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SOME IMPLICATIONS OF EXTERNAL PRESSURES ON SOUTH AFRICA
(Including Special Reference to the Portuguese Changes)

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A point which needs to be made at the start, perhaps an obvious one, is that the external pressures we are concerned with, are aimed at changing internal policies and practices in South Africa. Many countries face pressures to change their foreign policies, but South Africa is one of the few where these pressures are directed at internal policies almost exclusively. Among these few, South Africa is probably unique in the extent and degree of pressures from outside. I do not intend now to go into the various factors which led to this situation, which include developments in the world at large and in South Africa itself, especially in the period since 1945.

We have to appreciate that this fact, namely that the pressures are directed at changing internal policies, creates a real dilemma for us. No government in the world is inclined to change its internal policies in order to satisfy outside opinions and even pressures. Domestic considerations are very much more important to politicians anywhere, who are not answerable to other governments or outside bodies for their continued political existence. In any case, there is a natural tendency amongst people generally to resist outside pressures, which are usually seen as simply meddlesome interference. It is probably true to say that it is only when the outside pressures link up with effective internal pressures, political or economic, that the former have anything more than a marginal influence for constructive development.

While it is true that a sovereign independent state is not obliged to bow to demands for internal change made from outside, it is clear that we in South Africa cannot simply dismiss these demands and the actions which accompany them. In the first place we cannot do so because isolation is impossible in the modern world; the inter-dependence of states is a growing reality which cannot, for basic material reasons, be ignored.

In the second place - and this is probably more important in our case - these pressures cannot be dismissed, because many of them link up with growing internal pressures within South Africa itself. This makes them directly relevant to the real interests of the politicians and also of the businessmen.

There is no doubt that pressures from various sources and at various levels are increasing at present. This is, of course, balanced by the fact that at the same time South Africa's economic strength is growing. There is, for instance, a greater realisation of the economic and strategic importance

in the world of the nature and extent of our natural resources. This relative strength in the world community enables us to deal with problems, international and domestic, with more confidence, and it perhaps gives us more time than we would otherwise have. But there is the danger that we could as a result be over-confident and not use this time to deal constructively with the issues which need serious attention, including the disturbing factors in our international relations.

We cannot discuss now the vast field of South Africa's external relations, and the many and various pressures being exerted on us. I intend therefore to pick out a few areas which are of special significance at the present time, and in particular some which have the characteristic that they are directly linked with internal pressures which are also building up. An area of great concern to most South Africans at the moment is the dramatic change in the Portuguese picture, and so I shall pay some attention to that. Then it will be necessary to draw some general conclusions about the implications for us within South Africa. But the brief time available only allows for these matters to be dealt with very summarily.

Of the greatest importance to South Africa's external relations - for both economic and political reasons - are its links with the countries of the Western world. For this reason South Africa is compelled to take notice of the attitudes of people in those countries, and more specifically the attitudes and actions of their governments. These governments are thus in a position to exert considerable pressure on South Africa if they choose to do so. At the same time they have economic interests here which they wish to protect, and they have to balance very carefully these interests against interests in the other parts of the world, which may be affected because of hostilities towards South Africa. Where this balancing act becomes most critical, of course, is in Africa. These states are under continuous pressure from Black African states to reduce or even cut relations with White South Africa - and also of course with Rhodesia.

Generally speaking, these countries do not wish to lose influence and their economic interests in either Black or White Africa. But, if they have to make a choice, the outcome is not at all certain, and it should be our aim to see that they do not have to make a choice. The United Kingdom is a particular case in point, where total trade figures are higher for the rest of Africa, + although investment is still greater in South Africa.

As our main trading partner and the country with so many historic and traditional links, the United Kingdom is of special importance to us. But it is a country where considerable internal pressures are building up to force a hardening of attitudes towards South Africa. These pressures come from a variety of sources, such as church groups, universities, trade unions, political parties and so on, and such internal pressures on a government are much more significant than any pressures from outside sources, such as the United Nations and the African states. (This factor of internal pressures on foreign governments with regard to relations with South Africa, is true of other countries, too, to a lesser degree.)

Of special significance in the British case has been the consideration by a parliamentary select committee of the question of wages paid by British companies in South Africa. The report of this committe was issued in March,

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+ Approx. £800m. to £600m. (1972). Total trade with Nigeria alone is roughly half that with South Africa.

and guidelines are being proposed for the companies concerned. Such action by the British Parliament and government would cause considerable resentment and reaction if it were applied to other countries with developing economies. But South Africa is considered in this regard to be "a special case" where pressure of this sort from outside is legitimate. Whatever we may think of this, and whatever the effect of it may be, it indicates the depth and extent of British involvement and concern with South African internal developments.

This British example is only one of a number of efforts directed at the whole area of employment conditions for Black workers in South Africa, efforts originating in many countries and organisations. There is no need for me to dwell at length on this here, but I wish to point out that the importance of this form of pressure is that it is directly connected with the movement which exists among our own business community to work towards greatly improved employment conditions. At the same time, and most important, there is the growing pressure from the Black people themselves on this score. The external pressure in this area, therefore, is but one of the forces working on the present system in South Africa, and as such it can have a positive and constructive influence in a dynamic situation. There can be no argument in principle that improvements in this area are urgently needed, not in order to satisfy outside opinions, but for the healthy development of our own country. The internal needs and pressures will be more important in helping to bring about the changes required, but sometimes the addition of some external pressures can help to push us along a road that hopefully most people here have already chosen.

In case we should be tempted to think that it is only the Labour government in Britain which is seriously trying to bring pressure to bear on South Africa, we must take note of the fact that there are similar influences at play in other western countries, and that even the relatively easy relations with France cannot be taken for granted. In addition, there are signs that Japan, which is of growing importance to us economically, is trying to find ways of loosening ties with South Africa. The reasons for this may not be so much internal influences within Japan, but rather its growing economic interests in the rest of Africa.

I have singled out the area of employment conditions as one where the external pressures for change. + Another obvious area, which I can only mention in passing now, is that of sport. There is no doubt that there are significant changes taking place in our sports policies and practices, and it cannot be denied that external factors have played a part in bringing about these changes - whether one regards our new policies as "multi-national" or "multiracial". But it is also true that there have been internal influences involved, e.g. the progress in certain sports among the Black people and their need to have more real opportunities for competition.

To turn now to the implications of the Portuguese changes, it is clear that there is considerable apprehension among White South Africans about the potential effect of these changes on our position in Southern Africa - particularly as regards Mocambique. Certainly these changes have been more sudden, more dramatic, than almost anyone could have expected. But we should have known that changes of this sort were coming; the signs were there - in Portugal and Mocambique itself. Sooner or later we would have had to face up to them.

It is obviously too early to judge what will happen in Mocambique. Indications may come from the current negotiations in Lusaka between the

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+ The reported proposal of assistance from the European Trade Union movement for Black trade unions, is a further clear example of outside pressure joining growing internal pressure.

Portuguese and Frelimo. But I think it can safely be said that there will be a Black government in Mocambique within the next few years - probably sooner rather than later. This does not mean it will be a Frelimo government, provided the Portuguese maintain their present policy of allowing true self-determination to all the peoples of Mocambique but Frelimo will play a role.

I do not believe that our reaction to the possibility of a Black government should be a negative one. It is rather the threat of long-term instability or anarchy which could give us concern. This could, of course, upset the constructive development of the whole region. But, as Mr. Vorster implied, when he said recently that South Africa had no intention of interfering in any way, and also that the Republic was ready to co-operate with a Black government, instability and anarchy are not the necessary consequences of a Black government. We should at all costs avoid the tendency - which is not uncommon in South Africa - to equate Black rule with instability. There are many more examples of stable governments in Africa than of unstable ones, and in any case one need only look at the situation in Northern Ireland to realise that instability and violent conflict are not confined to areas which we so easily regard as simply "uncivilised". The Government's homelands policy, after all, and its policy towards our neighbour states, is based on the premise that we can live at peace with Black governments, and that political differences need not prevent practical co-operation.

In principle, I believe we have no reason to react negatively to present Portuguese policy, and potentially, if it succeeds, there could be great benefit for us in the long run. We may have the opportunity of co-operating in practical ways with a relative strong Black state on our borders, even if for a time there are political differences, and such mutually beneficial co-operation could greatly improve South Africa's position in Africa generally. This is not simply a naive pipe-dream, because there are good material reasons why Mocambique in the future should continue to maintain co-operative relations with South Africa. There is, for instance, the great importance to both countries of continued traffic through the port of Lourenco Marques. There is the considerable income derived from the export of labour to South Africa. There is the vital new factor of Cabora Bassa, which no future government of Mocambique can neglect if it is at all interested in the development of its peoples. The economic viability of the Cabora Bassa project depends for the foreseeable future on the purchase of power by the Republic, and this project will play a fundamental role in the development of the Zambezi Valley - development which is intended to benefit mainly the Black people of Mocambique - and the exploitation of Mocambique's considerable mineral resources. In this regard one can say that there is much more advantage to Mocambique than to South Africa in the continuation of the Cabora Bassa agreement, because, while South Africa has invested a lot in this project, we are not dependent on the power to be receved from it.

There are doubtless many other factors, too, which militate in favour of co-operation, such as further assistance from government and the private sector, which South Africa could give in the development of Mocambique's resources. I am not simply closing my eyes to the possible difficulties or even dangers in the political field, especially if a government comes to power which is so hostile to white rule in South Africa and Rhodesia that it places political considerations above any thought of practical economic development, and seeks merely confrontation with the South African government. But we have no evidence at present that any meaningful political group in Mocambique is adopting this extreme line - not even Frelimo itself.

It is perhaps pointless to speculate further at this stage about the nature of the eventual government which will emerge. It could perhaps even be

dangerous, because the expression of fears and suspicions could encourage the type of hostility among black Mocambiquans, which we sincerely hope will not develop.

While I have suggested that our approach to the changes in Portuguese policy should be a positive one, I do not mean to imply that there are no consequences for us, and that we can simply sit back and hope for the best. I believe that the changes coming in Mocambique and Angola will have profound effects, not least on our Black population, and that of Rhodesia. A new sense of urgency is therefore required in adjusting our attitudes to the realities of our place in Africa. This should not be seen as a threat, but as an opportunity to be taken while there is still time.

One adjustment to be made, involves the acceptance of the fact (proved in the Portuguese territories and in all other similar cases, including Vietnam) that we cannot rely simply on military strength to maintain our special position in Africa. In the type of conflict with which we are concerned and which many White South Africans seem to feel threatens us, now that the so-called "buffers" on our flanks are being removed, there are in fact no borders. This type of conflict takes place within the country, and the whole population is involved. If there is infiltration of subversive elements (and that can hardly be prevented entirely, with our long frontiers), they can only survive - let alone thrive - if they have the support of the local people. Guerillas cannot succeed without that support.

We should not, therefore, always be looking outside for the causes of our problems or of potential threats in the future. Our concern should be rather to ensure that our own people do not support subversive movements. What this comes down to, is that we have the answers to all these external pressures and threats here in our own country - if we are prepared, in our own long-term interests, to find them, and to make the necessary accommodations.

Some of the answers are to be found in providing better economic opportunities, training and prospects for all our people, and a better life generally, with less restrictions. But these basic requirements are not enough, because, while I do not claim to be able to speak for Black people, I am sure that they do not want always to be simply at the receiving end, accepting those improvements the Whites are willing to grant them - no matter how beneficial these may be in themselves. The Blacks would be very exceptional people indeed, if they did not, like everyone else, wish to determine their own future and have a fair say in the future of their country. In other words, they must have meaningful political rights.

The Whites at present still have all effective political power, and our main political parties have different answers to this question (which they recognise) of sharing power. But the sense of urgency is lacking, and they act as though the timing and degree of change can be controlled indefinitely. Furthermore, we would be very naive if we were to expect the Blacks simply to accept "handouts" even in the political field. They must be parties to decisions regarding future political development, if such decisions are to have a reasonable chance of wide acceptance.

This direction towards meaningful sharing in both the economic and political spheres is the only realistic way in which the serious and growing pressures from outside can be countered. But, much more important, it is the only way in which we can ensure the future security and prosperity of our country. I repeat, this should not be seen as a threat, but rather as a challenge we can

face with confidence and strength, because we have a combination of natural assets and advantages in this region of Africa which probably could not be found anywhere else in the world.

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SOUTH AFRICA: REACHING OUT

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No country can grow in isolation - especially in the modern world - and the harmful effects of isolation can be felt in many areas of national life, such as trade, political thought, science and technology, culture, sport and so on. For South Africa, isolation in the world has been a growing threat for several decades, more serious at certain times of crisis than at other times, but always there as a threat to our international contacts in many fields.

This "international apartheid" affecting South Africa is partly self-imposed by our own insidious system of domestic apartheid, and partly promoted from outside. Whatever the causes of this threatening isolation, however, it tends to create what is often described as a "laager" or "siege" mentality. The tendency towards such a mentality, encouraged by the feeling that we are out of tune with thinking in the rest of the world - or perhaps rather that the rest of the world is out of tune with our thinking - always needs to be strongly resisted for our own good. In this regard, a vital role in opening up and maintaining channels of communication, internally and internationally, is played by Rotary and by other non-governmental organisations, such as the SA Institute of International Affairs. These are organisations which are constantly involved in "reaching out" and establishing links which help to prevent the growth of a laager, siege or verkrampte mentality.

However, this "reaching out" is also necessary in political and inter-governmental affairs, and it may be useful to look back at developments in

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this regard in recent decades, before examining present trends in South Africa's international relationships.

A Rapidly Changing International Environment

The years after World War II saw dramatic changes in the world - economic, technological, social and political - to some of which South Africa found great difficulty in adapting. In particular, as a result of what has happened in Nazi Germany, attention was focussed as never before on the issue of racism, and the protection and promotion of human rights became a matter of international concern, especially in the Western World. In addition, the anti-colonialism movement quickly developed an international momentum which forced the previously dominant colonial powers, mainly of Europe, to withdraw from their colonies in Asia, Africa and the Caribbean region. This withdrawal was largely completed in the surprisingly short period of less than two decades.

Rightly or wrongly, South Africa was left behind in these new and powerful movements of history. Anti-racism and anti-colonialism came together in Africa, and the problem for South Africa was thus more acute. As more African states became independent, so did South Africa and South West Africa appear more isolated in their own continent. Moreover, the increasing number of independent African states developed even greater influence as a group in the world at large. This was particularly noticeable in the United Nations, where South Africa's isolation became clearly demonstrated. Even the Western States, although historically linked to South Africa and with significant economic interests here, were affected by the world opposition to apartheid and became increasingly sensitive about their South African ties.

As the two big splits in the world - between the North and the South and between the East and the West - developed and hardened, South Africa found itself increasingly isolated from any major grouping of countries. Not fully part of the industrialised "North", South Africa did not fit either into the underdeveloped or developing "South" (which came to be known as the Third World). It was also politically unacceptable to this Third World which included all the countries of the rest of Africa. Similarly, while the South African posture was, and has remained, vehemently anti-Communist, and while the

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country was once accepted as part of the West, it gradually became an embarrassment to the West and was, as it were, thrown out of the house. So, we found ourselves ideologically and politically isolated in a region of the world, Southern Africa, where both the North/South and East/West divisions became increasingly relevant and could not be ignored.

The international condemnation and isolation of South Africa have thus resulted as much from the far-reaching changes in the world at large, as from developments within South Africa itself. World attitudes and circumstances changed, while South Africa tried to hold on to its old way of life and political system and to some extent even changed in a direction politically opposite to the direction of world trends. Moreover, divisions within South Africa were aggravated by the changes in the rest of the world, especially in Africa, because, while Whites reacted against what was happening in the rest of our continent, black aspirations and expectations were aroused. This very fact has made the need to reach out across the internal divisions, as well as across the divisions between South Africa and the international community, even greater for the Government, private organisations and individuals.

The 1960 Watershed

1960 proved to be a traumatic year for South Africa : the external and internal factors referred to above converged to cause a serious setback in the country's international position and to let loose new forces within the country itself. On the one hand, it was the peak year of African independence, with 16 newly independent states becoming members of the United Nations in that year alone and with many more to follow in the years immediately ahead. On the other hand, largely as a result of the strong drive for nationalism and independence in the rest of Africa, disturbances broke out within South Africa, which have ever since been associated with the name of Sharpeville. The international spotlight was focussed on South Africa as never before, and for the first time ever the Security Council of the United Nations passed a condemnatory resolution about the country's domestic policies. As a direct consequence, South Africa had to leave the Commonwealth the following year, and the idea of sanctions was introduced, leading to the first U.N. decision in 1963 to impose an arms embargo. Although this embargo was voluntary, it was applied by most countries, except France until 1977 when the embargo became mandatory. The

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economic situation deteriorated, with a large capital outflow, and there were widespread prophesies that South Africa was heading for a revolutionary upheaval. The Government's response was to introduce extensive new security legislation and to ban the existing African Nationalist movements (the ANC and PAC).

So, in the first half of the 1960s, growing isolation seemed to be the dominant characteristic of our position in the world. Existing international links were shrinking fast, and South Africa lost its seat in one international organisation after another. The psychological effect was that the Government and Whites generally seemed to turn in on themselves in a highly defensive attitude, recognising neither the need to adapt internally to changing circumstances nor the need to restore and develop international links. This was the opposite of the attitude very recently expressed by Prime Minister P.W. Botha, when he said : "A Government which does not move with the times becomes embalmed, and we all know what that means." Far from moving with the times, the ideology of apartheid was being set in concrete, intended to be immovable in the face of international and domestic pressures. Now that there is at the present time more of a realisation of the need to "move with the times", the concrete is proving very difficult to break up.

Attempts to Move Outward

However, in the second half of the 1960s there was a change for the better. This period, extending into the early 1970s, saw the development of the so-called "outward movement" initiated by Prime Minister Vorster's Government. This movement was consciously designed to counter the effects of the threatening isolation of South Africa internationally. New diplomatic missions were established in regions of the world - Latin America and Asia - where South Africa had not been represented before, and efforts were made to diversify economic outlets as well. Dialogue in Africa was promoted and there were some notable results, e.g. the establishment of diplomatic relations with Malawi and discussions with leaders of the Ivory Coast and other West African States. There was also a more positive attitude towards the small neighbouring independent black states.

This policy was in considerable contrast to the previous defensive and reactive one. It is worth recalling, because it was an example of South

Africa trying to "reach out " and to build bridges of diplomacy, trade and other contacts. But why were the results nevertheless decidedly limited ? Why, in the end, was there not more progress towards normalising South Africa's international position ? The answer must be found in the same causes which brought about South Africa's isolation in the first place : on the one hand, the world was not standing still and was still undergoing profound changes, resulting in ever-growing demands on South Africa; on the other hand, although there was this attempt to "reach out" internationally, there was no significant sign of attempts to adapt internally to the changing times. Pressures were continuing to build among the majority of the population, who had no effective say in the political system and very little share in the economy.

Moreover, in the Southern African region pressures were building up along our borders - in the Portuguese territories, in Rhodesia and even to some extent in South West Africa. But, in spite of the dramatic changes that had taken place in the rest of Africa, we did not seem to take seriously the possibility that the movements of nationalism, self-determination and independence would soon overthrow also the bastions of white or colonial domination around us in Southern Africa. The existing régimes appeared so strong, especially in the military sense, that there seemed little doubt that they would be able to maintain themselves for many years to come, or that there would at least be time to adjust slowly to the demands of the majorities of the populations in each case.

There were thus limits to the intentions and willingness of those in power to reach out to build the bridges of contact and understanding, which are so necessary, especially in times of rapid change, if the disruptive divisions between peoples are to be reduced. Opportunities were lost in Rhodesia, in Mozambique and Angola, and in South West Africa, to avoid the escalation of conflict and the inevitable polarisation of political extremes.

For South Africa, too, this was a period of lost opportunities. For instance, in 1969 the Central and East African states, meeting in Lusaka, adopted the Lusaka Manifesto, which was probably partly in response to what appeared to be the South African Government's willingness to engage in dialogue. The Lusaka Manifesto did not by any means indicate approval of

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internal South African racial policies, but it did explicitly recognise the rights of Whites as Africans, with a permanent home in South Africa, and it recognised the problems involved in changing the existing political system. It also indicated a willingness on the part of the African states to talk to the South African Government, so as to improve relationships, provided that there was a firm commitment by the Government to move away from apartheid, and it was not required that apartheid should be ended overnight. The Government did not take the Lusaka Manifesto seriously, and instead regarded it as a further uncalled-for attempt to interfere in South Africa's domestic affairs. Looking back now, one can only conclude that this was a lost opportunity to reach out and promote meaningful dialogue on our continent.

1974 and its Aftermath : Negative and Positive Aspects

Then came 1974 - another watershed year - and the dramatic events set in train by the collapse of Portuguese rule in Mozambique and Angola, following the military coup in Lisbon. This development had the most profound impact on the region of Southern Africa: it brought independence to two of our big neighbours, under governments formed from revolutionary movements which had been fighting the Portuguese; it led to an escalation of the war in Rhodesia; it eventually led to a stepping-up of the war in Namibia as well; for South Africans it removed both the physical and psychological barriers to the spread of black nationalism and revolution southwards; and it substantially raised the aspirations and expectations of black people within South Africa.

The upsurge of militancy within South Africa, particularly among young black people, which burst out in the violent disturbances beginning in Soweto in June 1976 and extending into 1977, was not unconnected with the dramatic changes which had taken place in other parts of our region of Africa. The Government's reaction was again, as in the post-Sharpeville period of the early 1960s, to use its extensive security powers to clamp down on what it considered to be dissident movements and individuals. The detentions and bannings which were implemented dramatically on October 19, 1977, caused an uproar internationally, and led directly to the imposition by the United Nations Security Council of a mandatory arms embargo, supported by all members of the Council, including the major Western Powers. We seemed once

again to be plunging into a period of isolation and considerable political uncertainty, both at home and in our relationships externally. The economy also again felt the effects of this negative situation.

However, the response to the dramatic developments in the years from 1974 was different in some respects from that in the first half of the 1960s. In the first place, immediately after the collapse of the Portuguese in 1974, when it became obvious that Mozambique would be ruled by Frelimo, Prime Minister Vorster adopted a pragmatic and realistic attitude towards these developments in Southern Africa. He expressed South Africa's willingness to continue a co-operative relationship with Mozambique, in spite of ideological differences. Most important, he then initiated his policy of détente in Southern Africa, which was specifically designed to head off the danger of escalating conflict in the region. He referred, for instance, to the "consequences too ghastly to contemplate", if the Rhodesian dispute were not settled and if the conflict there were allowed to widen so as to engulf also South Africa. He proceeded to play a more active role in seeking a resolution of the Rhodesian issue.

We cannot go into the details now of this short period of détente in 1974 and 1975, but we can recall that it culminated in the meeting on the Victoria Falls Bridge in August, 1975, between Prime Minister Vorster and President Kaunda, together with the leaders of all the contending parties in Rhodesia. That meeting constituted an attempt by several leaders, including the South African Prime Minister, to reach out and try to break through the barriers of mistrust, in order to resolve one particular issue which posed an immediate threat to peace in the region. It was unfortunately not successful, because of two main reasons : firstly, the Rhodesian problem proved particularly intractable and the war proceeded to escalate; and, secondly, the disastrous war in Angola, in which South Africa became involved, intervened to overshadow all other matters during the next few months. The full story of the Angolan war has not yet been told, and there are no doubt many sides to the story, but there is also no doubt that South Africa's involvement in Angola helped to destroy the few bridges which had been built during the détente period of the previous two years. The disturbances within South Africa during 1976 and 1977 further aggravated the situation and widened the gulf between ourselves and other countries in Southern Africa and further abroad.

So the détente initiatives, important as they were at the time, did not in the end succeed. But at least they did show a different and more flexible South African response to the pressures of events, than had been the case in the past.

Then there was a second difference in approach, which did not emerge immediately, but which developed in response to the internal disturbances and the strong international reaction to them. When Mr. P.W. Botha became Prime Minister in the second half of 1978, he began to enunciate his policy of reform, based on a recognition that the status quo could not simply be maintained at all costs. His phrase "adapt or die" became fashionable, and there is no doubt that there was a new mood abroad in the land. Among many people, in both the white and black communities, there was considerable enthusiasm for this new approach, and it won a positive response abroad, particularly in Western states.

It is not my task now to evaluate the degree of success of this reform policy in the three-and-a-half years since it was first mooted. While there has been reaction to the reform concept from the right, including as a result the recent split in the National Party, there has also been widespread disappointment at the slow pace and limits of the reform policy. But in any case it would be a mistake to look only at government policy and actions in assessing present trends towards a transformation of our society - politically, economically and socially. There are other forces at work within both the white and black sectors of our population, as well as international influences, all contributing to the creation of a changed dynamic situation that is bound to lead - uncertainly, perhaps unpredictably, and not without disturbance - to a transformed order in the country. But, whatever the course and speed of change, it is very important to stress that an improvement in our external relationships is more dependent on this internal transformation than on anything else. Therefore the new internal climate, which has developed since the upheavals in Southern Africa after 1974, constituted a significant difference in our response to the changing times from that of earlier periods of the past few decades. One can only hope that there will be no setback now, as a result of the reaction of those Whites who unrealistically refuse to recognise the signs of the times, and that instead we will be able soon to move ahead with more determination and a clearer sense of direction.

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The third difference in the post-1974 period, as compared with the earlier periods mentioned, has been over the issue of South West Africa/ Namibia. Starting in the détente period of 1974/75, and influenced by the dramatic changes elsewhere in Southern Africa, the South African position on the future of this Territory was re-appraised. Gradually the Government came to the conclusion that this issue, which had been on our international agenda for so long, had to be settled in a way which was internationally acceptable. This meant independence for the Territory, to be achieved through a process in which there would be international involvement, including participation by the United Nations - difficult as this might be. It was on this basis that the "Contact Group" of five Western countries was able to begin negotiations with South Africa early in 1977, soon after the Carter Administration came into office in Washington. The Contact Group was acting for the U.N. Security Council and, after difficult negotiations for more than a year, agreement in principle was reached between all parties involved on a plan for independence, which became embodied in Security Council Resolution 435 of September 1978.

Unfortunately, that plan has still not been implemented, and we have been through an agonising period of ups and downs in the complex, on-going negotiations. There was renewed hope towards the end of last year that a new American initiative by the Reagan Administration would lead to concrete results, and some further progress was made. But now once again there seems to be a stalemate. The war continues and shows signs of escalating and spreading; the so-called internal parties are more divided than ever; political uncertainty is aggravating an already difficult economic situation in Namibia; and the unsettled conflict continues to give the Soviet Union and its allies the opportunity of interfering and extending their influence.

Nevertheless there are still hopeful signs : the South African Government continues to state publicly that it is determined to achieve an internationally acceptable independence for the Territory; Angola still shows clear signs that it wants to have the issue resolved, so that it can try to deal more effectively with its own internal economic and security problems; to this end Angola has also shown a willingness at least to discuss with the Americans conditions for a withdrawal of Cuban troops;

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other Southern African countries are also keen to see the issue resolved, in their own interests, and are thus willing to bring some influence to bear on SWAPO; the envisaged meeting between Prime Minister Botha and President Kaunda may have a positive effect on the Namibian issue, as well as on other Southern African differences; and, finally and most important, the Western Powers are still determined to achieve a settlement in the interests of promoting stability in the region as a whole.

This determination of the major Western States, particularly the United States, is a vitally important factor for South Africa, because our relationships with the West in the immediate future depend to a large extent on a resolution of the Namibian issue. While ultimately developments within South Africa will have the major determining influence on Western attitudes towards us in the future, an early resolution of the Namibian issue will have a very positive effect and promote more constructive communication, particularly with the Americans, in the years immediately ahead. On the other hand, if the Namibian issue is not resolved, we can expect a deterioration in our relationships with the United States and other Western Powers. In this regard, it is interesting to note that the South African Ambassador in Washington recently, in a public address, drew attention to this question. He said, inter alia, after referring to the current American policy of "constructive engagement" :

> "This policy rests on two main pillars : the one is the need to achieve an internationally recognised settlement or modus vivendi in Namibia; the other is the need to demonstrate - to what is conceded to be a sceptical world - that the Reagan approach to South Africa's domestic policies, which is one of curtailment of critical rhetoric and its replacement by private encouragement, is producing dividends in the form of clearly visible evolutionary progress for the less privileged components of the South African population. With respect to both these pillars, 1982 is seen to be a crucial year. If there is to be breakdown on Namibia - if the Namibia locomotive, to use another metaphor, should be derailed - the current Reagan initiative in this field will come under heavy fire, also from this country's traditional allies. If also the evolution of South Africa's domestic policy does not, by the end of 1982, produce observable and registrable changes, here again the Reagan policy will run into heavy weather."

This assessment must be taken seriously, if we value our links with our Western friends and major trading partners. The opportunity for a considerable improvement of the South African position in the world is

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here now; let us hope that we shall not lose this opportunity by further delays in these two areas of such great concern not only to us who live in this region, but also to many people and governments abroad.

Conclusion : The Prospects

South Africa has in many respects changed and has had to adapt in response to both internal and international pressures. The old rigidity has been relaxed in some areas of national life, e.g. in attitudes towards discrimination among many white people, in the removal of some petty apartheid measures, in the extension of economic opportunities and training facilities for Blacks, in the concern about the quality of life in the black urban townships (demonstrated, for instance, in the establishment and development of the Urban Foundation), in labour relations (the one significant area where actual legislation has changed), and in the wider recognition, at least, of the need for constitutional change. Political leaders have played their part, illustrated now in the willingness of the Government to speak openly not only of the urgent need for reform, but even of the need for some degree of sharing of power. The constitutional proposals envisaged do not yet go to the heart of our problems, but they do at least touch the heart of them - and that is an advance.

However, euphoria at this stage would be misplaced and premature, because there are still severe political limits to the extent of this new willingness to reach out to other groups in our population. At the same time the expectations and aspirations - even demands - of Blacks in South Africa have continued to increase at a faster rate than Whites generally, not simply the Government, have been willing or able to repond to effectively. In addition, there is the growing element of reaction among Whites, which may still cause the Government to hesitate or even slow down in the development of its reform plans.

On the Namibian issue, too, there are still frustrating problems. The resolution of this issue obviously does not depend only on the South African Government; there are other parties, including SWAPO, which all contribute to the complexity of the negotiating process. But one of the problems does concern the Government directly, and that is that within government circles and among government supporters and others, there are those who see the

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possibility of an international settlement as a dangerous development. They fear the effects of a possible SWAPO election victory on South Africa's own security, and they believe that a SWAPO Government, backed by the Soviet Union, would pose an immediate threat to South Africa itself.

This is, to my mind, an attitude based on a gross over-simplification, both of SWAPO's position and of the role of the Soviet Union and its allies, especially the Cubans. The example of other countries near to us, where revolutionary movements similar to SWAPO have come to power - especially Zimbabwe and even Angola and Mozambique - show that these movements are often influenced by circumstances to be much more pragmatic than expected. Also, the Soviet Union, while it is always ready to exploit opportunities of conflict to extend its influence and to embarrass the West (e.g. in the present Falkland Islands dispute), becomes much more cautious, when the conflict is settled, about trying to impose its will on the new governments. Moreover, these governments are inclined to assert their own independence and not to become dependent on an outside power, even if that power has been responsible for supplying them with weapons and has given them extensive political support before independence. Zimbabwe is perhaps a special case, where Robert Mugabe's movement, ZANU, never became fully dependent on the Soviet Union for weapons, and where, since independence, the Soviet Union has played hardly any role at all. But in the case of Angola, the MPLA was strongly backed by the Soviet Union, before it took over power in Luanda, and close links have remained since independence. Nevertheless, economically Angola depends more on the operations of Western companies, and the MPLA Government has shown an increasing desire to diversify its economic and diplomatic links, especially towards the Western industrialised countries. At present it is obviously seeking to find ways to normalise its relations with the United States.

In any case, a SWAPO Government - if that should be the result in Namibia - will rule a country which will remain so heavily dependent on South Africa that the South African Government will be able to exercise considerable leverage over any Namibian Government for some time to come. This is not to advocate a SWAPO Government, or to suggest that a SWAPO victory will not create considerable problems for the South African Government. But it is to suggest it would be better to face up realistically to the possibility of

this happening and to prepare to respond in the most effective way, rather than to build up SWAPO as an unacceptable threat in the minds of white South Africans and Namibians. There is no way of ensuring without doubt that SWAPO will not win an election, except by not agreeing to the holding of an election under international supervision at all. And that would mean facing the consequences of the refusal to agree to an international settlement, which consequences would undoubtedly include an escalation of conflict and a deterioration in international relations within Southern Africa and with the West, as already suggested.

This leads to a final point in looking briefly at the prospects. There is a tendency nowadays to ascribe our problems in Namibia and with some of our other neighbours, as well as the threats to internal security from the ANC, to a co-ordinated onslaught from outside, under the direction and control of the Soviet Union. This is a subject in itself, which we cannot go into in detail now. But it must be said here that the known facts do not support this interpretation of the situation. While there is no doubt that the Soviet Union does seek to gain advantage in unstable regions, and to use opportunities of instability and conflict to further its own interests and extend its influence, it is too easy simply to conclude that all those trying to change radically the existing system are puppets of the Soviet Union. More attention needs to be given to identifying the other factors which contribute to the instability and conflict, including the factors which cause widespread disaffection of people within the countries concerned, and then trying to resolve the problems involved, so as to remove the opportunities for Soviet intervention. In South Africa's case this would mean effective and meaningful reform, and in the case of Namibia it would mean a settlement which would allow the majority of the population fairly to determine their own political future.

If we can make progress along these lines, the prospects for the whole region of Southern Africa are very good. Some political and ideological differences will remain, and tensions must be expected to arise between some of the diverse ethnic groups. But, given the wealth of the human and natural resources of the region, the opportunities for development and growth for all its people are immense, provided that co-operation and regional planning can replace conflict and the pursuit of narrow national interests.

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