POLITICAL AND STRATEGIC ORIGIN OF SECURITY THREATS TO SOUTH AFRICA

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It is not my task to consider particular threats to security, which may occur
within South Africa, but rather the background of threats to the national secur-
ity of the country as a whole. Within this wider context particular acts occur,
which can affect the security of each of us, and which therefore demand constant
vigilance and effective counter-measures. But the aim should be to remove the
threats themselves, and to this end it is important to try to understand their
origin and nature.

Briefly, the concept of national security includes the survival of society
as a whole, the maintenance of the sovereignty of the state against infringement
from outside or inside, the protection of the territorial integrity of the state
within its borders, political and economic stability, etc. It is in the con-
text of national security that law and order is maintained, that peace exists
within the state and with other states, that there is economic progress for the
state and its people, and that there is freedom for the individual within the
state. On this latter aspect, if national security is threatened, it is likely
that the freedom of the individual will be affected. Governments have a respon-
sibility to maintain and defend national security, even if this requires a limi-
tation on individual freedoms, and in the extreme cases of war and revolution,
this may lead to martial law or perhaps the suspension of the constitution. But
there is always the temptation for governments throughout the world to use the
issue of national security as an excuse to impose dictatorial rule. Very often
this only aggravates the situation and in itself may even create a greater threat.
The case of Nicaragua today may be a dramatic illustration of this.

The question of understanding what the threats to national security are and
how to deal with them most effectively is of cardinal importance. This is not a
simple matter, however, for two general reasons :

1. It may be obvious that a country's security is being threatened (as in
   South Africa's case at present), but it is not always clear where the
   threats originate or what their real nature is, and there is a danger
   that they will be seen in over-simple terms. If a threat is to be
   affectively countered, it should be accurately identified and assessed.

   This raises the question of how we perceive threats. Even if a
   threat is correctly identified as coming from a particular country,

i.e. "the enemy", it is possible to have an incorrect image of that
country and a wrong perception of what it is trying to do. Wrong
images and perceptions can prevent an accurate determination of the
other country's intentions, its motivations and its capabilities, and
there are various examples in recent world history of the miscalculations,
with disastrous results, arising from such misperceptions.

Perceptual accuracy - or as much accuracy as is possible - is therefore
required for successful policy in countering threats to national security.
This should be based on good intelligence and intelligent analysis, but
the outcome still depends on the politicians who ultimately have to make
the decisions - and they are subject to many pressures and influences
which affect those decisions. Moreover, in an age of propaganda, when
even the official statements of governments are often intended more for
effect than accurately to reflect their positions, politicians can
easily be confused both by their own propaganda and by that of their
opponents. Also particular belief systems can act as filters in pre-
venting an understanding of the enemy's motives and intentions. For
instance, our assessment of the intentions of communist powers can very
easily be affected subjectively by our attitude towards communism - and
this is without doubt also true of communist assessments of our intentions.
But, unless we want to imitate the crusaders of old, and embark on a Holy
war, no matter what the cost, then we should try to look very coolly and
objectively at the policies of the Soviet Union and its satellites and
surrogates - without simply making generalised assumptions about their
intentions.

2. A related problem for governments in maintaining and defending national
security is that the <u>means of countering the threats</u> are not always
straightforward. Security threats are often thought of mainly in mili-
tary terms, but these days - and especially in our case - there are many
other elements involved. A purely military threat is often the simplest -
or at least the clearest - to deal with. But when the military element is
compounded with the political, diplomatic, psychological, economic and
other elements in the overall threat, then the response to the threat is
not a simple matter and also has to include all these elements. It is in
this sense, I believe, that there is a need for a co-ordinated "total
strategy" in countering the threat to South Africa's national security.
This need has often been referred to by South African leaders, including
military leaders who are well aware that the external threats faced by
South Africa are not purely military. Apart from anything else, they
are linked to internal problems which are predominantly political and

which therefore require political answers. But there are still many
people who refuse to recognise that what is said and done inside the
country can directly affect the threats from outside - for good or ill.
It is very difficult for any government in these circumstances to evolve
a total strategy, which includes both external and domestic policies, and
then to mobilise the people behind that strategy.

There is always the aggravating factor of public complacency. The
attitude of "it can't happen here" is a very prevalent one in any society,
and one could quote examples also from other countries. While no res-
ponsible person in our case would want to create a crisis atmosphere, which
would destroy the confidence in our future, it would be equally wrong to
encourage complacency or allow apathy to continue, in the light of the real
threats we face. This requires a balanced and honest approach on the part
of our leaders, in informing the public about our situation. But more
than anything it requires a realistic and co-ordinated policy, internally
and externally, to deal with the threats.

Turning now to consider more specifically the origin and nature of the threats
to South Africa's security, one must first reiterate that it is the combination
of related threats which makes our situation so difficult and serious. No single
source can account for the overall threat. For example, it would be relatively
easy to evolve a counter strategy if, as some people seem to think, the Soviet
Union were the sole ultimate source of all our problems, or if it were simply a
question of terrorism. But the problem is in reality much more complicated.

In identifying these threats one must start with the fact that South Africa
cannot be seen in isolation. There are two other main conflict issues in
Southern Africa which have a direct bearing on South African security - Zimbabwe/
Rhodesia and South West Africa/Namibia. In a real sense, it is the security
of the whole region which is at stake. Failure to ensure stability and peace in
these two important neighbours will prevent stability and security in the whole
region, and South Africa could not escape the consequences, even if we had no
problems of our own - nor could the other black-ruled states of the region for
that matter. Even more so would disorder and insecurity in South Africa affect
the others. Because of the unavoidable geographic, ethnic and economic links,
the fate of all peoples in this region is intertwined; like peace, security is
indivisible, and we shall all eventually either grow together in co-operation or
fall together in conflict.

The future of Southern Africa depends very largely on these three countries,
because of their impressive natural and human resources, and their relatively
advanced infrastructural, agricultural and industrial development. Moreover,
these three countries face various common threats. Although there are individ-

-ual differences in how these threats are applied in each case, they all arise from certain world phenomena. To understand the threats, it is therefore necessary to see Southern Africa in the context of a changing world, beset by many intractable problems. Southern Africa is a focus point of some of these world phenomena at present, but the challenges and threats we face are not peculiar to Southern Africa only.

Firstly, the ending of colonialism, which meant the domination of large parts of the world by the Western Powers, came with surprising speed after World War II. Without defending colonialism, one can at least say that its disappearance has seriously disrupted world order, and many countries are still trying to adapt to this changed world and to find their feet as independent nations. Not only in Africa has the removal of the colonial order left behind severe national problems and violent regional conflicts. The Middle East, the Indian sub-continent and South-East Asia have not seen the end of their problems and conflicts. In Africa there are only a few countries which have achieved a degree of stable political development and/or economic progress, and there are several unresolved regional conflicts. In Southern Africa the anti-colonialist tide swept in later than elsewhere and the resistance was much greater. But in essence this region is threatened with the same disruptive effects of the changes which have overwhelmed other parts of the world.

We were initially able to shelter behind the resistance to change of the Portuguese Empire in Mozambique and Angola. It can be argued now, with hindsight, that that resistance in fact aggravated the threat, and made the eventual disruption greater than it would have been if there had been a realistic adaptation, say in the early 1960's, to the changing circumstances in Africa. Then the liberation movements in those territories would not have gained the strength and support internationally which they did, and more moderate evolutionary solutions might have been possible. On the other hand, it can perhaps be argued that Portuguese resistance kept the threat further away for some years and gained us time. But then we would have to ask whether we have used that time to the best effect in assessing the threat and adapting ourselves to meet it. Impressive steps have and are being taken in Zimbabwe/Rhodesia and South West Africa/Namibia to change the inherited colonial systems, accommodate black nationalism internally and achieve an independence acceptable internationally. In this way it is hoped to reduce or even remove the threat now posed by the extreme elements of the anti-colonialist and nationalist movement. But these steps have had to be taken under severe pressure and with the threat immeasurably greater than it was a decade or more ago. For South Africa, is there not a lesson to be learned from this experience of our neighbours?

Secondly, there has been the widespread reaction against racialism since
World War II. This has been particularly evident in the Western World, where
growing emphasis has been placed on the issue of Human Rights. South Africa,
with its declared policies of racial separation, soon became a focal point for
attention in this regard, and this issue has been effectively used, in com-
bination with the issue of colonialism, in the international campaign on all
three Southern African states. In the past South Africa defended itself
simply on the basis of domestic jurisdiction, denying that it was anyone else's
business what happened inside the country. But the international problems only
became worse, and now the vital importance of removing this issue from the
armoury of opponents has been widely recognised. In Zimbabwe/Rhodesia and
South West Africa/Namibia a great deal has been done through legislative reform.
In South Africa some steps have been taken and more are promised, but the urgen-
cy is still not apparent to everyone.

Apart from the fact that this issue of racial discrimination has added con-
siderable fuel to the external threat, there is the even more important question
of the implications for internal security. Disaffection among a substantial
proportion of the population is a much greater threat to security than any
external enemy alone could ever be. General Magnus Malan recently stressed that
when the battle for the soul of the population was lost, everything was lost,
and he pointed out that the Portuguese did not lose their military battles in
Angola and Mozambique, but lost the faith and trust of the inhabitants. "The
lesson is clear .... We are strong enough to withstand the onslaught - but we
must take into account the aspirations of our different population groups. We
must gain and keep their faith and trust."

Thirdly, and related to the above two world phenomena, is the so-called
North/South division, i.e. the growing gap between the rich and poor nations.
The concept of the Third World has evolved as the less developed and poor states,
as a group, have attempted to develop international political power - often used
irrationally against the West. The means of closing the gap and of promoting
economic development in the under-developed two-thirds of the world have not
been found, and this situation constitutes a very real threat to world peace and
security and thus to the security of many individual countries, including those
of Southern Africa. We have this world phenomenon - the rich/poor division - in
our midst, aggravating other divisions and conflicts. In fact, in the longer
term this is much more serious than the current political divisions.

Fourthly, there has been the more recent but very serious energy crisis,
which has aggravated the world's existing economic and monetary problems, but
which has clearly been caused by political developments as much as anything else.

Apart from the general threat to world order, this issue poses a very real
threat to the security of many individual states.   Much can be done to reduce
this threat by conservation and the development of new sources of energy, but
the political element remains unpredictable.   The revolution in Iran, which has
caused such serious problems for South Africa and other countries, caught most
people and governments by surprise.   Can we be sure that a similar event will
not occur in another major oil-producing area?   The effects could be catastrophic
for some of the Western industrialised powers, including the United States, unless
steps are taken now to prepare to meet such an eventuality.   South Africa may
be more prepared than most countries, but even we have serious problems in this
regard, and our security would not be unaffected by another crisis which further
damaged the United States, Western Europe and Japan.

The fifth world phenomenon which threatens world order and security is
international terrorism which is one of the most serious and insidious phenomena
of our time, and I shall deal with it at somewhat greater length than the other
matters.   It has particular relevance to Southern Africa, although one must
caution at the outset against equating all members of militant nationalist
movements with terrorists.   That would be as inaccurate an oversimplification
as saying there are no terrorists in these movements and in their leadership
(which is said by their supporters throughout the world).

Although perpetrated occasionally by individuals who are mentally deranged
or harbour a personal grudge, the most dangerous and destructive terrorism is
associated with movements claiming to have political and social objectives.
Terrorist acts by these movements include murder, bombing, skyjacking, kidnapp-
ing, bank robbery and blackmail, and these acts have become commonplace in many
parts of the world - so much so, that there is a danger that the world is learning
to live with them.

In spite of the increase and spread of terrorism, the international community
has been unable to take effective joint action, except to a limited extent in
respect of skyjacking and the kidnapping of diplomats.   Techniques for countering
terrorist acts are being refined, but it will not be effectively stamped out until
all governments are willing to take strong action, no matter what political mo-
tives a particular terrorist group may have.   The problem that has prevented
effective international action is that some governments find excuses for par-
ticular groups, or they are afraid of the consequences for themselves of taking
action against them.   They provide sanctuary, and they allow movement across
their borders.   Many of these governments are in the Third World and some have
themselves come to power through revolution.   They have a different perception of
the movements which employ terrorism, seeing them in revolutionary terms, with

laudable political motives, even if specific acts of violence are to be de-
plored.

The origins of modern terrorism are to be found in Latin America, where
militant groups thrived on unjust social conditions. Although Fidel Castro's
revolt in Cuba in the late 1950's cannot be regarded as terrorism, it inspired
groups in other Latin American countries, and in the 1960's Cuba supported and
even initiated revolts. By the end of the 1960's Cuban-inspired movements had
failed to repeat Castro's success elsewhere, but groups had been spawned which
had turned to violence as the main method of drawing attention to their grievances
and demands - and this violence was directed not only against military targets.

From Latin America terrorism spread to the industrialised countries of Europe
and Japan, where conditions were very different, but where issues were found, and
sometimes created, for the terrorists' purposes. Italy is a country where terr-
orism has become rampant. In the first six months of 1978, there were 925 cases
of bombing and arson, and 492 attacks on schools, on the streets and in other
public places, in the course of which 877 vehicles, including many public busses
and police cars, were destroyed or damaged. There are said to be 115 left-wing
and 22 right-wing terrorist groups in Italy. (These figures were issued by
the Italian Communist Party which, by the way, strongly opposes terrorism,
partly, no doubt, for fear of being blamed for it, because of the extreme
left-wing elements in the majority of the terrorist groups.) The early 1960's
also saw the founding of the PLO, with its sub-groups, in the Middle East -
another source of terrorism - and terrorist acts have increased during the
1960's and 1970's in that region. The issue of Palestine has also inspired
terrorist acts in Europe, designed to draw maximum attention to that issue.

In Africa the origin of the movements concerned was different, but some
of their methods have since become similar to those employed elsewhere. They
were founded as nationalist political organisations to oppose colonialism and the
colonial or white governments. In the 1960's they turned to the "armed struggle",
first in the Portuguese territories. The ultimate success of these movements in
coming to power in Mozambique, Angola and Guinea-Bissau (the only countries, by
the way, in Africa south of the Sahara to achieve independence through the so-
called armed struggle) had a profound impact on other nationalist movements in
Southern Africa and inspired them to follow the same course. While denying that
they are terrorists and claiming instead to be guerrilla movements waging a
just armed struggle to free their countries, there is no doubt that violent
and even brutal acts against the civilian population (both black and white) have
increasingly occurred. When one includes the more recent incidents of bombings
in urban areas, it is difficult to appreciate any difference in kind between

these acts and the terrorism condemned in Europe and elsewhere.

The link with Cuba has become very close, especially since the Angolan War, and Cuba is now the major source of training and advisers for these movements in Southern Africa, although it is closer to some than to others. Cuba's involvement in Africa began in the mid-60's with assistance and training for the MPLA of Angola and the PAIGC in Portuguese Guinea. That was at a time when Cuba was also involved in other Latin American countries, but in the 1970's Fidel Castro, who obviously sees himself in the role of leader of all revolutionary movements, has vastly stepped up his African involvement in an apparent attempt to make up in Africa for his failure in Latin America. He now maintains over 40 000 troops in Africa (out of a total army of about 130 000 men). About half of these troops are to be found in Angola, assisting the Angolan MPLA government and also providing training for PLAN (SWAPO) and ZIPRA (ZAPU), while most of the remainder are in Ethiopia, with a few thousand in various other countries. This large commitment, which has involved actual fighting in Angola and Ethiopia (with an estimated 1 800 casualties), has imposed considerable strain on the Cuban economy. The only way in which Cuba has been able to maintain this commitment, with no signs of it being reduced, is through increasing subsidisation by the Soviet Union. Castro required economic assistance from the Soviet Union even before he embarked on his African adventures, but now he has made himself totally dependent on Moscow and, while he may have his own separate ambitions as a revolutionary world figure, he cannot afford to oppose the dictates of the Soviet government. Moreover, the Cubans and the movements they support and train are dependent on the Soviet Union for almost all their weapons and other military equipment.

It still remains an open question in my mind as to how far these movements themselves are communist or Marxist. They certainly did not start as Marxist movements, even if there were communists among them; they were in fact predominantly black nationalist movements. However, there is now no doubt about their dependence on the communist powers for material, training and military advice, and political pronouncements by their leaders have increasingly been couched in Marxist ideological terms - although in many cases this ideology may be no more then skin-deep. I do not believe they are fully subservient to the dictates of Moscow in their political decisions, but their dependence on Moscow and Havana must severely limit their freedom of action. They are also dependent on their hosts, the frontline African states, who give them sanctuary as well as operational and training bases and who therefore can exercise some influence on their policies. However, the time may be coming when the host government in a country like Zambia may be more dependent on the movement using its territory (ZAPU) than the other way around.

The nationalist or liberation movements in Southern Africa will not be able to succeed in their aims by military means or with terrorist tactics alone, because of the strength of the defending forces and the fact that they do not have the overall support of the local people - unless there is a collapse of the defending forces (as occurred in the Portuguese territories) or unless they can gain much increased committed local support. But we must not forget that for these movements their violent operations constitute only one element of their activities. The psychological, political and diplomatic elements are equally important, and even the violent element is designed to achieve ends other than a purely military victory, namely (a) to demoralise the local population and (b) to draw international attention to their cause and thus to gain support for their diplomatic efforts. Losses they incur in the field, therefore, do not basically affect their overall objectives.

In these circumstances the increasingly serious threat of terrorism and guerrilla incursions cannot be overcome simply by military means. The fact that the conflicts of Southern Africa are basically political ones, requiring political solutions, is fully recognised by the military leaders. This recognition has been expressed in statements by General Walls in Rhodesia, General Magnus Malan in South Africa and Major-General Geldenhuys in South West Africa, but it is not evident that this has penetrated the minds of the public in general yet, and there is still a widespread tendency to think that the terrorist and guerrilla threat can simply be dealt with on a military or para-military level.

Although there has been relatively little terrorist or guerrilla activity in South Africa itself, the number of incidents has grown in the past year or two, and a further increase cannot be excluded. In June 1978 it was reported that at least 4 000 Black South Africans were in guerrilla training camps, the exodus of Soweto students since 1976 having greatly added to the number. In April this year the Minister of Police stated that about 600 trained terrorists of the African National Congress were in Angola ready to try and infiltrate the Republic. There have already been several cases of infiltrators caught in Transkei, Bophuthatswana and on the borders of Swaziland, trying to use these countries as corridors into the Republic, as well as in at least eleven towns within the Republic, according to Mr. Jimmy Kruger's statement. A recently published study by two authoritative American authors has concluded that none of the conditions that create the right climate for guerrilla warfare exist in South Africa. Nevertheless, they add that "future guerrillas may well prove to be a serious nuisance to South Africa", even if the effectiveness of such raids would be strictly limited. However,Mr. Kruger implied that the aim of those attempting to infiltrate the Republic in recent times was to carry out urban terrorism, and certainly most of the inci-

-dents in the last two years have involved bomb explosions, mainly in urban areas.
The strategy of the ANC and PAC may therefore be very different from that of the
equivalent movements in Zimbabwe/Rhodesia and South West Africa/Namibia, where the
violent activities have been confined predominantly to rural areas, with only
relatively few incidents in urban areas. In any case, even though urban terror-
ism has not occurred here to the extent that it has in other parts of the world,
there is a need for an awareness of the potential threat and there are no grounds
for complacency.

I have dealt at some length with the implications of the threat emanating from
the guerrilla and/or terrorist movements, because I believe this phenomenon con-
stitutes the most serious threat to national security, and moreover it brings
together all the other threats that can be separately identified - whether they
be from internal or external sources - or whether they are political or military
in nature.

In conclusion on this particular issue, I must mention two further points
which underline the seriousness of the threat. Firstly, we must frankly appre-
ciate that many Blacks in South Africa identify with the liberation movements of
Southern Africa. Except for a small minority, they may not in any sense be giving
active support to these movements, but the fall of Mozambique and Angola raised
the expectations of many Blacks, and the liberation movements in those territories
were perceived as the agents of this dramatic change in Southern Africa. The
movements involved in other parts of Southern Africa are seen as having played a
major role in forcing the changes that have already taken place (in Zimbabwe/
Rhodesia and South West Africa/Namibia) and as being potential liberating agents
for South Africa itself. The growing communist connections of these movements
may be a cause for concern among some sections of the black community, for in-
stance the Homelands governments, but it is my impression that this factor is
simply shrugged off among many politically conscious Blacks, particularly in the
younger generation. This situation, if I am correct, underlines the importance
of General Malan's statement (quoted above) about the need for action to gain
the faith and trust of the population.

Secondly, we must appreciate frankly that most of the outside world, including
Western countries, do not equate these liberation movements with international
terrorism as it occurs elsewhere. In a sense they are right, because the nation-
alist origins of these movements are very different from terrorist groups operat-
ing, for instance, in Europe. But there are now obvious similarities, demonstrated
clearly in the violent acts committed against civilians, and this clear evidence
is largely overlooked by some countries which strongly oppose terrorism elsewhere.
Moreover, in the United Nations decisions have been taken, which give international

legitimacy to these movements and allow them to express their views in intern-
ational forums. The problem basically is that most countries are afraid of
the political embarrassment of strongly opposing the methods of these movements
and thus appearing to be siding with white minority regimes. The cause of this
state of affairs internationally is thus political, and the answer must be a
political one.

The sixth world phenomenon, which continues to have threatening implications
for Southern Africa, is the East/West division - what used to be called the "Cold
War" - and the policies towards this region of the Soviet Union and the United
States. This subject deserves greater in-depth treatment than can be given to
it here, but at least one can point to the effect which global competition and
rivalry between the superpowers has on Southern Africa - rivalry which continues
in various regions in spite of the efforts to promote "détente" between the
United States and the Soviet Union. This détente is largely confined to cer-
tain bilateral negotiations on issues such as the important one of the limita-
tion of strategic arms (SALT), while the Soviet Union continues to intervene
around the world and to undercut Western influence.

There is growing concern in the West about this state of affairs, but the
West gives the appearance of not being able to deal effectively with disruptive
Soviet activities. Although the image of the United States, as the Western
leader, is at present admittedly one of weakness, the impression that the West
is constantly losing the competition with the Soviet Union is not entirely accu-
rate. The will of the United States to exert itself as a world leader is still
affected by the Vietnam experience (although there are signs that this may be
changing); it is also suffering under a weak central Administration, following
the reaction to President Nixon and Watergate; and it has recently suffered a
public humiliation over its inability to do anything about the overthrow of its
staunch ally in Iran. But it is inaccurate to picture the Soviet Union as enjoying
one success after another; Moscow has had its fair share of failures. The biggest
one is probably China, and there is also its failure to extend its influence
significantly in Europe, where some of its own satellites have only been kept in
line by a considerable degree of coercion, and where communist parties in the West
have not recently been making any headway (e.g. recent losses in Italy) and where
some of these parties have asserted their independence from Moscow. Internally,
the Soviet Government also has serious political and economic problems. In
Africa, too, the position of the Soviet Union is not all that bright in spite of
many years of concentrated effort; one could give several examples of setbacks
for the Soviet Union in African countries and of over-commitment in unstable
areas, which is creating on-going problems for Moscow.

It is thus a mistake to conclude, I believe, that the Soviet Union has an overall strategic world plan which it is following step by step with consistent success. But this does not mean that the Soviet Union has no foreign policy goals and global ambitions; it certainly has, and these include the objective of extending dominant influence throughout the world and thus reducing the influence of the other superpower (and also of China). I do not, therefore, wish to underestimate the threat that Soviet involvement in Africa poses for us, but I see this threat as one of exploiting opportunities in a region which is of economic and strategic importance and where there are conflicts to be exploited to Soviet advantage at no very great cost to the Soviet Union. If there can be negotiated political solutions to these conflicts, which clearly have the acceptance of the people concerned in the region, then the ability of the Soviet Union to continue its intervention would be greatly reduced. As long as the divisions continue, the Soviet Union will exploit them for its own ends and will attempt to disrupt efforts to achieve solutions which allow Western influence to be maintained or increased. However, such solutions will not be easy to achieve while the Soviet Union does all it can to encourage certain groups to continue fighting, even though they have no assurance of majority popular support. (I have already referred to this aspect in discussing the guerrilla/terrorist groups.)

The West, on the other hand, has been trying - so far without final success - to achieve negotiated settlements as the best means of preventing the extension of Soviet influence, and in the case of Namibia concerted efforts by the five Western powers were made to achieve this goal. But this is not an easy course, given the deep divisions in the region, and the United States and its allies appear also to be hampered by an unwillingness, or inability, to accept the responsibility of ensuring that plans which they negotiate are then implemented consistently with determination. They possibly fear taking a stand which might involve, or lead to, a military commitment, and they also seem unwilling to risk any disagreement on the part of the African frontline states particularly, because of a fear that, if there is any disagreement, then these states will turn irrevocably to the Soviet Union, with a consequent loss of Western influence and even economic interests in Africa. From the Western point of view this is not a fear which can be lightly dismissed. But there is reason to argue that this fear is exaggerated, given the fact that there is little the Soviet Union can do - or has ever done - to assist African states economically and that threats by African states in the past have seldom resulted in long-term disruption of links with the West. Furthermore, the failure to achieve any settlements at all, with the resulting appearance of Western helplessness, is seriously affecting the credibility of the United States and its partners in Africa - amongst both Blacks and Whites.

In any case, there is little doubt that the East/West competition aggravates the situation and prevents the outside powers from looking objectively at the position in each of the countries concerned and considering firstly the interests of the people of those countries. In these circumstances it would be better if there was no involvement from either the East or the West, but obviously it is now too late to hope for that.

The subject of boycotts and sanctions is one which deserves mention in a consideration of security threats, and I understand that it will be discussed separately later in the programme. I merely wish to mention here that, although there has been much talk about possible further Western involvement in sanctions against South Africa (beyond the measures they are already applying in pursuance of the U.N. arms embargo imposed in November 1977), it is my impression that this question is now being approached very cautiously by the major Western governments. After detailed study, there is growing doubt about whether sanctions can ever be effectively and universally applied and whether in any case there can be any assurance that they would achieve their intended objective (or instead be highly counter-productive). So sanctions may have declined in importance as a possible threat, although it must be added that there can be no certainty on this, especially as far as the Namibian issue at the U.N. is concerned.

A final comment on the East/West subject -- We must remember that Southern Africa is not a region of top priority concern for either the Soviet Union or the United States. The question of strategic nuclear weapons and the European, Middle East and Chinese regions are probably of top concern in their competing global policies.

Conclusion:

Southern Africa at present is faced with the combined effects of these world phenomena, but with an added regional factor, namely the political and ideological differences with neighbour states. In world history the greatest security threats to individual countries have arisen from immediate neighbours, and most wars have arisen between neighbours, sometimes spreading to become wider conflagrations. Such conflicts have usually been perceived as military threats, even if they often arise out of political differences. In South Africa's case (and this applies to Zimbabwe/Rhodesia and South West Africa/Namibia, too) our neighbours pose no ordinary military threat. Such a threat, if posed, could be coped with, provided there were no direct military involvement from major powers on the other side. However, the hostility of these neighbours is part of a wider and real overall threat, as it is linked with the other threatening factors already mentioned. For instance, they give political, diplomatic and

military assistance to the groups which operate from their territories and
which are posing a direct threat to Zimbabwe/Rhodesia and South West Africa/
Namibia, as well as a potential one to South Africa. They also at present
allow the Soviet Union a fairly free hand in extending its influence in the
region and in preventing negotiated settlements, while at the same time they
bring pressure to bear on Western Powers and they use international organisations
- the OAU and the UN - to mobilise support.

However, in spite of the differences, a surprising degree of continuing prac-
tical co-operation on economic and technical levels has been possible between
South Africa and these states, including Mozambique and Zambia. This co-operation
is largely based on the needs of these states, but South Africa's willingness to
co-operate also has benefits for us, and it is the best policy possible at present
to reduce the level of potential threat and even to defuse the differences be-
tween us.

As indicated at the beginning, one can conclude from this attempt to identify
and assess the origins of threats to the security of Southern Africa, that there
is no single source and that we are concerned with various related types of
threats, arising both from the historical development of our internal situation
and from an outside exploitation of these problems. Just as there are various
origins and types of threats, so the means of countering them also have to vary,
but it remains important that these means should be co-ordinated in an effective
national strategy in which no aspect, internal or external, is neglected.

Finally, it must be noted that there is a distinction between a threat to
national security and a threat to an established political and economic system,
or the status quo. Attempts simply to defend the latter against any change
or adaptation would be in vain in today's world and would in fact increase the
level of the threat to our security.