

SOUTH AFRICA IN THE WORLD

Political and Strategic Realities

SAIIA ARCHIVES

DO NOT REMOVE

Ariston Chambati

John Barratt

Christoph Bertram

With comments by Nic Olivier
John Seiler
Deon Fourie
Frederick Clifford-Vaughan

and a foreword by Gideon Roos

Editor
DENIS VENTER



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FOREWORD

The South African Institute of International Affairs (founded in 1934) performs a constructive and very useful role through its varied activities, which include speakers' meetings, panel discussions, symposia, conferences, research and publications. As a national body with several branches (Witwatersrand, Pretoria, Cape Town, Stellenbosch, Eastern Province, Border, the Transkei and Natal) throughout the Republic, the Institute is able to reach out to all sections of the population.

The object of the Institute is to foster an understanding of international questions and problems among South Africans. Information on and analyses of current international developments are distributed to its corporate and individual members, as well as other organisations throughout South Africa and overseas, by means of various publications. The Institute also has relations with similar bodies in many other countries through the exchange of publications and research material, and through personal contacts.

The SAIIA aims in all its activities to contribute objectively to a wider appreciation of the importance of international affairs generally; to a greater awareness, at home and abroad, of South Africa's role in Africa and the rest of the world; and to an informed interest among the South African public in the development of the Republic's external relations, including the problems and opportunities involved. During the past few years there has been a substantial increase in interest in the work of the Institute, reflecting a wider appreciation of the vital importance of South Africa's international relations and of the very great need for a more informed understanding of international questions generally.

This volume is the product of a symposium organised by the Pretoria Branch of the Institute, the second to be held in Pretoria. The first symposium resulted in a publication in 1974, edited by Denis Venter and entitled *International Relations in Southern Africa*. The Branch is to be heartily congratulated on its initiative in organising these biennial symposia, and it is hoped that other Branches will be able to follow this example in future and thus stimulate the Institute's activities throughout the country.

The Institute, and particularly the Pretoria Branch, is most grateful for the willing co-operation of the University of South Africa which made this symposium possible. We are pleased, too, to acknowledge the generous

support of several South African companies, namely Concorde Leasing Corporation Ltd. (now Concorde Bank Ltd.), S.A. Breweries Ltd., Siemens (Pty.) Ltd. and Total South Africa (Pty.) Ltd. Without their invaluable assistance this undertaking could not have been a success.

Gideon Roos

National Deputy Chairman, SAIIA

PREFACE

The chapters in this volume are based on part of the proceedings of a symposium held in the Senate Hall at the UNISA Building in Pretoria, on 6 and 7 June 1975. The theme of the symposium, which was sponsored by the Pretoria Branch of the South African Institute of International Affairs, was *South Africa in the World : The Realities*, and it took stock of South Africa's relations with Africa and the rest of the world, viewed especially in the light of international monetary, trade, political, strategic and cultural developments affecting this country.

The symposium participants were drawn mainly from within South Africa, although a Black Rhodesian and a British expert on strategy also participated. Among the South Africans participating - White and Black - were representatives from central government departments, homeland governments, universities, research institutions, commercial and industrial firms and other organisations. Participation, therefore, reflected a wide cross-section of political and academic viewpoints, and included scholars, planners, administrators, politicians and business executives.

The contents of this volume do not follow the structure of the symposium itself, as only the political and strategic aspects are covered. The symposium was not convened to reach any concrete conclusions or recommendations, but some of the main concerns and viewpoints, regarding both the problems and opportunities, are reflected in the final chapter of this volume.

The Pretoria Branch of the Institute is most grateful to all those who have contributed to this volume and to all the others who participated in the symposium programme. The Editor wishes to acknowledge with appreciation the assistance received from the staff of the South African Institute of International Affairs in the preparation of this volume for publication.

Denis Venter
Editor

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As the Institute is precluded by its Constitution from itself expressing an opinion on any aspect of international affairs, views expressed in this volume are solely the responsibility of the respective authors.

CHAPTER 1

SOUTH AFRICA IN AFRICAN POLITICS

Ariston Chambati

South Africa's position in African politics can only be analysed in the context of the *outward-looking policy* (the *outward movement*) of the early Sixties, the policy of *dialogue* of the mid-Sixties and early Seventies, and now the policy of *détente*, which has characterized inter-state relations in the Southern Africa region since 23 October, 1974, when Mr. B.J. Vorster called for negotiations among the states within the region. In order to relate South Africa's position in African politics it is necessary to examine the development of the outward movement from dialogue to *détente*.

Objectives of the Outward Movement

To put South Africa's relations with Black Africa into historical perspective it is necessary to trace in broad outline the historical background to the Republic's outward-looking policy. This policy was formulated for the specific purpose of dealing with a new world order that emerged after World War II. It was characterized by the emergence of the Third World which was hostile to South Africa's internal policy, commonly known as *apartheid*. Before the Third World, or the Afro-Asian bloc, established itself as an effective force in international politics, the major thrust of South Africa's foreign policy was *directed at the consolidation and extension of economic, technological and military ties with Western powers; and the Western powers which have mattered in this context are primarily Britain, the United States and France.*¹ As the Afro-Asian bloc established itself at the UN in increasing numerical strength, the Republic discovered that in order to strengthen its ties with the Western powers, it had to project, not only an image of political stability and economic prosperity, but also had to offer an internationally acceptable explanation of its internal policy which was becoming increasingly objectionable to the Third World and the rest of the world community.

1. Spence, J.E., *South African Foreign Policy in Today's World*, South African Institute of International Affairs, Johannesburg, April 1975, p.1.

The outward movement was, therefore, an attempt by policy-makers in Pretoria to achieve friendly relations with Black Africa based on some form of economic and technical co-operation; fields in which South Africa has ample resources and know-how. In this context South African leaders saw a clear connection between the outward movement and the major thrust of South African foreign policy. Professor Spence confirms this point when he says that *there is a clear and direct connection between the policy of the outward movement and the policy of maintaining the best possible relations with the key and critically important Western powers.*² The Republic's thinking in this connection was that as the West became aware of South Africa's fruitful co-operation with other African states, the attitude of the West towards the Republic would improve. In other words, South African leaders recognized that their relations with the rest of the world were largely dependent on their country's relations with Black African states.

The Development of the Outward-Looking Policy

The outward movement, in spite of its continuity, has been adapted to changing circumstances in Africa. The first phase of the policy was characterized by the South African Government's opposition to decolonization. Three years after becoming Prime Minister, Dr. D.F. Malan spoke in the South African Parliament on 16 May, 1951, and warned the British Government that the granting of independence to African colonies would mean that Britain was abandoning its "civilising mission" in Africa and that the white presence would disappear from these territories once independence was granted.³ He nevertheless conceded that the granting of independence to the Gold Coast (Ghana), a development which by 1951 had become obvious, would not only provide impetus to other British colonies to demand similar treatment, but also that the process of decolonization would be accelerated. In time it became quite obvious that decolonization was unavoidable and Dr. Malan sought to come to terms with this inevitability by formulating an Africa policy in which South Africa was to act as a major link between Africa and Europe. Malan's view in this connection was based on the assumption that the new African states would learn to make use of the contribution South Africa could make to their welfare. He was also convinced that because of its position as the most highly industrialized state on the continent, with considerable resources of specialized scientific and technical know-how, South Africa was in a strong position to offer technical assistance to the new nations.

2. *Ibid.*, p.3.

3. Union of South Africa, *House of Assembly Debates*, 16 May, 1951, col. 6819.

Dr. Malan's Africa policy was embodied in his "Charter" which is often called the *Africa Manifesto*. The manifesto contained the following points, namely: that South Africa, the colonial powers and the United Nations should co-operate in safeguarding Africa from foreign influence, especially "Asian infiltration"; an effort had to be made to imbue Africa with the values of Western civilisation; communist infiltration in Africa had to be prevented; and militarisation of the continent had to be avoided. In order to achieve the objectives of the manifesto, Malan sought to establish contacts in Africa and to this end he appointed a former South African High Commissioner in London, Mr. Charles te Water, as South Africa's roving Ambassador in Africa. His dual task was to deal with the criticism of South Africa's internal policy and to improve the image of his country abroad.

Between the period 1948-1957, South Africa was already making attempts to move outward. The two major international organisations in existence at that time through which South Africa sought to achieve her objectives were the Committee for Technical Co-operation South of the Sahara (CCTA) and the Scientific Council for Africa (SCA). South Africa saw these two organisations as appropriate channels through which it could maintain contact in Africa, but it was later forced to withdraw from both.

Successive South African Prime Ministers emphasised the need for co-operation between South Africa and the rest of the continent. By the time Mr. J.G. Strijdom became Prime Minister, the stage for the establishment of an African government in the Gold Coast had been firmly set and the fact that many other colonies would follow the same path had become obvious. Mr. Strijdom stressed the fact that South Africa had to be prepared to co-operate in matters of common concern with all other states which were to be established in Africa south of the Sahara. He declared that *the relationship between South Africa and non-white states in Africa, with their millions of inhabitants, should be one of mutual interested parties in Africa, without hostility towards one another - a relationship of peoples and governments who recognise and respect one another's right of existence.*⁴

Both Mr. Strijdom and Mr. Eric Louw, realized that South Africa's internal policy was an obstacle to future co-operation. The two leaders used the outward policy to demonstrate South Africa's willingness to share its know-how in the fields of technology and science with other African states. Their efforts failed as the new states' hostility towards *apartheid* increased, both in Africa and at the United Nations. South Africa

4. Olivier, G., "South African Foreign Policy", in *South Africa : Government and Politics* (Edited by Denis Worrall), J.L. van Schaik, Pretoria, 1975, p.324.

had no diplomatic representation in Africa and therefore depended upon technical co-operation as the only effective means of bridging the gap caused by the absence of diplomatic ties.

When the Gold Coast achieved independence in 1957, Mr. Stijdom sent a telegram to Dr. Kwame Nkrumah emphasising "the desirability of co-operation in matters of common concern". Mr. Eric Louw pursued the outward policy for many years emphasising the fact that South Africa's success in the field of international relations depended on a number of factors, *inter alia*: the gradual removal of suspicion in Africa about South Africa's internal policy; the acceptance by other African states of South Africa as a fellow African state; and the willingness of South Africa to make an important contribution in dealing with common problems. In 1963 he urged his country to continue its search for friendly relations with Black African states in spite of failures and frustrations and stressed that South Africa would have to strive "to restore good relations with African states".

As African countries gained independence they made their position and attitudes towards South Africa very clear. Thus, in spite of Mr. Strijdom's and Mr. Louw's attempts to establish friendly relations, the African states showed increased hostility towards the Republic, particularly in the wake of the Sharpeville incident of 1960. This hostility of the new nations in Africa and Asia led to South Africa's withdrawal from the Commonwealth in 1961. After Sharpeville and withdrawal from the Commonwealth, South Africa faced increased isolation from the rest of the African continent. The Commonwealth had assumed a new character as defined by a new set of principles. Cardinal among these was that the Commonwealth had to be absolutely non-racial. The new states maintained that there could not be effective co-operation within the Commonwealth if any of the member states did not comply with the principle of absolute racial equality.

Hostility towards the Republic increased and during the period between 1960 and 1967 the outward policy suffered a severe setback. Despite this, South Africa did not stop looking for new opportunities for the pursuit of the outward policy. Dr. H.F. Verwoerd stressed the fact that the Republic felt goodwill towards African states and desired the well-being of all.

Formation of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU)

An important development affecting South Africa's outward movement was the formation of the OAU in 1963. This development provided the African states with a framework within which they could present a united front in their opposition to the Republic's internal policy. In its first resolution on South Africa, the OAU condemned the Republic's outward movement policy and characterized it as "manoeuvres" by which the South African regime sought to weaken the African states.

The adoption of this resolution condemning the Republic, was followed by the imposition of a boycott on South Africa, barring its ships from entering the harbours of any independent Black African state; its aircraft were to be forbidden the use of airspace of these countries; in addition, a "National Liberation Committee" was established for the purpose of training "freedom fighters" to liberate the remaining parts of Africa under colonial rule and domination of white minorities. This was a great blow to the Republic's overtures to African states, because it was forced to go on the defensive. In spite of all this, Dr. Verwoerd did not abandon his efforts to achieve a *détente* with the Black African states, which he saw as the only way to break through the isolation. But, South Africa continued at the same time to adhere to the principle of co-operation without interference in another country's internal affairs, maintaining that *apartheid* was a matter for the Republic alone. Dr. Verwoerd continued to state his country's willingness to aid Black African states, emphasising that such assistance was offered with no strings attached. But, as far as the OAU was concerned, the acceptance of economic aid from South Africa on the basis of non-interference by African states in the internal affairs of the Republic, entailed accepting aid with strings attached. In other words, South Africa demanded that co-operation could only be achieved if the African states committed themselves to non-interference in the Republic's internal affairs and that meant *apartheid* could not be discussed by the OAU. Dr. Verwoerd furthermore saw his policy of separate development as very much in keeping with the principle of self-determination. The problem here is that South African leaders' interpretation of the principle of self-determination was quite different from that of the African leaders and thus, when the two sides talked of self-determination, they were operating on entirely different cognitive maps.

Having been forced out of the CCTA and the CSA, the Republic was left without any direct channels through which it could execute its "outward policy". Its activities in the CCTA and the CSA, the two organisations in which co-operation existed, ceased. South Africa was further barred from participating in the regional activities of a number of organisations, including the UN's Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), and the World Health Organization (WHO). African leaders were aware of the important contribution the Republic could make through its participation in these organisations, but, as one African diplomat put it, "South Africa's presence in these bodies on the basis of *apartheid*, would have been an insult to African people throughout the entire continent". Dr. Verwoerd seemed convinced, nevertheless, that South Africa's ability to provide the right kind of technical assistance to African states, which these states needed so badly, would form the basis for future co-operation, particularly within the Southern African region.

Relations with Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland (the BLS states)

The independence of the BLS states provided an opportunity for the reappraisal and reshaping of policy, in order to project the prevailing circumstances. An important basis for co-operation between the BLS states and the Republic has been the Customs Union which was originally created in 1910 when these territories were still British Protectorates. The new initiative on co-operation in this area included the re-negotiation of the Customs Union agreement carried out in the light of the new independent status assumed by the BLS countries; this re-negotiated agreement came into effect in 1970. Although there had been historical links between the BLS countries and South Africa, when these three territories achieved independence the ties had to be re-examined and reconstituted to reflect their new status.

Vorster's Era and Successes of the Policy

The next phase of the outward policy came into existence when Mr. John Vorster took over after the death of Dr. Verwoerd. He continued to build upon the outward movement, making adaptations when and where circumstances demanded, emphasizing personal contact. Soon after assuming the premiership, Mr. Vorster met the Prime Minister of Lesotho, Chief Leabua Jonathan, shortly after Lesotho had achieved its independence on 4 October, 1966. It was during this period that the term "dialogue" was introduced to characterise the policy. Botswana remained rather lukewarm towards the idea of "dialogue" with South Africa after its independence, but because of its dependence on South Africa, Botswana nevertheless continued to maintain financial, trade and other links with the Republic. President Seretse Khama called on Mr. Vorster in September 1968, after medical treatment in Johannesburg. Swaziland gained its independence on 6 September, 1968 and it was not until 26 March, 1971 that the Prime Minister of Swaziland, Prince Makhosini Dlamini, met Mr. Vorster in Cape Town. As far as South Africa was concerned the three BLS states were now providing a basis for a real "dialogue" based on personal contact. Encouraged by its success in this region, the Republic continued to strengthen the "outward policy", consolidating and expanding a wide range of activities.

Thus, under Mr. Vorster, South Africa was eager to demonstrate through its relations with the BLS countries that friendship and co-operation between Black and White states in Africa was not only possible, but could be achieved in practical terms. The geographical area within which co-operation was being achieved expanded when Dr. Kamuzu Banda, President of Malawi, announced that his country and South Africa were to exchange Ambassadors. On 1 October, 1967, Dr. Banda made a further statement announcing the appointment of Mr. M.P.A. Richardson, Secretary for External

Affairs, as his country's first Ambassador to the Republic. It is important to note that Dr. Banda's historic announcement was followed on 2 October, 1967 by Chief Jonathan's declaration that he was negotiating with South Africa for the establishment of diplomatic relations and "hoped that he would be able to send an Ambassador to the Republic as soon as possible".

Prior to the exchange of diplomats between the two countries, Malawi had, in February, 1967, sent a delegation on an official visit to the Republic consisting of three Cabinet Ministers. The three ministers were Mr. R.J. Kumbweza (Minister of Trade and Industry), Mr. G.W. Kumtumanji (Minister of Natural Resources), and Mr. Aleke Banda (Minister of Development and Planning). During their visit the ministers completed a trade agreement with South Africa to replace that which existed during the time of the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland. Contacts were established further afield in Madagascar in 1967, when an agreement was concluded between the governments of South Africa and that country, providing, *inter alia*, for the introduction of air services between the two countries. By the end of 1967, Mr. Vorster was able to assess the achievements which the outward movement had accomplished and reported that throughout 1967, *good neighbourliness prevailed and friendly relations were maintained throughout with the states - White and Black - bordering upon us. Mutual visits between ourselves, Portugal, Rhodesia, Malawi, Botswana and Lesotho have led to better understanding and greater co-operation to the benefit of all concerned. Of special significance is the example set by South Africa and Malawi, an example which will certainly have great influence in time to come in Africa and in the rest of the world. During the year we had more visits than ever before in our history from important personalities from many countries.*⁵

In addition to establishing such contacts, Mr. Vorster had noted with pleasure the volume of opinion which was *steadily growing, not only that South Africa should be given a chance to prove itself, but that the question was posed more and more whether it is not just possible that South Africa might have found the solution to the one problem, namely the race problem, which the rest of the world has not yet found* In assessing the future in the light of what the policy had already achieved, Mr. Vorster claimed that the past year, *in spite of the official UN attitudes of so many governments, had brought greater understanding for the problems of the Republic and that those governments with whom South Africa had tried to establish closer contact, welcomed our advances and accepted our friendship, even if, as is to be understood,*

5. See *Africa Institute Bulletin*, Vol. VI, No. 2 (March, 1968), Pretoria, p.51.

there were reservations. This understanding will gain in strength in 1968.⁶ With these successes, South Africa pressed on with its "outward movement", which by then became popularly known as "dialogue".

In his assessment of the outward policy, Dr. Hilgard Muller explained that *our policy and actions in respect of the African states are realistic rather than dogmatic.*⁷ He believed that South Africa and its neighbours were establishing a "pattern of co-existence and co-operation" that would be worthy of imitation by others, and stressed that the policy was based on the inherent right of self-determination. Here reference was made specifically to the policy of separate development. The South African Government was convinced that Bantustans or Homelands would eventually be accepted by African states as fulfilling the principle of self-determination. This conviction on the part of the Republic was wrong as the policy of separate development remains to this day very much unacceptable to the African people, both inside and outside South Africa; and indeed, the policy continues to constitute one of the obstacles to South Africa's outward movement.

Inside the Republic the outward policy was questioned, opposed and rejected by the right-wing of the Nationalist Party, otherwise known as the "verkramptes". Dr. Muller assured those who questioned the policy, particularly with reference to the establishment of diplomatic relations with Black African states, saying that his government would not exchange diplomats with an African state, unless the state concerned had proved beyond doubt that it was its desire to promote friendly relations with South Africa and unless such a state subscribed to and practised the recognised principle of non-interference in the affairs of others. He then indicated that the South African Government was busy working on a scheme to establish two suburbs for diplomats, one in Pretoria and one in Cape Town. Dr. Muller further explained that diplomatic suburbs would also ensure that African diplomats were away from the general White public to avoid incidents which would inevitably arise from South Africa's racial policies.

It is important to note South Africa's insistence that establishment of diplomatic relations with the African states would be based on the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of other states. This was not accepted by the African countries, because their point of

6. *Ibid.*, pp. 51-52.

7. Dr. H. Muller, South African Minister of Foreign Affairs (Paper — *The Republic of South Africa in the Changed World* — read at Potchefstroom University on 31 August, 1967).

view has always been that *apartheid* was not an internal matter, as the policy had an international dimension. As far as South Africa is concerned it is on this principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of other states that the Republic rejected the 1969 Lusaka Manifesto, which among other things called for negotiations rather than confrontation in Southern Africa.

The Lusaka Manifesto as a Challenge

The Lusaka Manifesto was a declaration by fourteen East and Central African states which met in Lusaka in April, 1969. The basic principle contained in the Manifesto was the reaffirmation by these states of their belief that *all men are equal, and have equal rights to human dignity and respect, regardless of colour, race, religion or sex.*⁸

With specific reference to South Africa, the Lusaka Manifesto makes a very important point and that is the acceptance by these African states and indeed the OAU as such, that the Republic is an independent African state. The Manifesto declares: *South Africa is itself an independent, sovereign State and a member of the United Nations. It is more highly developed and richer than any other nation in Africa. On every legal basis its internal affairs are a matter exclusively for the people of South Africa. Yet, the purpose of law is people and we assert that the actions of the South African Government are such that the rest of the world has a responsibility to take some action in defence of humanity.*⁹ The Manifesto also stated the views of the fourteen nations on the question of liberation, saying: *On the objectives of liberation ... we can neither surrender nor compromise. We have always preferred, and we still prefer, to achieve it without physical violence. We would prefer to negotiate rather than destroy, to talk rather than kill*¹⁰

The Manifesto was, no doubt, a direct response by the African leaders to South Africa's call for "dialogue" with Black African states. In this context, the Manifesto represented a challenge to South Africa and a test of its sincerity in calling for "dialogue". But, the South African Government rejected the Lusaka Manifesto without much discussion

8. "Lusaka Manifesto on Southern Africa", in *Southern Africa Record* (Number Two), South African Institute of International Affairs, Johannesburg, June 1975, p.1.

9. *Ibid.*, p.6.

10. *Ibid.*, p.3.

of the document and today it is generally agreed in the Republic and elsewhere that the rejection of the Lusaka Manifesto was a serious mistake in terms of the outward policy. It is also important to note that the Manifesto was later adopted as an official document by both the OAU and the UN.

The attitude of the South African Government towards the Lusaka Manifesto made it difficult for the majority of African states to accept the Republic's outward policy. Thus, at the Seventh Summit Conference of East and Central African states at Mogadishu in October 1971, two years after the declaration of the Lusaka Manifesto, these African leaders reformulated their position on the question of dialogue and declared that in view of South Africa's rejection of the Lusaka Manifesto there was *no way left to the liberation of Southern Africa except armed struggle*¹¹ They rejected the policy of "dialogue" advocated by a minority of OAU member states, led by President Houphouet-Boigny of the Ivory Coast and Dr. Busia of Ghana. The policy of dialogue, however, was already being implemented by President Banda of Malawi. Thus in 1970 and 1971, the OAU was engaged in one of the greatest debates on the question of dialogue; a debate which had been provoked by President Boigny when he openly called for dialogue with South Africa. In this venture, he was supported by Dr. Busia and President Banda. The great OAU debate on dialogue ended in June 1971, when the organisation voted against dialogue at its summit conference in Addis Ababa.

As far as the OAU was concerned, dialogue had ceased to be an issue after the Addis Ababa Conference. In South Africa, the issue assumed a very low profile between June, 1971 and April, 1974. It would appear, however, that the South African leaders were at the same time giving serious thought to the next moves. Secret contacts with certain African countries were maintained and the South African Government stressed the need for quiet diplomacy. The outward policy was therefore not abandoned despite setbacks, which included an end to economic ties between South Africa and Madagascar in 1972 when the army took over, replacing the government of President Tsiranana.

Lost Opportunities

In assessing some of the factors that contributed towards the failure of the dialogue initiative, brief reference must be made to what might be called "lost opportunities" — a number of positive initiatives by various African leaders to establish some contact with South Africa. In all these instances, South Africa's response was negative. The first of these opportunities was as far back as 1958, when South Africa was invited to attend

11. "Mogadishu Declaration", in *Southern Africa Record* (Number Three), South African Institute of International Affairs, Johannesburg, October 1975, p.34.

the first Conference of Independent African States in Accra. South Africa turned down the invitation on the grounds that colonial powers, like Britain and France, should also have been invited. Here South Africa chose to identify itself with the colonial powers of Europe and it lost the opportunity to establish contact with African leaders on a personal, as well as at a governmental level. The fact that Dr. Nkrumah invited South Africa to attend this conference was in itself an indication that the African states accepted and recognized that South Africa was an independent African state. The object of the Conference, as stated by Dr. Nkrumah, was to forge "closer links of friendship, brotherhood, co-operation and solidarity". South Africa would not have had an easy time at the Conference; its internal policy would have been subjected to most severe criticism, but it would have had the opportunity for its Prime Minister to defend *apartheid* - after all, South Africa had always maintained that it had nothing to hide.

In 1962, the Nigerian Prime Minister, Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa offered to visit South Africa and to exchange Ambassadors, "in order", as he put it, "to reassure the Afrikaner of the good intentions of the African people". On 11 April 1962, the leader of the Opposition, Sir de Villiers Graaff, raised the question in the South African Parliament and urged the Government to consider Premier Balewa's offer. Mrs. Helen Suzman thought that "it would be sensible" to invite the Nigerian leader, but Dr. Verwoerd refused, saying: *I have met Balewa and have spoken to him privately and at the conference table while in London and tried to get a fair outlook from him on the South African situation My opinion is that he is not a moderate ... with regard to relations between White and Black He is a fanatic in respect of his own cause.*¹² Dr. Verwoerd thought the Nigerian Prime Minister was presumptuous to invite himself to visit South Africa and declared that the Nigerian leader should have waited for an invitation from the Republic. That such an invitation would have been sent to Premier Balewa is of considerable doubt.

Another important move was made by Dr. Kenneth Kaunda of Zambia in 1964, just before his country achieved independence, when he announced at a political rally that his country would be willing to establish diplomatic relations with South Africa, provided Zambian diplomats were treated like any other diplomats. The Republic's response was again negative. Dr. Verwoerd said that because Dr. Kaunda had not used the proper channels, South Africa could not take the Zambian leader seriously and even questioned his intentions. The summary rejection of the Lusaka Manifesto is yet another example of an opportunity that was lost.

12. Republic of South Africa, *House of Assembly Debates*, 11 April, 1962, col. 3758.

In addition to South Africa's negative responses to the positive moves by African leaders, the Republic's internal policy remained anathema to all of Africa. An important factor contributing to the failure of dialogue, perhaps more than anything else, was South Africa's support of the Salisbury Government after UDI in 1965, and by so doing defying UN economic sanctions against Rhodesia. South Africa was seen as standing in the way of the decolonization process in Rhodesia. The Republic's refusal to comply with UN resolutions on South West Africa (Namibia), has further been a complicating factor in South Africa's search for dialogue with Black Africa.

It may be argued that although dialogue ceased to be an issue in most parts of Africa by 1972, it nevertheless remained alive in countries like Malawi, Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland. Apart from diplomatic relations between Malawi and South Africa and the exchange of visits between President Banda and Prime Minister Vorster, the two countries have had considerable economic links and technical assistance programmes in which the Republic participated directly; and this includes aid in building the new capital at Lilongwe. Malawi, not being an immediate neighbour and not being as dependent on South Africa as the three BLS states, remains the only and best example of the success of the outward movement in Africa. The BLS states do not add to the success story of the policy of "dialogue", because most of the links between the BLS countries and the Republic are an unavoidable product of historical, geographical, economic and political factors. It is true that Lesotho, and Swaziland in particular, have since achieving independence made requests to the South African Government for technical assistance of one kind or another. But relations between South Africa and the BLS states have not been all that friendly. Botswana has been making an obvious effort to improve its links with Zambia and move towards the north and away from the south. Relations between Lesotho and South Africa have been difficult, particularly since Lesotho took a hard line against the Republic at the OAU Conference in Dar es Salaam. It is also significant that none of the BLS states has established diplomatic relations with South Africa. This would seem to suggest that despite economic links of one kind or another, all is not well in the region as far as inter-state relations are concerned.

Rhodesia : An Obstacle to Dialogue and Détente

At this point it is appropriate to examine the relations between South Africa and Rhodesia. The Rhodesian issue is of great importance in considering the Republic's relations with Black Africa, because Rhodesia has been one of the main obstacles to dialogue and now to détente. The question to be asked here is why South Africa has continued and still continues to support Rhodesia, thereby making it difficult for the Republic to achieve its objectives in Africa: the normalization of relations with Black Africa.

South Africa's continued support for Rhodesia is indeed based on a number of factors:

Firstly, the historical ties which date back to the time when Rhodes sent the Pioneer Column to occupy Rhodesia.

Secondly, there have always been strong sociological, cultural and ideological ties between the two countries. South Africa has been one of the main, if not the major training ground for Rhodesians, particularly at secondary school, university and other professional levels. The two countries have similar legal systems and a large number of Rhodesian laws, particularly those concerned with the Africans, such as the pass laws, the Land Apportionment Act or the Land Tenure Act, as well as others, are carbon copies of those to be found in the Republic of South Africa. Ideologically, Rhodesia and South Africa are committed to protecting Christianity and the Western way of life against the encroachment of Communism which they see as the number one enemy in the region. In this connection, both countries see themselves as the custodians of the Western way of life in Africa.

A third determinant upon which relations have been based between Rhodesia and South Africa is the geographical factor. Rhodesia has always been seen as a buffer state separating the Republic from the north; therefore Rhodesia, in terms of geopolitics, has always been very important to South Africa.

The fourth factor that has fostered relations between these countries has been trade and other economic links, particularly since UDI, when South Africa replaced Britain as Rhodesia's major trading partner.

In spite of all these strong links between Rhodesia and South Africa, their relations have been somewhat dubious, particularly after UDI, when the Republic was forced to make the choice of supporting Rhodesia in defiance of the UN. Even long before UDI, South Africa was not happy when Rhodesia looked to the north and joined the Central African Federation. There were aspects of the Federation which the South African Government never liked, especially the notion of multi-racialism and the policy of partnership. Therefore relations between the two countries during the days of the Federation were ambivalent as the two countries appeared to be moving in different directions.

Implications of UDI for South Africa's Outward Policy

UDI in 1965 had many disadvantages for South Africa, because the South African Government did not want to appear to be supporting White supremacy outside its own borders. Thus, it was confronted with very

difficult decisions. The Republic found itself having to support Rhodesia for a variety of reasons, some of which have already been outlined. There was also the fact that South Africa could not afford to support UN sanctions, because to have done so would have meant that the Republic was using sanctions against an ally and good neighbour. Furthermore, South Africa could not afford to support the idea of sanctions, a weapon with which it had been threatened itself, and which has been employed by the OAU against it. The Republic's attitude and position towards the Rhodesian situation was that it was a domestic matter concerning Britain and Rhodesia. It declared that it did not believe in boycotts and economic sanctions, nor in any interference in domestic affairs and therefore refused to co-operate with the UN. The Republic found itself in a very unhappy position, in that the South African Government recognised not only the fact that Rhodesia constituted an obstacle to the outward policy, but also the fact that Rhodesia was vulnerable to guerrilla incursions. In 1967, South Africa found itself having to send police forces to assist Rhodesia against guerrilla activity although the given reason was to prevent South African ANC guerrillas from crossing Rhodesia to the Republic. During this period South Africa recognised the fact that normalisation of relations with the African countries, particularly with Zambia, was not possible while the situation in Rhodesia remained unresolved. President Kaunda made this point very clear in his letter to Mr. Vorster in 1968, when he told the South African Prime Minister that it was not possible to reach an understanding between Zambia and South Africa as long as the Republic assisted the "illegal regime". It is thus clear that the South African Government wanted to see the situation in Rhodesia resolved through negotiation, and yet, on the other hand, it was South Africa's actions which made it possible for Rhodesia to succeed in evading sanctions.

Another development which complicated South Africa's position vis-à-vis the Rhodesian issue was the closure of the Zambian border by the Rhodesian Government in January 1973. It became very clear from statements made in South Africa and the reaction of the South African press in general, that the Republic's interests were not necessarily tied-up with those of Rhodesia. It also became obvious that South Africa was very unhappy about the action taken by Rhodesia. After the closure of the border, a number of prominent South Africans began to call upon their government to re-examine and re-assess its attitude towards Rhodesia. The result was that relations with South Africa became an election campaign issue in Rhodesia in 1974. The Rhodesia Party, in its call for a negotiated settlement, pointed out that South Africa was getting tired of constantly having to come to the aid of Rhodesia. Relations between the two countries remains a matter of debate in the Republic.

The most important development, however, that has helped to clarify South Africa's attitude towards Rhodesia, was the coup in Portugal on 25

April, 1974. Most observers of the Southern African political scene agreed immediately that this event would lead to dramatic changes in Southern Africa. But the speed with which events have taken place since the Lisbon coup has been unexpected, because previous analysis of the Southern African situation was based on unchallenged assumptions, such as South Africa's unquestionable support for White rule in Rhodesia. Guerrilla incursions into Rhodesia, particularly since 1972, followed by sustained fighting over a long period of time, must have made South Africa question the wisdom of committing its police forces to Rhodesia. It must have also been obvious to South Africa as to who would eventually win the war. Détente was seen as the only way to avoid confrontation and to promote better future relations in Southern Africa.

Implications of the Coup in Lisbon

After the coup in Portugal, the South African Prime Minister immediately acknowledged that the situation in Mozambique following the coup, would have far-reaching consequences for Southern Africa, and welcomed the possibility of a Frelimo Government there provided such a government was "responsible" and "a good neighbour". The South African Government made it clear that it would do nothing to oppose the transfer of power and that it would seek co-operation with the revolutionary government there. The response of Mozambique's Transitional Government to the South African overtures was positive, thus creating an atmosphere which led to détente between South Africa and Zambia on the Rhodesian issue.

The attitude of the South African Government towards Mozambique should be contrasted with the immediate reaction of the Rhodesian Front Government, which responded to this development by assuring the White population that events in Mozambique, resulting from the coup in Lisbon, did not have any relevance to developments in Rhodesia. The Rhodesian Prime Minister warned that those who believed that developments in Mozambique would influence the situation in Rhodesia were grossly "misreading the situation in Rhodesia". It would appear that Mr. Smith's remarks were also directed towards Mr. Vorster, who had quickly acknowledged that the situation in Mozambique was bound to have profound effects upon developments in this region. Here a clear divergence of views, if not sharp differences, between Mr. Vorster and Mr. Smith becomes apparent, at least judging by the way the two leaders responded to the situation created by the coup in Portugal.

Throughout the remainder of 1974, the South African press - particularly the Afrikaans press - became more and more critical of the Smith Government for its inflexible attitude and for failing to come to terms with the ANC. The press and many leading South Africans, from both the English-speaking and Afrikaans-speaking communities, once again urged the

South African Government to re-assess its position and attitude towards the government in Salisbury.

Emergence of Détente

In his Senate speech on 23 October, 1974, Mr. Vorster declared that Southern Africa had reached the cross-roads, where it had to choose between peace and the escalation of strife. The consequences of the latter choice were easily foreseeable, and *the toll of major confrontation would be too high for Southern Africa to pay.*¹³ President Kaunda responded almost immediately on 26 October, and described Mr. Vorster's policy speech as *the voice of reason for which Africa and the world have waited for many years.*¹⁴ Another landmark in the détente exercise was Mr. Vorster's speech at Nigel on 5 November, 1974, when he said that many would be surprised where South Africa stood on the diplomatic front after six months. This speech indicated a definite commitment to détente.

The first concrete step towards détente, however, was the Lusaka Agreement of December, 1974, reached between the parties to the Rhodesian dispute. The agreement was backed by Zambia and South Africa, the major actors in the region, as well as by Tanzania, Mozambique and Botswana, and set the stage for a constitutional conference between the Rhodesian Government and the unified ANC as the main parties. A number of difficulties, however, immediately arose on both sides, mainly related to the interpretation of the Lusaka Agreement and manoeuvring to obtain the best negotiating position. The result is that Rhodesia, once again, has become the main stumbling block to détente.

Achievements of Détente

The Rhodesian impasse has the twin consequences of focusing world attention on South Africa as the main sanctions-buster, and of almost compelling South Africa to aid Rhodesia economically and militarily. If South Africa were to establish good relations with Mozambique and to normalise relations with Zambia the Rhodesian issue had to be resolved first. President Kaunda made this point clear in his letter to Mr Vorster in April, 1968, when he told the South African Prime Minister that the normalisation of relations between Zambia and South Africa was not possible as long as the Republic continued to support "the illegal regime".

13. "Statement by the South African Prime Minister, the Hon. B.J. Vorster, in the Senate, Cape Town, on 23 October, 1974", in *Southern Africa Record* (Number One), South African Institute of International Affairs, Johannesburg, March, 1975, p.4.
14. "Address by H.E. the President of Zambia, Dr. K.D. Kaunda, on the occasion of the conferment of the degree of LL D. (Honoris causa), University of Zambia, 26 October, 1974", in *Southern Africa Record* (Number Two), *op. cit.*, p.17.

Zambia, for various reasons, has long been recognised in South Africa as a key country in the dialogue venture in the region. Firstly, Zambia has been the home and the major base for the liberation movements, a factor which gave President Kaunda a certain leverage. Secondly, Zambia is a key to détente, because of President Kaunda's position in the OAU, where he is highly respected for his commitment to the liberation of Southern Africa, and for his adherence to the philosophy of *Humanism*. A third factor is that in terms of geopolitics, Zambia occupies a strategic position vis-à-vis Rhodesia, particularly, as far as the liberation movements are concerned. Zambia is, relatively speaking and from an African viewpoint, a strong country in economic and political terms. There is undoubtedly also a community of interest between Zambia and South Africa in seeking a settlement to the Rhodesian problem, including the fact that Zambia faces economic problems which could be alleviated by a solution to the Rhodesian question.

At this point it is important to look at the achievements and progress made in the Southern African region, since the emergence of détente:

- Détente has made dialogue between Zambia and South Africa possible. This is indeed not a small achievement.
- The second achievement was the merging of the three Zimbabwean liberation movements - ZAPU, ZANU and FROLIZI - into one organisation: the ANC. Again, bringing these movements together, particularly ZAPU and ZANU, after a decade of being arch-enemies, is not a minor achievement.
- The third achievement was to get Mr. Smith to agree to release the detained African leaders and to allow them to fly to Zambia, a country with which Rhodesia has been, in effect, at war for a long time, as characterised by the closure of the border with Zambia in January 1973.
- Then there was the Lusaka Agreement between the Rhodesian African leaders and the Rhodesian Government, witnessed by four African Presidents - Kaunda, Nyerere, Khama and Machel. The agreement included, among other things, a ceasefire, although this has since been the subject of differing interpretations by both sides.
- Détente has also destroyed certain mythological conceptions, such as the belief that the chiefs are the true political leaders of the Africans. The fact need not be stressed that the chiefs were conspicuous by their absence at the Lusaka Conference and other subsequent talks.

Given the fact that hostility characterised inter-state relations in the region before détente, these achievements have been both remarkable and dramatic.

Détente and the Rhodesian Issue

In this kind of analysis some questions come to the fore from the picture that seems to be emerging in Southern Africa. The obvious question is whether these achievements are likely to lead to a settlement of the Rhodesian constitutional crisis? It appears very doubtful that a negotiated settlement can be reached in the near future and this pessimism about the possibility of a settlement is based on several factors.

Firstly, Mr. Smith's behaviour after the Lusaka Agreement appears to indicate that he has had second thoughts about that agreement. It is obvious that at the Lusaka talks the question of majority rule must have been discussed as a policy objective of the African leaders. It would further appear that the question to be decided at the constitutional conference was a time-scale during which majority rule would be introduced. Therefore, Mr. Smith's behaviour and pronouncements since the Lusaka Agreement, reaffirming his statement that there would be no majority rule in his lifetime, would seem to be contrary to the spirit of détente. Mr. Smith's behaviour in this regard is obviously at variance with South Africa's objective to achieve stability in the region. It would appear that Mr. Smith's version of the Lusaka declaration was simply an agreement to have a ceasefire as a *quid pro quo* for the release of the detained African leaders, and subsequent to this to hold talks with the ANC leaders for the purpose of finding a solution to the Rhodesian constitutional crisis. In a speech on the settlement issue on 26 May, 1975, Mr. Smith did not only dismiss the idea of majority rule, but also rejected "immediate parity". He said: *The idea of one man one vote, or immediate parity, or handover, or any such change is a non-starter, and the publication of anything like that is completely irresponsible*¹⁵ In view of this statement the possibility of a negotiated settlement in the immediate future is of considerable doubt.

There are factors in the Rhodesian situation which affect the immediate future of détente. There continues to be a difference between the RF and the ANC about the question of a venue for the constitutional conference. The African leaders have insisted that they would like the conference to be held outside Rhodesia, and possibly under the chairmanship of the British Government, thus reducing the Rhodesian issue to the colonial status to which it belongs. For Mr. Smith this is unacceptable, as this would indicate that he is no longer in full command of the situation. This to him would be tantamount to renouncing UDI. The ANC, however, agreed to hold talks with Mr. Smith as preliminary discussions, in order to secure from the Rhodesian Prime Minister an acceptance of the principle of majority rule as a basis for a full-fledged constitutional conference.

15. *Rhodesia Herald* (27 May, 1975).

It would appear that the present Rhodesian Front attitude towards a settlement and its refusal to accept the idea of majority rule is based on certain assumptions. These assumptions include the belief that in the event of a large scale guerrilla war, South Africa would put its full weight behind Rhodesia. Such a development, however, would not be in South Africa's long-term interest, both in the domestic and international spheres, and therefore it would be futile if the Republic were to involve itself on a large scale in a war which it would eventually not be able to win. The American experience in South East Asia may serve as a lesson here.

The second assumption is that the situation in Mozambique, after independence in June 1975, would erupt into inter-tribal fighting, leading to a Congo-like situation, and that such a development would alter the present attitude of the South African Government in favour of the *status quo* in Rhodesia. Even if the situation in Mozambique were to develop in that direction, that would not be in the interest of South Africa, as such a development would invite UN and OAU intervention, the two organisations whose presence in Southern Africa would not be welcome to the Republic.

The third assumption is that the African nationalist leaders would split into warring factions, and in the event of such a development the RF could point out to South Africa the futility of giving power to people who are not ready to govern themselves. There is also the assumption that it is possible to isolate the extremists in the ANC and negotiate with the moderates. As in any political party, there are identifiable factions within the ANC, but it appears that they all agree on the question of majority rule and this goal transcends whatever differences there may exist.

The fourth assumption is that Zambia is engaged in the détente exercise because of its economic difficulties and that Mozambique's food shortage will compel the new Frelimo Government to continue trade links with Rhodesia. This assumption is erroneous, because it overlooks the fact that political realities very often ignore economic considerations. The political realities are that there is a limit to which Zambia can allow itself to negotiate outside the OAU framework. For Mozambique, the political realities would seem to be of overriding importance. The new Mozambique nation, however, is a product of revolutionary effort and therefore continued trade with Rhodesia would be contrary to its revolutionary outlook. It would also mean defying the UN and the OAU. That Mozambique would do so because of economic difficulties seems extremely doubtful.

Inside Rhodesia, détente has failed to produce an atmosphere conducive to mutual trust. Unlike in South Africa, where certain progres-

sive measures have been undertaken in the spirit of détente nothing has happened in Rhodesia. Racial discrimination remains the Rhodesian way of life as ever before.

Consequences of the Failure of Détente

The main obstacles to South Africa's policy of dialogue have been Rhodesia, South West Africa (Namibia) and the Republic's internal policy (*apartheid*). In other words, failure to resolve these issues has made it difficult, if not impossible, to achieve a normalisation of relations between South Africa and the Black African states. Normalisation of relations was the main objective of the policy of dialogue and remains the major goal of the policy of détente. In order to assess what prospects there are for the future of détente, it is therefore necessary to look at these unresolved problems, because the future of détente rests upon their successful resolution.

It is generally agreed that, whereas in the 1960's the Namibian issue appeared insoluble, the gap between South Africa and the United Nations on this question now seems to be narrowing, thus giving hope that a solution may be found in the near future. Such a development would no doubt enhance the chances for the success of détente. South Africa has accepted self-determination for the people of Namibia in principle. For the OAU and the UN, however, self-determination is of cardinal importance in the whole process of decolonization and what remains unresolved between South Africa, the OAU and the UN is an agreement on the nature of the principle of self-determination. The OAU and the UN maintain that self-determination can be achieved only when the people of Namibia as a whole are allowed to decide their own destiny and to evolve the kind of society that reflect their aspirations, desires and ambitions. South Africa, however, sees self-determination in terms of its concept of multinationalism and separate development. SWAPO has also indicated its willingness to co-operate in positive efforts to find a solution to the process of decolonisation in Namibia, and to this end has agreed to assume a low profile by accepting that it is only one of the organisations representing the people of Namibia and not the sole representative. This is one of the positive signs pointing towards the narrowing of the gap on the question of decolonising Namibia.

On the question of *apartheid*, the OAU, while maintaining that *the apartheid regime constitutes a serious threat to international peace and security*¹⁶, recognizes that *apartheid*, despite its international implications, is an internal matter for South Africa. The OAU makes it clear that it opposes *the regime in South Africa not because it is white, but*

16. "Dar es Salaam Declaration on Southern Africa", in *Southern Africa Record* (Number Two), *op. cit.*, p. 42.

*because it rejects and fights against the principle of human equality and national self-determination.*¹⁷ The situation inside South Africa, however, remains far from being resolved despite Mr. Vorster's speech of 5 November, 1974, when he declared that given six months the world would be surprised by the changes that would be initiated from within the Republic. Nevertheless, observers of the South African political scene appear to agree on the following:

- that there are some changes being initiated from within South Africa and that these changes are being carried out in the spirit of détente;
- that there is a general feeling among the majority of the White population of South Africa that change affecting the social and the political status of the Africans must come. Admittedly, the kind of change that must come to improve the status of the African people is not defined or spelt out;
- that there is a general feeling among White South Africans that the "Homeland" policy cannot be rigidly applied if it does not work; in other words the policy is suspect. There are some who go as far as saying that if the policy does not work it would have to be revised completely;
- that there is a great deal of concern in South Africa about the future of the Republic and that this concern manifests itself in the constant debate that is going on in South Africa, both in the press and at conferences and symposia; and
- that both internal and external pressures continue to exert tremendous influence upon the situation inside the Republic. In short, there are some positive moves. These positive moves coupled with the declared intention of the South African Government to end racial discrimination, could help sustain détente leading to meaningful dialogue between South Africa and Black Africa. The Republic's intention to end racial discrimination was clearly articulated by the South African Ambassador to the United Nations when he declared that *discrimination based solely on the colour of a man's skin cannot be defended ...we shall do everything in our power to move away from discrimination based on race or colour.*¹⁸ Some people argue that such statements are mere

17. *Ibid.*, p.41.

18. "Statement by Ambassador R.F. Botha, Permanent Representative of South Africa to the United Nations, in the Security Council on 24 October, 1974", in *Southern Africa Record* (Number One), *op. cit.*, p. 21.

public relations exercises; but, whatever the intentions of the speaker may have been, the declaration has, nevertheless, the dual psychological effect of preparing people for possible change and of actually committing the South African Government to change. In short, political analysts agree that there are indeed some positive moves in South Africa and Africa is watching with great interest the developments taking place there.

The question to be asked is whether these moves are enough to sustain détente. An attempt has been made to analyse two of the obstacles of détente - the Namibian question and *apartheid* - and the conclusion that has emerged is that there are some positive moves being made in these areas and that, if sustained, these could lead to some normalisation of relations, particularly among the states within the Southern African region. The remaining obstacle to be analysed is Rhodesia. With the failure to achieve a settlement in Rhodesia détente is in danger of coming to an end. The consequences of the failure of détente have been graphically described by the South African Prime Minister as being "too ghastly to contemplate". The chances of an agreement being reached between the ANC and the RF Government are, however, remote. Another question to be asked is why would failure to reach a settlement in Rhodesia necessarily mean an end to détente. Failure to reach a settlement would inevitably lead to increased guerrilla activity and South Africa's position is that it will pull out its police forces from Rhodesia only when guerrilla activity ceases. In other words, if guerrilla activity continues and guerrilla warfare increases in intensity, South African police forces (para-military troops) will remain and indeed the logic of the Republic's present position would mean that it would send more reinforcements. In the event of this happening - and all indications at the moment point to the real possibility of such a development - then South Africa will have contributed towards the failure of détente because of its stand on Rhodesia. South Africa is therefore in the invidious position that its stand on the Rhodesian issue, which is characterised by its support for Rhodesia, negates the Republic's objectives in the détente initiatives: the achievement of a normalisation of relations between South Africa and the rest of Africa.

ANC Attitude towards South Africa

The ANC President, Bishop Abel Muzorewa, stated recently that future relations between South Africa and Zimbabwe will depend in the first instance on the Republic's present role in Rhodesia and secondly on what happens inside South Africa to change the situation towards recognition of human rights. The African people of Zimbabwe, and indeed of the rest of the continent, recognise that *in South Africa lies the key to the complete decolonisation of Southern Africa.*¹⁹ If détente fails, the

19. "Dar es Salaam Declaration on Southern Africa", in *Southern Africa Record* (Number Two), *op. cit.*, p.40.

Republic will perhaps have lost the greatest opportunity it has ever had to assist in resolving the problems of Southern Africa peacefully. Thus the Rhodesian situation may make it impossible for South Africa to *contribute its share towards bringing and giving order, development and technical and monetary aid ... to countries in Africa and particularly to those countries which are closer neighbours.*²⁰ Assuming that the analysis is correct, that there is some progress being made in the case of Namibia and in the South African internal situation, Rhodesia then clearly remained the major obstacle to détente. The only way to resolve that situation is for South Africa to reverse its present position on Rhodesia in the interest of détente.

The position the Republic will be in in Africa in the event of the failure of détente over the Rhodesian question, can be summarised as follows:

- South Africa will be seen as supporting White supremacy outside its own borders purely on the grounds of race;
- the Republic will be the only country engaged in economic sanctions-busting and thereby enabling the Smith regime to defy world opinion; and
- South Africa's pronouncements that it adheres to the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of other states will be meaningless, and indeed the Republic will be seen as having colonial and imperialist ambitions.

In conclusion, it is appropriate to ask — given the damage already done to South Africa's external relations, particularly in Africa, by its support for the Rhodesian Government, and allowing for further damage which will result from its continued support — what benefit South Africa thinks is to be gained by this policy? It would be of far greater benefit, in the short-term as well as in the long-term interest of the Republic, to promote speedy and peaceful change in Rhodesia. In this way détente will be salvaged and South Africa will be able to play a positive and constructive role in inter-African affairs.

20. "Statement by the South African Prime Minister, the Hon. B.J. Vorster, in the Senate, Cape Town, on 23 October, 1974", in *Southern Africa Record* (Number One), *op. cit.*, p.4.

CHAPTER 2

SOUTH AFRICA IN WORLD POLITICS

John Barratt

The Changing World Scene

Although there have been profound political and economic changes in the pattern of international relations in recent years, the view of world politics from South Africa seems to be a rather simplistic one. There is, perhaps, still a tendency to see the world in the static mould of the cold war, i.e. a bipolar world in which middle and small powers are either openly aligned with one of the two superpowers, or non-aligned in theory but pro-communist in practice. There is insufficient appreciation of the fact that the world is in the process of dynamic and rapid change, fundamentally affecting the relations between states. South Africa is not isolated from this process of change, and some of its external problems are related directly to the changing situation which at the same time also provides new opportunities.

The first half of the Seventies has seen the end of the dominance of world politics by the two superpowers, for a variety of reasons; and at the same time new initiatives to negotiate issues dividing the Soviet Union and the United States. Although only limited success has so far been achieved in these negotiations, there are no serious indications that the era of détente between the two, which replaced the confrontation of the cold war, is ending. Parallel with détente between the two superpowers, has been détente in relations between the United States and Communist China. Although the results of the increased communication between these two powers, high-lighted by President Nixon's visit to Peking in 1972, have not yet fulfilled the expectations aroused, there is no indication of any American desire to return to the old containment policy towards China, and China is now playing a growing role in the international community.

On the other hand, there are no signs of détente in the relations between China and the Soviet Union, and a major factor in world politics continues to be the competition for influence in the world between these two Communist powers.

Europe and Japan, as major economic powers, have been playing an increasingly independent role in international politics. Although political unity in the European Community is obviously not being achieved as easily and quickly as many hoped, Western Europe has, in the process of grappling with its own particular problems, come to rely less on the United States which has been pre-occupied with internal and external problems of its own. European sensitivities, and even suspicions, about the United States' bilateral negotiations with the Soviet Union, and the tendency of European governments to dissociate themselves from American foreign policy — especially as regards Vietnam and, after October, 1973, also the Middle East — have accentuated the divisions in what used to be known as the Western Alliance, even if this has not yet resulted in a unified European foreign policy.

Japan, too, has found the need to develop its own role in world politics, to match its economic strength, instead of a simple reliance on American protection and on a special relationship with the United States — a relationship which was discovered by the Japanese not to have much substance when the Sino-American rapprochement took place in 1971-72. Japan then had to move quickly to develop its own relations with Mainland China and to improve its relations with the Soviet Union.

While the two superpowers remain completely unchallenged in their overwhelming military strength — and are likely to remain so for the foreseeable future — their ability to use this power to exert their political will has become much more limited, and their authority over their respective client states or satellites has diminished. This is, of course, more evident in respect of the United States than of the Soviet Union.

Under these circumstances the concept of the Third World, which emerged during the bipolar period, has largely lost its political meaning. Regional arrangements and regional powers are now emerging, concerned more with their own problems and less with ideological commitments or world-wide alliances. As Alistair Buchan has pointed out, a "diffusion of power" is occurring within the international system.¹ While the threat of confrontation between the superpowers is thus reduced — by this very diffusion of power — the possibility of local conflicts has increased, and generally the world has *entered a period of such complexity that it makes the clear distinctions of*

1. Buchan, A., *The End of the Post-War Era : A New Balance of World Power*, Weidenfeld and Nicolson, London, 1974, p. 140. //

*the previous quarter century - distortions and myths though they may often have been - seem like the boyhood world of Rousseau's noble savage.*²

To illustrate the complexity further, various other factors now drastically affecting world politics must be added to this brief picture of the changing power pattern in the world.

The energy crisis, which is linked to the wider question of the supply of raw materials, could be considered to fall more appropriately under an economic or financial heading, rather than politics. But, obviously this matter cannot be divorced from international politics in respect of either the causes or the effects of the crisis. The dependence of the industrial countries of the West and also Japan on imported oil, has affected their relations with countries in the developing world; especially those which are suppliers of oil, but also those which are suppliers of other strategic raw materials. As all industrial nations, except possibly the Soviet Union, are net importers of most of the raw materials they require, a new kind of political power is conferred on the suppliers of these materials, which is illustrated, in particular, by the strong position of the OPEC countries — especially the Arab states. This, in turn, has had a negative effect on Israel's relations with the Western countries. Arab influence over other developing countries, including those in Africa, has also increased.

Although South Africa is not a supplier of oil, it is a source of other important raw materials, and this cannot but have a bearing on South Africa's international relations.

The question of international trade, which — in recent decades — has risen dramatically in the scale of priorities for all governments, cannot be divorced from international politics in the contemporary world. This applies also to monetary relations, which have recently become of critical importance. There is of necessity a very close connection between economic, political and security matters, and the changes in the pattern of economic relations thus intimately affect world politics. South Africa, as a growing economic and trading power, is inescapably involved in these changes.

The predominance of economic factors in international relations has induced a much larger degree of interdependence between states, than in the past. Other matters which now also receive priority attention, such as the protection of the environment and the control and use of resources of the sea, add to this growing awareness of interdependence, as they are

2. *Ibid.*, p. 82.

issues which cannot be confined within international boundaries.

The above matters are dealt with on an inter-governmental level and therefore remain truly international. However, the interdependence of countries and peoples is also being cemented by other factors which can more properly be defined as "transnational". These factors include the growing role of the multinational company (MNC) or transnational corporation, which George Ball has argued *is a modern concept evolved to meet the requirements of the modern age, at a time when the nation-state is still rooted in archaic concepts unsympathetic to the needs of our complex world.*³ The role of the MNC is a controversial one, especially where nationalism remains strong, but nevertheless the power of certain big corporations gives them the opportunity to exert great influence in today's world — influence which cuts across national boundaries and which is not in all cases under the full control of governments.

The dissemination of information and ideas, whether of a scientific, social, political, ideological or any other nature, through the mass-media and through faster and more advanced forms of communication, is another important underlying factor strengthening transnationalism and interdependence. The diffusion of ideas, especially those which can influence internal social change, is something which governments may try to control. But experience shows that, even when a government has strong control over the media, the flow of ideas cannot be stopped entirely.

This brief survey of some of the current developments on the changing world scene, affecting international relations — including those of South Africa — is perhaps an over-simplified one, but it serves to indicate at least the complexities and some of the realities of the world in which South Africa has to move. Some of the aforementioned factors affect South Africa directly; others to a lesser extent. But, in any case, it seems necessary to try to avoid simplistic assessments of South Africa's position in a complex world, and — faced with the realities — even to revise some too easily held assumptions.

The Question of South African Isolation

Against this framework of a rapidly changing international system, can it be said that the oft-stated proposition, namely that isolation

3. Quoted in Huntington, S.P., "Transnational Organizations in World Politics", *World Politics*, Vol. 25, No. 3 (April, 1973), pp. 333-368. (Further to this, see Endnote 1).

is the basis of South Africa's position in the world, is true? There is certainly much apparent evidence to support this proposition, especially when one looks at the almost complete absence of diplomatic links with other African states; the acute problems in the United Nations and other international organisations; the almost universal and frequent criticism by other governments, not only in Africa; the arms embargo and lack of any defence alliances; the international sports boycotts; the pressures from private groups in Western countries on companies investing in South Africa; and the unsympathetic press coverage.

All these pressures and threats, which have been steadily increasing over the past two decades or more, are consciously directed at increasing South Africa's isolation. But, what real effect have they had in areas of vital concern? James Barber, in the introduction to his survey of South Africa's foreign policy from 1945 to 1970, states that, while South Africa has faced considerable diplomatic isolation, at the same time she enjoyed one of the fastest economic growth rates in the world. This simply could not have been achieved without extensive international contacts and co-operation. He elaborates: *The contrast between diplomatic and economic contacts calls into question the basis on which South Africa's international relations should be examined. Should we, for example, concentrate on activity at the United Nations, or should we rather examine the flow of trade and investment? Obviously it would be a mistake to concentrate exclusively on one form of contact to the exclusion of all others, and in South Africa's case particular caution must be exercised in accepting too easily that the widely reported, public, diplomatic reactions represent the whole picture.*⁴

Given the importance of international trade in today's world and the need of the industrial countries to secure the supply of scarce raw materials, together with South Africa's economic strength and its wealth of natural resources, it is not surprising that all the efforts in the UN and elsewhere to isolate South Africa in the economic sphere have largely failed. In fact, South Africa's external economic relations have prospered rather than declined, and there is no indication of any change in this trend. Even in Africa, where trade boycotts have been officially maintained by many countries, the amount of trade has been increasing, not only within Southern Africa, but with countries further north — although specific figures in this regard are not available.⁵

4. Barber, J., *South Africa's Foreign Policy, 1945-1970*. Oxford University Press, London, 1973, p. 3.

5. See in this connection, for example, the South African Foreign Minister's statement in Republic of South Africa, *House of Assembly Debates*, 11 September, 1974, col. 2640.

The ability of South Africa to furnish economic and technical assistance and the desire of some African states to be able to trade openly with the Republic, are among the relevant factors influencing the current efforts to settle political differences through communication and negotiation.

Arms embargoes by certain countries, especially the UK and the US, have caused some problems, but they have not prevented South Africa from building up a considerable defence capability. While there are no defence alliances and a minimum of open co-operation with other defence forces, this degree of isolation does not appear to have noticeably weakened South Africa in the sphere of defence.

The expansion of formal diplomatic relations with other states has, to some extent, been limited by UN General Assembly recommendations aimed at isolating South Africa. But, in this regard it is noteworthy that, in spite of numerous UN resolutions, the number of South African diplomatic and consular missions abroad has steadily increased over the years, and it is only in Africa that there has been a containment of some sort. In fact, in no region where South Africa has vital economic links, have diplomatic relations been broken, and in regions where the Republic has been expanding trade relations and forging new links -- such as in Asia and Latin America -- a number of new missions have been opened in recent years.⁶ It would perhaps be true to say that the shortage of qualified personnel has been a greater limiting factor on the growth of South Africa's Foreign Service and its representation abroad, than the efforts of other governments and international organisations to isolate the Republic internationally.

The problems encountered by South Africa in international organisations are of a very real nature, and they have become more acute during the past year or two. South Africa has not been able to participate effectively in United Nations activities for many years, but membership still remains important because of the opportunity it offers for contact and communication, and thus for the resolving of political differences with other states. Furthermore, the termination of UN membership would make membership of other international organisations more vulnerable, in particular that of the Specialised Agencies related to the UN, which deal with technical matters of more direct concern to South Africa. But, even the Republic's exclusion from membership of these organisations would not necessarily mean the isolation of South Africa in the technical

6. For details in this regard, see Barratt, J., "The Department of Foreign Affairs", *South Africa: Government and Politics* (edited by D. Worrall), Second Edition, Van Schaiks, Pretoria, 1975, pp. 332-347.

fields concerned. For example, the Republic has for many years not been able to participate in the activities of the World Health Organization (WHO) and was forced in the early Sixties to withdraw from the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO). But, this has not meant by any means that South Africa has been isolated in the field of medical science, or been detrimentally affected in the development of its agricultural potential. What it has meant, of course, is that the Republic has not been able to contribute to the multilateral efforts in the developing countries, from its know-how and experience in these spheres.

Taking into account the various dimensions of international relations, there is some justification for the conclusion of the Minister of Foreign Affairs in Parliament in September, 1974, that isolation is a threat and in some respects South Africa has been isolated, but that "in most spheres, in the important spheres, attempts (at isolation) have failed". In this regard, Dr. Muller referred to the expansion of international trade and of diplomatic relations, especially in Latin America. He also mentioned, as being positive factors in international relations, the Republic's economy and its advanced technology — with reference, *inter alia*, to the field of nuclear energy.⁷

Dr. Muller may have had domestic political reasons — on this occasion and others — for looking at the bright side of South Africa's international position, in order to counteract Opposition accounts of increasing political isolation. But, the facts he mentioned are real and of growing importance in a world where trade, monetary questions, technological advances, energy problems, scarce natural resources, etc., are matters of increasingly high priority. The rhetoric of critical public statements — official and unofficial — in other countries and in international organisations can be misleading and give an impression of isolation which is, in fact, *sometimes more apparent than real* — as suggested by Jack Spence.⁸

Western Attitudes and the African Context

In none of the Western states — as the more important trading partners — South Africa features high on the list of political priorities. In no case,

7. Republic of South Africa, *House of Assembly Debates, op. cit.*, cols. 2629-2632.

8. Spence, J.E., *South Africa's Foreign Policy in Today's World*, South African Institute of International Affairs, Johannesburg, 1975, p.1.

for instance, has the Republic become anything more than a peripheral issue in election campaigns — with the possible exception of New Zealand.

All Western industrial states are, to a greater or lesser degree, desperately engaged in trying to cope with internal and external problems — economic, monetary, social and political — in a highly unsettled world. They also have no apparent inclination to get directly involved in Southern Africa. In fact, their concern, in their own interests, is that there should be stability in this region. This does not mean that there is, or has been, any specific commitment to South Africa's racial policies as a means of maintaining stability, but there is good reason for Spence's view that South African policy-makers have been able to act on the assumption that *Western élites in both political and economic spheres have been, and still are, essentially supporters of status quo in Southern Africa.*⁹ South African policy has, therefore, been directed at maintaining and strengthening an image of stability and prosperity, because of the importance of the links with Western industrial states. In today's uncertain world there is less reason than ever for these states to change their attitudes, *unless* they are compelled to do so due to a fundamental change in the Southern African sub-system. Such a change, as Spence again points out, *would have to be profound enough significantly to threaten Western political and economic interests in the region.*¹⁰

Lest it should be thought that this conclusion gives grounds for complacency about South Africa's international position, it should hastily be added that efforts are being redoubled in certain quarters to find effective ways of disrupting South Africa's external economic relations, and of reducing links in other areas, such as sport. Of particular importance now, is the possibility that Black African states will press for stronger measures, *inter alia* in the economic sphere, if the current efforts to settle differences in Southern Africa through negotiations fail.

The relevant question at the present time, therefore, is whether the dramatic ending of Portuguese control in Mozambique and Angola is bringing about the fundamental change in the Southern African sub-system which might compel Western powers to alter their perception of the South African situation — in spite of their reluctance to do so in view of other vital pre-occupations. In this regard, South Africa is currently more vulnerable on the issues of Rhodesia and South West Africa than on its own internal policies. The major countries of the West have become increasingly committed to solutions of these problems in terms of African

9. *Ibid.*

10. *Ibid.*

demands. Their resistance to pressures for effective action in the UN and elsewhere, to hasten a settlement of both these issues, is therefore likely to be less strong than on the issue of the South African domestic situation — at least for the time being.

This important question points directly to the basic issue of South Africa's relations with the rest of Africa. This subject cannot, of course, be entirely avoided in the context of this paper, because of its bearing on the Republic's relations with the rest of the world — and in particular with the industrialised countries, which are its main trading partners. African attitudes may not have a high priority in these countries, but the African states collectively *do* have an influence through their numerical strength as a group at the United Nations and in other international organisations related to the UN, as well as in bodies such as the Commonwealth.

Pragmatically, most Western states and Japan would like to maintain relations with both South Africa and the Black African states, and they do not wish to be forced to make a choice in this regard. These governments have for years tried to avoid the impression that they are giving support to the South African Government — hence, their increasingly critical public statements. When they have to take a stand, for instance in refusing to break off trading links or in preventing other extreme action by the United Nations, they obviously find it highly embarrassing. If the Black states increase their pressure and demands, as they appear likely to do if no settlements are reached in Southern Africa, the Republic may well find that its difficulties in the UN and with important Western countries will increase. Already Japan has placed limits on its economic relations with South Africa, against what would seem to be its own economic interests, largely because of the importance it attaches to its position in the United Nations and its reluctance to antagonise the African group there.

The Republic's relations with Africa are therefore the key to better relations with the rest of the world, and it is only through normalising relations in Africa that a deterioration of South Africa's position in the world as a whole will be prevented. The Republic does not have any real dispute with other states outside Africa, and its links in many fields are growing. Even in the UN, the disputes over "apartheid" and South West Africa are basically with other African states; if these disputes can be settled in Africa, they will automatically disappear from the UN agenda. But nevertheless, it is important to appreciate that these disputes, while they last, do affect South Africa's relations with other countries, and in the future they could affect them seriously.

Domestic or International Issue?

The nature of these disputes is relevant, when considering the wider picture of South Africa's political position in the world, to stress that they are a reality with which the Republic has to come to grips. Even though the basic issue in dispute concerns Black/White relations within the Republic, the reality of this cannot be escaped simply by claiming that the situation, being domestic, is not the concern of any other state. The fact is that the issue of relations between Black and White in South Africa has become internationalised, whether or not this fact can be justified in terms of a strict interpretation of traditional international law or of the United Nations Charter. Professor Gerrit Olivier has stated that the entrenchment in international law of a state's jurisdiction over its internal affairs *has proved to be of little or no avail to South Africa ever since the founding of the UN,*¹¹ and he has quoted Professor Joseph Frankel as pointing out that *reaction to Nazi atrocities which Hitler was left free to commit within the sanctuary of his domestic jurisdiction has led to widespread concern with human rights everywhere*¹² Professor Olivier then concluded: *To abrogate this principle of non-interference altogether would obviously be bad policy. But to stand or fall by it as the keystone of our foreign policy ... is totally unrealistic.*¹³

There is a further point in this regard, which is now becoming more relevant, namely that the Government's policy of separate development itself, which involves the creation of new independent states, in effect makes the issue an international one. There is even a growing tendency for this policy to be presented as one of "decolonisation", and there is no doubt that the question of decolonisation became accepted as an international issue long ago, in spite of attempts by the colonial powers in the early years after World War II to protect themselves behind the domestic jurisdiction clause of the UN Charter. In any case, whether separate development is a process of decolonisation or not, the ultimate success of this policy will depend on international recognition of independent Homelands.

11. Olivier, G., "Foreign Policy : A Change Needed", *New Nation*, Vol. 5 No. 9 (April, 1972), p. 17.
12. Frankel, J., *The Making of Foreign Policy*, Oxford University Press, London, 1963, pp. 85-86.
13. Olivier, G., *op cit.*, p. 29.

From Defensive to Positive Policies

What are the consequences of accepting the reality of the internationalisation of the question of Black/White relations in South Africa? It would seem that the first consequence should be a move away from the defensive posture which South Africa has adopted for so long. Attempts to defend the South African position from behind a legalistic shield of domestic jurisdiction have obviously failed, and similarly attempts to justify and explain internal policies, on the basis that other governments and peoples are misinformed or have a distorted view, have not made much headway and are not likely to. The fact is that, even if all the lack of information and distortions that do exist could be corrected, there would still remain basic differences of principle about the policy itself. The governments of neighbouring African states, for instance, are not misinformed about the situation in South Africa; the fact is that they disagree in principle with the South African Government. This dispute over principles cannot be eliminated simply by endless explanations; it can only be ended by radical changes in the facts of the South African situation, thus removing the grounds for disagreement -- which, to be realistic, is not a likely course of events -- or through negotiations in which accommodations can be made on both sides, in order to reduce the area of disagreement and provide for a gradual normalisation of relations.

In 1969 the Prime Minister emphasised the importance of relations with Africa -- as he has done many times since -- and stated: *To the extent that we establish the right relations with Africa, to that extent will our problems diminish in other parts of the world.*¹⁴ In this regard he said further that it was essential that the African states, and others, *must understand the essential nature of separate development.*¹⁵ However, it seems clear that there is no way of simply convincing other African states to accept this policy in theory, and to co-exist with a South African system in which the Government continues to apply the policy -- in the hope that some day in the future it will prove acceptable. There is wide acceptance in Africa of the position that it is for the peoples of South Africa themselves to reach a settlement, without direct interference from outside, but that in the meantime there will be no co-existence which implies acceptance of the "apartheid" system. Instead, efforts will be continued to ostracize or isolate South Africa, as a pressure for change.

14. *South Africa in the World* (Lectures delivered at the Annual General Meeting of the *Suid-Afrikaanse Akademie vir Wetenskap en Kuns*, Pretoria, July 1969), Tafelberg-uitgewers, Cape Town, 1970, p. 102.

15. *Ibid.*, p. 103.

This position is reflected in the Lusaka Manifesto on Southern Africa of April, 1969, the Dar es Salaam Declaration of April, 1975 and statements of African leaders. There are, of course, more extreme positions which envisage military action by African states. The Zambian position on this, reflecting a wide consensus, was stated by its Foreign Minister in Dar es Salaam in April, 1975, when he stated that Zambia would *not take up arms to fight South Africa*.¹⁶ On the other hand, there are a few states which, while not approving of the South African system, are perhaps prepared in effect to coexist with it and engage in "dialogue". Most African states, however, do not accept the terms "dialogue" and "détente", because of the implications of coexistence inherent in these concepts. The Zambian Foreign Minister, for instance, said in Dar es Salaam in April, 1975: *I therefore state categorically, as I have said many times before, that Zambia and her friends have not been engaged in 'dialogue' with South Africa. After all, one can only dialogue with a friend. The term 'détente' is not in our vocabulary.*¹⁷

The discussion with South Africa over the external questions of Rhodesia and South West Africa are seen in a different light and are acknowledged as necessary and productive by Zambia and similarly minded states. This position provides a serious problem for those who wish to see discussions and even serious negotiations take place with other African states over the basic issue dividing South Africa from Africa. It will thus be necessary for certain basic agreed principles to be found, to which there can be an initial commitment on both sides. Principles included in the Lusaka Manifesto could perhaps be taken as a start in this regard.

In the final analysis the problem of normalising relations with the rest of Africa will not be overcome until the internal situation has changed or developed in such a way that there is clear evidence of internal acceptance by South Africa's own Black people, followed then by acceptance in Africa. This obviously cannot, and will not, happen at the stroke of a pen internally, or through any sudden change of attitude externally. It will have to be a developing process of change, with communication and negotiation internally and externally, so that relations can gradually improve. But the differences will certainly not be overcome, if there is insistence that the issue which divides the Republic from the rest of Africa, and which thus affects relations with other states outside Africa, is a purely domestic one about which other governments have no right to be concerned. To insist defensively on that position is to fly in the face of the realities.

16. *Southern Africa Record* (Number Two), South African Institute of International Affairs, Johannesburg, June 1975, p. 34.

17. *Ibid.*, p. 31.

If, then, there is a willingness to discuss and even negotiate with other governments over this basic dividing issue -- and it seems this point may have been reached -- it has to be accepted that accommodation and even concessions may well be necessary. It can never be expected in negotiations that all the "give" will be on one side only. However, such a willingness to negotiate realistically should not be confused with appeasement. Negotiations do imply the need for compromise, but at the same time both sides in negotiations can expect to gain from them, and in South Africa's case there is a great deal to be gained from successful negotiations with fellow African states, even if this means agreeing to changes which they require in return.

A positive policy of this nature would no doubt have an immediate healthy effect on the Republic's relations with countries elsewhere in the world, as has already happened as a result of South African initiatives to seek negotiated settlements of the Rhodesian and South West African questions. Such a positive policy would make it unnecessary to engage in extensive propaganda campaigns in Western countries, which, however they are dressed up, are simply evidence of a defensive posture. In this regard, it does not help at all to point to other countries where living conditions may be worse than in South Africa, because this is simply another form of the defensive policy, and once again it avoids the real issue, which is the dispute within Africa over the principles involved, as well as the hard facts of the situation. Gimmickry in external relations, efforts to achieve short-term propaganda gains, and concentration on the question of South Africa's "image" abroad, do not go anywhere near the root of the problem. At best they can merely serve as palliatives, while there is always the danger they will be seen as "cover-up" attempts.

There is another problem with a defensive campaign in Western countries. South Africa's isolation in the world is generally more apparent than real, and in a world where trade, monetary problems, resources, technology, etc., are of vital concern, the Republic's external links have been growing in several directions. The apparent isolation of South Africa is due to the prominence given to political issues in the media and in official statements of other governments, but this situation is considerably aggravated by any highlighting of the divisive political issue in South African official and non-official external propaganda. The fact is that governments will not be influenced in this way, and it is they which decide on policy towards the Republic, because the public in these countries is, generally speaking, indifferent. A minor illustration of this appeared in a recent report of an attempt by a conservative American Senator to defend South Africa in the Senate Chamber. The report stated that, when he started speaking, *about half the Senate members stirred restlessly in their seats before heading for the lounges.*¹⁸

18. *To the Point* (Johannesburg), 30 May, 1975.

Confidence and Independence : A Regional Role

A further point about a defensive type of external policy is that it appears to demonstrate a lack of confidence, whereas in fact South Africa today has reason for considerable confidence in its external relations generally, on the basis of its strong economic position, its rich endowment of natural resources, its growing self-sufficiency in energy requirements, etc.

There are reasons for confidence, too, in South Africa's military and strategic position in the world. Again it is relevant to mention it here, because the attempts to convince the West of the Republic's strategic importance have generally been based on a rather negative and unsubtle approach. The stress, for instance, has often been on anti-Communism, which frankly has no wide appeal in today's post-bipolar world. There has also been a tendency to concentrate on and exaggerate potential threats. Instead of this negative approach, which tends to draw attention to political weaknesses, a more positive and realistic approach is needed, which takes into account the realities of a changing world situation, and which sees South Africa more in a regional role, as a stabilising factor in the region, rather than as a mere link in a worldwide Western defence network. The Republic must, in other words, get away from the thinking of the "cold war", with its defence of the *status quo*, and rather accept that the world is changing and that South Africa's role in it is changing accordingly.

This desire to be linked to a Western defence system, and the countless statements over the years, almost pleading for recognition as a valuable anti-Communist ally, illustrate what has been the main thrust of South African foreign policy since World War II, namely to maintain strong links with the West, particularly the United States, Britain and France. There have been good reasons for this policy, such as trade, but it has in the past been linked to a wider philosophy which has perceived of the Republic as part of the so-called Western world — or the "free world", as it is still sometimes described in "cold war" terminology. There was in the past also an inclination to describe white South Africans as part of the "civilised world", although this term, with its implications, wisely seems to have been dropped in South Africa — but not yet in Rhodesia.

South Africa's links with the metropolitan powers in colonial times prevented identification with Africa and gave strength to the idea of South Africa as an "outpost of Western civilisation". Then, as the colonial powers withdrew from Africa, South Africans were forced to begin to come to terms with their real position as part of this continent, and there was an attempt to define the country's role as a "bridge" between Africa and the West. This was spelt out particularly by the former

Foreign Minister, Mr. Eric Louw, in the late Fifties, but it was a concept which made no impression anywhere outside this country, and it was clearly motivated by the desire to have South Africa seen by the West as an outpost and as a bulwark against the potential spread of Communism in Africa. It was also indicative of a strong reluctance to accept the changes taking place in Africa, and also of opposition to Black nationalism. This set the Whites of South Africa against both the metropolitan powers, whose policy it was to withdraw from their colonies, and the African nationalists who were striving for independence. Under the circumstances, the claim of some Afrikaner nationalists to have been the first anti-imperialists of Africa sound rather hollow.

However, South African official attitudes have evolved during the Sixties and early Seventies, beginning under Dr. H.F. Verwoerd and then more clearly under Mr. B.J. Vorster, so that there is now a clear willingness on the Republic's part - officially at least - to see itself first of all as an African State with a role in Africa.¹⁹ This change of attitude has been met by an open recognition on the part of Black African states that South Africa is an independent African state and that the Whites are fully African. This was spelt out in the Lusaka Manifesto on Southern Africa, and in many statements of African leaders since then. It is doubtful, however, whether this perception of the Republic as fully committed to Africa in the first place, has yet permeated very far in the thinking of Whites in general, who are perhaps still inclined to view themselves as an appendage of Europe.

It is also doubtful whether the consequences have been fully appreciated even in official thinking, in regard, for instance, to South Africa's political relations with countries outside Africa. The time has surely come to recognise realistically that the Republic is not part of any Western grouping of states - if such a single grouping even exists any longer in the fluid state of world politics - and that South Africa now has a character of its own, which should be expressed in a fully independent foreign policy. In a world where the bipolar alignment of states has broken down, and where there is a stronger tendency for regional groupings to develop, the Republic has every reason to see itself as a regional power, with its primary role in Africa. In establishing its links with other regions and with major world powers, South Africa would then frame its policies on the basis of its own interests and those of its region, rather

19. See the Prime Minister's Nigel Speech in *Southern Africa Record* (Number One), South African Institute of International Affairs, Johannesburg, March 1975, p. 43; see also a report on a speech by the Minister of Mines, of Immigration and of Sport and Recreation, Dr. P.G.J. Koornhof in *Beeld* (Johannesburg), 2 June 1975.

than attempting to keep itself aligned with a particular group elsewhere in the world, or with a particular major power.

In the bipolar world, when the two super-powers still dominated world politics, the policy of seeking shelter under the United States nuclear umbrella was perhaps unavoidable. But now, with other centres of power growing and world politics becoming more flexible, this is no longer the case. In any event, there is no guarantee for South Africa of United States or West European protection against any threat to its security. Such protection would presumably only be given, if these powers felt that this region was vital for their own security, so that a commitment to its defence could be made in their own national interests. This is not the case at present, and the Republic has to face that fact realistically, and act accordingly.

This suggestion that South Africa should increasingly see itself as a regional power, unaligned with any major world power, is based on the facts of the situation and the indication that official attitudes have been tending in that direction for several years, as reflected in the efforts since the late Sixties to diversify economic and political links away from the concentration on Europe and North America, towards both Latin America and Asia; and more especially as reflected in the current policy of communication and negotiation in Africa. South Africa has come a long way since Dr. D.F. Malan's Election Manifesto in 1948, when the assurance was given that, should Russian aggression lead to war, *we will not remain neutral ... our sympathy will be on the side of the anti-Communist countries, and if it is sought and practicable, our active support as well.*²⁰ Two decades later, in 1968, after the United Kingdom had imposed its arms embargo on the Republic, Dr. Hilgard Muller commented in the House of Assembly: *It is no wonder that many South Africans are beginning to ask themselves whether it is in South Africa's interests to stand unconditionally by the West at all times.*²¹

There have been other voices raised, too, suggesting that South Africa should declare itself to be neutral in the struggle between the West and Communism, but these have all generally been a reflection of resentment at the refusal of Western countries to recognise the Republic as a valuable ally, rather than a positive and realistic appreciation of the realities and of South Africa's opportunities as an unaligned, regional power; and the Government has continued to maintain its

20. Quoted in Cockram, G-M., *Vorster's Foreign Policy*, Academica, Pretoria, 1970, p. 81.

21. Quoted in *Ibid.*

vehement public stand against the Communist powers. Whether or not there was any justification for the reluctance of Western countries in the past to associate themselves too closely, politically or militarily, with the Republic, there no longer seems to be any need for South Africa to commit itself in advance, as it were, to any particular powers or to align itself with any particular group, except when special circumstances and its own interests so dictate.

Conclusion

An attempt has been made to deal with some of the factors in South Africa's external relations in the light of the political realities of a changing world situation. Looking at the present position of the Republic in the world and the trends for the future, it seems necessary, in particular, to take into account the country's developing external relations *as a whole*, and to appreciate that certain political constraints, which are perhaps the most obvious, do not by any means constitute the whole picture. Political isolation, which is a reality, does not mean that isolation is the most crucial factor in South Africa's international relations, when other vital factors, such as trade, are taken into consideration.

Nevertheless, the factor of isolation, especially in Africa, is important, and it can affect wider relationships in the world. It is, therefore, essential that South Africans come to grips with the basic issue in the political dispute with Africa; an issue which has, in fact, become international, whatever may be thought about the legalities. The recognition now of South Africa's potential role in Africa and of the realities of relations with the so-called Western world, of which for so long South Africans have assumed themselves to be part, could be the beginning of a healthier, more realistic view of the Republic's position in the world as a whole, namely as a regional power with a distinctive African character.

Needless to say, for this view to become a reality in the years ahead, political differences in Africa must at least be drastically reduced. A great deal depends, therefore, on the current process of communication and negotiations with other African states.

ENDNOTE

In this article Huntington also deals with other "transnational organizations" which operate across international boundaries "in relative disregard of those boundaries" (p. 333). He concludes that *today the revolutionary organizations in world politics are not the national or international organizations which have been part of the nation-state system, but rather the transnational organizations which have developed alongside, but outside, that system, and that in the immediate future a central focus of world politics will be on the co-existence of and interaction between transnational organizations and the nation-state* (p. 368). He does also point out, however, that "predictions of the death of the nation-state are premature" (p. 363).

CHAPTER 3

SOUTH AFRICA IN THE WORLD STRATEGIC SITUATION

Christoph Bertz

Introduction : Uncertainties of Definition

"Strategic significance" is a term often used but seldom defined. In a recent article on South Africa, one analyst simply summed up the number of tankers that pass the Cape of Good Hope and the degree of European dependence on oil imports, pointed to the number of Soviet naval vessels in the Indian Ocean and deduced from all this that South Africa holds a strategic position of capital importance.

This is quite a common approach to strategic analysis, but clearly an imperfect one. For one, the strategic situation is not static, but undergoes constant change — Portugal's withdrawal from Africa after the military coup in April, 1974, was one of the more obvious examples of change. Second, strategic relevance and significance cannot be measured by the number of vessels passing the Cape, or by the degree of dependencies of industrialized countries on oil-imports; numbers do not say much about the security importance attached to them. Third, the strategic outlook is determined by interests and the perception of interests which are different from country to country; for South Africans, the security of South Africa is obviously much more central than it is to West Europeans, or Americans or Russians, or other Africans. Finally, in international politics it is often more important what people and governments believe the facts to be than what they really are, and these subjective interpretations of reality can change in spite of "objective factors" — take, for instance, the widely-held view in Europe that the risk of a Soviet attack against NATO is relatively small at present, although the military power of the Soviet Union today is much superior to that which existed when this threat was first formulated.

1. Allbert, J-F., *L'Afrique du Sud à la croisee des chemins*, Revue de Defence Nationale (Mai, 1975), pp. 65-67.

Positions of strategic interest must, therefore, be assessed against a moving background. They are clearly different in the event of war or international crisis than in times of peace, and the art of predicting, in peace-time, what may or may not become strategically significant is a difficult one. Often "strategic significance" is the result of a historical accident or symbolism. Laos, Cambodia and Vietnam were not central to American security concerns as such; they became the focus of a major protracted and costly war, because successive American governments thought that a defeat in South East Asia would have profound global implications — on the rivalry with Communist powers, the effect on other alliances more important to US security interests, and such intangible factors as the "image" of the United States in the world. If for some reason or other a particular piece of land or sea becomes an issue of dispute between major powers, it will for this reason alone, not for any inherent characteristics, become strategically significant. But, in the absence of dispute and war, strategic relevance is often difficult to pin down. A major war between Black and White in Africa would be of primary importance for the world strategic situation, if only because the polarisation of the racial question would not be limited to the region: the United States with its large Black population, the Soviet Union, China, the oil-producing countries — all the major powers would become involved; military, economic, strategic interests would be at stake and the repercussions would be world-wide. In the absence of war, however, and particularly at a time when moves towards African détente hold some hopes for making military confrontation even less probable, the strategic significance of South Africa would be much reduced, if not peripheral. What is more, this may be the best basis from which regional accommodation can be achieved: for a non-world power, strategic significance should not be a cause for pride but for concern. The more strategically significant an area, the stronger will be the pressure from outside powers and the less likely the ability of indigenous control of events.

What follows from this brief discussion, is that "strategic significance" can be defined only in the over-all context of world security trends, prevailing moods and expectations, and interests as they are perceived. The first part of this paper will try to analyse these factors as they present themselves today and consider their implications for South Africa: how will the world strategic situation affect South Africa? The second part will ask the question in reverse: how will events in South Africa affect the world?

I. Trends in International Security

The wide range of trends and currents shaping the international environment of security today can perhaps be divided into two categories:

a move towards flexibility to deal with the uncertainties of international politics, and the emergence of a number of functional factors of security, from the new significance of the oceans and the impact of new technologies on the importance of raw materials and access to them.

Flexibility

Today, the international system has lost that element of predictability which, in retrospect, seemed to be its major characteristic in the 1950's and 1960's. Then, it was East-West centred, with more or less clearly defined spheres of interest, when Soviet-American competition seemed to be the major pattern of international security. It was the time when terms of physics were believed to have relevance to policy: asymmetries were definable because people believed in a bi-polar structure; vacua once created had to be filled again; balances were clear because there were only two weights to be measured, that of the Soviet Union and that of the United States. It was possible, although even then simplistic, to equal "communist" with pro-Soviet. The typical instruments of foreign and security policy of the time reflected this: that alliances, treaties, commitments were the major tools for structuring the international community.

Today, the situation has changed, or rather, it is perceived to have changed. There was no one single watershed when the old system disappeared and the new one emerged; indeed it is quite impossible to define the new situation of fluidity and unpredictability even by so vague a term as "system". What did happen was a series of often unconnected events which changed the way in which states interpreted their interests: the emergence of strategic nuclear parity between the two super-powers; the Sino-Soviet rift which meant that communism ceased to be uniform; the assertion of other kinds of power, such as oil; greater readiness to search for common interests rather than to define international politics as a zero-sum-game where one side's loss was automatically seen as the other side's gain; and the realization of the limits of power, most vividly demonstrated in America's Vietnam fiasco.

The consequences, still only visible in an embryonic state, are three. First, it has become more difficult to define clearly what really matters in strategic terms. Does it matter, for instance, if the United States has less, or less-powerful strategic launchers than the Soviet Union? Both sides have enough for the secure second-strike forces that constitute, according to traditional strategic analysis, the essence of deterrence. But, some — like the former US Secretary of Defence James Schlesinger — argue that disparities in strategic forces

are politically important, because the United States could — wrongly — be seen by other governments to be militarily weaker. Yet, this cannot mean that in future American force planners will have to base their programmes on the mistaken views of others, rather than on the analysis of the number of targets they must cover, the vulnerability of their own forces to a first Soviet strike, or the possibilities offered by new technologies. Does it really matter if the North Vietnamese take control in Indochina? Some — like the US Secretary of State Henry Kissinger — would argue that it affects the trust that other allies put into America's security commitments around the world. But, this would particularly be so if the United States itself believes that its alliances with Europe, or Japan, or South Korea are in the same league as the undertakings given to the former rulers of South Vietnam. Does it matter that the Soviet Union has expanded its naval forces over the past ten years? It is by no means certain that its capabilities will in any significant way be larger than those of the United States, and it is no easy thing to translate naval power into political influence or even into adequate means of local crisis control. Finally, does it really matter if oil prices were to be further increased? The economies of the industrialized world have somehow coped with a five-fold increase over the past 18 months and are still suffering from the effect — but would it affect the essence of their security?

This uncertainty over what really matters, what really threatens security today, means that there are often no absolute yardsticks to measure gains and losses. Consequently, there are doubts in all countries whether it is worth the effort to procure gains and to avoid losses. Physical presence and control, and access to raw materials remain highly important in strategic terms. It seems clear, to judge by historical experience rather than political analysis, that a cumulation of setbacks will matter; it will affect political confidence, will undermine, if nothing is done, the ability for adequate response, and produce a general turning back from international involvement. But, it is difficult to judge where the line must be drawn between the failure of policies and the risk for security.

As a result, and this is the second consequence, the major powers have started to hedge against uncertainties by developing a range of options to meet contingencies. In the seemingly tidy world of the past two decades, the responses to security risks were well defined. Today, uncertainty of reaction has become a major element of deterrence. With it goes a reluctance to be tied to pre-determined responses. Flexibility, already visible in the first pronouncements of the Nixon Doctrine, has become the catchword for the new era. This affects not only the relationship between the two super-powers, but no less their attitude to

new alignments and alliances, as well as to their traditional alliances. The United States will want to preserve some freedom of action even in the Atlantic Alliance, feeling that this is necessary to meet unforeseen contingencies. The Soviet Union has always enjoyed this in the Warsaw Pact, but it too seems reluctant to allow new allies — like India, or Egypt — to determine Soviet policy reaction. The quest for flexibility and options tends to centralize security decisions even in traditional alliances like NATO, and to make alliances less central a means for structuring international security relations.

The third consequence from the state of uncertainty is that security becomes divisible. It was one of the basic American, and Western concepts of international security that crises and conflicts around the world were closely linked, that Europe was defended in Korea, or Berlin in the Cuban missile crisis, and even perhaps that a threat to South Africa would be a threat to other Western countries. Today, some conflicts still have world-wide repercussions. A major strategic confrontation between the United States and the Soviet Union in the Middle East could scarcely be limited to the region, nor could a new outbreak of war in the Middle East, since the imposition of a new oil embargo could affect the whole of the industrialized world and emotions could not be regionalized. But, these are exceptions to the rule and even if war should break out in those sensitive areas, one major device of conflict management which the major powers would quickly resort to would be an attempt to localise the conflict to keep it from getting out of control. The same attitude would prevail for other areas, less symbolic and less sensitive, and for lesser powers — witness the deliberate attempt by West European governments not to be drawn into the 1973 Middle East War, or the policy of Asian countries to stay out of the Vietnam conflict. The divisibility of security does not contradict the fact of increasing international interdependence; it is precisely the concern over interdependence — the limitless consequences of unrestrained conflict for the whole web of international intercourse — that makes governments wish to stay aloof from the wars of others.

This does not mean that no country will come to the help of another in an emergency. But, this will depend not so much on formal defence arrangements; it will depend rather on a perceived communality of interests. That is why the fears about American isolationism, expressed at times among America's traditional allies, seem unfounded. The leading country in the Western world will not act against its own interests as it sees them, and when it feels its own security — in terms of its political role in the world, not just in military terms — at stake over the security of an ally, it will provide support and protection. But, interests will be more closely scrutinized now than in the past, and American support for a

government that fails to maintain control over its own country and becomes involved in a civil war is increasingly unlikely. That lesson from Vietnam will stick: the United States must not be drawn into a situation where they have to support a government whose domestic base of authority has eroded.

If the diplomatic instruments of the past two decades were treaties and alliances, those of the period of fluidity and flexibility will be unilateral actions, perhaps a greater effort to translate military power into precise political influence in a particular crisis, and large multilateral negotiations where the process is often more important than the result — not least because the complexity of the issues defies rapid results. Whether on the proliferation of nuclear weapons, the energy crisis, the Law of the Sea, the food crisis or arms control, long drawn out negotiations are the most likely form of co-operative governmental action, designed to monitor relationships, to manage crises, to maintain dialogue — it often is a cumbersome instrument, which also entails the risk that it might be used as a forum for propaganda or an alibi for inaction.

What does this imply for South Africa? Firstly, grand designs like a South Atlantic Treaty Organization, if they were ever taken seriously, are now quite obsolete. Even if there were no reservations about apartheid, no major Western country would be likely to seek a security alliance with the Republic. South African ambitions to be "the bastion of the Free World" or "the aircraft carrier of the Free World", if they should still be nourished, will fail to solicit any serious response. This could, of course, change at times of severe international crisis or a major East-West war, but it would presuppose a radical, dramatic change of international politics which is not in sight. Even then, a security arrangement with South Africa would be far from automatic. On the one hand, Western governments, as well as the Soviet Union, generally feel that in the event of a major East-West conflict South Africa would be unlikely to stay neutral, while Western countries would even then have a choice of whether or not to link their security to events in Africa, and whether or not to use military facilities and installations in the south. On the other hand, in some conflicts South Africa may strongly prefer to stay neutral itself.

Secondly, it implies a self-reliance for South Africa in terms of security. The problem, however, will be to strike the right balance between an adequate response to a security threat and provocation, between the goal of regional deterrence and defence and the task of regional co-operation. This is particularly difficult to do for a country which, because of its internal policies of apartheid and the rallying focus of international disapproval this provides, is likely to find its motives

questioned on each of these scores — a strong defence can easily be interpreted as an attempt to defend not the country but the policy of apartheid, and a co-operative stance could be read as an attempt to acquire international respectability to avoid a change in domestic policies. As long as apartheid is maintained, the problem for South Africa to build its security on respected and unprovocative self-reliance is probably insolvable. The process of détente in Southern Africa might alleviate the problem, but by itself is unlikely to solve it. What is more, it makes the task of unprovocative self-reliance that much more important, if the search for regional accommodation should not falter over the search for national military security.

It is true that there are other conceivable military dimensions than those in relation to the countries further north, such as a military threat from the sea. For various reasons this is not a very probable contingency. Hostile naval interventions by, say, the Soviet Union cannot subjugate a country, and if there should be a serious interruption of shipping, the conflict would have acquired dimensions which go far beyond the capabilities of a regional power like South Africa. For the time being, therefore, major efforts to meet this kind of threat might be seen as an attempt to camouflage preparations for contingencies in the north.

Perhaps the best example for the dilemma of self-reliance is that of the nuclear deterrent. South Africa is in a position to manufacture nuclear explosives within a period of three years if it should put its mind to it.² But, there seems little to be gained, in terms of security, in embarking on this road. If the main threat to South African security came from states aware of the vulnerability of their cities and populations to a nuclear strike, the option of going nuclear might have some deterrent effect as an ultimate resort, as in the case of Israel, although South Africa's conventional deterrent would seem already more than sufficient. But, the security threat that the South African Government seems most concerned about comes from non-state groups, terrorists or "freedom fighters" and their aim seems not to grab a piece of territory, but to change the domestic power balance between Black and White within South Africa. Actual deterrence — through a nuclear force — or potential deterrence — through a nuclear option — would not apply against these groups.

2. *Strategic Survey 1974*, International Institute for Strategic Studies, London, 1975, p. 35.

Nor would the other advantage which some see in a nuclear option, namely that of a bargaining chip to secure conventional weapon supplies from other countries. It is true that most Western states who are in a position to produce and export modern weaponry, also regard nuclear proliferation as dangerous and might be prepared to make some concessions in order to prevent a country from acquiring nuclear weapon status. But, any attempt by South Africa to use a nuclear option in this way would high-light the issue of arms supplies and make it politically even more awkward than it already is for many supplier governments; what is more, it could trigger off new international attempts to ban arms exports to South Africa altogether. A nuclear option for bargaining on arms is, therefore, likely to be counterproductive from a South African perspective.

The third consequence for South Africa from the new international situation is that the cost of remaining outside the new multilateral framework of negotiations and international problem management is likely to increase. It is true that global international organisations like the United Nations are in a crisis of purpose, direction and effectiveness. The new and numerous countries of the Third World seek to redress what seems to them an unfair bias in favour of the established, white, industrialized powers, by more or less copying their example of the past and rule the organisation by majority vote. But, it would be too facile to dismiss the need for participation in international endeavours by pointing to the evident shortcomings of the UN. The nation-state is no longer capable of controlling events, however imperfect international co-operation. On food, population, energy, ocean resources, space etc., functional and multi-lateral co-operation between states is now the order of the day or will be so in future, and it will establish the framework in which these problems will be tackled. To be present in these negotiations may have been a luxury in the past. It now becomes a necessity and absence from them will be increasingly costly. There is no doubt that the decision to bar South Africa from practically all these activities was shortsighted and created a dangerous precedent for the future of international organisations. But, it is also clear that the cost for South Africa of remaining outside is considerable and likely to rise.

Functional Changes

In coming years, three functional changes in the world strategic situation will acquire growing importance: the problem of secure raw material supplies, the significance of the oceans, and the impact of new military technologies. None of these is entirely new. After all, the strategic importance attached to raw material supplies has been responsi-

ble for much of international politics and conflict in the late nineteenth century and the early twentieth century; the seas of the world have always provided the scene for naval action; and new technologies have to be absorbed and integrated into military forces all the time. However, some of the new developments in these traditional categories pose specific problems and all are relevant to South Africa.

Raw materials will be strategically important in two respects: in obtaining them and in getting them to the place where they are needed. The continued need for oil, for instance, will give to the oil-producing countries a bargaining position and with it a particular position of power. The fact that much of that oil comes from the Persian Gulf area has already given to that area and to the routes of access a specific strategic importance. What kind of threats must industrialized countries prepare themselves for in respect of supply and access? There could be an embargo by the oil-producing countries against individual, or a number of consumers; supplies could be threatened by an overthrow of regime, with the new rulers either incapable or unwilling to honour commitments to deliver, or by a shift in allegiances — imagine, for instance, that Saudi Arabia is taken over by a Gulf Ghaddafi who decides to give preferential treatment to the Soviet Union. In either of these cases, some more hypothetical than others, there is probably very little that the consumer can do except to seek ways in which to stock and share resources, during a period of shortage, which are under their own control. For the flow of oil they must essentially rely on the self-interest of the producer states to produce; and, indeed, the degree of dependency of oil-producers in the Gulf on the income from oil is higher in most cases than is that of the consumer in obtaining it from them, although the time factor is clearly critical. Coercion is unlikely to provide any serious remedy to an embargo, unless it is coupled with outright, physical and prolonged occupation; no military intervention force is likely to produce sufficient oil output to meet the needs of the industrial world in the face of a world-wide OPEC embargo. A *renversement des alliances*, with Soviet control over a major oil-producing country, is again something that will probably have to be endured rather than militarily opposed. The real strategic problem that the hypothetical Sovietisation of, say, Saudi Arabia would pose would not be the supply of oil but the overall effect on the region, with the possibility that other powers would be drawn in, as well as the serious risk of military confrontation between the United States and the Soviet Union.

The access to raw material is a different problem. Here the military implications are more direct. Until the new network of pipelines from the Gulf to the Mediterranean is completed, a decisive interception of tankers at the Straits of Hormuz could seriously harm the

economy of the oil-producers and, to a lesser extent, that of the consumers provided it were maintained long enough to exhaust the producers' cash and the consumers' stocks. Or the tankers carrying fuel for one particular country — say South Africa or Israel — could be stopped by hostile forces. A total blockade is no very likely scenario; after all, it requires considerable forces to maintain a blockade for any length of time needed until it shows effect, and it is highly doubtful that no counter-measures would be attempted during that time. But it is a conceivable one, and this is the reason why the Arabian Sea has acquired its increased strategic importance. Similarly, routes which tankers pass and oil installations on continental shelves become objects for protection.

There is another and somewhat wider aspect to this issue. As a general rule, the exportable quantities of raw materials will come from countries of the so-called Third World — while some industrialized countries have important raw material resources, e.g. the United States, the Soviet Union, South Africa or Britain, they will in general not be primarily available for export — who need the income to purchase manufactured goods from the industrialized world. It is now highly probable that there will be shortly a major conference of consumers and producers, not just on oil but on other raw materials as well.

It offers some chance to begin the redistribution of wealth which the Third World countries have demanded for some time. At the same time any such arrangement contains some potential for conflict which, if it should occur, could put the industrial against the developing world. Claims that the old pattern of East-West conflict will be superseded by North-South conflict still seem more fashionable than convincing; after all, East-West rivalry will not disappear — East-West conflict remains conceivable and military force will remain concentrated in the industrialized part of the world. But over-confidence in the power that raw material cartels can assume, the political effect of Third World solidarisation, and popular resentment in the industrialized countries to accept a reduction in their standard of living could combine to exacerbate tension into conflict.

What does the renewed importance of raw materials imply for South Africa's strategic position? For one, South Africa will have to prepare against being singled out in an oil embargo by producing states, just as it was in 1973. Apart from maintaining adequate stocks and seeking special relations with some producers there is probably nothing else it can do. Secondly, the country itself is rich in a variety of sought-after raw materials. Apart from the obvious economic advantages, this position raises two questions of strategic relevance: can it attract

the greed of other powers and, therefore, pose a specific security problem? And could South Africa buy the support of allies for its security with the help of its resource assets?

The answer to the first question seems relatively simple under the existing circumstances of power. While raw materials make some territories of the Republic a tempting prize for an invader, no such invader is in sight.

Does the position as the holder of, say, one quarter of the world's uranium reserves improve South Africa's bargaining position in terms of security? Countries probably do not come to the military assistance of another, if this should risk their own security, merely for the sake of access to raw materials. While it would be deplorable if the Soviet Union or some other potential enemy of the West were to take control over these resources, it would not seem to present — from the point of view of the assured supply of uranium — a situation which Western states could not survive. South Africa's bargaining position in obtaining modern weaponry from abroad might be helped by its favourable resource position, but will not be decisive in the event that really counts, namely the resupply at the time of conflict.

The heightened strategic interest in the Persian Gulf area will increase the strategic relevance of the littoral states in the Gulf, in the Arabian Sea and further south. Their territory might be useful for the basing or reprovisioning of military units, their domestic stability will be important for stability in the area and, indirectly for the stability of supply. South Africa is politically too problematic a place to be considered as a major staging post for Western military forces as long as military competition in South-West Asia remains at its present relatively low level. Besides, bases and military staging posts are becoming less important for military operations. Given the political complications that could arise from any basing agreement, both superpowers are seeking ways to make their naval task forces as self-sufficient and shore-independent as possible. Air reinforcement capabilities, for men and material, are well developed in the US forces. Their maritime presence in the area and their related back-up seem to be quite capable of assuring most of the more realistic military options in the event of interference with oil supplies, without having to call on South African territory — however much easier and cost-saving this could be.

The shipping route around the Cape has become, particularly since the 1967-closure of the Suez Canal, one of the most important waterways for tankers from the Gulf; even with the opening of the Canal in June 1975 and the completion of new pipelines to the Mediterranean, this

situation is unlikely to change fundamentally given the cost-effectiveness of the very large tankers. But, again it is difficult to see what precise strategic relevance to South Africa this will have. Clearly, if there should be a new protracted world war, shipping around the Cape would be vulnerable to interference, and South Africa would almost inevitably become involved. But in the absence of such a catastrophe, little strategic gain is likely to be had from attempts to threaten civilian transport vessels. It is a doubtful demonstration of military power because of the delayed effect, and as a deliberate scare it could be counterproductive in scaring the trading nations into forceful reaction rather than meek submission. Moreover, it could be seen as a greater security threat by producer than by consumer countries.

Perhaps the most direct strategic implication for South Africa of the increasing importance of resources is the North-South dimension. If raw materials should become a symbol for the relationship between the white industrialized and the non-white developing world, close relations with a South Africa that discriminates against sections of the population on racial grounds are likely to be seen as additionally costly in political terms by many governments in the Western world.

The second major factor of future strategic developments is the new importance of the oceans. For one, in an era of "flexibility" maritime power has obvious advantages: mobility, low escalation risk, and visibility tailored to political and military requirements. This, in addition to other factors, has been one motivation in the expansion of the Soviet Navy over the past decade, as it is one of the guidelines for the American naval programmes. There is also, of course, the fact that as land-based strategic systems become more vulnerable, the sea is the medium in which strategic submarines successfully evade detection. Secondly, ocean resources will become increasingly important, as will their protection -- a problem magnified by the very vulnerability of installations, like oil rigs or underwater mining, to interference from others. Thirdly, the acceptance in principle, at the UN Law of the Sea Conference, of a 200 mile (320 kilometers) exclusive economic zone for littoral states may lead to the claim of national control over large parts of the oceans, to attempts to protect the new "territory" and to new conflicts.

Much of this is, of course, still a matter of speculation; the new trends are only just becoming visible. It is difficult, therefore, to spell out the consequences for a country like South Africa. The increased attention to maritime power could, but need not, affect South Africa. After all, we are not witnessing the introduction of massive new fleets; the total number of Soviet and American naval vessels has

gone down over the past years as older types were phased out, and there are few areas in the world of concentrated naval deployment. Oceans are very spacious and just because they become strategically more important, they will not automatically be littered with new fleets. Those task forces that will operate in the area will have a high degree of self-sufficiency. Anti-submarine warfare and communications with submarines can increasingly be conducted from the air and from satellites, although the use of airfields in the area will increase the effectiveness. Future naval competition will not be fixed to particular areas; it will be a fluid matter on a fluid substance, where bases and reprovisioning depots will certainly offer useful and valuable options; but they will not be enough to firmly anchor a commitment. It is true that South Africa's geographical position offers many advantages for maritime powers, and a loss of these facilities, by a policy of open neutralism in South Africa or, much less conceivable, a Soviet take-over, would severely restrict maritime options for the West in general and the United States in particular. Yet, most Western governments would doubt whether a policy of actively seeking bases in South Africa would, in the existing political climate, be the best way of furthering that strategic interest. While South African territory is useful in the period of increased maritime significance, the political costs of seeking a permanent platform there for maritime support are very high, both in the short and in the long-term. This could change if the Soviet Union should seek an extension of military presence in the countries to the north — unlikely at the moment, but a real risk in the event of protracted regional instability in the new African states.

The growing importance of ocean resources and the likely extension of exclusive zones of economic exploitation to 200 miles along the littoral will pose a number of strategic problems for South Africa. The resources in the 200 mile (320 kilometers) zone around the shores of South Africa seem sufficient enough to be attractive both to South Africa and to other countries. This raises the question of how these huge areas of new semi-sovereignty can be protected against potential intruders, not only for South Africa but for other littoral states as well. This may mean a major change in the role of their maritime forces, with — in the long-run — perhaps only the superpowers in a position to finance, procure and man major naval forces for the more traditional maritime tasks of force projection, overseas protection of sea lanes and conflict control in distant areas. It could also lead to new types of conflict at sea between states in Africa over disputed areas, and new alignments of the weaker states with more powerful states — say, the Soviet Union or possibly China — in joint ventures for the exploitation *and* the protection of resources. For South Africa, who clearly has a major interest in avoiding direct military conflict with another African state, this is an ominous prospect.

Moreover, the exploitation of ocean resources will favour the technologically advanced states, since the sheer task of mining the ocean floor is a matter of high technological skills. The discrepancy in this respect between South Africa and its neighbours to the north might offer a basis for co-operation; but if *détente* should not succeed in changing the over-all pattern of relations with Black Africa, the same technological discrepancy might well give rise, on the side of the smaller states, to suspicions and accusations claiming that South Africa was violating the rights of its neighbours. Since lines on the water are difficult to make out, these claims are easy to make and hard to dispute. The new Law of the Sea could, therefore, imply the risk of new conflict and tensions for the region.

The third major factor of new strategic development is the qualitative leap in military technologies. These are generally discussed in the context of strategic nuclear systems: the high accuracy of delivery, which makes strategic missile silos vulnerable to intercontinental missiles of the other side; improvements in communications and in the precision with which military and other targets can be identified and, therefore, hit; a more precise "tailoring" of warheads to achieve the desired effect with greater certainty. But, many of these developments have been no less visible in the conventional — i.e. the non-nuclear field of military technology. The high precision of modern missiles gives them a more than average chance of hitting a designated target. Air defence systems have been so much improved to make tactical airforces a very costly and militarily doubtful weapon for deep strikes into enemy territory and for action over a modern battlefield. New types of bombs and other munitions are entering the inventory that can hit point targets as well as areas — urban centres, military and economic installations, etc. — with a high degree of assured destruction.

It is still too early to say what the over-all effect of the new technologies will be. Paradoxically, this will be even harder to assess in a theatre where the highly sophisticated forces of major military powers meet — as in Europe — and where both sides will be busy devising counter-measures to new capabilities; although the over-all technological superiority of the West, and in particular the United States, will tend to give a certain premium to the Western side. In other geographical areas the impact of the new weapons can, however, be more marked. Not all the new technologies require the sophisticated infrastructure that only technologically advanced societies can provide; the man-held anti-tank and anti-aircraft precision-guided weapon can be used by soldiers with little training, as well as by terrorists. On the whole, the new capabilities give additional importance to hiding: what can be seen, can be hit, and the visible targets of massive warfare or of urban centres are easier to hit than small troops of insurgents camouflaged in

the countryside.

Some potential implications for South Africa follow from this brief sketch of the new conventional military capabilities. The threat from determined terrorist groups could increase with the increase in their ability to shoot down aircraft and to pick out targets with greater precision. Similarly, the capability of the militarily weak states, to the north of South Africa, to deter military action against them, will also increase if they can deliver a precise strike, over a distance, against sensitive installations in the country they feel threatened by, or against enemy naval vessels approaching their shores. At the same time, South Africa's technological superiority in the region would give it an even stronger military advance over its neighbours, and a real defence against surface shipping. If the situation in Africa should deteriorate to such an extent that organised military action between states becomes conceivable, this technological superiority might have a useful deterrent effect; it might also, however, lead the weaker states to rely on sophisticated arms deliveries from outside suppliers and, since many of these require a modern infrastructure and co-ordinated planning, on outside military advisers as well.

II. *South Africa and the World*

The trends in international security therefore seem all to point in one direction: South Africa's security depends primarily on developments in the region. South African territory is not essential for the security interests of others outside the region; while it may be useful, given the new importance of oil and of the oceans, the political costs of becoming involved are generally too high for Western states. The divisibility of security has become an important element of international crisis control.

The strategic effect of South Africa on the international strategic situation will be defined by events in the region, and on South Africa's ability to respond to them. There are essentially two connections between developments in the region and the world strategic scene: the danger that a conflict in the south of Africa would become a racial war and, thereby, an international one; and the possibility that in the absence of political accommodation, outside powers could be drawn in and become involved in the region.

Of these, the first is, at the moment, not very probable. Skirmishes between defence forces and "freedom fighters" do not amount to a major war. While sufficient to maintain the problem of Black and White coexistence in evidence to draw attention to apartheid and thus to promote the diplomatic quarantine of South Africa, this level of conflict does not yet produce that world-wide racial polarisation, which could so easily range the rest of the world against the Republic in the event of a North-South war in Africa. There is no evident reason today, why the African states to the north should seek open military conflict; a fact that the support given by them to the irregular forces of "liberation armies" only serves to underline.

It is the second risk, however, which seems much more real: that political change in Africa could get out of control and that outside powers could become involved. South Africa is surrounded by a number of states whose internal political future is in doubt: Rhodesia, where the intransigence of the government to reach an arrangement with the black majority could jeopardize the hopes for détente; Angola, where rival factions of former insurgents dispute each other's rights to take part in the post-Portuguese government; Mozambique, where the new government faces daunting problems in reorganising the economy and feeding the population. Even among states in full control of their domestic situation and enjoying popular support, a policy of détente would be difficult enough to implement. As it is, it has to be pursued against a background of domestic insecurity and uncertainty in many countries, where governments might either be unwilling to take some of the domestic risks of détente or use political emotions, which run counter to the process of détente, in order to strengthen their domestic base.

This is particularly difficult to rule out since the essence of détente is of a domestic political nature: for the states of Black Africa, it is to what extent they can coexist with a South Africa which discriminates against the large majority of its inhabitants on racial grounds; for South Africa, détente is the attempt to assure its neighbours that peaceful coexistence is possible, in spite of major domestic difficulties. There is some parallel here with the détente concept in East-West relations. The West — as the Black African states — argues that real détente between East and West must not be limited to interstate relations, but also affect domestic policy in the East where individual liberties are suppressed. The Soviet Union, on the other hand — not unlike South Africa — claims that détente is incompatible with any attempt at interference in the internal affairs of another country. In Europe, the Soviet Union is likely to get away with this argument, since the individual liberties of East Europeans are not an overriding priority for West European governments; the racial question in Africa, however, is of

central concern to governments in the region. The détente forces will, therefore, be closely linked to the domestic scene in South Africa; apartheid is the real test for détente, not the recognition of governments, or frontiers, or the provision of economic aid.

The processes of change involved are complex, difficult to coordinate and difficult to control. On the one hand, the speed of adjustment to a more equitable state of the Black population in South Africa must be sufficient to convince leaders in Black Africa that détente is a serious undertaking. But will this be understood and supported, or at least tolerated by the political forces within South Africa? The closer détente comes to be measured by domestic change in the south — and this seems inevitable — the greater resistance to détente among South Africans could become. Conversely, it seems doubtful if all groups in the African states will have the patience and the confidence to wait for the results of détente, and likely that governments there will find it difficult to maintain control over those forces which seek a solution through violence and terrorism. This in turn, would strengthen resistance to domestic change in South Africa.

What if events get out of control, or if détente is deadlocked? The internal stability of regimes and states could then be in jeopardy, governments in the area may want to invite outside support, and loss of governmental control in the new states could bring foreign arms, advisers, and great power rivalry into a situation of uncertainty. It is this kind of scenario which underlines the importance that the détente policy must succeed, not just in the interest of the region but also to avoid, for the outside world, choices that could be painful and potentially dangerous.

A détente solution imposed from the outside is almost impossible to conceive. No other country but South Africa itself can offer a way to accommodation without war in the south of Africa; and no other country can make for South Africa the concessions that will be necessary in the domestic policy of the country to complement interstate coexistence with Black Africa by fair internal coexistence with a Black majority. The key to failure or success is here. This is the major strategic significance of South Africa today.

CHAPTER 4

COMMENTS

Nic Olivier

Comment : Mr. Chambati dealt with the very crucial issues facing South Africa, Southern Africa and the Republic's relations with the rest of the continent. South Africans must surely take note of the gravity of the alternatives posed by him. There is every reason to believe that his views reflect the thinking of Black Africa in and outside the OAU; and it must be stressed, the thinking of Black Africans in Rhodesia.

Not only in terms of discussion at this conference, but also in terms of indicating some guidelines for South Africa's future action and the possible evolvement of the Republic's policy on these issues, Mr. Chambati's paper makes a contribution of tremendous significance. He clearly defined the fundamental issues and outlined the evolution of South Africa's policies regarding the rest of the continent — the outward movement, dialogue and now détente. The moves towards dialogue that came to an end in 1971, floundered on the simple issue that it was thought that having dialogue with the Republic would be meaningless in view of the absence of effective dialogue between White and Black within South Africa itself. Mr. Chambati analysed the attitudes of African states towards the Republic and it is very important to note that he stressed that Africa's attitude towards South Africa has to be seen against the background of the contents of the Lusaka Manifesto. The basic problem seems to be that there is a great deal of reluctance on the part of White South Africans to accept the attitude displayed in the Lusaka Manifesto — the right to existence of South Africa and of White South Africans on this continent. In that sense it manifests the general lack of trust that has, to some extent, become abundantly clear in relations between White and Black on this continent — at least in a number of vital spheres.

Mr. Chambati furthermore dealt with the essence of the problems facing South Africa, namely the issues of Rhodesia and South West Africa, and also in passing referred to the Republic's relations with the BLS countries and to South Africa's internal policies. The interdependence of these various issues is self-evident and South Africans should basically be *ad idem* with him regarding his analysis of the situation and of the problems facing this country. In essence, it must be accepted that the most volatile problem facing the Republic now, and in the near future,

is the Rhodesian issue. There are obviously two alternatives, as he has indicated: failure of the movement towards accommodation in Rhodesia, or reaching of a negotiated settlement. If accommodation fails, the implications would in actual fact be "too ghastly to contemplate".

Failure to reach a settlement in Rhodesia is also going to have tremendous implications within South Africa itself. It will place the Republic in the extremely painful position of deciding whether it is going to continue its involvement in Rhodesia - not only in an economic sense; making its transport system, communication system and its harbours available for the import and export of Rhodesian goods; not only in terms of providing markets and serving as economic sanctions-buster, but also in terms of increased military involvement. Decisions under these circumstances will be extremely difficult to make and the pressures on the South African Government will become quite severe.

In circumstances like this, the white electorate of South Africa might believe that its own future and security is at stake - particularly in view of people expounding the domino theory, viz. that if Rhodesia were to fall, either as a result of the détente initiatives, or as a result of terrorist activity, it would be only a matter of time before the same crisis will face the Republic. In other words, that South Africa might become the victim of similar intensified terrorist activity. Under these circumstances, there might be an increasing White backlash in the Republic; increased pressure on South Africa to take a stronger stand on this issue; and increased party political implications on the South African domestic scene - particularly if the situation in Rhodesia were to lead to an exodus of White Rhodesians to the Republic. In evaluating the situation, the conclusion must be drawn that South Africa might be faced - within a very short period - with a rather serious dilemma in this regard and with quite obvious wide-ranging implications. The problem is, as Mr. Chambati has indicated, that Blacks in Rhodesia simply do not believe that the Smith Government is really prepared to come to terms with the Black population and with Black aspirations. This seems to be the essence of the Rhodesian problem.

Obvious changes are, however, taking place in South West Africa. There have been steps to remove discrimination and at least a change in the emphasis of South Africa's policy, with the possibility of retaining South West Africa as a unitary state. This will depend very largely on whether the movement towards independence for Ovambo, Kavango and Caprivi will actually lead to these territories becoming independent and how the peoples in these areas will react to such an eventuality; whether, in other words, the OAU and the world community will accept this as really being the expression of the will of the peoples of these territories, or whether it will be seen as a solution or arrangement imposed by the South

African authorities. The correctness and validity of the Prime Minister's statement that all options are open must, however, be accepted. At this stage - and considering the fact that in the normal course of events one can expect a fairly long drawn-out process of constitutional negotiations between the various groups in the Territory - South West Africa will probably not be as focal an issue, as potentially dangerous an issue, as Rhodesia.

As far as South Africa's internal policies are concerned, gradual changes are also taking place. There is movement towards a greater recognition of human dignity and equality. There has been a subtle change of concepts, such as from apartheid to separate development, multinationalism and self-determination. Whether these steps are indeed fundamental enough to meet the needs of the time - to use a cliché - is hard to tell. Analysis, however, shows that the gap between Black demands and aspirations and what the White group is prepared to concede, has indeed widened and not narrowed. In this context, a number of questions has to be raised: is the Homelands policy as a constitutional solution and in its present form - not in terms of providing avenues for cultural identification by particular groups - indeed one that can provide an answer to Black political aspirations; can this policy be viable and can it succeed without a radical redistribution of land; and can the political involvement of Blacks outside the Homelands, in the urban areas particularly, in any way give adequate expression to and provide satisfactory avenues for their political needs and aspirations?

John Seiler

Comment : Mr. Barratt has been unusually provocative, but it is not my intention to deal with his several specific suggestions for change in foreign and domestic policies. Some of his basic concepts must be examined, not as an academic exercise, but because doing so may help to illuminate the strengths and weaknesses of his policy prescriptions which rest on his use of specific concepts.

Briefly, attention must be given to his use of five such concepts : politics itself; the model of a changing international system which he describes; his notion of détente; his emphasis on regional power; and his view of mutual accommodation in the present regional conflict.

In the first instance, his definition of politics as something separable from other aspects of international relations is, while a time-honoured one, a definition that is ambiguous. It would be far better to see politics

and political decisions as all those decisions involving an allocation of priorities among competing claims, interests, and values, and either made by a government or influencing government policy. Thus, economic ties either reflect policy commitments or will have some impact on their overall effectiveness. Cultural contact between nations influence Black African attitudes about South Africa and thus have some impact on the effectiveness of formal policy. In short, Mr. Barratt should not be so hesitant and apologetic about the inclusion of economic or cultural factors in his analysis. His attempt to distinguish between "political" isolation and extensive economic and cultural interdependence would then become irrelevant. Instead, he would be faced with the far more difficult analytical task of assessing the combined political impact on other governments of the entire range of contacts with and knowledge about South Africa.

Now to his view of the changing international system. No substantial disagreement can be found with his impressionistic view of recent actions which have unsettled the previous bipolar international system — Nixon's efforts at "détente" with the Soviet Union and China, the OPEC oil embargo, continued unsolved economic problems in most developed and many developing states — but there could be disagreement with his suggestion that these events have resulted in the collapse of the bipolar world. It is the other way round: that they could happen testifies to the fact that this system had already lost much of its vigour. The decline of the bipolar world could rather be traced to two major events which occurred more than a decade ago — the Sino-Soviet split over ideological goals, international Communist leadership, national-territorial disputes, *and* the 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis. Since these events, both the US and the USSR have been generally reluctant to involve themselves directly in regional conflicts. In addition, the simultaneous mutual frustrations they faced in the Congo made even stronger their reluctance to be so involved in this continent, although this position might change in future.

It could be argued that, since about 1962, the bipolar international system has been no constraint on the ability of South Africa to implement a positive and constructive regional and continental role like that which Mr. Barratt quite rightly argues it should now seek. The explanation for the failure to achieve this goal before the 1974 Portuguese coup, lies in two other factors: on the South African side, the continued adherence to a static bipolar world view and a lack of sustained effort at maintaining the scattered initiatives of the "outward" and "dialogue" policies; *and* Black African resistance to acceptance of South African initiatives. As Mr. Barratt points out, this resistance remains widespread and for him justifies extraordinary adjustments within domestic policies.

The present South African policy, which shows considerable ingenuity and obvious sustained impetus, can best be explained not because of any

change in the overall international system, but because of a single event within this region -- the political repercussions for Mozambique and Angola of the April, 1974, Portuguese coup. Of course, this single event may have some impact on Western Europe and hence on the general condition of the larger international system. Looking at this point another way; for the past decade Southern Africa has probably been more free of substantial super-power intervention than any other region of the world, and the initiative for resolution of regional conflict rested and still rests with regional governments.

More briefly, a word on détente. This much-abused term really means no more than a reduction in the level of conflict among mutually unfriendly states. Contrary to Mr. Barratt's view of this definition, détente between the Soviet Union and China does exist, albeit different in its terms and stability than that between the Soviet Union and the US, and that between this country and its Black neighbours. Mr. Barratt's notion that South Africa should concentrate on being a regional power raises a number of practical questions, but the Republic's economic links will be elsewhere for the foreseeable future, and it is arguable that in the absence of strong economic or cultural ties, it might be best for South Africa not to work toward either an economic and/or political regional commonwealth.

Finally, on mutual accommodation, while it is a *sine qua non* for regional political stability -- and it must be agreed with Mr. Barratt that much domestic change is in order -- discomfort must be admitted with the apparent imbalance in accommodation implied by him. It may be simply that more detailed discussion is required to explicate his general endorsement of this process. For example, what accommodation would the Black regional governments have to make? Would their acceptance of a confederal South West Africa be considered sufficient accommodation? Would their grudging acceptance of an independent Transkei be adequate accommodation to justify the substantial domestic change Mr. Barratt envisions? On the other hand, it could be argued that South Africa has already made substantial accommodation in its South West African policy or may yet, in the months and years to come, do so in its Rhodesian and domestic policies.

Deon Fourie

Comment : South Africans have certain fixed ideas as to the Republic's continuing and absolute strategic significance. This is hardly surprising when one looks at the past. During World War I, South Africa was needed

to fulfill certain roles in the old British Empire. It was needed to take South West Africa as a bargaining counter, as was apparently projected when the Imperial Conference met in 1911 and discussed the possibilities of a war with Germany. The Union was also the only country in the Empire to fight and win a campaign on its own; not only without additional British forces, but without the intervention of any British commander - and it continued with something like 150 000 volunteers to fight in East Africa, Egypt, Palestine, France and Belgium.

In World War II, South Africa's contribution was even more significant; and particularly more significant from today's perspective. Apart from the 250 000 volunteers who went to Italy, Abyssinia, the Western Desert, Madagascar and the Mediterranean, the Union had 55 small vessels, as well as the largest air force contingent in Italy in 1944. South Africa, in addition to all this, provided a large and important maritime maintenance and support base. During the first four years of the War, something like 19 244 merchant ships touched in at Cape Town or Durban, as well as another 1 500 naval vessels - and in the neighbourhood of these coasts 88 000 gross tons of shipping were lost. This constituted something like five percent of the total wartime loss to submarine warfare.

This has not only served as an influence on the way South Africans think about strategy and the future; there is also a tendency to fix their minds a little too firmly. Although suspicions are frequently voiced about their political motives - perhaps not without some justification - South Africans have developed a picture of their strategic significance which has been added to by the obvious economic value to Europe - and to Asia, it might be said - of the route past the Cape, where, according to figures that Sir Alec Douglas-Home quoted at the time he was Foreign Minister, one quarter of the United Kingdom's trade passes and also one third of Europe's oil supplies - this of course since 1967. Taken together with its economic and technological advances South Africa has found it rather incomprehensible why its erstwhile allies has passed it by. Dr. Bertram has given us the opportunity of looking at this from another angle. Perhaps there are over-emphases in his under-emphasis of the Republic's strategic significance. However, he has highlighted elements which can only contribute to the viewing of South Africa's strategic significance in a fresh and perhaps more realistic perspective.

South Africans do not readily understand - perhaps because so little is said of this question in the media - that even after the oil crisis in 1973 the paramount strategic considerations in Europe and the United States are concerned with the fear that there may be a nuclear war. All the thought and energy in the field of strategic studies go to avoiding this possibility. The Republic's perception of threats in this area of the world are peripheral for Europeans and Americans; and as Dr. Bertram sug-

gested, what is important is what governments believe the facts to be. South Africa's problem is that it sees one set of circumstances, while Western powers see another. Perhaps there is comfort in this, and looking at the world elsewhere - one might think of a very recent example, Cambodia - one tends to feel that probably, as Dr. Bertram suggested, the Republic might be better off without the interests and involvement of the major powers in this region. Self-reliance in defence may enable South Africa to choose the enemies it likes and there may be greater security in not being seen to be of strategic significance.

Dr. Bertram has furthermore pointed out that a strategic situation and the consequent strategic significance should be seen against the moving background. Perhaps this is of particular importance to South Africans; that in their analyses of the Republic's strategic position, they should cease to see the country from their own perspective only, but rather see it as part of the world as a whole - placing South Africa in the total scheme of things, not in the segment. That will lead to an understanding of the trends in international security that were spoken of; a flexible approach to issues; a change in functional factors; a difficulty in defining what really matters in strategy; and not least, the importance of what happens inside the Republic as an influence on the influence South Africa might yet have on the world strategic situation.

Frederick Clifford-Vaughan

Comment : Discussion at this symposium has revolved around certain identifiable factors. One of these seems to be the notion that, both internationally and in South Africa's own situation, there exists what one could call a state of "complex fluidity". This reality characterises the present domestic situation and also reflects in the international sphere in a sort of "anarchism of states", where each state acts according to its own often undefined interests and ignores the wishes, instructions and demands of groups such as the UN, NATO and so on. Besides all this, there are the actions of various non-governmental organisations with *ad hoc* capability to arrive at agreements. Some of these are extra-legal, as for example the so-called "liberation movements". Others might be exemplified by, for example, the South African Institute of International Affairs, whose activities lead to the introduction of a suitable climate for discussion and understanding. Not only this, but also an element of public debate is created, where it is perhaps possible to affect ongoing foreign and domestic relations.

Within the complexity of the world situation, it seems that South Africa has yet to develop its role. It apparently has not yet defined this and it is increasingly unwilling to have this done on its behalf by others. This is manifested by the more positive approach now being adopted by policy-makers in the Republic - a role played both internally and externally. Its internal characteristics are political, social and economic, particularly because of the crucial and central problem of separate development. When using the term *apartheid* the emotive sense in which it is used as a slogan and the highly charged connotation which makes it an unacceptable policy, at least overtly, to the outside world immediately comes to the fore.

The economic factors of South Africa's role in the world situation are based upon production of special raw materials, upon mineral deposits found in the Republic and upon the manufactured goods which can be exported. The availability of technical know-how and capital is also an exportable commodity and a strategic factor. The technical processes and the energy to make these processes work are something in which South Africa seems to have a distinct lead as far as Africa is concerned; but the superstructure of energy supply lines is supplemented by electricity from, for example, Mozambique - a pragmatic fact which will be taken into account by foreign policy-makers, as well as by military planners.

Another factor, one which could be called the military factor - bearing in mind, of course, that strategy and politics are bedfellows - is the "atomic potential". Thus the limited use of tactical nuclear weapons could certainly be included in naval defence. Almost certainly non-nuclear missiles are possible and the Republic seems to have the necessary sophisticated back-up structure of communications and power supply, which will be ensured by securing the political base. Of course, the possibility of internal subversive war cannot be, and certainly is not, overlooked by the General Staff and this, too, will have to be taken into account by politicians responsible for social policy, as well as by soldiers responsible for security. Although such purely military factors may seem to be tactical rather than strategic, they are intimately intertwined with political and social changes within the Republic.

The defence of the Republic is perhaps, at the moment at any rate, only of interest to its inhabitants. But the defence of the Indian Ocean as a whole affects many more interests than the purely local. Whilst there may be rational arguments against taking an alarmist line about this whole matter, some thinking must be done, for example, on the protection of sea routes, and not only the well-known Cape route but also those lines which pass up and down the east coast. As is well-known, the logic of strategy is sometimes jettisoned for short-term gains and successes. A conflict in the Indian Ocean could, however, hardly exclude the Republic, although certainly involvement would not be sought.

The communications gap between South Africa and the rest of the world is being attacked through overt and hidden diplomatic moves and by a more positive, less defensive attitude towards other countries. The term "hidden" is used, rather than secret, because it seems that when the results are eventually revealed as part of the whole exercise, they are, of course, successes. There are also an ever-increasing number of trade and other agreements which are not made public, but which reflect continuous efforts on the part of the Government to achieve a basis for communication. There is some evidence that this too is a success, although of course not publicly acclaimed as such. There has been some criticism of these perhaps hidden moves and, indeed, one may see a dilemma in this: whether to make public such secret agreements and risk world, especially African, opprobrium; or to remain silent and have large sections of world opinion confirmed in their prejudices about South Africa's changing intentions, capabilities and attitudes.

Such a position, it seems, becomes even further counter-productive in the sense that the world tends to visualise the position as one-sided - since strategic and political facets are not always clearly definable. For example, the non-strategic position of Berlin before the Truman Doctrine declarations of 1947 could hardly have been more pronounced. Yet its symbolic, political, and hence strategic position was recognised by the world, including the Soviet Union; and Berlin has remained of extreme symbolic value to the West ever since. Perhaps South Africa, too, has a part to play in the international theatre, a part as yet not defined? The strategic value of South Africa to the West may very well at the present time be non-existent, or at best limited. These sorts of considerations, however, change rapidly. One might be tempted to add that the Soviet Union may very well have a different value to place on the political and strategic position of the Republic, far-fetched as this notion may appear at present.

It is clear that the final and over-riding factor in this whole question of the reality of South Africa's situation, both in politics and strategy, is bound up with what could be considered a primary and decisive aspect - a factor which is vitally important, namely the *time* factor. Just as the instant communication phenomenon, "the news media factor" as General Beaufre called it, can assist in the success of revolutionary warfare, so will the rate at which détente proceeds, both domestically and internationally, as a result of governmental and individual action, affect the world's judgment of its success.