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THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA AND DÉTENTE

by

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Institute of International Affairs  
Salisbury

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AND DETENTE

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SENATOR DR. DENIS WORRALL

Edited version of an address to a meeting of  
The Institute of International Affairs in  
Salisbury on 24 June, 1975. Senator Worrall  
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Mount Pleasant  
Salisbury  
Rhodesia

1975

Although I am speaking to you tonight as a Nationalist politician, I am reminded of a point which Maurice Cowling of Cambridge makes in a very excellent little book called *The Nature and Limits of Political Science*(1). He is rather sceptical of political scientists who suppose that by studying the outer manifestations of government, light will be thrown on the way governments actually work - as though, to quote Cowling:

those who govern make public the factors which determine the decisions they take. Not only is it unlikely that their explanations will reveal their intentions: it is likely, on the contrary, that they will conceal them. And not only in trivial or unimportant matters but in important matters also: the more important the matter, the more likely is concealment to occur ..... Those who govern are apt to take actions for which the reasons cannot be given: and often the reasons that are given are designed to lead those who study them as far away from the true reasons as possible.(2)

As a political scientist I *believed* this to be true; as a politician I now *know* it to be so. And therefore although I speak to you tonight as a parliamentary representative of the ruling party in South Africa, this must necessarily be a personal interpretation of South Africa's policy towards Southern Africa.

#### *South Africa in the post-World War II Period*

There are probably three primary reasons why South Africa has drawn more international attention in the post-World War II period than its size, resources, and general importance warrant. Firstly, there is the fact of colour. South Africa's policies have been seen to conflict with the non-discriminatory and integrational norms generally advocated and expounded in such documents as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination. Secondly, South Africa has drawn attention to itself as a carry over from colonialism. It has been viewed in the same light as former European-colonised territories in East and Central Africa, and has been seen to represent a reaction to the epochal developments based on majority rule and self-determination which have changed the political configuration of the African continent. And thirdly, South Africa has drawn attention to itself because of its strategic importance both with respect to its precious mineral resources and its geographic location.

During the Fifties, South Africa under pressure withdrew from certain international organisations which it deemed less than useful (e.g. UNESCO), but it clung to its membership of those organisations which served a practical value. Despite the great increase in the number of states in the world, South Africa's diplomatic relations remained more or less static.

The Republic's alienation within the international community reached new

extremes in the early Sixties. Out of the Commonwealth and no longer cushioned by Britain, the early Sixties saw a massive increase in demands for trade sanctions, and boycott movements proliferated. In influential circles abroad there was a feeling, almost an expectation, that internal change induced by violence was just around the corner. South Africa's race relations policy stood out against the movement towards independence in the rest of Africa and rudely contradicted the hopes of those who, during the infancy of independent African politics, saw in Africa a kind of renaissance of man: African states, it was believed, would achieve democracy without the growing pains of industrialisation; African states, it was believed, would achieve the kind of Pan-African unity leaders like Nkrumah preached, without having to pass through the traumas of nationalism.

In the early years of the Sixties South Africa sat out tightly. As an insurance against embargoes and sanctions the search for oil was commenced and SASOL was expanded. The armed forces were reorganised and a massive military build-up undertaken. On the race relations front the Homeland policy was delineated more boldly and the Odendaal Commission<sup>(3)</sup> was appointed to draw up detailed proposals for South West Africa. Concerned by the effects on South Africa's trade, of Britain's possible entry to the European Economic Community, a determined effort was made to diversify the Republic's international trade.

#### *The Outward Policy of the Sixties*

Several developments in the mid-Sixties contributed to the question of a more favourable international climate as far as the Republic was concerned. In the first place the economic boom in the country of 1964 and 1965 put South Africa high up on the list of important trading countries, a fact which, combined with its greater military strength and armament self-sufficiency, put an end for the time being to talk of military invasions and economic sanctions. Racial tension in Britain and elsewhere, and the slow-down of the civil rights movement in the United States as it had been conceived in the years following Supreme Court's decision in *Brown vs. the Board of Education* of 1954, was another factor favouring South Africa: without implying approval of South African policies, these developments underlined the intractability of race problems and the improbability of instant solutions. The failure of African states to realise the early hope held out for them should be added to this factor.

The development of super-tankers and the closing later of the Suez Canal focused attention on the Cape sea route; and although there is disagreement about its strategic value in a nuclear age, an old argument for meaningful co-operation with the Republic was given new substance. Finally, among the factors which changed the international environment as far as South Africa was concerned, was the independence of Black states in and around the Republic. Apart from the fact that their dependence on South Africa was not lost on South Africa's detractors, the situation was created which forced policy-makers in the Republic to face up to the question of relations with independent Black African states. These were the circumstances which gave rise to the so-called "outward policy". In essence this policy involved a determination on South Africa's part to define its foreign policy objectives more ambitiously than in the past and to pursue these goals with greater vigour. There appeared to be three facets to this policy, the economic, the diplomatic, and the informational.

On the economic front the Republic was determined to expand its trade relations as widely as possible. The old reliance on Britain, while undoubtedly of continued

importance, was seen to contain hazards; and hence trade relations were expanded to other European countries and extended to South America and the Far East. On the diplomatic front the "outward policy" had as its objective the generation of a strong sense of Southern African regionalism through the establishment of diplomatic and other relations with these states. Also a part of the diplomatic/political facet of the "outward policy" was the Republic's expressed desire to play a role in conjunction with certain South American countries and Australia in the defence of the Southern hemisphere. On the informational front the goal of the "outward policy" was the promotion of a more positive image of South Africa, combined with a more flexible response to criticism of South Africa's policies. In this regard it took advantage of the greater uncertainty which existed and continues to exist in informed circles in Western countries in particular as to what should be done about South Africa and its problems.

### *The First Dialogue Movement*

The "outward policy" was not specifically directed at Africa, though it represented a change in gear of South Africa's foreign policy in general. However in the period 1969 to 1971 the Republic achieved a relative break-through in its relations with the rest of Africa. On 7 November 1969 Dr. K.A. Busia, Ghana's new Prime Minister, announced that he favoured dialogue with Pretoria, and despite criticisms from within Ghana he reiterated this view in November 1970. However, the overthrow shortly afterwards of Busia's government ended this possibility as far as Ghana was concerned. A more significant initiative for contact with South Africa came in particular from the Francophone states of West Africa. The lead here was taken by President Felix Houphouet-Boigny of the Ivory Coast who, on 4 November 1970, announced that he intended calling a meeting of African leaders to promote direct talks with South Africa. Within a matter of days, several other African heads of government, including President Philibert Tsiranana of Madagascar, President Omar Bongo of Gabon, President Leopold-Sedar Senghor of Senegal, and President Jean-Bedel Bokassa of the Central African Republic, came out in support of contact with South Africa.

Support for dialogue grew in 1971, when at a major press conference in Abidjan on 28 April, President Houphouet-Boigny confirmed that he would continue with dialogue and try to persuade other African heads of state to support him. On this occasion he also intimated that he would visit South Africa if the initial contacts proved fruitful. The Africa Institute of South Africa regards this press conference as marking the high-water mark of the movement towards West African/South African dialogue in the period 1969 to 1971, because two months later the OAU expressed itself in opposition to dialogue, except on the basis set out in the Lusaka Manifesto of April, 1969.<sup>(4)</sup>

### *The Coup in Lisbon*

Diplomatic relations between South Africa and other countries in Africa was officially at a standstill in the period from mid-1971 to mid-1974, although trade, of course, continued. Then somewhere during 1972, a decision was taken to switch the focus of South Africa's foreign policy to Africa. The course of the South West Africa issue at the United Nations and developments in the Portuguese territories and Rhodesia will have influenced this decision. But what was crucial was the realization that South Africa was wasting its time trying to make an impact on Western countries as long as it failed to demonstrate some measure of acceptability in Africa itself.

It would come as no surprise to me if Prime Minister John Vorster figured in this decision. Mr. Vorster is a hard-headed realist with an acute understanding of the nature of power. He is a resourceful negotiator and very effective in person-to-person contacts and not to be under-estimated. However, possibly the main significance of his contribution to South African foreign policy to date is the fact that under his leadership South Africa, for the first time, has become completely Africa-orientated. Previous Prime Ministers to a varying degree all started from the premise that South Africa was a part of Europe in Africa. Mr. Vorster broke with this shortly after becoming Prime Minister, when he spoke of white Africans as "being of Africa; Africa has been kind to us; and we intend paying back to Africa something of what we have received from Africa" - a sentiment which runs through many of his major speeches on South Africa's relations with the rest of Africa. But whatever the decision, and regardless of who was responsible, when historians get down to writing up the course of South African foreign policy during the years 1972 to 1974, I have a feeling that they will find that our foreign policy efforts were greatly increased during these years, particularly the exploring of possible contact with Africa.

Of course what brought the issue to the surface was the coup in Lisbon and, more specifically, the subsequent decision of the new government to withdraw from Africa, but this is not to suggest that the Lisbon coup suddenly transformed South Africa's perception of the southern African situation. On the contrary, the South African response, as reflected publicly in the speeches of both the Prime Minister and Foreign Minister was, to quote the Africa Institute, "...the logical continuation of the South African government's long-standing policy of seeking co-operation and sound relationships with others, and adhering to the principle of non-intervention in the domestic affairs of its neighbours on the continent of Africa."(5)

In other words, the South African response to events in the Portuguese territories was the only one South Africa could logically adopt. Surprising, therefore, is the fact that there were nevertheless fears at the time that South Africa would intervene. The Prime Minister's interview in *Newsweek* of 16 September 1974 must have gone a long way towards putting these fears to rest. The South African Prime Minister received full marks for his diplomatic correctness in handling this situation. But more important than this, South Africa probably demonstrated its *bona fides* to other African countries. The Africa Institute puts it like this:

It is possible that in the eyes of President Kaunda and certain other African leaders this consistent application of South African principles in practice seemed to supply surprising, but convincing, proof of the South African Prime Minister's credibility and of the fact that he is just as sincerely concerned about peace and co-operation as any other responsible African leader. President Kaunda's philosophy is clearly another important factor which would have had a positive bearing on such a demonstration of good faith.(5)

*First Public Moves in Détente*

With his speech in the South African Senate on 23 October 1974, Mr. Voster moved beyond a single response to events in the Portuguese territories, for with this speech he publicly committed South Africa to a wider détente movement. To quote the Prime Minister's central theme:

I believe that southern Africa has come to the cross-roads. I believe that southern Africa has to make a choice. I think that that choice lies between peace on one hand and an escalation of strife on the other. The consequences of an escalation are easily foreseeable. The toll of a major confrontation will be high. I would go so far as to say that it would be too high for southern Africa to pay ... But there is an alternative way. That way is the way of peace. The way of normalizing of relations, the way of sound understanding and normal association. I believe that southern Africa can take that way. I have reason to believe that it is prepared to take that way. And I believe that it will do so in the end.(6)

The main themes of the Senate speech were underlined the next day by South Africa's Ambassador at the United Nations, Mr. Pik Botha, in an address to the General Assembly.(7) Mr. Vorster himself returned to the same themes in a speech in his own constituency of Nigel on 5 November (this was his widely reported "give us six months" speech) (8) and at a political rally in Zeerust a week later.

Of very considerable significance was the Zambian response, Dr. Kaunda on 26 October(9) described Mr. Vorster's speech as the "voice of reason". He went on to say "that African countries will not take up arms and fight South Africa. The people of South Africa will face the primary task of shaping their own destiny". The significance of the Zambian response lies in the fact that, although there was a frank exchange of letters between the Zambian President and the South African Prime Minister between April and August 1968, relations between the two countries had been severed since June 1967 when the Zambian government prohibited Zambians from working in South African mines (an estimated 6,000 Zambians were involved). The extent of the break-down of relations which followed is reflected in the sudden decline - from 25,000 in 1965 to a standstill - of South African tourists to Zambia.

Why the change in attitude implicit in President Kaunda's response to Mr. Vorster's speech? Mr. C.J.A. Barratt, Director of the South African Institute of International Affairs, in an article in *The World Today*(10) points out that developments in the Portuguese territories and in particular in Mozambique also had an effect on Zambia:

Although Dr. Kaunda had worked for the ending of Portuguese rule in Mozambique, he was suddenly faced in 1974 with the prospect of becoming involved, together with Mozambique, in a direct confrontation with the remaining bastions of White rule.

He must have realised that a confrontation with South Africa in particular would be very different in kind from anything else which had happened in southern Africa, and might engulf the whole of the region in uncontrollable violence.(11)

Zambia also, for economic reasons and the fact that the Tanzam railway line and the East African Community have lost a lot of their original glamour, has a direct interest in the maintenance of political stability in Mozambique. And the significance of this, as Barratt points out: "It seems clear therefore, that there is now a coincidence of interests between Zambia and South Africa in regard to the avoidance of direct confrontation in southern Africa and, in particular, in regard to the stable development of Mozambique".(12) This community of interests embraces also the achievement of a constitutional settlement in Rhodesia, for, as Barratt put it: "While Rhodesia remains in the middle (politically and economically, as well as physically), South Africa and Zambia cannot move effectively to negotiations about economic relations and eventually about political differences".(13)

But whatever the precise reasons for Zambia's positive response to the South African Prime Minister's speech of 23 October, there is little question that Zambia has a direct interest in the avoidance of confrontation and conflict in southern Africa. (Interesting in this regard is Mr. Colin Legum's account of the emergence of détente. According to him, the OAU and Zambia took the initiative and invited Pretoria to respond.) (14) Moreover, this interest expressed in fairly extensive, formal government-to-government contacts with South Africa. As a matter of fact, according to the Africa Institute<sup>(15)</sup>, between 5 October 1974 and 12 February 1975 there were no fewer than fifteen meetings in Cape Town, Pretoria, Lusaka, and Salisbury between representatives of the two governments, and on 9 February the South African Foreign Minister, Dr. Hilgard Muller, visited Lusaka. This visit was described by Zambian television as "epoch-making". Shortly afterwards a South African Broadcasting news team, the first since the 1964 Independence, and the Director of the Africa Institute, Dr. J.H. Moolman, and two of his senior researchers, visited Zambia. Both groups were cordially received.

However, South Africa's contacts over the past eighteen months have not been limited to Zambia, but have ranged very widely over Africa. Apart from the subsequently highly-publicised personal visit of Mr. Vorster to the Ivory Coast for discussions with President Houphouët-Boigny, and his visit to Liberia for discussions with President Tolbert, it may be assumed that South Africa has been in touch with other governments in Africa. The primary and obvious purpose of these contacts has been to inform these states of South Africa's objectives and, where possible, to gain their support. South Africa can also not be unmindful that contacts made beyond the southern African periphery serve as justification for leaders closer to home for whom dialogue is not simply an emotional or ideological issue.

#### *Détente and its Issues*

But what *are* South Africa's objectives in the détente process; what *is* it that South Africa hopes to achieve? With Maurice Cowling's cautionary words in mind



I would prefer to rephrase the question in terms of the main issues which are involved, for the mysterious ways of politicians aside, the fact is that a Community interest has emerged, or certainly appears to have emerged, among states in southern Africa, so that the same goals are in varying degrees shared. The main issues then, seen from a South African point of view, are the following: (1) The normalization of inter-state relations in southern Africa specifically and in Africa generally; (2) The resolution by peaceful means of the outstanding international problems of the region; and (3) The recognition in regional association terms of the inter-state relations which already exist among the several states and territories of southern Africa.

(1) The Normalization of Inter-state Relations: In one sense the concept of *normalized* relations is of course a relative concept - for relations between states vary in their intensity, their extent, and their amity. What is more, relations between states vary according to political personnel, changes in party, shifts in ideology, and of course perceptions of national interest differ. But on the other hand certain minimal assumptions underlie the regular relations between states: state recognition; non-interference in internal affairs; and the encouragement of trade and other non-political relations where these naturally and logically occur. Diplomatic relations as such are not a pre-requisite of normal relations - depending as they do on a country's resources and priorities in the international community - although certain minimal standards of "civilized" discourse are a requisite for normal relations.

By these standards, relations in southern Africa are certainly not normal. Although several of the national economies in the region are inextricably linked to the South African economy, and although inter-regional trade has actually continued to increase (official disclaimers notwithstanding), South Africa has diplomatic relations with only one other country in the region (Malawi); its right to survive is openly questioned; the most blatant forms of interference in South Africa's internal affairs are practised or permitted by other states in the region; which states also join in the hostile comment which is directed at South Africa at the United Nations and elsewhere; and which states also reject South Africa's *bona fides* as far as its internal policies are concerned. When, therefore, Mr. Vorster spoke of "normalization" he may be taken to have been referring to changes with respect to these aspects of inter-state relations in southern Africa.

To describe normalization of relations as an issue of *détente* in these terms is not, as some might think, to evade what many regard as the main cause of South Africa's international estrangement, namely its governmental structure, its political processes, and pattern of race relations. Normalization, in fact, *détente* as such, does have unavoidable implications for South Africa (and also for Rhodesia), measured in terms of that country's domestic policies, and I will return to these presently. But up till now, our African, like so many of our critics elsewhere, have approached South Africa dogmatically and have tended not to see what developments have occurred or to recognize the generally changing character of the South African policy. If normalization of inter-state relations is explicitly acknowledged in official statements to be an issue in southern African *détente*, so are the reasons for wanting relations normalized. The first is unquestionably the need to put an end to violence in the region and so negate the dangers of an escalation of strife. This is what the Prime Minister was referring to in his Senate speech when he said: "On considering South Africa on this occasion it is clear to all of us that for a decade or more southern Africa has unfortunately been characterized by violence and strife". Seemingly intent on clearing away all

possible misunderstandings in this regard, and allaying any fears that may be, Mr. Vorster again repeated his government's willingness to enter a non-aggression pact with "... any government which requests this and which may perhaps harbour any misgivings on that score". But while he promised "... that although no incidents would be provoked on the part of South Africa, and no problem caused", he cautioned that "... South Africa has the elementary right to defend itself with all the power at its command, and South Africa's power in that regard is not inconsiderable".(16)

South Africa also considers normalization of relations as desirable in view of the threat of Great Power rivalry and involvement in Africa. In his Senate speech the Prime Minister referred to this when he said:

"I believe that we have reached the stage where Africa should give serious consideration to itself and to its future, where Africa should in all earnest ask itself where it is going and where it wants to go, particularly if we take cognizance of what is happening in the Indian Ocean and of the disturbances which are being caused by that."(17)

This is not a new position as far as South Africa is concerned. In fact it figured in the earlier "dialogue" movement and was strongly echoed at that time by President Houphouët-Boigny. In a widely publicised press interview on 14 May 1971, the Ivory Coast leader urged dialogue with Pretoria because, he said, the real danger to Africa was not South Africa, but rather communist expansion.

South Africa furthermore believes that normalization of inter-state relations is necessary if African countries are to achieve satisfactory levels of economic development. In his Senate speech the Prime Minister, as on other occasions, committed South Africa to contributing its share to the continent's needs in this respect.

(2) The settlement by peaceful means of the international problems of the region: The two major problems of international concern in the region, namely South West Africa and Rhodesia, have for some time been points of friction; and in present circumstances they constitute obstacles to the normalization of inter-state relations in southern Africa. It is encouraging that settlement of these problems by peaceful means is entailed also in the community of interest which has emerged in southern Africa. Apart from earlier statements by President Kaunda, indicating a preference for negotiated settlements, and a similar commitment by Sir Seretse Khama on 18 November(18) when opening the Botswana parliamentary session, according to Mr. Legum(19) the Lusaka Agreement reached between the parties to the Rhodesian dispute in December 1974, represented the first concrete joint Black African commitment to the principle of a negotiated non-violent settlement of, specifically, the Rhodesian issue. That agreement was witnessed and backed by Zambia, Botswana, Tanzania, and Mozambique. This position was endorsed and extended to include also South West Africa at the April meeting of OAU Foreign Ministers at Dar es Salaam.(20)

On the other side, if proof were needed of South Africa's commitment to the peaceful settlement of disputes in the region, this is present in Mr. Vorster's speech in the Senate, with its reference to "... the toll of major confrontation

being too high for southern Africa to pay", and also in his speech in Nigal where he spoke of the choice before Africa lying between "either peace on the one side, or escalation of violence on the other; either co-operation on the one side, or confrontation on the other; either progress on the one side, or destruction on the other; either development on the one side, or stagnation on the other".(21)

South West Africa has been an issue of dispute between South Africa and the United Nations since the League of Nations was dissolved in April 1946. The question arose then of the future of South West Africa, and four courses suggested themselves: (1) The territory be placed under international trusteeship; (2) It be annexed by South Africa; (3) It become independent; and (4) The prevailing situation be maintained. Even before the dissolution of the League, the Legislative Assembly of South West Africa asked that the territory be incorporated into South Africa. And this was the request which General Smuts made to the United Nations in 1946. But this request was refused and South Africa was asked to transfer the territory to the new Trusteeship Council of the United Nations. South Africa declined to do so, adopting the position that she was under no legal obligation to the United Nations. By 1947 it was clear to South Africa that the United Nations would never agree to incorporation, and in June of that year the government informed the United Nations that it had no intention of pursuing this course: it would continue to administer the territory in the spirit of the mandate, and it undertook to furnish the United Nations with voluntary progress reports.

However, the new Government in 1948 decided to discontinue this practice. In consequence the United Nations asked the International Court for a legal opinion on the legal status of South West Africa, and for a statement of South Africa's obligations under the mandate. This is not the place to describe in detail the course of the dispute from this point on, with its several references to the International Court, the General Assembly's unlawful revocation of the mandate, and the increasing involvement of the Security Council, right down to the exercise earlier this month (June, 1975) by the United Kingdom, France and the United States of their veto of a mandatory arms embargo proposal. However, what is relevant in the light of détente is South Africa's present position on South West Africa and the steps which it has, and is, taking in that territory.

South Africa has repeatedly stated that it has no claim to South West Africa or to any part of its territory. In the letter the South African Minister of Foreign Affairs, Dr. Hilgard Muller, wrote to Dr. Waldheim on 27 May 1975, Dr. Muller wrote:

My government has repeatedly stated that it recognised the distinct international status of South West Africa, and that it does not claim one inch of the territory for itself. Its sole concern has been to develop the territory to the best interest of all its inhabitants and to prepare them for the orderly exercise of their right to self-determination.(22)

South Africa has also repeatedly stated that its goals for South West Africa are self-determination and independence. This much was confirmed by the Secretary-General following his meeting with the South African Prime Minister in March 1972. In his report Dr. Waldheim declared: "With regard to the question of Namibia, the South African government confirms that its policy is one of self-determination and independence".(23) However, it is precisely on this aspect that differences of opinion occur. Most of South Africa's critics at the United Nations understand self-determination to mean self-government on a majority rule basis, regardless of the great demographic and cultural diversity of the population. By contrast, the South African government has stressed the heterogeneity of the population, and the fact that the country is composed of many peoples, each of which has a right to maintain its cultural identity. However, the South African government has also consistently emphasized that the political future of South West Africa must be determined by the people of South West Africa themselves. In his letter of 27 May 1975 to the Secretary-General, Dr. Muller expressed this point as follows:

As is well-known, the basis of the South African Government's approach to the question of South West Africa is that it is for the people of South West Africa themselves to determine their own political and constitutional future in accordance with their own freely expressed wishes. This presupposes that they should exercise their choice freely and without interference from South Africa, the United Nations, or any other outside entity. All options are therefore open to them - including that of independence as one state, if that is what they should choose.(24)

In a nutshell, therefore, South African policy with regard to South West Africa is one of self-determination and independence in a form to be decided upon by the peoples of South West Africa themselves and they are in the process of taking this decision right now.

South Africa's attitude towards Rhodesia, both before and after UDI, is perfectly clear. In October 1965, Dr. Muller flatly said that South Africa would not interfere should Rhodesia declare independence unilaterally: "This is a matter which only concerns Rhodesia. South Africa's policy is not to interfere in other countries' affairs".(25) On 12 November, the day after UDI, Dr. H.F. Verwoerd, the then South African Prime Minister, said that "... in accordance with our policy of non-intervention, we did not try to tell either Great Britain what we thought it should do or Rhodesia what we thought it should do".(26) This, therefore, was the official position, whatever reservations there were in government-supporting circles regarding the wisdom of the UDI course. This attitude was also clearly reflected on 25 January 1966, in the first comprehensive statement of the South African standpoint which Dr. Verwoerd gave the South African parliament. The South African position rested on two principles, which it had tried to uphold from the time of General Smuts. The first of these

... is that we do not allow interference in our own matters, and, if we do not allow such interference, then we should not interfere in those of others. The moment we interfere, we would sacrifice our own principles ... The second major

principle of our policy is this: since we have been threatened over and over again with, and to certain extent have experienced, boycotts and sanctions, we have taken a clear attitude that under no circumstances, be it under pressure or under force, will we participate in either boycotts or sanctions.... Naturally, in upholding such a principle, one has to uphold it equally towards all. I have been attacked for saying that we would be prepared to send coal to Zambia if coal were ordered. But this is a symbol, a clear-cut symbol, of our preparedness to uphold this principle towards all sides.(27)

With the exception of one small, but significant, change, South Africa has consistently maintained this policy towards Rhodesia down the years. The change related to the United Kingdom's role in the matter. At the time of UDI and immediately afterwards, South Africa saw the issue as a dispute between the United Kingdom and Rhodesia. (Dr. Verwoerd's statement of 12 November 1965, illustrated the point. For this reason, too, South Africa was critical of Britain for taking the Rhodesian issue to Security Council.) More recent South African statements have stressed that a settlement is a matter to be worked out by the Rhodesians themselves. With the exception of this change, and it is a change which simply reflects the reality of the situation, South African policy on Rhodesia has been completely consistent.

In his Senate speech, Mr. Voster set out South African policy towards Rhodesia in detail. And in his Nigél speech of 5 November he answered newspaper reports which suggested that South Africa was applying pressure to Rhodesia to reach a settlement with these words:

The truth of the matter is that South Africa and Rhodesia talk to each other. The truth of the matter is that we give each other advice. The truth of the matter is that we bring the realities of the situation to each other's attention and discuss them in depth. But Rhodesia is just as much a part of Africa as we are. Their hearth and home is also here... I want to make it very clear tonight that Rhodesia is not a subordinate of South Africa. It does not receive orders from South Africa. The Rhodesian government makes its own decisions.(28)

If these and other official statements of South African policy towards Rhodesia are analysed, South Africa's position will be seen to rest on the following four assumptions and propositions:

- (1) That South Africa is committed to the principle of non-intervention in the domestic affairs of other states;
- (2) That South Africa is generally opposed to sanctions and boycotts;
- (3) That South Africa believes that a peaceful settlement is in the interest of Rhodesia, South Africa, and southern Africa as a whole; and

(4) That while South Africa is willing to assist with the creation of a climate in the region which is conducive to a negotiated, non-violent settlement, the form itself of the settlement is a matter for the Rhodesians to agree upon.

Regarding the presence since August 1967 of South African Police in Rhodesia, which is often interpreted as conflicting with South Africa's commitment to non-intervention, it should be pointed out that, in the South African view, this is not an act of involvement in Rhodesian affairs. The immediate reason for dispatching the South African Police was the participation by the banned African National Congress of South Africa in terrorist operations across the Zambesi. Thus, the South African representative told the United Nations, in October 1967, that this action was intended "to deal with terrorists of South African origin en route to South Africa for the purpose of committing subversion".(29) He went on to say that countries which allowed terrorists to operate from their territory had only to end that practice and the need to have South African police in Rhodesia would fall away. South Africa's reason for this step was therefore fully understood at the United Nations and in southern Africa at the time it was taken, and this is also the background to the decision of March of this year to withdraw the South African Police from active duty along the Rhodesian border.

As far as official policy towards Rhodesia is concerned, no changes have been made since 1965. The same basic assumptions apply. However, some observers detect a falling off in South Africa of popular support for Rhodesia. Thus Mr. Barratt, in the article referred to previously, writes that "... the strongest pressure Rhodesia must be feeling is the increasing evidence that support in South Africa for the *status quo* (in Rhodesia) is not very deep; in spite of wide emotional support in the past among South African Whites".(30) I am obviously in no position to say whether this is felt as a pressure in Rhodesia, but Barratt's observation is otherwise correct - that is, if popular opinion follows newspaper editorials. This is a development which, one wishes to stress, has little or nothing to do with official policy, and one can only speculate on possible reasons. But among them are probably the fear (particularly in the wake of Vietnam) of being sucked into a prolonged and uncontrollable war of attrition; awareness of the relatively narrow parameters which define South Africa's military strategy; impatience with Rhodesia because it is presented, particularly by Opposition newspapers, as holding up détente; and a greater consciousness of the very fundamental difference in principle between the internal policies of the two countries and the kind of political order each is committed to bringing about. Whatever the explanation, however, I wish to make it very clear that this is a development which cannot be attributed to official policy or to official policy statements.

The promotion of a southern African regionalism: A striking characteristic of international relations over the past twenty-five years has been the development of institutions linking countries at different levels of inter-state activity. Although "regional arrangements" and "agencies" are specifically recognised in Art. 33 and 52-54 of the UN Charter as means for preserving international peace and security, and for the peaceful settlement of disputes; the framers of the Charter could not have foreseen the mushrooming of regional associations which has in fact taken place.

South Africa has been committed for many years to the realization in southern Africa of a system of independent, inter-acting states, characterised by a spirit of good neighbourliness. As unquestionably the most economically and industrially

developed country in the area, South Africa is very conscious of the extensive inter-state links which already exist within the region - links of a financial, economic, trade, labour, communications, and transportation kind. Also contributing to a community of interest in functional terms is the compelling need to develop the natural and physical resources of southern Africa jointly. Moreover, these links involve all the states and territories of southern Africa.

Both generally and as far as specific bilateral relations are concerned, South Africa regards functional inter-state relations as very useful, if not necessary, objective conditions for political stability - particularly in a region containing so markedly different, yet inter-acting, political and economic systems. That South Africa wishes to contribute to the development of this regionalism is evident in its official pronouncements and actions. Thus the Prime Minister in his Senate speech said:

"I want to say that South Africa is prepared, to the extent that this is asked of it, and to which it is its duty, to play its part in and contribute its share towards bringing and giving order, development, and technical and monetary aid as far as this is within its means, to countries in Africa, and particularly to those countries which are closer neighbours.(31)

#### *The Implications of Détente for Internal Policy*

Black African states have not hesitated to prescribe the kind of political order they would like to see in South Africa. The Lusaka Manifesto of 1969(32) goes so far as to stipulate a change in the direction of policy in South Africa as a pre-condition for dialogue. And even those countries which have favoured contact with Pretoria have almost always justified this in terms of the influence they feel they will be able to exercise in this way on South Africa's internal policies.

One consequence of this is that the impression is left that there is a contradiction between South Africa's professed hopes for southern Africa and the goals of its internal policies. This is demonstrably not the case. In fact, properly understood and seen in transitional terms - as is true of so much else in Africa - the values and goals underlying South Africa's internal policy should not cause affront elsewhere in Africa. And I wish to explain this in relation to three important areas of social policy.

In the first place, South Africa is committed to the dismantling of the minority government structures inherited from a previous era, and to transferring political power on territorial lines as far as the Black nations are concerned. This policy does not answer all the questions that can be posed of it at present, but like any political policy it is a developing policy, an evolving policy, which must either accommodate new political forces as they are generated or collapse. But so far this policy has worked and is working - to the point where the first of the Homelands (The Transkei) is likely to take its place in the international community as an independent state next year. This course of political development which we are following in South Africa is fundamentally different from the course which you in Rhodesia have adopted. Political change in this country is premised

on the existence of a single political system serving all of Rhodesia's peoples, and progress in your case is measured in terms of the widening of the base of that system to include all Rhodesians. Secondly, South Africa is committed to the elimination of discrimination on grounds of colour. This goal and South Africa's commitment to it, were candidly put to the General Assembly on 24 October 1974 by the South African Ambassador, Mr. Pik Botha, in these terms:

"The fact of the matter is that we are all human beings, and with the exception of some elements which you will find in any country, white South Africans have the same feelings of humanity towards a black person as they do to any other person. Despite this, I know that many members of this Organization will say to us: Well that all sounds very fine, but if you really feel as you say you do, why is it that the policies of your government are discriminatory? Why is that your legislation or some of it anyway, distinguishes between persons on grounds of colour and race? We do have discriminatory practices and we do have discriminatory laws, and it is precisely because of this that the greatest misunderstandings occur and our motives are most misrepresented. But that discrimination must not be equated with racialism. If we have that discrimination it is not because the whites in South Africa have any "Herrenvolk" complex. We are not better than black people; we are not more clever than they; what we can achieve so can they. Those laws and practices are a part of the historical evolution of our country, they were introduced to avoid friction and to promote and protect the interests and the development of every group, not only the whites. But I want to state here today very clearly and categorically: my government does not condone discrimination purely on the grounds of race and colour. Discrimination based solely on the colour of a man's skin cannot be defended. And we shall do everything in our power to move away from discrimination based on race or colour. (33)

And thirdly, South Africa is committed to the goal of a more equitable distribution of the country's resources by way of closing the largely-historically-determined "wage gap" and by economic and industrial decentralization.

There are therefore no inconsistencies, no anomalies, between South Africa's hopes for southern Africa and the internal objectives which it has set itself. And the process of détente neither adds to nor detracts from South Africa's internal policies. But this it does do: it challenges our commitment by reminding us of the expectations we have created over the years. We can hardly blame other people for wanting us to fulfil these commitments - for this is the price of being taken seriously. And the same point, incidentally, applies also to Rhodesia: over the years you have created certain expectations - what they are, you know better than I - and you can hardly hold it against others for looking to you to fulfil them.



## Footnotes

1. See Maurice Cowling *"The Nature and Limits of Political Science"* Cambridge University Press, 1963
2. See Footnote above
3. See *Report of the Commission of Enquiry into South West Africa Affairs 1962-1963*  
The Government Printer, Pretoria, No. 12/1964
4. The Lusaka Manifesto on Southern Africa, adopted by the Conference of East and Central African States, held in Lusaka in April, 1969. Reproduced in *Southern Africa Record*, Number 2, published by the South African Institute of International Affairs.
5. See *Bulletin* No. 3, 1974, published by The Africa Institute of South Africa.
6. See "Statement by the South African Prime Minister, The Hon. B.J. Vorster, in the Senate, Cape Town, on 23 October, 1974" Reproduced in *Southern Africa Record* Number 1, March, 1975 published by The South African Institute of International Affairs.
7. See "Statement by Ambassador, R.F. Botha, Permanent Representative of South Africa to the United Nations, in the Security Council on the 24 October, 1974 " Reproduced in *Southern Africa Record* Number 1, March 1975, Published by The South African Institute of International Affairs.
8. "Uittreksels uit 'n Toespraak deur die Eerste Minister, Sy Edele B.J. Vorster, Tydens 'n Vergadering te Nigel op 5 November, 1975!" Reproduced in *Southern Africa Record* Number 1, March 1975, published by The South African Institute of International Affairs.
9. See "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. Reproduced in *Southern Africa Record* Number 2, June 1975, by the South African Institute of International Affairs
10. See John Barratt "Detente in Southern Africa", *The World Today*, March, 1975, The Royal Institute of International Affairs.
11. See Footnote 10 above.
12. See Footnote 10 above.
13. See Footnote 10 above.
14. See Colin Legum, "The Organisation of African Unity" *International Affairs*, April, 1975, published by the Royal Institute of International Affairs.
15. See Footnote 5 above.
16. See Footnote 6 above.
17. See Footnote 6 above.
18. See Footnote 9 above.
19. See Footnote 14 above.

20. See "Dar es Salaam Declaration on Southern Africa, 10 April, 1975,"  
Reproduced in *Southern Africa Record*, Number 2, June, 1975, published  
by The South African Institute of International Affairs.
21. See Footnote 8 above.
22. See "Text of a Letter, dated 27 May, 1975, from the South African  
Minister of Foreign Affairs, Dr. the Hon. H. Muller, to the Secretary-  
General of the United Nations, Dr. Kurt Waldheim, on the Question of  
South West Africa. Reproduced in *Southern Africa Record*, Number 2,  
June, 1975, published by The South African Institute of International  
Affairs.
23. See S/10738, U.N. Security Council, 27th Year, (1972) Secretary-General  
"Report on the Implementation of Security Council Resolution 309
24. See Footnote 22 above.
25. Dr. Hilgard Muller, S.A. Foreign Minister, reply to a question at a  
Press Conference in Berne, Switzerland.  
See *The Star*, Johannesburg, 21 October, 1965.
26. See *Die Vaderland*, Johannesburg, Friday 12 November, 1965,  
page 13.
27. See "Extracts Relating to Rhodesia From Statements by the Leader of  
Opposition and the Prime Minister, in the South African House of  
Assembly, on 25 January, 1966", in *Southern Africa Record*, Number 2,  
June, 1975, reproduced by The South African Institute of International  
Affairs.
28. See Footnote 8 above.
29. See U.N. General Assembly, *22nd Session*, 4th Committee, 1697th and  
1704th Meetings, 19 and 27 October, 1976, OFFICIAL RECORDS.
30. See Footnote 10 above.
31. See Footnote 6 above.
32. See Footnote 4 above.
33. See Footnote 4 above.