰

During the Anglo-Boer War only naturalized foreigners were required to perform military service, but those settlers who had not yet become

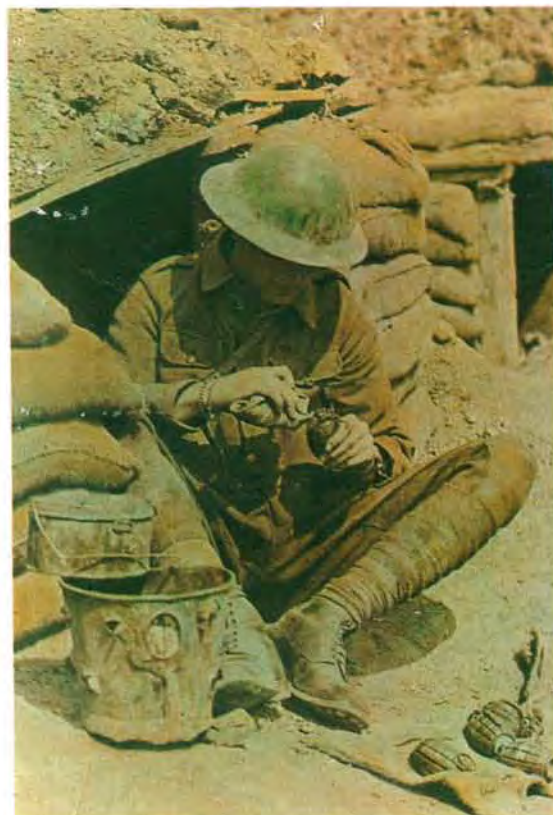
LANDSVERDEDIGING – HISTORIESE BEELD



Trekkers veg om voortbestaan



Boerekryger in Eerste Vryheidsoorlog 1880–1881



In die loopgraaf – Eerste Wêreldoorlog

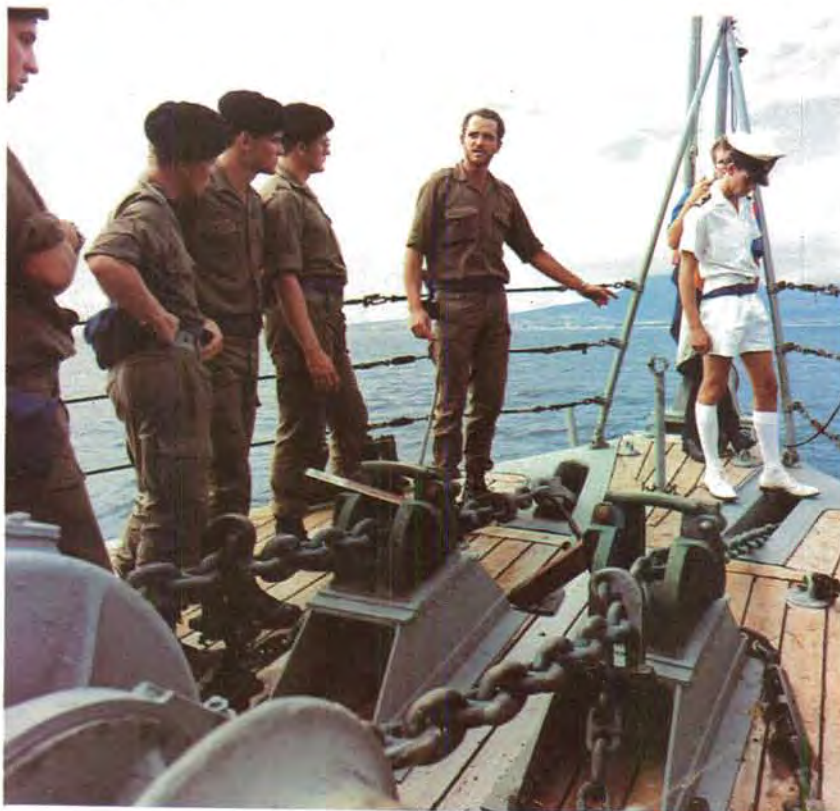
DIENSPLIG OPLEIDING



Mediese bystand tydens 'n veldoefening



Driloefening op paradegrond



Opleiding ter see

FOREIGNERS IN THE DEFENCE OF OUR COUNTRY

Anglo-Boer War 1899–1901



1985 intake of immigrants



IMMIGRANTS BUSY WITH NATIONAL SERVICE

Immigrant registers for National Service



Arrival at camp

Rifle phase during basic training



DIE VROU IN LANDSVERDEDIGING



*'n SA Verpleegster
in 'n kamphospitaal
tydens Eerste Wêreldoorlog*



*Verpleegster in teater van 1 Militêre
Hospitaal*



*Paradewerk deur vroue van
SA Geneeskundige Diens
tydens basiese opleiding*

VROU IN DIE WEERMAG



*Kaartleesopleiding by
SA Leërvrouekollege*



*Uitreiking van uniform by
SA Vloot se klerestoor*



Radaroperatrises in die SA Lugmag

NON-WHITES IN THE SA DEFENCE FORCE



Basic training has started for 2 SA Cape Corps Training Battalion

Chefs of the SA Cape Corps preparing a meal



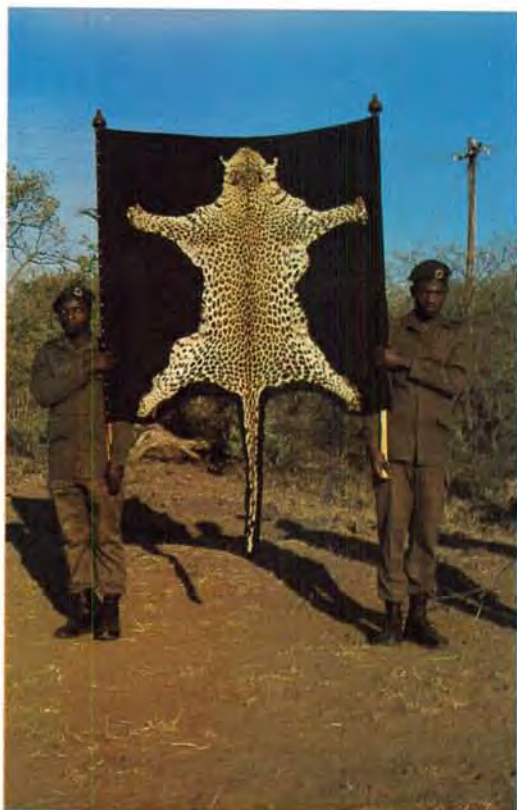
The Navy's training of Indians at SAS JALSENA



NON-WHITES IN THE SADF



Orchestra of SAS JALSENA



***Colour Drill at
21 Battalion***



***Bush training of
Blacks at 21 Battalion***

naturalized citizens could offer their services voluntarily. Many such non-citizens, particularly from the ZAR, spontaneously answered the call together with their enfranchised compatriots and fought in voluntary corps with the Boers against British colonial powers. The largest of these, all of which had their own officers but stood under the supreme command of a Boer general, was the German Corps. Under the leadership of the indefatigable Adolf Schiel, (at that time head of ZAR prison services) the Germans offered their support to the Commandant General of the Transvaal, General P.J. Joubert, fully two months before the outbreak of the war. Their enthusiasm and loyalty towards the ZAR is clear from their communication addressed to the government:

"The most noble government knows that we Germans and German citizens, who have chosen this land as our second Fatherland, have always been loyal citizens and inhabitants of this land and that we have done our duty faithfully. We take pride in pointing out that the blood of many has been shed in the service of the government and for this reason we assure the government in these difficult times of our loyalty and obedience to the laws of this land."²¹

The corps, under the direction of Schiel, was the first foreign unit to be mobilized. As early as 1 October 1899 they received their orders to move to the front. Shortly thereafter the corps split into



Adolf Schiel, commander of the German volunteer corps in the ZAR during the Anglo-Boer War. (SADF Archives: no 700005273)

two independent units out of which two smaller units were eventually formed. The Germans' willingness to associate with the Boer cause is all the more remarkable in the light of the fact that Germany had declared itself to be neutral in the dispute. Obviously this implied that German nationals in South Africa had to remain strictly neutral too. In spite of this they went, the un-naturalized among them fully aware of the fact that they could not have laid claim to the protection of the German consulate after capture on the battlefield.²²

Shortly after the founding of the German Volunteer Corps the Dutch followed suit. A combat corps as well as a garrison (police) corps saw the light of day. Jan Lombard became Commandant-in-Chief of both. Belgian residents in the ZAR were included in the Dutch Corps.²³ Other volunteer units were the Irish Brigade (also known as the "Revenge Corps") under the command of Colonel J.Y. Filmore Blake; the Scandinavian Corps composed of Norwegians, Danes, Swedes and Finns and led by Johannes Flygare; the Chicago Irish-American Volunteers; the American Reconnaissance Corps (Hassel's Scouts) founded and commanded by Captain J.A. Hassel; the Austrian Reconnaissance Corps under Baron A. von Goldegg; the Italian Corps or Latin Brigade led by Captain C. Ricchiardi; the Russian Corps commanded by Alexis Conetzky and the French Free Corps of Lieutenant Ernest Galopand. It should be mentioned here that the French enthusiasm in support of the Boers was not dampened by official French government policy of not helping the Boers. Although it did thwart their plans for a combat corps, it did not prevent the local French volunteers from joining a neutral police contingent for the protection of gold mines in and around Johannesburg. This meant that, although the French did not directly assist the Boer war effort, their action nevertheless freed a like number of citizens for commando service at the front.²⁴

The Swiss community in the Transvaal republic also came forward to do their bit. Since they were too few in number to form their own corps, they were attached to various others. A Swiss missionary doctor, G. Liengme, as well as the Swiss missionary council at Elim, also supported the republic.²⁵

Whereas the afore-mentioned corps were brought into being through the initiative of the foreigners themselves, the Foreign Legion in South Africa was started by General G. de Ville-



Ik. John MacBride

beloof en zweer plechtig trouw aan het volk
dezer Republiek; in mijne betrekking als *Major*
van het *Irische Corps*...

naar wet, recht en billijkheid te zullen handelen
volgens mijn beste kennis en geweten, en zonder
aanzien des persoons; verklaarende: dat ic aan
niemand eenige gift of gunst gedaan of bevoegd heb
om tot die betrekking te geraken; van niemand
eenige gift of gunst te zullen aanvaarden, wanneer
ik vermoeden kan dat deze gedaan of bevoegd zou
worden om mij in mijne betrekking ten voordele
van den gouver af begunstiger aan te haalen: te
zullen gehoorzamen aan de bevelen der boven mi
gestelden, en niets anders te beoogen dan den *Dienst*
de *Wetvaardigheid* en *Onafhankelijkheid* van het *Land*
en *Volk* dezer *Republiek*

of
Gaa waarlijk help mij God Almachtig!
John MacBride
Dezwaren naar mij *F.W. Reitz*
te Pretoria op kaden, den 2 oktober 1899.

F.W. Reitz
Sti. seel

Oath of faith to the ZAR by Major John MacBride of the
Irish Corps. (2 October 1899) (SADF Archives: no
781002330)

bois-Mareuil at the request of the republican authorities themselves. The then Colonel de Villebois had originally approached the ZAR, whereafter he had been appointed for a while as military advisor to the Commandant General. In March of 1900 the joint war cabinet of the two republics requested him to get an international corps off the ground. This corps was to be constituted of the by then dismembered voluntary corps of various kinds. The Foreign Legion thus had its beginning here and was placed under the command of the newly-promoted General de Villebois. His appointment is, incidentally, the only one whereby a foreigner became a Boer general. The Foreign Legion was composed mainly of Dutch and French nationals, although de Villebois' personal staff had a more international flavour.²⁶

The formation of the various voluntary bodies showed where the sympathies of these foreigners lay. Their conviction and loyalty, however, extended beyond the Boer cause to the firm

belief that they had a duty to perform for the country of their new-found residence. With the exception of the French who served in the special police-corps and who were remunerated by the French Committee in the ZAR, none of the volunteer soldiers received payment of any kind for their service to the country. They willingly served and sometimes paid for their conviction with their lives. A few were eventually also captured together with the Boers and sent to prisoner-of-war-camps.

Apart from members of the volunteer groups, a fair number of individuals decided on their own initiative to join the war effort by directly report-

ing to the burgher commandos. Naturalized citizens as well as foreigners still subject to the authority of their overseas governments, were involved. One of these individuals was Henri Slegtkamp from the Netherlands. He arrived in the Transvaal in 1873 and a few years later became involved in the action against Jameson in 1895. During the Anglo-Boer War he first saw service in the Middelburg commando, thereafter he was active in reconnaissance. His chief claim to fame lay in his exploits which led to the destruction of British armoured and provisioning trains. Before that he, together with Jack Hindon and Albert de Roos, played a significant part in the victory of Spioenkop. For his part, Hindon – a Scot – also served against Jameson. He, more-



Henri Slegtkamp from the Netherlands served in the Middelburg Commando during the Anglo-Boer War. (SADF Archives: no 700005400)

over, distinguished himself during the 1899–1902 war as master scout. Eventually he headed his own corps which inflicted considerable damage to enemy communications and rail transport.²⁷

Not all foreigners rendered military service with a rifle in the hand. In the instance of Frans Oerder, he used a paint brush instead. Oerder was a Dutch painter who became the first official South African war artist. Having settled in the Transvaal in 1890, Oerder joined up at the outbreak of war. President Kruger soon commissioned him as official chronicler on canvas, whereupon he spent many months with the Boers in the veld before he was forced to retire to Pretoria for reasons of ill-health.²⁸

The colourful French national, Robert de Kersauson de Pennendreff (dubbed Robert the Frenchman by the Boers) contributed to the war effort in a more conventional manner. He set sail for South Africa in 1900, full of enthusiasm for the Boer cause. After short service in one of the volunteer groups, he joined the Middelburg commando. Later he switched to the Danie Theron reconnaissance corps and eventually became adjutant-officer to General Manie Maritz. Ever courteous, willing and brave, he enjoyed great popularity among generals and burghers alike. He remained in the field right up to the end of the war and was decorated by the ZAR in grateful recognition for his sterling contribution.²⁹

Dr Oskar Hintrager, a German legal expert, was



Monument for the Scandinavians who fought at Magersfontein on 11 December 1899. (SADF Archives: no 781002352)

another of the many who decided to come to South Africa out of sympathy towards the Boers. He was accepted by the Free State artillery in May 1900, where he fought for four months until the Boers went over to guerilla tactics. Since he felt that he could be of no further use to the Boer artillery which was now almost non-existent, he returned to Europe in September of the same year.

Among the men who were captured together with the Boers while in their service, was Major Albrecht of the Free State artillery, and Erich Mayer, considered one of South Africa's pioneer artists. A sufferer of a lung disease, Mayer nonetheless joined up with the Boers immediately upon the outbreak of the war and saw action on the Natal side of the Tugela River. Even when he suffered a severe setback in his health, he didn't give up fighting but merely moved to the drier climate of the West front. During the siege of Kimberley, Mayer was taken prisoner-of-war and sent to St Helena Island. After the Peace of Vereeniging in 1902, he was not permitted to return to South Africa but was sent to England by the British authorities. In 1904 he set sail for South West Africa, from whence he returned to South Africa in 1911.³⁰

Foreigners did not, however, only engage in the front lines of combat nor was their support limited to special police units. Many of them rendered outstanding service as medics, which helped to alleviate the sufferings of war. A telling example of such valued assistance was the ambulances which had been outfitted overseas and which were then donated to the Boers. Special mention in this regard should be made of the Irish-American ambulance of Captain O'Connor, that of the Belgians under Dr Coolen, the three German ambulances under the care, respectively, of Drs Matthiolus, Ringal and Hans Stehl. In addition, the three Netherlands ambulances commanded by Drs Lingbeek, Koster and Ryckevorsel as well as the Russian ambulance and the Russo-Netherlands vehicle under Captain Petrapof performed valuable humanitarian services. One of the physicians posted to the latter ambulance later became General J.H. de la Rey's personal physician.³¹

Although all members of ambulance staff deserve honourable mention, the name of Dr H. Tileman stands out. Having arrived in Delagoa Bay in 1899 as member of the German-Belgian 'Saniteits-expeditie', Tileman followed his calling in Natal, the Free State and the Transvaal, where



Members of the Russian Ambulance who served in the War of 1899–1902. (SADF Archives: no 700001048)

he gave succour to Boer soldiers. In spite of the fact that his ambulance was captured on more than one occasion and despite the putting to the torch of his field hospital (when all the patients were also taken prisoner), Tileman never shirked his self-imposed duty of ministering to the wounded and the sick. He was even captured by the British on three separate occasions but returned to the Boers every time he was released. After the war a written certificate of appreciation was handed to him by the Commandant General in the name of the people he had served so gallantly.³²

There can be little doubt however, that the immense personal contribution of Emily Hobhouse meant more than that of any other foreign individual to the Boers. Shocked and touched by the great suffering which the Boer women and children had to endure after Kitchener's ruthless scorched-earth policy, Emily started a welfare fund on their behalf in England. The 'South African Women and Children Distress Fund' enabled her to bring a measure of relief to these victims of the war. After arrival in South Africa at the end of 1900, she experienced at first hand the brutal conditions of the concentration camps



Emily Hobhouse, who more than any other foreign individual tried to alleviate the lot of the Boer women and children in the concentration camps. (SADF Archives: no 700001048)

of Kitchener. She tirelessly strove to lighten the suffering she encountered. By publishing open letters, addressing meetings, compiling reports and holding interviews in England, she informed the British people about the conditions in South Africa. The resulting wave of revulsion which swept many European countries forced the British authorities to bring about improvements in the concentration camps. Not least of all, Emily Hobhouse visited these camps personally and did much to alleviate the lot of the women and children. The high esteem and love which the Boer people accorded Emily Hobhouse is symbolized by her final resting place at the foot of the Vrouemonument.³³

The list of foreigners' names aforementioned here, is by no means exhaustive and many, many more have served the South African cause with distinction. They all gave evidence of a loyal and duty-bound sense of belonging to the land where they had either come to stay or whose cause they felt was worthy of defence.

Conclusion

In the wars which followed in which South Africans participated, among them World Wars I and II as well as the Korean War, foreigners once again served in the ranks of the South African Forces. In these instances however, it was the South Africans who sacrificed their own interests and gave their lives in their thousands by travelling to far-away and strange lands in aid of a free international community. It is a little-known fact that South Africans were among those who fought with the Allied and White Russian forces from 1918–1920 against the Red Army during the Russian Civil War. Their willingness to perform military service in Russia is all the more remarkable when one considers that in 1918, they had just survived the First World War, yet were nevertheless prepared once again to risk their lives. During the First and Second World War, members of the Union Defence Force, in spite of their political sentiments, fought gallantly and effectively with British and Allied Forces against Germany. So too, South Africans fought against communist aggression in South Korea in 1950. In response to a United Nations request, the South African government sent No 2 Squadron of the South African Air Force to Korea where it served until the truce in July 1953. South Africa was one of 14 countries which offered military assistance in Korea. It was a gesture of solidarity against communism as

well as of co-operation within the Commonwealth. In all three of these wars South Africans subjected their own interests to what they perceived to be a greater common good. They went to far-off battle-fields on land, sea and in the air and willingly sacrificed their lives in the defence of a free international community.



Andreas Pantke, a German immigrant who came to South Africa in 1970, is currently doing his National Service at 7 South African Infantry Battalion at Phalaborwa.



An Immigrant of the July 1985 intake at Klipdrift, Potchefstroom during the third week of basic training consisting of the musketry phase.

Today the Republic of South Africa is engaged in fighting the enemy inside and on its own borders. Just as foreigners of yore contributed to the defence of this country, so too our immigrants of today do their bit by sharing the responsibility of national military service with South African-born citizens. But notwithstanding the distinction of being a born or naturalized South African, each one is afforded the opportunity to contribute in an honourable and meaningful way to ensure an orderly, secure and prosperous future for all its inhabitants.

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Notes

1. J. Ploeger, "Die Duitse Aandeel in die Militêre Geskiedenis van Suid-Afrika en Suidwes", *Militaria*, 2/4, pp 4-6.
2. J.A. le Roux, *Europese Oorloë en die Kaap (1652-1795)*, pp 21, 48, 76, 82-83.
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