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In a paper presented to the 13th Business Outlook Conference, about two years ago, I stressed the importance of taking fully into account the political context in which business decisions had to be taken. I suggested that there was an unfortunate tendency to try to separate economics from politics, but that in fact this was not possible and that ultimately it was the political decisions (domestic and international) which determined the direction of a country's development in all its aspects, including the economic. Perhaps now, after the events of the past two years, it is unnecessary to make an issue of this again, because the interplay of economic and political forces and their effects are all too clear.

Confidence in a country's future depends both on sound economic conditions and on a stable political environment. But it is equally true that a lack of confidence can itself create negative results, politically and economically, and therefore confidence is a necessary ingredient for stable development. Business leaders have a vital role to play in this regard, but it is the task of the political leaders, more than anyone else, to create the grounds for confidence in the future, not by pretending that problems do not exist, but rather by facing the realities squarely and by being prepared, when necessary, to make the required accommodations.

Various political constraints, internal and external, are now hampering development in Southern Africa and affecting the attitudes of people overseas in such crucial areas as investment. If these constraints can be removed, there is no reason to doubt the potential for healthy economic development in this country and the whole region of Southern Africa. The natural and human resources for such development are immense, and the opportunities they hold for all the peoples of the region provide the incentive to overcome the present political constraints. It is clear that this fact is appreciated by those engaged in the current efforts to settle disputes in this region by peaceful means. Dr. Henry Kissinger has constantly stressed the opportunities for economic development through regional co-operation, and the plans for settlements in Rhodesia and South West Africa include specific proposals to stimulate the development of industry and agriculture through investment and development aid. All this helps to create the confidence in the future which is necessary, if the immediate political problems are to be overcome.

Two years ago, when we discussed the outlook for Southern Africa, we were very conscious of the dramatic changes set in motion by the overthrow of the Portuguese Government in April, 1974. In spite of these changes, which

threatened to lead to confrontation between militant black nationalism and the white-ruled countries of Southern Africa, there was good reason for hope then that this confrontation would be avoided. We were at the beginning of the so-called détente period; Prime Minister Vorster and President Kaunda had made their well known speeches at the end of October, 1974, choosing the way of peace and negotiation. Serious confrontation has been avoided in the intervening two years - which is an achievement in itself. But events have moved unevenly, and some new elements have now affected the situation in the region. It is thus worth looking briefly at the changes since the détente period began, changes on which our outlook must now be based.

Rhodesia was the main critical issue on which the détente negotiations at first focussed. There were considerable hopes that a settlement could be found through negotiations between the parties immediately concerned, without outside intervention. But these hopes were in the end frustrated and the level of violence increased notably, while the economic outlook for the country deteriorated.

In Angola, where it was hoped that the three nationalist movements could reach agreement to form a government to which Portugal could hand over power, there developed instead a civil war into which outside powers were drawn. While it was known that the Soviet Union supported the MPLA against the other two movements, the degree of Russian intervention was not expected and, in particular, the active involvement of Cuban troops was a surprise. This led to the unhappy experience of the South African intervention, but also to a greater American and European concern with the developments of this region.

Meanwhile, in South West Africa the trends towards a negotiated settlement were more hopeful than elsewhere. In September, 1975, at the very time when the Angolan war was escalating seriously, the Turnhalle Conference gathered to begin its search for a solution to the Territory's political problems. However, the Angolan war and the eventual victory of the MPLA encouraged greater militancy on the part of SWAPO, and have led to some increase in violent activity in the north of the Territory.

The most serious recent development has been the violent disturbances which have erupted throughout South Africa, since the Soweto riots began in mid-June of this year. Whereas last year, during the détente negotiations, we could look at the issues of Southern Africa as having an order of priority, with South Africa's internal problems less acute than those of Rhodesia and South West Africa, these issues now all require urgent attention.

The Angolan conflict had a profound effect on the course of events in Southern Africa. It affected the attitudes of many, inside and outside this region, and created the impression that increased violence was the inevitable trend. Although this trend is not in fact being fatalistically accepted, and although we are now witnessing a much more serious effort than ever before to find negotiated solutions in Rhodesia and South West Africa, those who see violence and the armed struggle as the only way to achieve solutions, have been encouraged by the results of the Angolan war, especially in their hopes for military assistance from outside.

The most significant and far-reaching effect of the Angolan conflict has been the direct involvement of non-African powers in the domestic and regional

disputes of Southern Africa. New dimensions, including super-power rivalry, have thus been introduced into the Southern African situation. It is no longer possible to look simply for regional solutions, as was being done in 1974 and 1975; and for South Africa and other countries the circumstances in which their foreign policies must operate have now changed dramatically. These new circumstances, which include the current initiatives of the American Secretary of State, are affecting all the region's critical issues. There is thus, as the Americans would say, now "a new ball-game" and this game is in the "big league", with super-power interests directly involved in the region for the first time. This certainly makes the issues more critical and more complicated, because they now have to be settled in a world arena where not only the interests of the peoples directly concerned have to be taken into account, but also the interests of various outside powers. But this new situation also gives some ground for new hope, in that the determined interest of the United States and other Western powers provides assistance to those who seek peaceful and negotiated solutions - assistance which they did not have before.

The Struggle for Power

Behind all the rhetoric in the many statements of political leaders in Southern Africa and abroad, we are in fact now witnessing a struggle for power on various levels. This struggle is still mainly political, but a military dimension has been introduced on some levels and there is the real threat that this military dimension will take on much greater proportions. This is the reason for the urgency of Western initiatives in the region, aimed at defusing the conflict situation and reducing the threat of escalating violence. But the complexities of the situation defy any attempts at easy answers. (Dr. Henry Kissinger has in fact admitted that this is the most complex situation he has ever tried to deal with - which is a considerable admission from the man who was responsible for negotiating agreements in Vietnam and the Middle East.)

The struggle for power is not a simple one between a black side and a white side - as it was often seen from the outside in the past. There is certainly an underlying racial element in all the conflict situations in the region, with white control being challenged in Rhodesia, South West and South Africa. But there is also a struggle for power among the various black movements which are challenging white power. Then, if one moves to another level, one finds a struggle for influence between different systems among the independent black states involved - the so-called "frontline" states. On the one hand, there are Mozambique and Angola, seeking the extension of their systems (claimed to be Marxist) in Southern Africa. On the other hand, there are Zambia and Botswana, with different systems, and there is Tanzania somewhere inbetween.

Dr. Kissinger has said that "the task of diplomacy is to find common ground among the differing objectives of the multitude of nations and groups involved" in the current negotiations. He believes there is common ground, but he has also said that "black nationalist groups competing for power must bridge their differences if there is to be early progress to majority rule". He has urged these groups "not to jeopardize everything by personal competition for power". (Philadelphia speech, 31 August, 1976.)

Overshadowing all these regional power struggles, there is the global struggle between the super-powers, with Southern Africa as one of its focus-points. The intervention of the Soviet Union, with Cuban assistance, in the

Angolan conflict and the extension of Soviet influence in Mozambique have brought this super-power element into the regional situation. The United States could not simply stand aside, when the Soviet Union made this clear move to extend its influence and thus threatened to disturb the world balance of power. So the United States saw the problems of Southern Africa for the first time as a matter of vital national interest. Dr. Kissinger has explained that "America's peace and safety rest crucially on a global balance of power" and that the U.S. "could not remain indifferent to the trends" in Southern Africa, which had "implications not only for the peace, independence and unity of Africa, but for global peace and stability". (Boston speech, 4 August, 1976.)

The question for the immediate future is, therefore, whether these struggles for power at various levels will engulf us in widening conflict and violence, or whether they can be resolved by peaceful means on the basis of the common ground which Dr. Kissinger believes exists. A major effort is now underway to find these peaceful means through a complex process of negotiations. The complexity results from all the different interests involved and the various struggles for power going on, as well as from "the legacy of generations of mistrust" which has to be overcome - as Dr. Kissinger has put it. (Philadelphia speech, 31 August, 1976.)

South Africa and the West

At this stage these negotiations concern mainly Rhodesia and South West Africa. But we should not be under any illusion that South Africa's own internal conflict situation is being overlooked and that somehow it will not become a serious international issue, if only the other two questions can be settled satisfactorily. Nor should we be under any illusion that the pressures now building up will somehow decline, if South Africa contributes positively to settlements in Rhodesia and South West Africa. Such a contribution to the peaceful settlement of differences will be of great importance in creating a better climate in the region, improving the Government's credibility in negotiations, and also no doubt in gaining time. But peace and stability in the region will not be achieved until there is a settlement within South Africa itself, and this will ultimately be the most difficult and complex question of all.

There is good reason to believe that Western governments, led by the United States, are now becoming determined to find ways of settling the conflicts of this region as a whole, because these conflicts are becoming increasingly embarrassing to them politically in the world. They have a stake in the region and in Africa as a whole, which they do not want to lose, and they see a clear threat to their position in a continued black/white conflict situation, where the West is perceived by black Africa as simply supporting the whites and the status quo.

This external Western pressure for change is therefore becoming of vital significance for our future political and economic development in this country. It is no longer a question simply of critical statements in the United Nations and elsewhere, and of occasional diplomatic protests; ways are now being sought to bring effective influence to bear on the South African system. Such interference may seem intolerable, but South Africa's economic and political dependence on the West, of which we claim to be a part, will make it impossible to ignore these efforts to influence the direction of change. In this regard, let us not forget that we have in the past constantly invited the West to take a greater interest in this region. We may now find that our invitation is

accepted with a vengeance !

The danger is that the motivation for these external pressures is based in the first place on the interests of the countries outside and not on the interests of the peoples directly concerned in Southern Africa. It would have been much better if differences could have been settled between the parties in the region themselves, without outside interference. But efforts in that direction during the 1974 to early 1976 détente period did not succeed, and now the external involvement is an unescapable fact. The positive side, however, is that Western interest in, and commitment to, the stable development of the region is now being clearly demonstrated, and we can hope that this will be a constructive influence for the long-term benefit of the peoples of the region. What we shall have to appreciate, perhaps, is that we cannot have this commitment simply on our own terms, and if we are to retain the advantages of this commitment - and there are potentially great advantages for the future - we shall have to be prepared for changes more radical than presently contemplated.

In view of this developing external influence on our political development, it may be useful to look more closely at the American approach to Southern Africa, before turning to examine briefly the outlook for the two particular critical issues in Southern Africa - namely Rhodesia and South West Africa - which are the subjects of the current negotiating process.

The United States Approach

In the past (with the exception perhaps of a brief period in the early 1960's) the real political interest of the U.S. in Africa has been minimal. In general, American Governments have been content to leave the European, ex-colonial, powers to make the running on policy towards African questions (e.g. Rhodesia). This has clearly changed now, and for the first time a Secretary of State has become directly and personally involved in Southern Africa. An important part of the motivation behind the new American involvement is concern about possible Soviet intentions since the Angolan episode - as already indicated above. This is linked with the growing appreciation of the strategic importance of the resources of Southern Africa, and perhaps also of the strategic location of this region between the Atlantic and Indian Oceans - although this latter point has been exaggerated by South African spokesmen.

However, an equally important element in American motivation relates to developments within the field of race relations in the United States itself. This is a complicated question which is still developing, but there are three aspects which can be mentioned :

(i) The question of race is no longer an issue in the American political system. There may still be marginal problems to be settled, such as that of school bussing, but there is no longer anyone, north or south, who is prepared to defend policies based in any way on racial separation, let alone discrimination.

(ii) American Blacks are now playing an increasingly significant role within the political system. It is not simply the number of Blacks, constituting over 15% of the population and concentrated as effective voting groups in certain important states; it is rather the increasingly important role of black leaders in political and other fields. It has been said in this regard that black leaders have now come off the streets (i.e. the protest movements) and into government, industry and other professions.

(iii) Although the question of race is no longer at issue in the American political system, racial conflict is a matter of recent history, and there is a fear that a racial conflagration in Africa could have a profoundly negative effect within American society. The prevention of such a conflagration, for this very reason, is said to be an important part of Dr. Kissinger's motivation in his current initiatives - apart from the fears about the effects on world peace.

So it must be appreciated here and elsewhere in Southern Africa that the U.S. is acting in its own national interests, external and domestic, and these interests will not permit it any longer to give support to the status quo, i.e. to the continuation of white domination anywhere. This is not a question of advocating revolution or even demanding immediate radical change. But we must be in no doubt about the fact that, if American support for peaceful change and constructive development is to be retained, there will have to be clear and active commitment to change in all the presently white-ruled countries.

The nature of the change in South Africa's case must obviously be determined here, in the interests of our own people. But this determination cannot be made by Whites alone for the Blacks and other groups. There will have to be effective participation by all in the decision-making about our joint political future - as has already been recognised in South African policy towards South West Africa and Rhodesia. This is a basic requirement for internal peace and order; for acceptance in Africa; and for normal relations with the rest of the world - including the United States whose support, and even protection we are presently seeking.

It appears that an important part of Dr. Kissinger's approach to Rhodesia and South West Africa, as well as to South Africa, is that the goal of economic development - on the basis of our considerable natural and human resources, with Western assistance - can provide the incentive to all groups to make the accommodations required for peaceful and acceptable change. The economic capability of the United States gives it the means to back up his initiatives in a meaningful way. This is an advantage which the Soviet Union does not have; its influence at present is based mainly on its ability to supply weapons.

Another advantage which the Soviet Union does not have, is that the United States can talk to all sides (or most of them) in the Southern African conflicts. The American expectation, no doubt, is that, if the violence can be stopped and replaced with a reasonable hope on all sides that negotiations can be fruitful, then the Russian influence will decline. This is precisely what has happened in the Middle East.

Finally, on the American approach, there must be one further note of caution about the outlook. While there is a determination now about the approach to Southern Africa, future policy is not predictable with certainty, given the fact that Administrations and Congresses change, as does the mood of the American public. If American efforts in this region are seriously frustrated, and if another crisis in the world develops to absorb American attention, it is conceivable that the U.S. could simply "throw up its hands", cut its losses in the region, and simply leave us all to our own devices - and to the devices of more persistent world powers. This development may seem unlikely now, in view of the apparent importance of the region's resources to the West, but a breaking-point may come, if we are unable to put our house in order.

Rhodesia

What the outlook will be for the whole of Southern Africa in the next few years depends largely on the settlement moves in Rhodesia. There is more reason for hope now than there has been for some time, but obviously there are still many obstacles to be overcome in this tremendously complex situation. One cannot begin to describe this situation adequately here, and it would be a very rash man who attempted to forecast the outcome of the current negotiations. It may be useful, however, in considering the present developments, to draw up a very tentative balance sheet of the negative and positive factors at this stage.

On the credit or positive side one can make briefly the following points :

- ... The ruling Rhodesian Front Party, under Mr. Ian Smith, has accepted the realities of its own position and of South Africa's untenable position vis-a-vis Rhodesia, if the present unsettled state of affairs continues. After the settlement proposals and the alternatives were presented to Mr. Smith and his Ministers by Mr. Vorster and Dr. Kissinger, Mr. Smith responded positively and clearly in his statement of 24 September. On the basis of this response the way forward to settlement negotiations should be open from the white side, even though Mr. Smith has indicated that he would not have chosen this way (if he had a choice), and even though there are still some points at dispute in his response.
- ... There is a firm determination now on the part of the United States and the United Kingdom to bring about a settlement and thus to stem the spread of Soviet influence in the region. This offers the assurance of continued Western political influence in the region, to balance that of the Soviet Union - something that has been missing in the past.
- ... There is an appreciation of the need to make some provision for the protection of minorities, which is intended to reassure whites, and this is spelt out in the economic sphere in the plan to guarantee compensation for pensions, property, etc., on the basis of an international Trust Fund to be set up.
- ... There is also an appreciation of the economic opportunities of Rhodesia and a willingness to undertake measures to stimulate development through investment and aid.
- ... An early lifting of sanctions is promised. According to the present proposals, this would take place as soon as an interim government is formed and would not await a final settlement.
- ... As a result of these reassuring elements in the present package of proposals, the attitude of businessmen in Rhodesia seems to be fairly positive towards the settlement plans. This is very important, as the confidence of the business community is essential, if the plan is to work. In this regard the lifting of sanctions is the crucial factor and is more important than the financial aid which may be forthcoming.
- ... In spite of the divisions among black groups, there are now more serious efforts to form a credible nationalist front for the purposes of negotiations (although these efforts have not yet borne fruit, as discussed below).

- ... There is a substantial number of Blacks in Rhodesia with a stake in the economic system, and this is appreciated by at least some of the nationalist leaders. As Rhodesia is far more advanced economically than Mozambique and Angola, there is much more to lose by disorder, and this provides an incentive for compromise.
- ... The concept of an interim government is in itself a positive factor of importance. Previously the settlement attempts were based on efforts to agree first on a final constitution; then the negotiations became bogged down in details. There is a chance now that black and white leaders can first learn to work together in running the country and develop some mutual trust on which a final constitutional solution can be based.

On the debit or negative side one must place the following items :

- ... There is a serious legacy of mistrust between the black nationalists and the white government, as a result of the many previous abortive attempts at finding a settlement, the escalating war situation, etc.
- ... The divisions and rivalries between the black nationalist groups and between their leaders constitute probably the most serious obstacle in the way of a viable settlement. As already indicated, there is now a struggle for power going on, and it is difficult to see how this will be resolved. It will be impossible to negotiate meaningfully if there is no credible, unified nationalist voice.
- ... Among the black "front-line" Presidents, the militant influence appears to be increasing. These Presidents have a vital role, both in bringing about unity among the nationalists and in assuring that a settlement will be acceptable externally. But it is now difficult to predict how effectively they will perform this role, and to determine whether they are all motivated in the first place by the interests of the inhabitants of Rhodesia, or by their own ideological interests. A decision to continue or to stop the war is largely in their hands, and, if the war does not stop within a reasonable period after the formation of an interim government, it is unlikely that negotiations for a final settlement will be able to continue.
- ... Related to the latter point is the question of Russian influence. Judging by the Soviet Government's statements, it will do what it can to prevent the American initiatives from succeeding. But the extent of Russian influence on the various nationalist parties is not yet clear.
- ... There is still some lack of confidence among many Whites, who largely hold the economic power. This lack of confidence could have a serious effect on the stability of the country, if it grows and causes an exodus of Whites.
- ... A particular difficulty, which hopefully may be overcome within the next few days, is the different interpretations of some parts of the Vorster/Kissinger/Smith agreement. Specifically these differences relate to the chairmanship of the proposed Council of State, and to the two portfolios (Defence and Law and Order) which Mr. Smith says will be retained by Whites in the interim government. In view of the strong stand taken on these points by the "front-line" Presidents, as well as by nationalist leaders in Rhodesia, Mr. Smith's Government may be required to make some

further concessions. In this case there is the danger that Mr. Smith may decide to withdraw from the agreement, which would mean beginning all over again.

In view of the critically important question of disunity among the black groups, and of who will emerge to lead the nationalist side in the interim government and in the negotiations for a final constitutional settlement, it may be useful to indicate briefly the apparent line-up at this stage of the nationalist groups under their respective leaders. The three leaders in the present struggle for influence, both internally and externally, are Mr. Joshua Nkomo, Bishop Abel Muzorewa and Mr. Robert Mugabe.

Mr. Joshua Nkomo: He is the leader of longest standing in the nationalist struggle, head of the first nationalist movement to be founded (ZAPU) in the late 1950's. He has an effective organization throughout Rhodesia (not only among the Matabele, as often alleged), but there are doubts as to the extent of his internal support, particularly in the towns, compared with that of Bishop Muzorewa. However, he also has some military strength in the ZAPU section of the so-called Zimbabwe People's Army (ZIPA). His section of ZIPA operates from Zambia and Botswana.

Externally, it appears that Mr. Nkomo has considerable support among the "front-line" Presidents, and that he is also favoured by the Western countries and by South Africa. In addition, Mr. Nkomo has links with the Soviet Union, as ZAPU in the past was always the movement supported by the Soviet Union (while ZANU was supported by China). This all puts him in a fairly strong position, in spite of the doubt about his internal support.

Bishop Abel Muzorewa: The Bishop only came to prominence in 1972, when he was chosen to head the new African National Council (ANC) within Rhodesia, formed to oppose the settlement agreement reached between Mr. Smith and Sir Alec Douglas-Home. Then, when the Vorster/Kaunda détente initiatives began at the end of 1974, the ZAPU and ZANU movements agreed (under pressure from Presidents Kaunda and Nyerere) to unite under his leadership. He has thus always had the unifying role, although he has never been regarded as a strong leader in himself. It is clear that he has considerable internal support, as witnessed by his reception on his return to Salisbury a few days ago, and many observers regard his following within Rhodesia as overwhelmingly greater than that of any other nationalist leader. However, he has been rejected by the "front-line" Presidents, and he apparently at this stage has no section of ZIPA owing allegiance to him.

Mr. Robert Mugabe: He has come fairly recently into prominence as a nationalist leader. He belongs to the ZANU faction which at the beginning of the 1960's broke away from ZAPU under the leadership of the Rev. Ndabaningi Sithole. While in detention with Sithole, Mugabe tried to supplant him as leader, which he now seems effectively at last to have done. For some time he has been out of circulation, almost in detention in Mozambique, while attempts were made to find a new leader from among the ranks of ZIPA, the so-called "Third Force". No effective leader emerged, however, and very recently Mr. Mugabe has appeared as the political leader of the ZANU section of ZIPA, which is the larger section compared with the ZAPU section loyal to Mr. Nkomo.

Mr. Mugabe has no internal organisation, and his strength therefore is dependent on the Army, which operates from Mozambique, and on the support of

President Machel. It is thus not clear to what extent he is a political leader in his own right, or whether he is almost a hostage of the Mozambique Government and ZIPA. In any case, he is adopting a hard line publicly towards the settlement proposals and appears to be reflecting a Mozambican view in this regard.

There have been attempts by the front-line Presidents to bring Mr. Mugabe and Mr. Nkomo together in a common front for the purposes of the settlement negotiations, and talks in this regard have been going on in Maputo. An alliance between their respective groups, however, is unlikely to be an easy one.

The next few weeks will be crucial for the three main nationalist groups, and for the settlement plans. At present the groups all have significant elements of strength, and there could be serious problems if any one of them actively opposes the settlement arrangements. It would seem important, therefore, that some level of agreement should be reached between all three (or at the very least between two of them), if there is to be both sufficient internal support for settlement and a halt to external subversion. In particular, it would seem important, in the long term view, that Bishop Muzorewa's supporters should be taken more seriously than they appear to have been in the recent past, both by the United States and by the front-line Presidents.

The obstacles thus appear to be considerable, but it is most important that the momentum of the negotiations should be kept up - that the proposed conference to form the interim government should be held as soon as possible; that the interim government should be installed, even if it does not initially have full support from all parties. If the negotiations get bogged down in details and in personal rivalries, the considerable progress that has already been made will fast be dissipated. Then there is likely to be a rapid deterioration of the situation, with violence seen by all parties as the only available course and with little hope of a peaceful settlement.

South West Africa

Apart from the special case of Rhodesia, South West Africa is the only remaining substantial territory in Africa that is still in a colonial situation. In this regard it is worth mentioning here that South Africa itself is in a different position vis-a-vis the rest of Africa. The official O.A.U. policy, as reflected in the Lusaka Manifesto of 1969 and the Dar-es-Salaam Declaration of 1975, is that South Africa is recognised as an independent African state, although its internal policies are not accepted, while Rhodesia and South West Africa are regarded as colonial territories which must still achieve legitimate independence. In both cases, South Africa's role in making such independence possible, is considered crucial, particularly in the case of South West Africa, where South Africa is in effect the colonial power. Dr. Kissinger has based his diplomacy on this approach, regarding the South African Government as holding the key to the settlement of these "colonial" issues.

In the modern world, with colonialism having almost disappeared, the status of South West Africa as a dependency of South Africa cannot be maintained. This issue, which has for so long had a negative effect on our external relations, must be settled through the granting of independence. The alternative of incorporation of the Territory within a larger South Africa could not be seriously pursued, and the Government recognised this more than a decade ago. It then began to talk about self-determination and independence in the Territory, but it advocated this on the basis of the separate development of different ethnic groups. This was, of course, not acceptable to the

international community, nor to the majority of the people within the Territory. The realisation therefore gradually grew that, if this issue was to be removed from the international agenda and if the dispute with the rest of Africa was to be ended, the independence of the Territory as one state would have to be accepted. This acceptance has become clear since the Turnhalle Conference began in September, 1975, with its Declaration of Intent, and it was confirmed by the announcement of the Constitutional Committee of that Conference on 18 August of this year, that the intention was for the Territory to become independent as one unit by 31 December, 1978.

South West Africa/Namibia is therefore moving towards independence, but the structure of the future independent state has not yet been settled, and this remains a very controversial question.

The Constitutional Committee of the Turnhalle Conference has proposed in its most recent statement a three-tier system of government for South West Africa. There is, of course, nothing original in a three-tier system; we have one in South Africa with the national government, the Provinces and Municipalities. But in the case of South West Africa the intention with this system is that it should make provision for at least some measure of self-government for the different ethnic groups in the Territory. This would be the purpose of the second tier of government, while the first tier would be the national government, and the third tier municipal. Several important and controversial questions remain to be answered, when the Committee continues its work on the proposed constitution :

(1) Will all significant powers be vested in the national government, with only certain restricted powers of a regional and perhaps cultural nature delegated to the second tier governments?

(2) Will the second tier governments be based on purely ethnic group lines, or will they be regional governments, with perhaps particular groups dominant in each of the regions?

(3) Will the national government be elected directly by the people of the whole Territory, with a formula perhaps to ensure adequate representation of minorities, or will the national government simply be nominated by the group or regional governments of the second tier?

(4) Will the third-tier government, i.e. the municipalities, be multi-racial, or will there be an attempt to maintain ethnic divisions, i.e. separate towns for whites, coloureds, blacks, etc?

It can be seen that behind all these particular questions lies the central issue of whether a proposed constitution for an independent South West Africa/Namibia is to be based on ethnic divisions. There is no doubt that there are significant language, cultural, educational, economic and historical differences between groups in South West Africa and, if a workable settlement is to be achieved, these must be taken into account. But it has to be appreciated, if one is to be realistic, that a political system based primarily on the ethnic divisions, rather than on the national unity of the new state, will not be acceptable internationally - even to the countries of the West, let alone those of Africa. And I suspect that it will not be acceptable internally either, because there is a growing sense of national identity in the Territory, particularly among the more politically sophisticated, who will after all be those who will have to run the new state. Internationally and internally an over-emphasis on ethnic groups will simply be seen as an attempt to entrench a watered-down version of separate development - and it does seem clear from their statements that the Turnhalle leaders do wish to avoid this.

In addition, there are the very real practical difficulties of creating efficient government based on ethnic groups, many of whose members are scattered all over the Territory.

The South African Government has maintained firmly that it is up to the people of the Territory themselves to decide on their future, and in this regard the Government places its hope in the Turnhalle Conference. But, as the colonial power in this case, South Africa cannot simply stand aside in the international arena. Negotiations are therefore now proceeding, with Dr. Henry Kissinger as the middle-man, aimed at finding an acceptable process through which an international agreement over the future of the Territory can be reached. While it is true that a permanent settlement must be based first on an internal agreement, South Africa has always acknowledged the international character of the Territory and therefore must work for an acceptance of an independent South West Africa/Namibia by the international community.

Our experience with the United Nations has not been a happy one, and it may thus seem an almost impossible task to obtain U.N. approval for a South African-sponsored solution. But here it must be borne in mind that what is essential is agreement with the African states; once that is obtained, U.N. acceptance will follow almost automatically and many of the countless U.N. resolutions of past years will then become irrelevant.

If agreement is to be reached with the African states - or at least a majority of them - then there would seem to be two basic requirements. Firstly, every effort must be made to enable and encourage the people in the Territory to express themselves freely and independently. If the Turnhalle Conference is to be the vehicle for the expression of the people's wishes, it must demonstrate its independence, firmly establish its credibility as a truly representative body, and find ways of effectively countering the allegations that it is being manipulated to serve the interests of South Africa and of the white group in the Territory. Even if one can prove that the Conference is the most representative gathering to have been held in the Territory, one has to face the fact that it is not fully accepted as such in Africa or anywhere else in the world. Some Western governments are inclined to be more objective and give some attention to the deliberations of the Conference, but even they are not prepared to accept it as fully representative and therefore entitled to determine, on its own, the future of the Territory.

This brings us to the second and most controversial requirement, related to the position of SWAPO. It is difficult, if not impossible, to ascertain the degree of support which SWAPO has in the Territory. It has not participated in those ethnic group elections which there have been, and it cannot operate openly without restrictions. Claims made by SWAPO about its support can be taken to be exaggerated, but then so can the claims from the other side about SWAPO's lack of support. At least it can be said that, among the many political parties in the Territory, SWAPO is the strongest one on a national basis, and particularly within the Owambo group which constitutes 46% of the total population. However, while this question of internal support cannot be answered conclusively, there is no doubt about the external support which SWAPO has. It is recognised by the African states, and therefore also by the U.N., as the sole authentic movement representative of the people. Although not recognised as such by most Western governments, it does nevertheless have access to those governments, who regard a settlement without the participation of SWAPO as almost meaningless.

This does not mean to say that the United States and other Western governments advocate simply a hand-over of power to SWAPO. In fact, I believe this is almost the last thing they would want, given SWAPO's increased militancy and Marxist tendencies since the Angolan war. But they consider that, if an independent settlement is to be credible and acceptable internationally, SWAPO must somehow be brought into the negotiating process and some way must be found of objectively testing SWAPO's strength in the Territory. One can speculate perhaps that their hope would be that, if the Turnhalle leaders can demonstrate their independence from South Africa and its policies, then they will increase their internal strength and draw support away from SWAPO.

SWAPO itself has indicated in recent months that it is willing to negotiate with the South African Government as the colonial power, but not with the Turnhalle leaders. South Africa insists that such negotiations should be with the Turnhalle Conference. Some way must now be found of getting around these positions of principle, in order that there can be negotiations on the basis of the realities, and in order that there can be a settlement which will be acceptable internally and internationally. With some compromise on both sides, it should not be too difficult to arrange such negotiations, possibly in the form of a conference outside the Territory, and I believe that this is the aim of Dr. Kissinger's current initiatives. The Constitutional Committee of the Turnhalle Conference is reported to be considering this question now, and there have been discussions between the Americans and SWAPO.

It is obviously too early to say what the outcome of all these discussions will be, but, if a meeting takes place in some form with SWAPO, then one of the questions to be dealt with will presumably be the holding of elections or a referendum in the Territory before independence, in order to test the acceptability of a constitution and/or the degree of support for SWAPO. The problem here is that the U.N. Security Council has demanded that there should be U.N. supervision of elections, and in particular the U.N.'s Council for Namibia is expected to be given a role. This will be difficult for the South African Government and probably for the Turnhalle Conference to accept, although there is no doubt that some form of international supervision or observation of elections or referendum will have to be accepted.

Although there are still problems ahead, one can conclude that the outlook for South West Africa is a reasonably optimistic one. If independence can be achieved, hopefully even earlier than the end of 1978, which is generally acceptable internally and internationally, then the new state can look forward to a bright future economically. With the likelihood of increased investment from outside, there is considerable potential for the development of the mining industry, for example. With the political constraints removed, there can be hope for the growth of other sectors, too, and also for international aid for education, training, etc., to stimulate development generally.