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Contents

Smuts House Notes

The telltale signs of some South African activity beyond the Republic's borders are now unmistakable: the deaths of members of an expeditionary force in Zimbabwe; rumours of the persistent successes of the Mocambique Resistance Movement and the confident reports from Luanda that South African troops are massing on Angola's southern border.

All these point to a degree of complicity by Pretoria in the affairs of our neighbours and, even when it is not possible to establish a direct link, our neighbours are beginning to believe that Pretoria's finger is persistently involved in upsetting the regional pie.

An important ingredient in international affairs is provided by perceptions of the behaviour, or intended behaviour, of others. In forming perceptions, it is often difficult to distinguish between fact and fiction and, because states often react on their perceptions of events, a distinction is frequently unnecessary. In southern Africa this division between fact and fiction is becoming increasingly blurred, and this bodes ill for us all.

How has this come about? On the one hand, there is the fact that South Africa is constantly engaged in activities deep into neighbouring states; the well understood — from Pretoria's point of view — incursions into Angola are common knowledge.

On the other hand, there is a vigorous belief which has taken hold in the international community, that Pretoria has embarked on a deliberate policy of regional destabilisation. Irrespective of official "explanations", the recent Zimbabwean incident and the mysterious events surrounding the Seychelles and the Mocambique Resistance Movement — not to mention UNITA — only serve to reinforce this view.

Now, while the fact of cross-border raids may be explained in terms of Pretoria's need to control — as far as possible — the forces of change in Namibia, in particular; the reality (or perception) of a deliberate policy of destabilisation is a highly dangerous one which needs the most careful consideration.

It is difficult to believe that there is not an energetic debate in policy-making circles over what is the best regional strategy to follow. Predictably, the divide is along "hawk/dove" lines and, in the interests of under-

standing the present regional situation, both stances need to be considered.

The rationale for a fairly ambitious policy of regional destabilization has a seductive logic from the hawk position. Given that the Republic's neighbours are both military and economic dwarfs, the goal is to keep them that way and, in so doing, to ensure that Pretoria's hand is not removed from the tiller controlling regional events.

True, it is a policy not without some short-term costs, but these are controllable. A chief cost would be that the amount of military hardware in the region would increase. However, based on recent experience, most of this would be obsolete and no match for South Africa's own arsenal.

In the absence of this policy, the position runs, the states around South Africa begin to develop a modicum of economic independence — perhaps, through SADCC — and with increased self-confidence brought about by this, the A.N.C. will begin to use these states as the springboard for attacks into South Africa.

So it follows that Pretoria's security interests are best served by keeping these states cowed, and persistent involvement in their domestic affairs serves this end.

If there is foundation in the view that Pretoria has embarked on a deliberate policy with this in mind, then bureaucrats — and one suspects that the military are probably in the forefront — must have used these and similar arguments with deep conviction.

Not without some coincidence, the doves start from the same baseline, namely the Republic's residual economic strength. Without question, South Africa's economic grip on the region is unassailable, notwithstanding the ambitious plans inherent in the SADCC project. It is this power, doves argue, which Pretoria should use to buy her stability.

By its skilful use regional prosperity can be ensured which, in the short to medium-term, will make other states in the region more economically beholden to South Africa. As this dependency increases, the temptation of hosting the A.N.C. becomes less attractive. With it too, goes the real possibility of dislodging individual neighbours from SADCC — Swaziland is a case in point.

Thus, the way to ensure security is to refrain from political meddling, in the hope that the South African purse is full of irresistible arguments. This is the position with which South African business would be most comfortable.

The doves would also argue that a region which appears to be undergoing destabilisation — irrespective of who was behind it — increases the nervousness of foreign investors whose interest is crucial for all-round prosperity.

Most certainly doves would be mindful of the miserable circumstances experienced in regions which become destabilised. In the post-War period

two examples spring to mind: Indo-China and the Middle East. In both cases, the climate necessary for the peaceful solution of fairly profound political differences was dissipated as the tempo of regional destabilisation increased. Today, the tragic economic and political circumstances in that triad of countries — Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos — is a sad reminder of what can happen when swiftly flowing events overtake the forces which provide regional stability. Recent developments in the Middle East have demonstrated, yet again, how finely balanced the region is between order and anarchy.

Doves would argue that this latter experience might develop in a situation where the economic weapon is used in tandem with the military weapon. A real danger may be that massive assistance from the outside is called in; South Africa loses complete control of events, and a conflict develops which best serves only the interests of extra-regional powers.

Perhaps the most irksome question facing the hawks, doves might argue, arises from how, if at all, the effectiveness of a policy is to be measured. If destabilisation aims at changing the political complexion of the states around us, recent events prove that the direction of change may be exactly the opposite of what was intended. If anything, the continued turmoil in Zimbabwe plays directly into the hands of those who are more hostile to this country than Robert Mugabe. The same is happening in Angola, where the recent purges have favoured a similar group of thinkers.

A central risk attached to the dove position, is that political feelings rather than economic realities, will sway the course of southern African events. Our neighbours might make a considerable economic sacrifice to ensure the political solution of the regional problems. It needs to be pointed out that when Ian Smith closed the Zambian border, President Kaunda did not go on bended knees to Salisbury, but paid a high price for his political principles.

Of course, those of us outside the power structure can only make intelligent guesses as to what is behind regional events as they unfold; what is important, however, is that we understand fully the inherent difficulties involved in the policy opinions facing all the states around us.

On balance, the weight of logic must favour the doves, but often in these cases rationality, like love, leaves by the window as poverty enters at the door.

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Director of Research,
The South African Institute of International Affairs

(This is an expanded version of a piece which originally appeared in *The Star*, Johannesburg, on 3 September, 1982)

The following three articles are the texts of papers presented at a private workshop on

FOREIGN POLICY CONCEPTS OF WEST EUROPEAN COUNTRIES TOWARDS AFRICA

held at Jan Smuts House, Johannesburg on 5 and 6 July 1982 and organized jointly by the SAIIA and the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, Bonn

Richard Hodder-Williams

British policy in Africa

I

Britain has no specifically African policy. A cursory glance at the organisation of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) might suggest the opposite, however, for there is an African subsection with its various regional desks. The impression of geographical criteria as the ruling framework for operations is enhanced by the knowledge that at the beginning of the Thatcher Administration a junior minister in the FCO was publicly designated as having a special responsibility for British policy in Africa. He was Richard Luce, whose father had been a distinguished colonial civil servant, and he spent much of 1979 flying from African capital to African capital. The reason for this was not that the new Conservative Government had suddenly been converted to a passionate interest in a general African policy (far from it); the reason was that a number of major international problems happened by chance to be located in Africa; their significance lay in the issues they raised. But the FCO has never been organised to manage issues so much as areas; that historical legacy complicates the contemporary handling of foreign relations and obscures the real parameters of British foreign policy.

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In analysing British policy towards Africa, four dimensions must be borne in mind. First, there has been a marked shift during the last two decades from political to economic concerns, so that a primary function of High Commissions and Embassies throughout the world is to assist British companies, both public and private, in their efforts to hold or expand markets. In Africa, as in much of the third world, this is of peculiar importance, because governments in the continent are directly responsible for a very high proportion of their countries' economic activity. The general decline in Britain's status in the world, of which this new concern is a prime consequence, is reflected in the second dimension, the special position accorded to the Commonwealth and its members. The third dimension, too, follows from the perceived weakness — or, at any rate, comparative weakness — of Britain in the world community; this is Britain's concern to keep the special relationship with the United States of America in good repair and to strengthen the ties of co-operation with her European partners. The fourth dimension has a longer history; it is the enduring worry that the balance of global power might shift towards the Soviet Union unless the Western democracies actively endeavour to consolidate their friendships and to deny allies to the Soviet Union. None of these dimensions are peculiar to Africa alone; hence "African policy" is largely the British response to one or other of these dimensions within the context of Africa itself.

To complicate the situation, however, are two special cases, Zimbabwe and the Republic of South Africa (although both of them are also viewed within the assumptions of the four dimensions already set down). Particularly since the Unilateral Declaration of Independence in November 1965, Southern Rhodesia, as Zimbabwe then was officially called, was not only a country which the United Nations and the Commonwealth kept firmly in the public eye, it was also Britain's responsibility in international law. As much as consecutive governments must have wished that the problem would simply go away, it obstinately remained in international gatherings at the top of too many agendas for comfort.

Although the problem of apartheid is not, strictly speaking, Britain's problem, the international community has not forgotten that Britain established an independent Union of South Africa in 1910, and reaffirmed its independence with the Statute of Westminster; nor has it overlooked the extent to which Britain and the Republic of South Africa share economic interests and cultural traditions. In both instances, Britain was drawn into the centre of the international stage reluctantly, but inescapably.

There is one final aspect to this topic. There is, of course, something artificial in referring to Britain's policy towards Africa as though Britain was a principled actor with a consistency of approach and an enduring set of priorities. Briatain merely refers, for simplicity's sake but with confus-

ing consequences, to whatever government happens to be speaking on Britain's behalf at any time. It may be that there are a few general principles on which all governments are agreed and which remain stable over time. More realistically, however, it must be recognized that different parties do indeed differ in their assumptions and tactics along all four dimensions of the country's foreign policy. The public stance of the United Kingdom in international fora, its tone, its priorities, and its detailed preferences will alter in response both to external variables and to shifts in the balance of domestic power; Mr Benn is not Dr Owen; Dr Owen is not Peter Carrington; Peter Carrington is not Margaret Thatcher. And that simple, obvious, and seemingly trite observation is actually of fundamental importance.

II

The decline of Britain is a hoary chestnut. Whether hoary or not, it is real. Similarly, the conventional wisdom that Britain must trade to survive is conventional for once because it is wise. These two facts — the relative weakness of Britain's productive capacity within an increasingly competitive international economic system and the absolute need to sell goods and services abroad — have come to dominate much of British foreign policy. The attraction of the European Community for many thinking British politicians was one part of the realization. The deliberate effort to strengthen the economic side of the nation's representation abroad was another part.

Africa, at first sight, is a pretty unimportant part of the whole picture. If 1979 figures are taken, 7,3 per cent of all exports went to Africa and 4,5 per cent of all imports originated from the continent. In percentage terms, therefore, Africa is frankly of marginal significance; in money terms, however, those small figures translate into not inconsiderable sums of money: £3 119 million of exports (contributing to many jobs) and £2 215 million of imports (contributing to many needs). Within the continent, there are wide variations in the amount of trade undertaken with individual countries; the two giants, South Africa and Nigeria, dominate British economic links. At the same time, trade alone understates the extent of economic involvement, since British companies have invested considerable fixed capital in the continent and thus have powerful vested interests to defend there. Once again, South Africa and Nigeria dominate the picture. (See appended trade statistics).

From the perspective of the FCO, there are two aspects of this situation. Since the publication of the Duncan Report, there has been the expectation that commercial sections should assist British companies as best they can; in the first flush of enthusiasm for this new role, some of the best and brightest young men joined the commercial side of operations. Although

this may have paid dividends in some cases, particularly in the Middle East and China, success in this area depended much more on British firms being able to meet promised completion dates, to provide spare parts quickly, and to deliver products which were suitable and in good working order. When they failed, which they did with awful regularity, there was little the staff of Embassies and High Commissions could to to remedy the situation. Second, the fact that the two economic giants in Africa are White-ruled South Africa and Black-ruled Nigeria is a major complication and cause of considerable difficulty. The political weight which Nigeria, through a host of Third World organizations, can carry in the international community requires Britain constantly to watch her links with South Africa; but there is little likelihood, or indeed wish, that Britain would disengage entirely from the southern tip of the continent. The economic costs, though manageable in themselves at a time of rising prosperity, are thought to be too high in a time of recession; besides, the political will is also absent. What consecutive British governments have tried to do is to commit themselves to neither side, but to continue to benefit from both South African and Nigerian economic links. It is sometimes a difficult tightrope to walk.

III

The end of Empire, although symptomatic of Britain's waning strength, did not destroy the close links with her African possessions. These continued, partly through the continuation of the economic bonds to which reference has already been made and partly through the political device of the Commonwealth. This unique organization, representing as it does a range of states from the richest and largest to the poorest and smallest and drawing its members from every continent and every major racial grouping, structures British foreign relations more than is often realized. Its death, like Mark Twain's, has many times been prematurely announced. Yet it lives, more active than ever. Under its articulate and ambitious Secretary-General, the Guyanian Sir Shridath Ramphal, the Commonwealth offers more than the bi-annual Heads of Government Conference; it organizes a veritable galaxy of meetings, covering economic, cultural, technical, and vocational subjects in its various capitals across the world. Without either of the superpowers and with only one ex-imperial power, the Commonwealth is an exclusive club which draws its members together in many often intangible ways and provides a forum for informal and (a rare commodity these days) sometimes unpublicized discussions on serious matters of world importance. Without the Commonwealth, it is doubtful whether the final path to Zimbabwean independence could have been so smooth. Now the organization has turned its attention

to the North–South dialogue. Again, there is little doubt that the position of the Thatcher Government at Cancun (including perhaps its readiness to attend at all) was affected by discussions in Kingston, Jamaica.

There are 13 members from Africa. This fact, itself a consequence of imperial rule in the continent, provides a further explanation for the "non-rational" distribution of British resources and efforts in Africa. The flow of aid to Malawi, Lesotho, or Swaziland, for instance, is not economically rational in the sense that investments there would provide a maximal return for Britain; it is a consequence of the special position enjoyed by these countries by virtue of their membership of the Commonwealth and Britain's preference for the English-speaking Commonwealth countries. The High Commissions in these countries are important places; the British Council, cut though it may have been, remains significant; missions from the Chamber of Commerce of major British cities are regularly arranged through the good offices of the British consular staffs. Although this attachment to the old imperial possessions may be less than in France's case, it is nevertheless important.

It both looks back to the past and also anticipates the future. In the new international environment where the dominance of the rich and powerful states of the developed Western liberal democracies cannot be taken for granted, friends in the less developed world are valuable. The Commonwealth does not vote as a bloc (it is composed, after all, of sovereign states) but it often shows a degree of cohesion and an understanding of British positions — for example over Gibraltar — which is not shared by all countries with similar imperial heritages and economic problems.

It is in this context that Britain's relations with South Africa are embarrassing. A combination of the non-racial principles of the Commonwealth (it was, after all, the apartheid policies of the Pretoria government rather than its republicanism which really led to its break with the Commonwealth in 1961) and of Britain's long imperial and economic connections with the country, has thrust Britain into the forefront of the international community's relations with the Republic of South Africa. If there is one thing that holds African states together — and they are generally far from united — it is a passionate and genuine concern to eradicate from the continent the apartheid principles of South Africa. It is hardly an exaggeration to say that, if there was no discriminatory South Africa, the Organisation of African Unity would have had to invent it. This passion spills over into the Commonwealth. The future of the Commonwealth Games is jeopardized by privately organized, although much publicized, visits of sporting teams to the Republic. At the recent Melbourne meeting of Heads of Government, sporting links with South Africa threatened to destroy the gathering's opportunity to address other matters of arguably greater importance for the peoples of the Commonwealth. Certainly two non-

African members, Malaysia and Singapore, took that view.

The interests of these members were more practical: to press on with discussions between the "North" and the "South" towards a new international economic order and to lobby Britain to reduce the high fees charged to overseas students in the tertiary educational sector in the United Kingdom. It was probably a meeting of Finance Ministers in Jamaica in 1981 which persuaded the British government to go to Cancun with a seemly show of concern. Second in importance to the South African problem in the eyes of African states is the question of economic relations between rich and poor countries. This, indeed, is a central concern of the Secretary General; and the Commonwealth's ability to force the issue onto the agendas of many meetings of its representatives has stiffened the resolve of that faction in the FCO which favours a more positive development policy in the Third World and has, to some extent, checked the more insular and xenophobic factions of the Conservative Party hierarchy who have little time for the poor states of Black Africa. Hence, Commonwealth membership imposes upon Britain an agenda to which some positive response is required; at the same time, it provides opportunities to establish beneficial links across the increasingly dangerous gulf of rich and poor nations, opportunities in which the African members play a crucial part.

IV

The Commonwealth is not the only organization which affects British policy in Africa. Indeed, it is the very membership of certain organizations which forces governments to take cognizance of African matters; they do not make policy autonomously without regard to the external world. The public agenda is constructed to a marked degree by other states, by the members of the United Nations or the European Community, for instance. By virtue of her membership of these international organizations, Britain is forced to attend to a range of problems, and a number of countries, which she would probably prefer to avoid. Just as the Commonwealth worries at the South African problem like a dog at a bone, the United Nations and the European Community also establish areas of conflict in which Britain gets unavoidably embroiled. Thus, a great deal of British policy is essentially reactive.

Britain's permanent membership of the United Nations Security Council draws her into conflicts throughout the world; inevitably some of these are African. As the centre of idealogical gravity in New York has shifted towards the anticolonialism and radical pessimism associated with so much of "the South", Britain has been drawn — partly as a result of her own imperial heritage, partly as a result of her formal position in the United Nations Organisation, and partly as a result of her long economic, finan-

cial and cultural links with South Africa — into one of the most passionately divisive and emotionally charged issues on the agenda of international politics: South Africa and Namibia's future.

Membership of the European Community, too, has altered the framework of British policy to some extent. The regular meetings between Foreign Ministers or senior civil servants, intended ultimately to forge a single European foreign policy, has brought British Ministers into collaborative efforts unimagined in the 1960s. With Lomé II and the more forceful European Development Programme, British officials have settled down to negotiate tariff preferences, price stabilization schemes, development projects, and industrial links in a context, and according to rules, which have not been of her own making. Again, the lack of autonomy is obvious.

This institutional initiator, as it could be called, might dictate a great number of problems to which British governments must respond; it does not, however, dictate that response. What has been a noticeable development in recent years has been the open way in which British governments have acted in concert with her allies.

This is only partly due to the new institutional links with Europe; it is also due to the realization that British power and, perhaps more important, the new conventions of international politics require joint action. David Owen's special relationship with Andrew Young was one of the most visible manifestations of this development; the Contact Group negotiating with the South Africans over the future of Namibia is currently the most significant; the orchestration of Commonwealth assistance, American support, and pressure from the "Front Line States" over Zimbabwe has been the most dramatic example. The Falklands Crisis has, at first sight, provided a rare instance of Britain taking the initiative and making the running; but the special relationship with the United States and the formal links with the European Community, as well as the formal position of permanent membership of the United Nations' Security Council, were quickly brought into play.

The central point here is a simple one. A great deal of Britain's activity in the sphere of foreign relations is structured by existing associations. The Foreign and Commonwealth Office is no different in this respect than other Departments; its time and energy are largely consumed in responding to outside stimuli, preparing for regular meetings of international organizations, and briefing Ministers to answer questions they would rather had never been asked. In making its response, past precedents, common sense, and considerations of the arena in which it has to be made are the dominating considerations. Thus, British actions in Africa are rarely the outcome of a considered rational decision-making process concerned with long-term ends and intermediate means; they are more often dictated by short-term requirements outside Africa altogether — such as satisfying

French interests or Commonwealth susceptibilities or United Nations expectations.

V

The fourth dimension to consider briefly is the East-West dimension. Although the assumptions of bipolarity may still be held by only a small number of Conservative politicians, the cast of mind in which they are embedded is far from dead. An immediate question raised by government leaders and their official advisers whenever some event of apparent significance occurs in the African continent, is the extent to which it benefits, or hinders, the interests of East and West. The calculations are metaphysical in many instances and certainly imprecise in most; but there remains in all analyses an undercurrent that attempts to evaluate developments in terms of the East-West rivalry. In a few instances, there are obvious strategic considerations; the Horn of Africa, with its propinquity to the oil of the Middle East, or southern Africa with its minerals and geographical location between the Indian and South Atlantic oceans, are clear instances. Even here, however, the assumptions are essentially apocalyptic. The linkage between radical governments, Soviet presence, and interdiction of trade presupposes an escalation of conflict to a stage of inevitable physical confrontation. There is little doubt that this perspective is shared more by some defence planners (who have to consider the worst possible alternative) and some unreconstructed cold warriors in the ranks of the Conservative Party than by the officials of the FCO. Yet there is unquestionably a certain ambivalence in this dimension; even if the dominant "realist" view downplays the possibility of Soviet utilization of its allies for direct constraining of Western trading patterns, it is also very much aware that in international politics a nation's standing is itself a source of power and the superpowers' standing is related in international perception to the number and range of their friends.

If the military significance of Africa has diminished in recent years, its significance as a yardstick of the comparative strengths of the two great ideological blocs remains unimpaired. Where its significance has increased has been in the field of strategic mineral resources. Although this particular concern — that Western interests would be irremediably disadvantaged if mineral-rich southern Africa fell into the "wrong" hands — is high up on the agenda of United States strategic thinking, it is less so on the European side of the Atlantic. This is partly due, in the British case, to a long history of dependency, of which an essentially self-sufficient United States has little experience. It is also due to a more pragmatic estimation of likely behaviour patterns if, or when, there is a transference of power in southern Africa. Lacking the same deep-rooted attachment to a bipolar framework

of analysis, British observers have increasingly argued that the danger to her interests lies not in the ideological beliefs of governments so much as in the possibility of chaos or anarchy. Seeing anti-colonial movements as nationalist, rather than socialist, and distinguishing between professions of African socialism and adherence to Moscow directives, they assume that raw materials will still be marketed and bought by the Western industrialized nations. Angola is, then, a cause for confidence, rather than a source of anxiety.

This is not to say that Africa is unimportant in FCO eyes; it is merely to stress the lack of that apocalyptic vision which finds expression in some of the speeches of conservative American Senators. Africa's strategic significance remains; it is still an area in which East and West "score points" and in which their relative intangible strengths are measured; it is still an area where close and harmonious relations with certain governments can pay handsome economic dividends and ensure continuous supplies of much needed raw materials. For these two reasons above all, Britain feels obliged to expend time and money on forging strong links with many African governments. But there is a third reason, too; Britain's friends in Africa — most notably the Republic of South Africa — can also be the cause of much international embarrassment and provide the Soviet Union with a convenient stick with which to beat the British. The echo of imperialism still reverberates around the Third World; its racialist accoutrements have yet to disappear from man's consciousness. For Britain, the situation in South Africa brings to the surface these very problems she would rather forget. In the rivalry between East and West, therefore, South Africa has an important role to play.

VI

It is time to look briefly at South Africa. Britain's central position in the international community's dealings with that country has caused her governments much irritation and little joy. The various dimensions to which I have alluded are all illustrated here. The economic dimension is frequently stressed; although in relative terms South Africa's importance to Britain is declining (at a rate, incidentally, rather slower than Britain's importance to South Africa), in absolute terms it remains considerable. Apart from the technical problems of disengagement and disinvestment, there are many forces, including trades unions in the privacy of "off the record" meetings, which strive to retain the links. The South African links are also more salient than comparable links with other states; there remains a multitude of strong personal attachments between articulate and well placed British citizens and the Republic of South Africa; these people, as well as the well-reported opponents of apartheid, have access to the media and friends in

important positions. There is no escaping the somewhat artificial significance which South Africa enjoys in the public life of the United Kingdom. Its coverage in column inches, to measure this crudely, is incommensurate with its actual economic importance. But in political terms, this very fact induces a cautious approach to the country among politicians; the friends of South Africa are more influential and more "respectable" than her opponents.

Britain's responsibilities for South Africa (and Namibia) are in law no greater than those of any other member of the United Nations. But South Africa's imperial links have continued to bedevil relations between the two countries; the ultimate autonomy represented by the 1961 creation of a Republic ironically reduced South Africa's dependence on Britain more than it ended Britain's responsibility for South Africa. The Commonwealth has long seen one of its functions, as befits a multiracial body, as a catalyst for change in southern Africa. The Zimbabwe dominance of Heads of Government meetings from 1966 to 1979 merely reduced the attention on South Africa a little. But the Gleneagles Agreement and the recent Melbourne meeting have re-emphasized its concern and the special role it sees Britain playing. In the United Nations, too, it was assumed that Britain would be one of the major figures in the Contact Group. To some extent this is welcome; certainly, it is a great improvement on bearing sole responsibility. And British governments, particularly Labour ones, have been relieved to have allies to assist them in this delicate area. The stress on European codes of conduct for firms operating in South Africa, the care to integrate the approaches of the Contact Group, and the involvement of other countries, like Canada or Australia, as signatories of the Gleneagles Agreement are all part of this sharing of responsibilities. When friends step out of line, it is particularly irksome. Although New Zealand was largely forgiven for her contacts with South African rugby players, the current dismay centres on the United States of America's tendency to go it alone under the Reagan Administration. "Our greatest problem", one diplomat is quoted as saying, "is the USA".

It is in the context of East-West rivalries that the debate over South Africa in British circles is most inconclusive. There exists a spectrum of opinion in Parliament. At one extreme, some see any contacts with South Africa as morally indefensible and potentially dangerous on the grounds that a posture of even implied friendship will drive Black Africa and much of the Third World into an anti-British, perhaps even a pro-Soviet camp; at the other extreme are those who see South Africa as significant strategically, both in mineral and geopolitical terms, and a bulwark against the radical pro-Sovietism of African nationalism. Most politicians, and most officials, prefer a middle course, but they are aware of the political impact the confident assertion of untrammelled principles can make. They doubt

the strategic argument, but feel unable, for technical as well as prudential reasons, to reduce too overtly Britain's links with South Africa; yet, at the same time, they are mindful of Nigeria's economic and, increasingly, political muscle and the unyielding opposition of most of the world to the unique discriminatory practices of South Africa. They cannot yet bring themselves to choose; the domestic political consequences of openly supporting the ANC are too doubtful to risk. Like Janus, they look both ways and hope against hope that something will turn up to relieve them from the awful responsibility of choosing between Black and White Africa. It is not surprising, therefore, that British governments, despite their growing despair and very real resentment, try by persuasion to deflect South African governments from a path destined to lead to violence and upheaval and use their formal powers at the United Nations to defend South Africa. They get little thanks or help from Pretoria.

VII

The implications behind the word policy are many; among them is the notion of a clearly considered and articulated set of aims, with accompanying strategies and tactics, which direct action. In this sense, there is no African policy. Indeed, part of the African continent is deemed to fall within the Arabists' sphere of influence; when the Organisation of African Unity was meeting in Khartoum once, it was well nigh impossible to arouse the interest of the FCO officials in Khartoum because their concerns were Arabic, not African. As I have indicated already, action is often reactive; it is also often conceived within a framework that sees Africa not as an entity in itself but as part of a wider constellation of interests. In this way, domestic needs or economic calculations dictate the precise form of action that is taken.

There is a further complicating factor. The concept of a British policy implies both continuity and order, a patterned set of relationships which enjoy a longer life than passing Foreign Secretaries. The African dimension of British foreign policy, however, has been marked by discontinuity and disorder. The deep involvement in Africa's problems shown by David Owen contrasts strongly with the pragmatic distance of Peter Carrington. These two individuals epitomize the extremes; the one was genuinely concerned to produce the "right" answer to the problem of Southern Rhodesia while the other was concerned above all merely to conjure some resolution from the inhospitable terrain in which he had to operate. There was certainly a feeling that the British Foreign Office's interest in Zimbabwe was virtually extinguished once Independence had been achieved; it needed considerable pressure from a range of sources to keep attention on their country. Although there are inevitably similarities between the actions of

consecutive governments, as is to be expected, there are also marked dissimilarities of emphasis, tone and priorities. Traditionally Conservative governments have been happiest when expending the least amount of energy on Africa; Labour governments, involved more by moral imperatives and by personal links with Third World leaders, have been more deeply and emotionally involved. FCO officials have sometimes needed to remind the one how much Africa can embarrass Britain just as they have had to remind the other of the virtues of pragmatism in international affairs.

Relations with Africa can never be as ordered, as predictable, as relations with most of the developed world. Africa's foreign policy stance is peculiarly personalized and there is as yet little tradition which her diplomats learn and reproduce from generation to generation. Here the diplomacy of personalities reigns. That is an erratic basis on which to structure enduring relationships; it is too volatile and too dependent upon the vagaries of individual leaders for European states to establish the long-term links which need no more than regular servicing by trained officials. Personal involvement at the highest level is regularly required. This enhances the significance of the Commonwealth, but it also exaggerates the importance of personal chemistry. Mrs Thatcher's instant, and profound, antipathy towards Mr R.F. Botha (whose undiplomatic dominance of short audiences with President Reagan and Mrs Thatcher was as unforgiven as it was unforgivable) has done much to cool her gut feelings of support for White South Africa. In Black Africa, too, Heath's relations with the Ugandan leader Milton Obote explain in part the alacrity of British enthusiasm for Idi Amin. The tendency for African leaders to use the forum of foreign relations to re-establish radical credentials domestically and to express publicly positions denied privately, contributes further to a general feeling in the FCO of the disordered quality of British-African relations.

This realization emphasizes again the reactive nature of so much British policy. The potential for embarrassment emanating from Africa is great. The FCO sees part of its role as preventive medicine, rather than restorative action; it seeks to anticipate where troubles may arise, to defuse tensions, and to guard in a defensive frame of mind British economic and political interests. Given her position as a major, but no longer a super, power, this is to be expected. What makes her position in Africa different from that of, say, Germany or France, is the extent to which, whether she likes it or not, she can be drawn embarrassingly into international controversies not of her own instigation.

ECONOMIC RELATIONS WITH AFRICA

Trade (1979)

UK exports to South Africa	£715 m (1,7 per cent of UK exports)
UK exports to OAU countries	£2 304 m (5,6 per cent of UK exports)
UK imports from South Africa	£554 m (1,1 per cent of UK imports)
UK imports from OAU countries	£1 661 m (3,4 per cent of UK imports)

Invisibles (1978)

UK earnings in South Africa	£608 m (3,3 per cent) (surplus £419 m)
UK earnings in OAU countries	£1 206 m (6,4 per cent) (surplus £746 m)

Investment (end 1978)

UK direct investment in SA	£2 700 m (10 per cent)
UK direct investment in OAU	£3 000–£4 000 m (11–15 per cent) (£2 000 m in Nigeria)
UK indirect investment in SA	£1 400 m
UK indirect investment in OAU	Negligible

Exports to South Africa

15th most important export market for Britain in 1979 (9th in 1975): less than 2 per cent of total exports. Main exports to South Africa: Manufacturing machinery, electrical machinery, transport equipment. Approx 50 000 jobs depend on current trade with South Africa.

Exports to OAU Countries

Nigeria £1 billion+ in 1977, 1978: fell to £638 m in 1979. Overall exports to OAU countries: 5,5 per cent of UK world total. Mainly industrial and agricultural machinery, manufactured goods, chemicals, fertilizers, insecticides. Approx 150 000 jobs directly linked to UK exports to OAU countries.

Imports from South Africa

1978:
- 63 per cent of UK demand for chromium
- 46 per cent of UK demand for manganese — USSR major alternative
- 70 per cent of UK demand for platinum group metals — USSR major alternative
- 41 per cent of UK demand for vanadium

76 per cent of UK demand for antimony
55 per cent of UK demand for gold
73 per cent of UK demand for diamonds
} UK mainly marketing centre: not vital
32 per cent of UK demand for canned fruit

Imports from OAU countries

1978: 78 per cent of UK demand for coffee beans
87 per cent of UK demand for cocoa beans
50 per cent of UK demand for sugar
46 per cent of UK demand for tea
45 per cent of UK demand for cocoa products
80 per cent of UK demand for cobalt (Zaire and Zambia)
28 per cent of UK demand for manganese ore (Ghana, Gabon)
15 per cent of UK demand for tin (Nigeria)
21 per cent of UK demand for copper (Zambia)
3 per cent of UK demand for crude oil (Nigeria)

Investment

UK is largest direct investor in South Africa — estimated 50 per cent (£2 700 m). Compare USA (20 per cent), Switzerland (7 per cent), West Germany (5 per cent), Netherlands (3 per cent), France (2 per cent).

200–300 UK companies operate in South Africa.

Investment in Nigeria: £2 000 m; Zimbabwe: possibly £800 m; Kenya: £500 m.

Banking	**UK gross claims**	**UK net claims**
South Africa	£910 m	£584 m
OAU countries	£3 550 m	£1 991 m
(Liberia	£1 100 m)	

Sterling Balances	
South Africa	relatively small
OAU	13 per cent (end 1979)
	21 per cent (June 1980)

ECGD commitments (Export Credit Guarantees)	
South Africa	£753 m
OAU	£2 509 m

Aid

UK bilateral aid to Africa:	1980/81 £205 m
planned	1981/82 £170 m
(Zimbabwe: £75 m over 3 years)	

Frits Dekker

Dutch policy on Africa

Dutch interests in Africa differ from those of other countries in a number of ways. In the first place, of course, they differ from those of the great powers who have major political and economic interests at stake in Africa. Secondly, they differ from those of the nations who feel bound to take into account considerations of strategic security. But there are other differences, even in the case of the smaller countries which can be compared with the Netherlands. The reason for this lies in the history of the Netherlands as a colonial power.

Furthermore, there were — and to some extent still are — special cultural ties with South Africa, part of whose White population is descended from Dutch colonists. Because of this, South Africa is a special case, since, although the Netherlands was a colonial power, in Africa it never actually colonized anywhere except South Africa. The Dutch East India Company's long rule over the Dutch settlers at the Cape left its mark, and traces are still visible today. The highly critical attitude which the Netherlands in particular has taken towards the system of apartheid in South Africa can be attributed to a large extent to a continuing sense of kinship.

It is a fact that we tend to feel much more sensitive about the shortcomings of a friend rather than those of someone towards whom we are indifferent. Another important factor is the idea, whether justified or not, that we have some influence. The Netherlands believes that it can exert influence in South Africa, precisely because of this sense of kinship. Whether this is indeed the case remains an open question.

Political interests

Dutch political interests find their expression in the formulation of Dutch foreign policy. The days when the Netherlands, as a leading colonial power, had global economic and political interests belong to the distant past. Since that time, however, it has continued to take a great interest

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in international relations, particularly where questions of international law were concerned.

In the period before World War II, when the Netherlands followed a policy of strict neutrality, Dutch international jurists and politicians played a relatively important role in international bodies such as the League of Nations. After the war the Netherlands abandoned its neutrality by joining NATO, the Western Alliance. It was also among the founders of the movement for European integration which resulted in the creation of the European Community. The Netherlands believes that its interests abroad are best represented through its membership of the United Nations, NATO and the European Community.

In addition, Dutch foreign policy continues to be concerned with several idealistic objectives such as an active human rights policy and development aid. Per head of population the Netherlands gives more aid than most other countries. The core of the human rights policy is an awareness that its aim of promoting human rights is not limited to defending purely Dutch interests.

More fundamental values are involved, and as a member of the world community the Netherlands must bear its share of the responsibility. The same sense of a shared responsibility underlies the policy on development aid, which is aimed both at the poorest groups in society and at the economic emancipation of the Third World.

So Dutch political interest in Africa can be divided into two basic categories. In the first of these, the Netherlands participates in the collective promotion in Africa of the interests of international organizations of which it is a member, e.g. NATO and the European Community.

Secondly, specifically Dutch political interests in Africa are pursued through human rights and development aid policies. For each Dutch Government these concerns are far from being the expression of some gratuitous idealistic whim; human rights and development aid are without doubt components of a policy of firmly protecting Dutch interests. However great the religious and political diversity of the Dutch population, there are only marginal differences in the attitudes of the various groups and political parties to human rights and development aid. In a parliamentary democracy such as the Netherlands, any government which attempted to deviate from this policy would be committing political suicide. The background to this is one of the characteristics of the Dutch mentality: the typical duality between the trader and the preacher. Both these aspects of the national character can be found in Dutch foreign policy.

In the case of Africa both the policy of moral principle and the commercial spirit can be found in Dutch attitudes to South Africa on the one hand, and Black Africa on the other. Commercial and political interests are of course constantly being weighed, both consciously and unconsciously,

against idealistic concerns. However, the results of this process, in terms of political decisions, are by no means predictable in every case. Dutch criticism of the official South African policy of separate development (apartheid) is a direct consequence of the human rights policy followed by the Netherlands.

The Dutch position is based on the international standards laid down under the auspices of the United Nations in many declarations, statements and treaties. These include the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, and the International Convention on Civil and Political Rights. As regards opposition to apartheid, Dutch policy closely follows the recommendations of the United Nations. This applies in particular to the forms of pressure put on the South African Government to bring about changes in its policy. So far the Netherlands has refused to apply a unilateral embargo, although some time ago the Dutch Foreign Minister did investigate how much support there would be in other European countries such as Belgium and Scandinavia for an oil embargo against South Africa. This was done as the result of strong pressure from the Dutch Parliament.

However, when it was found that there would be no support from other countries, the Dutch Government abandoned its attempts to reach agreement on an embargo, although it has requested Dutch businessmen to introduce a voluntary embargo. In general, the Dutch Government believes that the best way to make its views known in the countries concerned is to maintain as many useful contacts as possible. Despite the fact that dialogue often yields few results, because the opposing standpoints are too firmly fixed, the government considers it is important to continue to maintain normal contacts.

There are two sides to Dutch policy in relation to South Africa: on the one hand pressure continues to be applied on the South African Government, while on the other, existing contacts are used to create greater understanding of the Dutch point of view. One example which has often been misinterpreted is the question of the cultural treaty with South Africa which was ended some time ago. In fact the ending of the treaty was no more than the legal recognition of the current situation, since it had not been in operation for years. But this does not mean that all cultural links with "kith and kin" in South Africa have been broken. For example, the Dutch Ministry of Culture still subsidizes the Institute of Dutch Culture and History at the University of Pretoria, and makes gifts of books to other South African universities.

Of course, a human rights policy such as the one followed by the Netherlands invites accusations of interfering with the internal affairs of other countries. The standpoint of the Dutch Government is that the ban in international law on intervening in other countries' affairs does not go so

far as to rule out every form of involvement. From the Declaration adopted by the United Nations Assembly in 1965 on the unacceptability of intervention, it is clear that this refers to armed intervention, the threat of violence, or inciting or supporting internal violence or subversive activities intended to bring down foreign governments. Moreover, the Dutch Government takes the view that since the Nuremberg Tribunal at the end of World War II, we no longer consider the State to be completely sovereign in its treatment of its subjects. Dutch political interests in Africa hinge on the question of whether conflicts on this continent threaten to lead to wider international conflict.

The anti-apartheid policy of the Netherlands is in fact motivated by the same concern. Increasing political unrest within South Africa could have disastrous effects. This is why the Netherlands continues to apply pressure on the South African Government, both unilaterally and through international bodies, to abandon its policy of separate development, or at least change it so that racial and political discrimination are eliminated. Dutch public opinion is virtually unanimous in its rejection of apartheid. There are differing views as to the measures which the Dutch Government might take, e.g. as regards an embargo, and there are some politicians who would like to offer their ideas on possible solutions for this very complicated issue, e.g. on models to be considered and the pace of change. The official attitude of the Dutch Government is that these are internal matters for the South African Government.

So the government's opposition to apartheid does not mean that it has preconceptions as to what the political future should be, for example in relation to the "one man, one vote" issue. Dutch political interests in Africa are directed toward *achieving stabilization* of the political situation. This applies, for example, in the case of Namibia, and the Netherlands has supported the five Western powers in their attempts to find a political formula for the future. The same is true of policy towards the Black African countries, where the Netherlands has given extra financial and economic support to newly independent states with the aim of strengthening stability. Examples of this include Angola, Mozambique and, more recently, Zimbabwe.

Economic interests

The Netherlands' economic interests in Africa are determined to a significant extent by the development aid which it gives. A quarter of all Dutch aid (totalling about 4 000 million guilders) is given through bilateral aid agreements to nations which include five of the so-called "Least Developed Countries". Three of these — Tanzania, Sudan and Upper Volta are in Africa. Apart from this, and aid to Africa through the United Nations and related multilateral institutions such as the World Bank, the Nether-

lands also contributes to the European Development Fund under the Lomé Convention between the European Community and the African, Caribbean and Pacific countries. During the Eighties a large part of international aid will be concentrated on Africa south of the Sahara.

Of the 31 Least Developed Countries (LDCs), 21 are in this part of Africa. In 1982, 960 million guilders will be made available from the aid budget for those countries with which the Netherlands has a special relationship, i.e. the 13 so-called "concentration countries". This aid will be in the form of gifts of technical and financial assistance and loans. It is worth noting that within the total amount of aid more will be in the form of technical and financial gifts and considerably less in the form of loans. In the case of five African countries — Upper Volta, Sudan, Tanzania, Zambia and Kenya — all aid will be a gift.

In addition, the Netherlands has given special attention to the regional co-operation between nine countries in southern Africa: Tanzania, Mozambique, Zambia, Angola, Botswana, Malawi, Swaziland, Lesotho, and Zimbabwe. In November 1980, they set up the Southern Africa Development Coordinating Conference (SADCC) in Maputo, and the Netherlands was one of the donors present. Most of Dutch aid to SADCC will be used for the modernization and future development of the port of Beira. The aid given to the SADCC is in part aimed at reducing their economic dependence on South Africa, and has therefore a political aspect.

There is also a political aspect to the aid which the Netherlands has given and continues to give to national liberation movements, although it is strictly humanitarian in nature. Where possible, the Netherlands prefers to channel aid through international bodies, as in the case of Namibia, where multilateral aid is given through several international bodies such as the Red Cross, UNHCR, the UN Fund for Namibia and the Namibia Institute in Lusaka.

Other Dutch economic interests in Africa are related to the amount of trade and Dutch capital investments. By way of example, Dutch imports from South Africa amount to about 500 million guilders (coal, non-ferrous metals, gold, agricultural produce etc.). The value of exports to South Africa is about 700 million guilders (agricultural produce, chemical and pharmaceutical products, machinery). South Africa produces many raw materials which are scarce and generally non-replaceable. With the exception of manganese and chrome, the amount of direct imports of these products into the Netherlands is not large, since Dutch industry can obtain them from European suppliers. The extent of Dutch investments in South Africa is not known, but all large Dutch companies and a number of smaller ones have branches there.

Compare now a Black African country where the Netherlands has major economic interests: Nigeria. About 20 per cent of all Dutch oil im-

ports come from Nigeria. Total imports from Nigeria amount to some 6 000 million guilders, and exports to between 1 500 and 2 000 million guilders. These figures give some idea of the growing trade between the two countries, and in addition, many Dutch companies are involved in the economic and industrial development of Nigeria.

It is clear from these statistics that Dutch economic interests lie to a large extent in the Black African countries. Naturally, the Dutch attitude to apartheid in South Africa is an important factor in its relations with these countries. Nonetheless, it is not the case that there is a direct link between the formulation of Dutch human rights policy and the economic policy towards Black Africa. It may be safely assumed that it is simply a welcome coincidence that the effects of trade and human rights policies on Africa tend to be to their mutual benefit rather than disadvantage.

Security interests

These can be dealt with briefly, since, as one of the smaller powers, the Netherlands has no direct security interests in Africa other than those of the NATO alliance of which it is a member.

It does have a direct interest in the maintenance of the shipping route via the Cape of Good Hope. At present there are virtually no alternatives available for the bunkering and repair facilities at South African ports of call.

Southern Africa as a region in crisis

There are wide differences, I believe, between European and South African views of the danger of southern Africa developing into a region of political crisis. In South Africa, the communist threat is seen as the most likely source of a major crisis. Any political movement with Marxist tendencies in a neighbouring country is regarded as the advance guard of Russian economic and military expansionism. The concept of the total strategy leads to a mentality of defence against threatened encirclement, rather like the "laagers" in the Boer War.

The idea that the communist danger looms on all sides goes some way to explain the South African policy of pre-emptive defence, which has led to incursions into Angola. It also explains the attempts to make the position of the White population of South Africa as strong as possible, since it is thought that many of the Black nationalist movements, aiming at power sharing, are inspired by Marxist ideals. Whether one thinks these fears justified or not depends on whether one believes that the Soviet Union aims at world domination and is intent on undermining and overthrowing all Western capitalist societies.

In Europe, including the Netherlands, this danger is assessed rather differently. While it is thought that southern Africa may develop into a region

of crisis, very different causes for this are suggested. The European view is that increasing racial tension could lead to outbursts of violence involving many of the countries in the region. This racial tension is caused in part by the South African system of separate development. The unrest which this creates is seen to provide fertile ground for the spread of Russian influence. Equally, the actions of South African armed forces in other countries may lead to Moscow gaining greater influence in those countries. The belief in Europe is that peace in the region can best be ensured by a reduction in tension between races and states. The more prosperous South Africa's neighbours, the less the chance of Russian infiltration.

Although doubtless Moscow will use every chance to increase its influence in the region, I do not believe there is an overall Russian strategy aimed at world domination; it already has enough problems to cope with inside its existing sphere of influence. In the view of Europe, it is the continual South African military pressure on Angola which ensures the continuing presence of Cuban troops there. If the European analysis of the situation is correct, a policy aimed at reducing tension could remove the risk of crisis in the region.

One aspect of such a policy would be reform in South Africa, therefore the attempts of Prime Minister Botha to introduce certain reforms have been followed with great interest in the Netherlands. The split in the National Party may well make it possible for Mr Botha to pursue these reforms more energetically than up to now. After all, he no longer needs to concern himself with appeasing the die-hard element — the "verkramptes" — in order to preserve a semblance of political unity. Another component of a policy aimed at reducing tension would be a deliberate policy of economic assistance to South Africa's neighbours.

Therefore one sees that the European analysis of the future of the region produces a paradox: reducing tension, rather than increasing it, will lead to a reduction of Russian influence.

Peter C.J. Vale

Through light glasses darkly: Some thoughts on the formulation and nature of South African foreign policy

At the outset it needs to be realized that the realm of South African foreign policy is the exclusive domain of a small coterie of Whites, located chiefly in the Departments of the Prime Minister, of Foreign Affairs and more recently, Defence.

Two features of this realization need to be appreciated. First, there has been a small contribution from the Black majority to the formal* elements of South Africa's foreign policy. This contribution has, in the main, been made to the informal setting of foreign policy. The exiled groups — particularly the ANC — have, by their very exile, used diplomatic skills to become quasi-governmental. If only because they have had to be taken into account, they have become a factor in the country's foreign policy and this process has been a continuous one since the early Sixties. Less certain is the contribution made to South Africa's foreign policy by other, non-banned, Black organizations, like Inkatha.

Secondly, even within its limited confines, Pretoria's foreign policy, certainly in the past thirty years, has been directed by the governing Party. Further, in its implementation, it has been the jealously-guarded preserve of an elite which, in most cases, has not been accountable to any public constituency.

There is clear evidence that those who make South Africa's foreign policy are both fearful of outside involvement in the process and coy of accepting any ideas which might assist in the development thereof. Indeed, let it be stated that those who make South Africa's foreign policy are surly

*Foreign policy can exist in two settings: formal and informal. The former we may take to be the governmental level of international ties: diplomacy, summitary and international law being a few of the instruments thereof. In the latter setting, international ties are conducted by a plethora of other agents normally, but not exclusively, outside of the formal government domain.

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towards those on the "outside" who display even the remotest interest in questions which deal with its foreign policy or South Africa's international position.

While the first point is obvious, the second needs a trifle more attention. Those who run the foreign policy of this country are dismissive of the burgeoning local interest in international relations. Their attitude towards those who criticize both the form and the content of foreign policy is naive; for the inevitable claim is that the critics do not have sufficient information. The irony is that perceptive and constructive critics have tried in vain to obtain the correct facts on issues from bureaucracs, but that the latter have hidden behind terms such as "security" and "sensitivity". It is, therefore, little wonder that both sides of the great foreign policy divide — "insiders" and "outsiders" — peer at each other through myopic lenses. More worrying, for the long term, is that there appears no way of bridging the divide.

It follows from the foregoing that it is not easy to gauge how South African foreign policy is formulated. Apart from Robert Schrire's unpublished piece on the decision to go to war in Angola (1975), no analyses exist of serious public policy decisions. Arguably, the 1975 decision was a special case because questions of national security were imperative. This observation strengthens the case of those who hold that regional policy issues have become separated from other foreign policy considerations, both in their inception and in the bureaucratic mix which has come to run regional policy. (This theme will be explored later.)

The very exclusivity of the policy-making mechanism and its strong loyalty towards the ruling Party enables one to assert, in the absence of compelling contrary evidence, that the golden thread which runs through South African foreign policy is the need to preserve White (read Nationalist) ideology.*

This assertion on ideology should be seen as the primary proposition of this article and attention will now be devoted to how the achievement of this goal is sought in the execution of South African foreign policy towards both Europe and Africa.

The preservation of this ideology requires that the South African economy continues to function in an effective fashion, and a primary aim of South Africa's policy towards Europe is to ensure that the residual trade and economic links continue uninterrupted. Thus the policy is one of assuring those who do business in this country that sufficient forces are at

*The term ideology is used here in the loosest possible fashion, for what is meant is something more than textbook definitions. Some will see this to mean the inalienable right for Whites (particularly Afrikaners) to survive, others will see it as having more nefarious intent. It really does not matter, for the fundamental point remains: the need to preserve the ideology.

work which may ensure that peaceful political change can come about. It is simplistic to assume that mere economic considerations are sufficient alone for foreigners to trade with South Africa. For genuine or contrived reasons, outsiders doing business with South Africa need to defend themselves, and an essential feature of Pretoria's foreign policy is to provide the ammunition for this defence in hostile foreign forums.

Thus, Ambassadors and other senior foreign policy officials do a great deal of "Boardroom work" and, as in the Wiehahn case, those who are presumed to be in the forefront of political change in the country are used on a broader international stage to reassure the captive audience of those who already invest in this country and to encourage potential investors.

A series of complementary strategies help to buttress this economic feature and these are the positions, frequently argued both here and abroad, that South Africa is vitally important for Europe because of her "strategic minerals" and her location along the "Cape Sea Route".

Given the sophisticated foreign analyses on these issues of recent years, their credibility has been debunked. In seeking to emphasize them, however, those who make South Africa's foreign policy attempt to add credence to their advocacy of continued economic involvement by arguing these points. (It will be noticed that these two points in Pretoria's armoury have been separated from the "total onslaught/bulwark against Communism" position which will be considered later. Clearly, however, they may belong together.)

Primarily pre-World War II history accounts for a feeling in South Africa, particularly amongst Whites, that the country is part of a broad Western "fellowship". This is a continuous theme in our foreign policy and it, too, is an obvious one, as a cursory reading of South Africa's economic history reveals. From the earliest time the economy, chiefly extractive in nature, was directed towards the metropole. Even the limited industrialization which accompanied World War II was geared towards the requirements of others. After the War, our primary goods until the early Seventies, had guaranteed access to a major European market under the Ottawa Agreements.

At no stage since the War, has it made sound economic sense for South African traders to seek markets elsewhere than with, in the first instance, the Europeans, and secondly, in North America. Therefore, the essential focus of our foreign policy effort towards these states has been to ensure that these economic links remained paramount.

Now the argument pursued thus far, has more than a hint of economic determinism about it and appears to have moved from the strongly ideological stance set as the primary proposition of this paper.

In normal circumstances there need not necessarily be a gap between the need to preserve an ideology and the desire to trade. (Indeed the Revision-

ist historians would argue that exactly this situation was happening in America's "aggressive" world role.) The point is that South Africa is not a normal case. Post-war history is the catalogue of issues concerning human rights and the concomitant rise of "new nations". South Africa is seen as the exception to the rule and this has made the conduct of foreign policy a distinctly uncomfortable exercise.

These changes in the international community have not gone unnoticed by the more thoughtful of those who make Pretoria's foreign policy. For them in these changed circumstances, it has been important to maintain the viability of the economic links by keeping a low profile and stressing to those in Europe (of a more conservative persuasion) that irrespective of all other considerations, South Africa could be relied on as a secure friend in times of trauma.

Arguably, Pretoria's Africa policy is a creature born of much these same considerations, and is essentially supportive of her European policy. Throughout that long, lamentable series of forays into Africa, South Africa was keen to broadcast to the world at large her willingness to "be an African state". More poignantly, she appeared anxious to be speaking to Blacks outside her borders and ignored, for well nigh a decade, the Lusaka Manifesto's common-sense advice to begin speaking at home. (In the light of the Swazi-KwaZulu land deal one cannot help wondering whether the Manifesto has ever been read!)

Out of the southern African region, Pretoria's Africa policy has not been without some cost to herself. It has further been a policy in which it has become difficult to see what the immediate priorities could possibly be.

While much is made of the fact that the Republic trades with no less than 46 African countries, a serious question mark hangs over the fact that this trade may — repeat, may — not actually generate much for the trade balance. As such, this trade is really a diplomatic tool designed to influence international opinion, for given that African states are so hostile to the Republic, one must ask what real political penetration is actually made.

A clearer picture emerges of Pretoria's broader Africa policy when we realize that, in both its conception and execution, it is designed to inpress upon the international community the case for South Africa as a positive force for peaceful change in Africa. By arguing a fairly banal theory of free trade, Pretoria is in the position to demonstrate that it is Africa, not she, which harbours evil intent.

It is very interesting how this view that Pretoria trades with a number of African countries has become increasingly frequent over the past decade. (As an argument it is a distant cousin to a commonplace one which is a favourite of the South African Foreign Minister: "Africa is dying . . . alone South Africa is a vibrant force on the continent . . . Blacks are much better off in South Africa than elsewhere on the continent.")

The central point about Pretoria's Africa policy is that it is designed not so much with African goals in mind, but with the belief that it is a valuable instrument in impressing upon Europeans (and other Westerners), of South Africa's most serious, even righteous, intention to be a stabilizing influence in Africa.

This single policy with a minor (African) and a major (European-cum-Western) goal neatly came together in the Angolan crisis and this needs to be considered for a moment. The plan to intervene was aimed at both sets of audiences. If successful, moderate African states, who had undoubtedly signalled their concern to Prime Minister Vorster, would have been forced to "come onside". Equally so, Western states, who traditionally take their lead from Africa on these issues, would have been forced to recognize the contribution which South Africa had made to their security interests on the continent. Quite understandably, but erroneously, Vorster saw things in this fashion. He was also wrong on a number of far more important issues and, as has happened so often in South Africa's foreign policy, the wish was the father to the thought.

Now, if by what has been said so far, the impression has been gained that South African foreign policy is clear-cut, systematic and unwavering, this impression is wrong. No country can conduct a foreign policy with such exactitude; one is bound to say, not even the Kremlin!

South African foreign policy, except in a few vital areas, is conducted in a highly *ad hoc* fashion. There is, as far as one can tell, no forward planning and the branch established for this purpose appears to spend its time dealing with issues as they arise, and it is therefore not surprising that it has recently been preoccupied with the Namibian question.

Attention will now be directed towards the "vital areas" in which South African foreign policy appears to be systematic: (a) the crucial and highly-visible question of Namibia, and (b) the low-key and neglected issue of South Africa's nuclear potential.

Serious South African foreign policy-makers have known for more than a decade that the weight of international opinion would force them to re-chart their course in Windhoek. Indeed, the desire to incorporate the disputed territory, which gave way to the Homelands option, which gave way to the need to find a way out of the maze with the recent Contact Group's assistance, are signs of this realization. Whilst these permutations have been changes in Pretoria's domestic designs, the international picture has always remained the same, *viz.* prompted by an awareness that the West had fairly high interests in Namibia, South Africa has believed that she could play these along, whilst retaining a facade of wishing to find an acceptable international solution.

South Africa's prevarication over a settlement has rested as much on the need to retain another concrete link with the West, as it has in keeping a

Swapo government out of Windhoek. The knowledge that they are militarily superior has been a great source of strength for those who have made South Africa's Namibia policy. Looking back over the long, long years of the dispute, a clear picture emerges of South Africa's conscious effort to keep this link with the West open and, secondly, to prevent the advent of a hostile government close to her real estate.

The nuclear issue has been played in a similar fashion. South Africa has known for a number of years that the Western countries have laid special emphasis on her signing the Non-proliferation Treaty (N.P.T.), Pretoria believes that the West's desire to see this, is that South Africa has a process so unique that on-site inspections would mean the end of her potential to dominate a slice of the world enrichment market. Another view is that to sign the N.P.T. would oblige South Africa to adhere to the terms of the Treaty, and would prevent her from developing a weapon if necessary.

Rational arguments have been put along a line of reasoning, and there seems little gainsaying the claims of those who argue that Pretoria's coyness about signing the N.P.T. rests on the belief that the West has a particular interest in her enrichment process. It remains a fundamental issue in our relations with successive American governments, and is periodically an issue of concern to European governments.

For South African foreign policy-makers the issue is a crucial and ongoing one and South Africa's baseline is quite plain: no signature to the N.P.T. until some other (political) assurances have been extracted. The fact that, even at the covert level, major Western countries, particularly the U.S., cannot give such assurances merely enhances Pretoria's strength in this regard.

A new area in which South African foreign policy has moved from "ad hocracy" towards more contingent planning is the regional security considerations which have arisen in the past decade, particularly after the Portuguese coup.

Up to the time of this event, South Africa was able to rely on her unparalleled economic strength to maintain indirect control over the events in the region. So, she consorted fairly openly with the Smith regime in Salisbury and co-operated with the Portuguese in a fashion which we still do not fully appreciate. This policy was fairly successful for the period from the mid-Sixties until the mid-Seventies when the Portuguese coup changed the gameplan.

When John Vorster embarked on his much vaunted *Detente,* it was with the express purpose of shoring up some of the collapsing region; particularly because, for the first time since World War II, South Africa's regional domination was threatened by intrusive forces.

It was plain to successive regional policy-makers that a combination of Soviet-backed intrusive forces, if linked to local nationalist fervour, could

prove the end of White domination. *Detente* was however a non-starter and Vorster and his successor, P.W. Botha, resuscitated the old scheme for a "constellation" of southern African states. If successful, the scheme could have legalized South Africa's economic (and political) control over the region.

At the time of its launching there was some belief, in foreign policy-making circles, that a victory for the self-styled moderates in Zimbabwe could come to pass at the same time as conservative governments in Washington and London. This array of forces would have formalized and blessed Pretoria's constellation. Not only would such a scheme have brought Pretoria closer to major Western power centres, but it would also have provided the convenient conduit for the solution of the Namibian issue. Quite simply, Namibia would have been brought to an internationally acceptable Independence under the moderate DTA.

The victory of Robert Mugabe wrecked this ploy, and with it came the wrath of Pretoria. There is some indication that, after Zimbabwean independence, the South African Prime Minister changed the team charged with making regional policy. As part of his "rationalization of government" programme, Mr Botha moved his own military men closer to the centre of regional policy making. For them, there was only one way out of the disintegrating regional problem, and that was to impress on her neighbours exactly how much they needed Pretoria. The extensive policy of regional destabilization pursued by South Africa in the period, mid-1980 to December 1981 and to the present time, was the military-influenced policy departure.

It is clear that those who make broader foreign policy (i.e. the Department of Foreign Affairs and Information) were not happy with this situation for they came under even more international pressure but were powerless to do anything about it. There was, one must recognize, a pivotal point where South Africa was not only being accused of carrying the Apartheid sin, but also of being the perpetrator of regional destabilization. The two sins were very nearly rolled into one; it was a dangerous moment for Pretoria!

South Africa's ideological imperative is intimately caught up in the issues surrounding her control over the region, and there is no escaping this situation. It will crucially affect her relations not only with the Europeans but also with the rest of Africa. Regional control is the bottom line of South Africa's very survival.

The Ingwavuma land deal presently being contested both in, and out of, South African courts must also be seen to be partially motivated by security considerations. It demonstrates the degree to which those who make regional policy will go in the primary task of defending the ideology.

One final issue needs to be considered, and this concerns the notion of

the so-called "Communist threat or total onslaught" — the phrases are used interchangeably — and its impact on foreign policy, particularly policy towards Europe and Africa. It seems clear that there are two free interpretations of this.

The first would argue that it was necessary to invoke exhortations of this kind in an effort to push South Africa's churlish White electorate in the direction of change. In this setting, reform is only necessary because the country faces a greater threat from the outside. If this is the view held by a section of those who make foreign policy, then it illustrates the central place which ideology occupies in the minds of South Africa's foreign policy-makers. The Soviet "threat" is necessary to promote reform which will ensure White (Nationalist) survival.

The second interpretation of the "Soviet threat/total onslaught" springs from the genuine belief that the greatest single danger which the country faces — in the immediate and distant future — arises from the Soviets. Used in this fashion, the notion is a dangerously myopic tool, for it inhibits the capacity to pursue the innovative international relations with a range of countries which view the Soviet world role through differing lenses. It is also important to note that while conservative governments elsewhere in the world may share the South African Government's general feelings about the nature of Soviet expansionism, they have not been willing to embrace South Africa politically.

So, used in this crude fashion, the notion that South Africa is the lynchpin in a grand Soviet design is a negative factor in South Africa's foreign relations. Simply by its domestic use, it has become a factor which has increased the potential role played by the military particularly in regional issues. The notion of the "threat" has been widely used to disguise a range of other inequities in South African society: simply put, to hide problem areas which were previously disguised under some other concept in overall apartheid.

A problem in the two-fold use of the "threat" is that those who believe it to be a necessary instrument in exhorting people to reform, may begin to believe the second use of the term. This itself will inhibit the capacity to push through reforms which, so we are led to believe, the serious makers of South African public policy believe are necessary for their survival. With this goes the alarming increase in military power and the increased role played by the military in public life, and the increased militarization of South African society.

Book Reviews

ECONOMIC POWER IN ANGLO-SOUTH AFRICAN DIPLOMACY
Geoff Berridge
Macmillan, 1981, 225 pp.

Berridge sets out to explain why the British Government has adopted a "solicitous" policy towards South Africa and he argues that previous explanations have been flawed by misunderstandings. He maintains that these explanations have fallen into two main categories.

The first is an "establishment" view which suggests that a variety of factors have played their part, such as the strategic importance of the Cape sea route, the old colonial responsibilities for the High Commission Territories, Britain's economic interests, and the traditional ties including those of kith and kin. The second is the capitalist/imperialist one, which concentrates on investment and trade, largely to the exclusion of all else.

Both explanations are rejected by Berridge: "the establishment", because he says it is set in an historical void, failing to distinguish change or what is most important at a particular time; and the "capitalist/imperialist" because it has nothing to say about particular foreign policies.

Having rejected these, Berridge then advances an economic power hypothesis, which, being derived from Klaus Knorr's work, rests on two stages — "potential power" and "putative power". Potential economic power is said by Knorr (and agreed by Berridge) to be transformed into putative power by the use of political will and skill.

Applying this to Anglo-South African relations, Berridge concludes that the South African Government has been able to exercise power over the British Government. Indeed, so clearly has this been the case that the South Africans have frequently been able to exercise "a diplomatically significant economic grip on the United Kingdom" (p. 32). Berridge recognizes that this may seem surprising as Britain has much the larger economy, but he explains it first by referring to "the structure" of the economic relationship through which Britain has been reliant on South African supplies. (The nature of the reliance has changed over time, for at one stage it was industrial diamonds, at another uranium, while gold has been fairly consistently important, but it has been a persistent theme.) The second reason is that while the South African Government has had the will and skill to use its potential power, the British Government has not.

Berridge relates his views to three particular situations — the negotiations which led to the Simonstown Agreement, the post-Sharpeville days,

and the period of Harold Wilson's Labour Government, when the arms ban was applied against South Africa, and Rhodesia assumed UDI. In each case, Berridge maintains, the British sought accommodation with South Africa, and in each case the critical factor was the exercise of South Africa's economic power.

Berridge's main point is well made — that the use to which the South African Government has been prepared to put its economic strength has been undervalued. Moreover, he might have added that the South African Government has seen itself, in its international as well as its domestic relations, playing for the highest stakes — the survival of the existing state and society, whereas the British have seen the relationship in much less dramatic terms. However, having made his point, Berridge overplays his hand. If, as he frequently claims, the South African Government had "an economic grip" on Britain then all the other domestic and international factors which come into play in shaping British policy towards the Republic must be subordinate to that. Plainly, that has not been the case. After all the British have, among other things, withdrawn from the Simonstown Agreement and imposed an arms ban. Of course, Britain may have modified these and other steps because of the use made by the South Africans of their economic strength, but then the question turns on one set of influences measured against others.

Now and again Berridge recognizes this, and often he seems torn between advocating his particular line and recognizing that it is only one factor among many. For instance, the last words in the book are: "the British Government was at certain junctures under even greater pressure from the anti-South African quarters than from Pretoria" (p. 165) — so much for the "economic grip".

Returning to Berridge's main theme: he argues that the Simonstown Agreement was one-sided, but, unlike previous analyses, he says it strongly favoured the South Africans. This, as one would expect, he explains by the use that was made of South Africa's economic power, and he reaches that conclusion by eliminating other explanations and emphasizing the importance, at that time, of South African uranium and gold to Britain. Yet having stated that clearly, the old inconsistency re-emerges, for he finishes the section on Simonstown by saying that the secrecy which still surrounds the negotiations "makes it impossible for us to determine whether or not South Africa's value to the United Kingdom was specifically linked to British concessions" (p. 108). With this admission the previous argument collapses like a pack of cards.

There is a compelling attraction in the belief that social relations — whether it be the relationship between Britain and South Africa or any other — can be explained by one set of reasons. Berridge does not consistently claim that for his economic power hypothesis, but he is often

tempted part way down the path. A similar tendency to oversimplify mars his judgement of the terms of the Simonstown Agreement. As we have seen, in this case he completely turns the tables by saying that South Africa gained at Britain's expense. However, while he is right to point out the advantages gained by South Africa why does he then have to see it as a zero sum calculation whereby her gain is Britain's loss? Surely the position is that both sides thought that they were making some gains, for why otherwise would they have signed the agreement?

In the complex picture of Anglo-South African relations Berridge has made a valuable contribution by underlining the way in which the South African Government has sought to use its economic strength, but his overall hypothesis does not stand up. In any relationship "power" is based on the degree to which one side can make the other bend to its will. In those terms many factors other than South Africa's economic strength have to be considered, and despite his eagerness to put across his main message Berridge himself does from time to time recognize that.

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THE STRUCTURE OF INTERNATIONAL CONFLICT
C.R. Mitchell
Macmillan Press Ltd, London, 1981. 355 pp.

In view of the recent workshop on international theory held at Jan Smuts House (in association with the Department of Internal Relations, University of the Witwatersrand), Mitchell's book can be seen, in this reviewer's opinion, as a prime tool for focusing future workshop discussions and reflections on the state of international relations theory.

First it must be pointed out that this book is only dealing in a general sense with international theory, or more specifically one of its sub-fields. Basically it is an attempt to survey a new field of study known by such labels as "conflict studies", "peace research", "conflict analysis", etc. Resulting from the impact of the "behavioural revolution" on the various disciplines of the social sciences, it is the author's stated objective to advance "an interdisciplinary approach to investigating the causes of conflict, violence and war and the problems of maintaining — indeed, defining — a condition of peace . . . Hence, there is a dual interest in conflict and co-operation within the field" (p. 1).

Mitchell approaches his survey in a logical and structured framework. Beginning with an explanation of his basic assumptions, he lists three: that conflict is a legitimate focus of enquiry; that there is general agreement for a multi-disciplinary and multi-level approach; and that conflict is an endemic feature of society and social interaction.

He then goes on to examine the conceptual problems involved in analyzing both intranational and international conflicts (Part I), including the difficulties in "devising clear and useful definitions of terms and identifying parties and issues (p. 10). Parts II and III consider how parties to a conflict (utilizing examples from a number of different social levels: from interpersonal to inter-state, mostly at the inter-state level) conduct and conclude such conflicts. Rising out of his assumption that there must be a multi-level approach, the author makes considerable use of "analogue analysis" (the process of transferring findings and theories from one level of society to another). He visualizes this "as a ladder, with the transfer of insights or theories as a process of climbing up (or down) the ladder bearing different ideas, concepts and findings that might be useful at the other levels in understanding conflict structures and processes to be found there" (p. 6).

Part IV provides a very interesting discussion of methods for containing conflict, discussing such aspects as conflict management, peacemaking, and third-party intermediaries. Seen from an alternative perspective which perceives a necessity for societal conflict (i.e. class struggle) to obtain societal transformation, some of these methods could appear to be supports for the *status quo*.

Yet the chapter on conflict management does discuss processes to prevent conflicts crossing the threshold from incipient conflict ("existence of goal incompatibility") to latent conflict ("recognition of goal incompatibility"), and finally to manifest conflict ("conflict behaviour"). At each of these stages of conflict, the author discusses methods and tactics of the relevant management process: conflict avoidance, conflict prevention, conflict settlement, and conflict resolution. His fresh insights on the role(s) of third-party intermediaries, their nature, and their functions are particularly useful.

As to the author's objectives: Mitchell states in the foreword that the book is intended mainly to introduce undergraduate students in the social sciences to the ideas of conflict research, and this it does. Although a wide-ranging and idiosyncratic survey (which the author acknowledges), one gains the impression that different examples might have provided different insights, though perhaps not different taxonomies, and that examples from one level of society do not necessarily provide insights at another level. But this should not detract from the main point that this is a thought-provoking book for academics as well as students in the social sciences. Even political decision-makers could benefit from many of his insights into the structure of conflict.

As to the book's limitations: the author readily points out that it is "conceptual, descriptive and taxonomic, rather than theoretical in any formal sense". It should rather be seen as "pre-theoretical" dealing with the delimitation, classification, analysis, and problemation of the field (pp. 10 and 315). Further, he points out that it does not contain any list of hypotheses with operationalized concepts nor specified relationships between dependent and independent variables (p. 315). In addition to these points, it needs to be added that the high price of this book (R42,60) will prove a major limitation to the size of its readership, despite a lucid writing style.

This reviewer would suggest that this book has a centripetal utility for the continuing workshop on international theory. It could provide a much-needed focus for a future session while encouraging a multi-disciplinary audience/approach, as well as a problem-oriented perspective. It seems capable of provoking academic thinking into new patterns on the problems of conflict; into adopting fresh perspectives on the nature of their circumstances, and into evolving new options for future relationships and interactions, as its author hopes (p. 316). It is doubtful, though, whether a short review of this type can do justice to a structural survey on such a complex yet wide-spread field of study.

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ECONOMIC SANCTIONS AND INTERNATIONAL ENFORCEMENT
Margaret P. Doxey
The Royal Institute of International Affairs, second edition, London, 1980, 161 pp.

When and why are economic sanctions imposed? What forms do they take on? Are they successful? How do target states react?

This second, updated edition of Margaret Doxey's book endeavours to answer these and related questions, and she succeeds quite handsomely. Although it is neither a very technical (in the sense that the precise working of control and evasion measures are explained in depth), nor voluminous work, it is remarkably complete. It deals with economic warfare in the 20th century (siege and blockade, the oil weapon); regional sanctions (Yugoslavia, Albania, Cuba); sanctions under the League (Italy) and the UN (Rhodesia, South Africa, Korea and China).

In the chapter on the problems of international enforcement several important points are made. In times of peace states will seldom form a united sanctionist front. National interests (*vide* American grain farmers) pose a formidable obstacle, and even when decisions are reached, the participating states may have different objectives and priorities in mind. This is the dilemma of international organizations like the UN. These bodies lack some of the advantages of national governments but share their weaknesses. They do not enjoy the authority and legitimacy that seem necessary in order to ensure compliance. Other problems which defy easy answers are those which concern the scope of sanctions, the selection of measures, the cost factor, the burden on neighbours and those dependent on the target state, as well as supervision.

Target states may choose from quite a number of alternatives (stockpiling, development of alternative sources, retaliatory measures, evasion) and can offer stiff opposition — especially with the assistance of a strong backer (as Rhodesia for some time had in South Africa) and other non-sanctionists. Through skilful propaganda and exploitation of sentiments the local regime may even reap some handsome profits in terms of increased internal support.

Doxey makes a further valid point about the *raison d'être* for modern sanctions. Under UN machinery "provided that an existing situation is deemed to threaten the peace in terms of Article 39, the objective of sanctions may not be to preserve or restore the *status quo*, but to alter it" (p. 84).

In South Africa's case the aim is clearly to bring about change in the internal political structure — with the predictable result that the local government regards that as improper intervention. It is with some sobering effect that one then reads: "If a *peaceful* outcome is sought, it also implies an

eventual acceptance of the changed structure of their society by the nationals of the country concerned" (p. 84, italics added).

Doxey again demonstrates that economic sanctions have anything but an impressive track record, and she clearly sets out the reasons. Nevertheless, the concluding chapter offers some more food for thought for South Africans — especially for those whose understanding of international relations is confined to pointing out the hypocrisy or the incompetence of the UN. All will be grateful for the comprehensive bibliography included in the book.

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Erratum: International Affairs Bulletin, Vol. 6, No. 1, 1982. "Book Reviews" p. 42, para. 3, line 7; omit (?) following Ciskei.

Books received for review

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Basil Blackwell. £9.50, pb. £19.95 lib ed.

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Macmillan. Approx. R42,60.

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