

Tentacles of war 20 MAR 1981

South Africa makes an air strike on a Swago base deep inside Angola.
A South African soldier is killed in a mine near the Natal border with Mozambique.

Botswana protests to South Africa about shooting in the Caprivi area.

These incidents in the past week, separate but disturbingly related, point to a heightening of tensions in southern Africa. The new Reagan administration, referring to the escalating violence over SWA/Namibia, rightly points out its "utmost concern" and emphasises ~~the~~ military solutions

are not the way.

For some years now South Africa has been subjected to a "low intensity" war — in which sophisticated weaponry is being increasingly used — over SWA/Namibia. There have also been violent confrontations involving neighbouring states. As always the problem with conflict of this sort is that disengagement is more difficult than joining battle. This, in turn, raises the spectre of engulfing an entire region in bitter upheaval. It is high time for a new international initiative to set peaceful political solutions before all the parties involved.