Apartheid
In Our Living Rooms:
U.S. Foreign Policy and South Africa

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Prexy Nesbitt
Chicago, 1986
Introduction

The time has come for South Africa to embark on a full-scale psychological war, instead of relying on films, brochures and other government handouts. In this unconventional propaganda offensive, no rules need apply, no regulations would stand in our way. Only objectives would count and the end would indeed justify the means — any means.¹

Once upon a time, according to several reliable sources in Washington, there was a cabinet member of the Richard Nixon Administration who used to drum vigorously on the table during meetings whenever the word “Africa” was mentioned. Now, however, it is unlikely that the same individual views Africa, especially South Africa, with scorn and derision, for the issue of South Africa and its apartheid system has entered into the living rooms of the American people. At long last the conscience of the American people has been pricked and there is a growing awareness that apartheid is evil and that the foreign policy of the U.S. government and the practices of U.S. corporations are connected to the abhorrent situation in South Africa. Undoubtedly, the major reason for this new awareness is the profound depth and scale of resistance inside South Africa, including demonstrations which between August 1984, and June, 1986 have seen over 1600 people shot and killed, over 3000 wounded, and over 15,000 systematically arrested or detained. The South Africa Institute of Race Relations recorded more than 3400 “unrest incidents” in the six months between August, 1985 and January, 1986. “South Africa is,” as the prominent South African black leader, Rev. Alan Boesak, has said, “in a state of civil war.” One very conservative white newspaper in South Africa underscored the depth and scale of the current rebellion in South Africa when it commented on the seven thousand army regulars brought into several townships to assist the police: “When the army

takes over, it is tantamount to a confession that the unruly parts of the country are occupied enemy territory. It is an exercise not in law enforcement but in reconquest.²

A related reason for the new interest in South Africa is the frequent protest marches being held all over the U.S. by the black American-led Free South Africa Movement. The U.S. marches, especially in Washington, D.C., but also in many other cities, led to the arrest of more than 4000 people between November 21, 1984, and the end of April, 1986. Many of those arrested were prominent politicians, religious and labor leaders, and entertainers, such as Detroit Mayor Coleman Young, United Auto Workers President Owen Bieber, and singers Stevie Wonder and Harry Belafonte. Moreover, media star involvement and the consistency of the demonstrations has kept the South Africa question in the national consciousness. Radio and TV journalists have devoted substantial time to in-depth interviews and special features.

An equally important source of the new visibility of South Africa and the Apartheid question in the U.S. is the divestment movement—the effort to withdraw public monies from U.S. companies and banks linked to South Africa, thus putting pressure on U.S. companies to terminate their activities and support for South Africa. Between 1976 and June 1986, nineteen states, at least 65 cities ranging from New York to East Lansing and from Chicago to Seattle, ten counties, and the U.S. territory of the Virgin Islands took some type of divestment action involving a total of over $6 billion dollars. In roughly the same period, 84 colleges or universities throughout the country took similar action (41 adopting total divestment), withdrawing approximately $70 million dollars.

But what is apartheid? Where did it come from? Why has apartheid become so codified? Considering that other multi-racial societies too can be characterized as having race relations problems, how did apartheid become so systematic and institutionalized in South Africa?

Historical Background

“Apartheid” (pronounced apart-hate), which literally means “apartness” in Afrikaans, is not just a system of racial discrimination. It is not merely “segregation.” Apartheid cannot be reduced to a series of unjust laws and a situation wherein the black majority is denied its civil rights as guaranteed by a constitutional framework. Nor can apartheid adequately be projected with the statistics we can easily summarize:

- 87% of the land mass is reserved for whites;
- 13% of the land for blacks;
- 8.5 million black South Africans denaturalized since 1976;
- on the average, 136 black children in South Africa die from hunger each day;

• 3,372,900 black South Africans have been removed from areas designated “white” between 1960 and 1982;
• during 1983, there were 262,908 pass law arrests for violations of the passbook, which all Africans over 16 must carry and which specifies one’s color (African, coloured, Indian or White), the equivalent of 720 arrests a day or 30 an hour, representing a 27.6% increase over 1982 or a 28.75% increase over the 1981 figure of 160,000 arrests.

The printed word is limited. It cannot begin to convey it all. Facts, bare and naked, have no intimacy. They do not breathe and bleed. The pain and anguish of living under apartheid cannot be felt in the facts alone, for the apartheid system is all this but more. It is a highly organized and sophisticated system in which a minority population systematically strips and then willfully exploits
a majority population. Novelist Nadine Gordimer's simple definition of apartheid as "the sight of horror on the sun" describes it all eloquently and clearly.

The seizure of black land is the heart of apartheid exploitation. Through the Land Acts of 1913 and 1936 and subsequent codification, the Bantustans (formerly called "native reserves") have been set up. Currently consisting of more than 100 non-contiguous patches of arid and non-productive territory, the Bantustans are meant to be the homelands for the African majority population. It is intended that all of these 100 areas (including Bophuthatswana, Ciskei, Transkei) will ultimately be independent states. Thus, Africans will become foreigners in the 87% of South Africa — the mineral rich, productive portion — which is white-ruled. Far from facilitating greater independence for black people, the Bantustans entrap both the men, forced to do migrant labor away from the homeland, and the women, compelled to do subsistence agriculture or scrape up funds in other ways, in a mutually reinforcing, debilitating cycle of dependency and poverty. Meanwhile, the Bantustans provide the white sectors of the economy with a captive, well-controlled source of cheap labor, while keeping the surplus population (the unemployed, the old, the sick, the children — called "superfluous appendages" by the white officialdom) out of sight and out of mind. The Bantustans per se are an act of violence. As a recent study done jointly by the South African Council of Churches (SACC) and the Southern African Catholic Bishops Conference (ACBC) described them:

Bantustans are characterized by mass unemployment; by poverty so desperate that the position of the residents is worse than that of the inhabitants of any other part of Africa except perhaps the Sahel countries. They are characterized by outbreaks of diseases such as cholera, bubonic plague and typhoid, and malnutrition so far advanced that about a fifth or more of the children die before the age of five.³

Apartheid is a system which predicates every facet of life on color. Being white is the starting point and ending point for everything in the political, economic and social fabric of the society. There can be no suggestion of "power sharing" amongst the different groups in South Africa, for the raw quintessence of the apartheid system is to ensure white control in perpetuity. As Premier Verwoerd said on January 25, 1963 in the South African House of Assembly:

Reduced to its simplest form the problem is nothing else than this: We want to keep South Africa white... "Keeping it white" can only mean one thing, namely white domination, not "leadership," not "guidance," but "control," "supremacy." If we are agreed that the white man should be able to continue to protect himself by

retaining white domination, we say that it can be achieved by separate development.\textsuperscript{4}

In the beginning, even determining who and what was “white” was a major problem. The original 1959 Population Registration Act stated that:

\textbf{A white person means} a person who in appearance obviously is, or who is generally accepted as a white person but does not include a person who although in appearance obviously a white person, is generally accepted as a coloured person.\textsuperscript{5}

But from July 1959 to the end of 1966, there were 267,541 cases of doubt. The definition was amended in 1967 by the Population Registration Amendment Act No. 64:

A person shall be classified as White if his natural parents have both been so classified. In the absence of proof to that effect, his habits, education, speech and deportment shall be taken into account as well as how he is accepted at his place of ordinary residence, place of employment, place where he mixes socially with the public, and place where he associates with members of his family. In addition there are complicated presumptions deriving from statements made in documents such as census returns or birth registers.\textsuperscript{6}

Nonetheless, the confusion and illogic continues. For instance, a Chinese born in South Africa is treated as Coloured or Asian and a Japanese born in Asia is considered an honorary white. The result is that the “political” or governing function of the term “race” is what matters, with little attempt at any scientific accuracy.

The apartheid system (sometimes called by the South African government “separate development” or more recently, “plural relations,” “vertical differentiation,” or “plural democracy” or most recently, the “confederal states system”) is grounded in the bedrock foundations of South Africa’s formation as a state. The roots of the system go very deep. The ideological and religious justifications of South Africa’s apartheid system can be traced to the initial arrival of the white settlers who came in 1652 with the Dutch East India trading company to establish a refreshments station at the Cape of Good Hope in route to East India. The December 13, 1652 diary entry of Jan Van Riebeeck describes succinctly the Dutch attitude toward the people who greeted them:

\begin{quote}
Today the hottentots (the Khoikhoi) came with
\end{quote}


\textsuperscript{6} \textit{Ibid.}
thousands of cattle and sheep close to our fort, so
that their cattle nearly mixed with ours. We feel
vexed to see so many fine head of cattle, and not
be able to buy to any considerable extent. If it had
been indeed allowed, we had opportunity today
to deprive them of 10,000 head, which, however,
if we obtain orders to that effect can be done at
any time, and even more conveniently, because
they will have greater confidence in us. With 150
men, 10,000 or 11,000 head of black cattle might
be obtained without danger of losing one man; and
many savages might be taken without resistance,
in order to be sent as slaves to India, as they still
always come to us unarmed. 7

Over the centuries, the white settler population, with its superior weapons
and technology, grew and consolidated its powers through various brutal
wars of conquest against first, the KhoiKhoi and San peoples, then the Xhosa
speaking peoples and finally, the Ngunis (Zulus). The African populations
became a cheap labor source for white farmers and entrepreneurs.

In the 1830’s, the descendents of the early Dutch settlers, now calling
themselves “Afrikaners” and viewing themselves as a chosen superior
people, moved northwards into the interior of South Africa. This northward
move, called the “Great Trek,” is a significant point in South African history
because it was partly the Afrikaners’ attempt to avoid the British effort to
abolish slavery and lift the color ban. Meanwhile Afrikaaner theologians and
church leaders preached that they were “called upon by God” to achieve the
specific task of civilizing the non-whites they encountered. Thus, they could
assert — as many do to the present day — that their “calling” was evidence
of their racial superiority and of the predestined fact that blacks were intended
to be the “hewers of wood” and “drawers of water” while whites were
“to act as the guardian, master and spiritual leader of the black man.”

The “Great Trek,” comparable in so many respects to the westward movement
of the U.S. settlers, ultimately led to several decisive battles with the Zulu
people. Though the Zulus fought well, ultimately the Afrikaners prevailed.
Afrikaners still celebrate the December 10, 1938 conquest when they killed
3,000 Zulus as the Day of the Covenant, the day in which they pledged to
God that they would forever honor God’s support of their campaign against
the “heathens and Kaffirs.” Today, South African children — even some black
children — recite their equivalent of the U.S. pledge of allegiance every
Covenant Day:

Brothers and fellow countrymen, we stand here
before the Holy God of Heaven and Earth to make
a vow that, if He will be with us and protect us
and give the foe into our hands, we shall ever
celebrate the day and date as a Day of Thanksgiving
like the Sabbath in His honor. We shall enjoin our
children that they must take part with us in this,

7 H. B. Thomas (ed.), Journal of Jan Van Riebeeck, 1651-1655
(Capetown, 1911) vol. I, p. 112.
for a remembrance even for our posterity. For the honor of God shall herein be glorified, and to Him shall be given the fame and honor of the victory.

In the late 19th Century, during the time diamonds were discovered in 1867 and gold in 1887 and while European governments were scrambling all over Africa for territory and resources, the British moved into South Africa. In 1877, the British annexed the Transvaal in northern South Africa. A year later, they began a series of wars against the Zulus to pacify them and assume control of their lands. It was during this period that the competition over mineral riches and tension over land and labor between the Afrikaaners (or “Boers”) and British colonialists intensified to armed conflict in 1880 to 1881, which was known as the First Anglo-Boer War. Eighteen years later, hostilities broke out again from 1899-1902, the Second Anglo-Boer War. The Second Anglo-Boer War was fought on a more bitter level and involved the famous winter internment of thousands of Afrikaaner women and children by the British army. By the end of the war, approximately 25,000 women and children had died in the British camps from exposure, disease, and starvation.

One key factor united Britain and Boer: the desire to maintain the African population as a source of cheap labor for the farms, mines, and industry. In 1873, 18 year old Cecil Rhodes observed that “diamonds are found in all ways by the caffre (sic) . . . they have been able to find no bottom yet.” Another white man rejoiced that “it was a veritable tom tidlers ground, where the diggers could not only make a fortune but have it done for them by niggers.” Hence, in 1910, few in the African community were surprised when the British and Afrikaaners joined together to form the Union of South Africa. In 1913, the Native Land Act was passed, closely followed by amendments strengthening the already existing Masters and Servants Act. Both laws were designed to alienate Africans from the land, to reduce African cash-crop farming, and to facilitate a regular flow of cheap and unorganized African labor onto white farms and mining sites.

In the early 1930’s, the Transvaal leader of the Nationalist Party, J.G. Strijdom, bluntly stated:

Our policy is that the Europeans must stand their ground and must remain baas in South Africa. If we reject the herrenvolk idea and accept the principle that the white man cannot remain baas, if the franchise is to be extended to the non-Europeans, and if the non-Europeans are given representation and the vote and the non-Europeans are developed on the same basis as the Europeans, how can the European remain baas? . . . . Our view is that in every sphere the European must retain the right to rule the country and

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Several years later, in 1936, the Native Land in Trust Act, passed by an all white Parliament, divided the land: 86.3% for the whites; the remaining 13.7% for the blacks. In 1948, the Nationalist Party was elected.

It followed logically that in its quest to protect and empower the herrenvolk, the Boers would turn to Nazism as a model of strong government. So strong was the Nazi influence upon the South African Nationalist Party stalwarts that even when Nazism was being revealed at its ugliest, the Boers continued to publicly identify with the Reichstag. In 1942, Jan Strijdom, who would later become Prime Minister, heralded Nazism in a parliamentary debate:

German National Socialism strives for race purity. That philosophy is certainly the nearest to our National-Christian philosophy in South Africa.10

Other laws, such as the Suppression of Communism Act, the 180 Day Detention Act, and others, can be traced to the Nazi factor. The 1984 constitutional reform, which concentrated nearly all executive power in Botha’s new office of the Presidency, parallels Hitler’s seizure of most executive decision-making powers in the late 1930’s as Germany faced more internal and external crises and tensions.

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10 Ibid.
By 1959, the Nationalist government had passed the Group Areas Act making it illegal for people of different races to live in the same area, the Prohibition of Mixed Marriages Act, the Suppression of Communism Act, and the Population Registration Act. This legislation controlled the black population and prevented their superior numbers from overwhelming the white minority. As the Afrikaaners stated in their history texts: it was in general, legislation designed to define the blacks' place and prevent "swartgevaar" — the black peril.

In no single area was the intent of apartheid as clearly stated as in the field of education for Africans. In 1954 Dr. Hendrik Verwoerd, the principal architect of apartheid, described the "facilitating" function which education would provide within the schema of apartheid. Making a cogent statement with far-reaching implications, he said:

My department's policy is that education should stand with both feet in the reserves and have its roots in the spirit and being of Bantu society. There Bantu education must be able to give itself complete expression and there it will be called upon to perform its real service. The Bantu must be guided to serve his own community in all respects. There is no place for him in the European community above the level of certain forms of labour. Within his own community, however, all doors are open. . . . Until now he has been subjected to a school system which drew him away from his own community and misled him by showing him the green pastures of European society in which he was not allowed to graze.  
(Dr. H. F. Verwoerd, Minister of Native Affairs, Senate, June 7, 1954)

There are many more dimensions to the historical development of apartheid South Africa. One dimension, which is increasingly critical to the unfolding pageant in South Africa, is the white population of South Africa and its attitudes. There are now approximately 4,700,000 whites in South Africa. They are not an undifferentiated, homogeneous mass. Divided largely along linguistic lines into the Afrikaans-speaking Dutch descendents of approximately 2,800,000, and the English-speaking group, mostly British, of 1,880,000, there are also Germans, Portuguese, Greeks, Italians, French, and recently, a growing number of Polish refugees. Additionally, there is a Jewish community of 117,000 which constitutes about 3% of the white population.

Historically, this population has been united, despite certain deep conflicts like the Boer War and the dissent of tiny but persistent groups of whites, in its posture of white "baasskap" ("bosssdom" domination) over the majority black population. It has been united as well in the sublimely indifferent
attitude toward the police state terror and degradation intrinsic to the apartheid state. Many whites have simply enjoyed their high standard of living and managed a serene indifference to all that is transpiring everywhere around them. Like many Germans during the rise of Nazism, many whites in South Africa have been convinced or convinced themselves that they have no idea of what's going on.

**Whites Against Apartheid**

Today, a new juncture has been reached in South Africa. The white terrain is no longer the same. Cracks and faults are steadily developing. A small but prophetic group of theologians inside the Afrikaaner's dominant Dutch Reformed Church, influenced by some remarkable figures like the Rev. Beyers Naude, head of the South African Council of Churches, has recently declared apartheid to be heresy and resistance against apartheid, including armed struggle, to be theologically justifiable. This has led to a sharpened crisis inside the Nederduitsche Gereformeerde Kerk (Dutch Reformed Church) about whether the Bible indeed justified the existence of apartheid. In this way, some Dutch Reformed members join a swelling number of white and black church people, from Catholics and Protestants to Muslims and Jews, from Bishops like Catholic Archbishop Hurley to laypeople like community leader Mohamed Allie Razak (shot and killed May 9, 1985 while in police custody), who are more and more involved in the struggle for total change. This fissure inside the white community is very important because most Afrikaaners rely very heavily upon their religious conviction that God sanctions all that they do.

There is a small, but steadily growing stream of white draft resisters who are either refusing service and fleeing the country or going absent during their required military stints. Recently, South African intelligence documents captured in Namibia showed the South African Defense Force (SADF) admitting to a major morale problem amongst its troops in Namibia.

The South African white business community is showing that it is not as monolithic as it has appeared in the past. There are clearly a growing number of mining and industrial leaders who want to make substantive changes in apartheid, for example, giving black unions the right to strike and bargain collectively in order to maximize their flexibility for profit-making within a free enterprise system. This is a group who would see doing away with blatant racist practices in order to assure that the basic mechanisms of the free market system are not threatened by the current movement for change.

Clearly, there is a prophetic minority — but growing — group of whites, many of them young, who in the unions, churches and universities are openly and totally identifying themselves with the black struggle for freedom. The underground structures of the banned African National Congress (ANC) have membership from all of South Africa's population groups. Significant numbers of white cadre from the ANC have been imprisoned and tortured through the years. The funeral of trade unionist Neil Aggett, who died in detention in February 1982, attended by thousands of black workers from all
over South Africa, symbolized the new visage which some are putting forward in South Africa.\(^\text{11}\)

**Pro-Apartheid Whites**

At the same time there is an equally significant hardening of attitudes and positions taking place within the white community. The Afrikaaner’s Conservative Party, a more right-leaning split-off from the ruling Nationalist Party, is growing in numbers. So too is the Herstigte Nasionale Party (HNP). As well, both old and new vigilante groups, panicked by the reform initiatives taken by the Botha administration (e.g., the ending of the prohibition against mixed marriages) and by the growing mass movement inside the black community, are becoming active throughout the country. On May 5, 1984, the Afrikaaner Volkswag or Sentinels of the People, was born. Committed to alerting the Afrikaaner nation to the new threat to their survival, the 7,000 people who participated in the founding ceremonies and oathings believed themselves to be representative of the tough minority who stood tall and firm while “the soft element talked peace and compromise.”\(^\text{12}\)

In the Spring of 1986, a more militantly right wing and racist group, the Afrikaaner Resistance Movement, or Afrikaanse Weerstand Beweging (AWB) emerged in South Africa. The AWB consciously assumed as its symbol a three-legged version of the Nazi swastika.

In short, dramatically different options are rapidly being taken up within the white community as the curtain of “serene unawareness” is being ripped open. It is even conceivable that at the end of this process there may lie a totally polarized white South Africa.

**The History of Black Resistance**

The pivotal strand in the South African fabric, however, is the struggle which the African people have waged throughout the unfolding of the apartheid system. Repeated generations of Africans resisted: first, they fought the encroachment of white settlers and their appropriation of African lands; second, they fought against the growth of the apartheid state itself. For instance, in the late 1890’s, a young Zulu chief, Bembatha, protesting the imposition of an increased hut tax, led an unsuccessful struggle against extremely well-armed and modernized British colonial army contingents. On March 21, 1960, at Sharpeville and Langa townships, while hundreds of peaceful demonstrators protested the passbook law, the South African police opened fire and killed 67 demonstrators and wounded hundreds more. On June 16, 1976, thousands of African school children marched through streets throughout South Africa protesting apartheid education. In the days and weeks which followed, South African police and constables, acting on the highest orders, responded by killing approximately 1,000 of the young protesters (500 were shot in the back as they fled), wounding and arresting


thousands more. As the South African poet Dennis Brutus movingly stated:

There was a girl
eight years old, they say
her hair in spiky braids
her innocent fist raised in imitation.
Afterwards, there was a mass of red
some torn pieces of meat
and bright rags fluttering;
a girl in a print dress, once, they say.
(“There was a Girl” by Dennis Brutus)

Those massacres, as with other situations of revolt against colonial rule and oppressive conditions, fueled the flames rather than stilled the resistance.

The resistance inside South Africa today is cut from the same fabric. In late October 1984, 7,000 troops surrounded Sebokeng, a model township. For ten hours the troops and police conducted the most intense house-to-house raids South Africa had ever seen. Hundreds of people were loaded into trucks or given orange armbands to show that they had been interrogated and their fingerprints had been entered into the computers. Beginning November 5, 1984, over one million black workers in and around Johannesburg collectively responded to the joint army-police raids by staging a two day “stay-away” work stoppage.

For several days beginning in late February 1985, thousands of stone-throwing residents of Crossroads, (an African squatter camp outside Capetown), battled police and riot squads attempting to resettle them to remote bantustans.13 Crossroads had long been a citadel of resistance but February’s battle was the most damaging. When the battle was over, eighteen people had been killed, 250 were wounded, dozens of police vehicles were burned, and 26 police were injured. But the residents of Crossroads were not removed. In short, the batons, dum-dum bullets, and tear gas at Soweto and Sharpeville, the 1977 and 1982 assassinations in jail cells of black leader Steve Biko and white trade unionist Neil Aggett, the 1960 and 1977 bannings of legitimate popular people’s organizations and institutions like the African National Congress (ANC) and the Christian Institute, have served to mobilize wave upon wave of new recruits into the resistance struggle.

There are many more stories of remarkable heroism and strength in South Africa’s histoire d’resistance. The thousands of people who today march the streets, boycott the schools, organize the strikes, and quietly stalk South African police and military are picking up a gauntlet left for them by thousands of resisters with a vision: from Bembatha of the 1890’s to Bram Fischer and more recently to Nelson Mandela.

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South Africa’s Use of Violence

Sometimes you have to do it to the children to make the adults talk. There was a 12-year-old boy. We wanted to know what was going on. We wanted his mother to talk, so we tied him up like a chicken with his wrists up behind his back, strapped to his ankles. Then we played water polo with him, put him in this dam and pushed him about, let him kick. Every so often we took him out. He wouldn’t cry. He just wet himself. The mother didn’t tell us anything. In the end we just left him in the water and he drowned. (Trevor Edwards, “A British Mercenary on Operations for the South African Army in Angola.” Guardian 29:1, 1981)

South Africa is a violent society. One facet of its violence is derived from the deep structural inequities and repression of the apartheid system. It is the upheaval of people’s lives that emanates from situations like those identified in a recent Carnegie Endowment financed study entitled “The Second Carnegie Inquiry into Poverty in Southern Africa.” Amongst the study’s findings were the following:

a) the migratory labor system destroys family life. 1/3 of the migrant male workers interviewed from several villages spend only one month a year with their families;

b) some black rural areas had only one doctor to every 174,999 people;

c) the number of people made destitute by landlessness and unemployment had increased

between 1960 and 1980 from 4.9 million to 8.9 million;

d) on white-owned farms, black laborers earned as little as $10.00 a month and 63% of the men were underweight.

Thus one can assert, especially from the perspective of those subject to the apartheid system's various institutions and vagaries, that apartheid itself is an act of violence to the South African people.

But there is another face to the generalized ambience of violence in South Africa. It is the violence of a totally militarized society. Violence is a result of "the total strategy" — an all-out-war mentality which permeates every state structure in South Africa — intended to combat the white man's replacement by a black majority government.

Drafted shortly after the 1976 Soweto uprising in a Defense Department White Paper on National Security, "the total strategy" is a plan to address the perceived multi-dimensional offensive against South Africa's minority white government. This offensive is led, according to the analysis, by the Soviet Union, acting with such unlikely allies as the World Council of Churches, the U.S. Conference of Mayors, the Congressional Black Caucus, TransAfrica, the American Friends Service Committee, and the Washington Office on Africa, to name a few. The goal of the offensive is identified as "nothing less than the political and moral subversion of the white man and his replacement by a majority government. The appropriate response, therefore, is that the entire population, not just the security forces, sees the defense of the Republic of South Africa as its responsibility."

Thus, it is not accidental that the semi-secret State Security Council (SSC), chaired and dominated by President Botha, staffed by military officers, today is the most powerful organ of government and is the result of Botha's "reforms."

It is a state-fostered violence that we see today in South Africa. The violence of containment and intimidation brought about by new laws like the 1982 Internal Security Act (which, among other things, makes it an offense punishable by up to 25 years imprisonment to "advocate, advise or encourage any person or action which might cause feelings of hostility between different population groups") is a violence sanctioned by the specific South African-home doctrine of national security.

Violence manifests itself as well in the $1.72 million dollars per day which the South African Defense Force (SADF) expends today in Namibia. The violence also manifests itself in the reckless, nearly bi-weekly destabilization raids and actions which South Africa and its surrogate forces, UNITA (National Union for the Total Independence of Angola) in Angola and the MNR (National Resistance Movement) in Mozambique, conduct upon the neighboring countries of Angola, Mozambique, Lesotho, Botswana and Zambia. The raids include: the May 4, 1978 Cassinga, Angola invasion (800 women and children killed); the January 31, 1981 Matola, Mozambique raid on an ANC home (13
people killed); the May 23, 1982 attack on Matola and the bombing of Maputo factories (5 Mozambican citizens killed); the December 9, 1982 invasion of Maseru, Lesotho (42 South African refugees and Lesotho citizens killed); the June 14, 1985 invasion of Gaborone, Botswana (16 people killed, one a six year old girl); and the May 19, 1986 invasions of Zambia, Botswana, and Zimbabwe. In Angola alone, the damage done by South African invasions and sabotage of Angolan industrial installations (e.g., the June, 1985 attempted sabotage of Gulf Oil's facilities in Cabinda, Angola) since 1975 is conservative estimated at $10 billion. In its war against its neighbors, called the "second front" by the South African government, South Africa since 1980 has killed more than 100,000 people and made one million more homeless. It is estimated that an additional 100,000 have died in Mozambique and southern Angola as the result of famine caused by the war. Lastly, the systematic financial, logistical and arms support South Africa gives to UNITA in Angola and to the MNR in Mozambique to destroy their citizenry and infrastructure is a part of the South African ambience of violence. 

The violence is in everyday life, in the lives of blacks and whites. It is in the fund raising braes, and sundowners (barbecue parties) for "the boys at the front." It is in the tank and cannon shaped pastries and cakes to be found in the shops. And, it is in the fact that the defense budget has increased over 1000% in recent years and that now men between sixteen and 60 can be drafted. On a 1982 trip into South Africa, the author once saw white, teen-aged boys gleefully doing target practice with automatic rifles at water buckets being carried on the heads of young African girls walking 100 yards away.

In recent years, there has been a marked growth in random savage attacks

on black people by young white men. In Klerksdorp in the Transvaal, in late 1984, four white men, including two AWOL soldiers, accused a 21 year old black woman of stealing the car she was driving. They stripped and beat the woman, then shoved her body into the trunk of the car and set it ablaze. In another instance, two soldiers shot a young black woman, then drove their car over her head. The main perpetrator was sentenced to six years in jail. The other was given five strokes of the cane. "The judge found 'extenuating circumstances' because both men were drunk." 16

In the last twenty-one months, most of the approximately 1600 African deaths have occurred at the hands of the South African police or South African army. But another type of violence, dubbed "black on black violence" by the press, stems from the awareness of many blacks that black officials appointed by the South African government are collaborators with that government. In the case of informants, blacks are seen as exceptionally dangerous because the information they provide to the white government is often more revealing and critical than that provided by white informants. This hostility to collaborators explains why it is so often black policemen who have died as a result of over 400 attacks on policemen. It is also blacks who are killed in the inter-ethnic rivalries so long systematically encouraged by the police, the white government and by the apartheid system.

Even whites feel the violence. A Los Angeles Times correspondent found that South Africa has a very high rate of family killings. During June 1983-December 1984, at least 102 members of white families were shot and killed by husbands and fathers who often subsequently killed themselves. "The motive was often sexual but in some cases involved fear that the family had 'no future.'" 17

It is only logical since South Africa is a society where guns of every genre and make are prevalent. Whether it is a bra pistol or an Israeli-made Uzi machine gun, most whites have multiple weapons. More than two million guns are licensed to South African whites. 18 Generally, blacks are not permitted to have gun licenses.

Weapons, therefore, are big business in South Africa. In 1984, the Armaments Supplies Corporation (ARMSCOR), a state owned company which is the third largest industrial enterprise in the country, sought to export approximately $150 million worth of "combat-tested" arms merchandise. The shipment was to include guns ranging from a South African manufacturer's "midnight special," specially geared for markets like that of the U.S. black "inner-city," to a 155 millimeter field howitzer reportedly capable of firing a nuclear bullet and/or carrying nerve gas. The production of arms in South Africa involves, other than ARMSCOR's eight subsidiaries and fifteen factories, 50 main contracting companies, 400 more companies supplying components, and another 1000 companies selling related items to ARMSCOR. It also involves an extensive advertising and marketing campaign. "This is


17 Ibid.

18 Ibid.
ARMSCOR” and “SALVO” are two titles of numerous magazines and brochures saturating Western markets with claims of the “combat-proven reliability” of South African-made weaponry. ARMSCOR advertisements can be found in various U.S. publications like Soldiers of Fortune, Jane’s, and the International Defense Review.

South Africa participates in most of the international weapons, military or police expositions. An Israeli stated that it was at such a conference in the late 1960’s where the Israeli-made machine gun, the Uzi, was introduced to South Africa and its then ally, Rhodesia, as “the Ruzi.” In 1982, South Africa, until its expulsion, was a surprise exhibitor at the Defendorf Exposition in Greece. A South African delegation arrived in search of police hardware at the Detroit, Michigan International Association of Police Chiefs Convention on October 3, 1983. More predictably, in 1984, South Africa showed up at the International Air Show in Chile, only months after organizing its own grandstanding air show in the Transvaal.

In recent years, the amount of money that the South African government spends on weapons and military equipment has increased geometrically. In 1966, South Africa spent $35 million on armaments. By 1980, this figure had increased to about $2 billion.

As was the case during World War II, some foreign companies, including Westinghouse, General Motors, Siemens, and Leyland, are presently reaping profit return rates of 12-15% based on their sales of computers, electronic components, and motor vehicles to the South African military police. In 1978, a secret memorandum from General Motors in South Africa revealed GM’s posture that a refusal to supply vehicles to the South African military could lead to “a loss of government business thereby threatening the company’s viability.”

South Africa’s continuing illegal occupation of Namibia, or Southwest Africa, is an example of the application of the brutality and structural violence which characterizes the apartheid state. South Africa took control of Namibia in 1915 after Germany’s defeat in WWI. From 1919 until the establishment of the United Nations in 1945, South Africa administered Namibia as a mandate under the League of Nations. In 1966, the United Nations General Assembly terminated South Africa’s control of Namibia and placed it under direct U.N. control. In 1969, the U.N. Security Council endorsed this decision and termed South Africa’s continued presence in Namibia “illegal.” The International Court of Justice rendered it illegal in 1971. Throughout this entire period, South Africa defiantly remained in Southwest Africa, created its own mock state apparatus, and increased the size and scope of its military presence. At the same time, the Southwest African People’s Organization, SWAPO, founded in 1960 and committed to founding a genuinely independent nation,

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continued mobilizing inside the country, beginning with peaceful petitioning and protests to adopting armed struggle in 1966. The Namibian Council of Churches became deeply committed to the struggle for Namibia’s independence. Every move made by SWAPO or by other nationalist forces in Namibia has been countered by South Africa by bringing in more troops and or further entrenching itself politically. For example, in May 1979, South Africa set up the National Sovereign Assembly and the Council of Ministers in Namibia which are answerable to an Administrator General appointed by the Pretoria government.

Presently in Namibia there are over 100,000 troops or one soldier for every six Namibian adults. There are 80,000 troops under South African Defense Forces (SADF) control. There are 10,500 police. Both forces have reserves. There are also various mercenary and vigilante groups or “white terror” groups such as Blankswa. There are guard forces of private companies. In between the state’s armed forces and the private armies, are South Africa’s clandestine units like the Koevoet (“crowbar”) and 32 battalions famous for their torture techniques. Lastly, there is a mushrooming of white command and militia units both in towns and on farms who receive their arms and training from the SADF.

The growing militarization of South Africa and its presence in Namibia is not merely the result of internal developments. It is also the product of specific historical and global dynamics. One dynamic is that historically, “the west” has viewed South Africa (in addition to Israel and the Philippines) as a regional police and as an outpost of the “Free World.” In 1949, the British government suggested to other Atlantic Pact members that South Africa was a kind of transit center and support base and that “Malan [the South African Prime Minister] should be convinced that South Africa’s frontier was the Middle East.”

The Impact of the U.S.

In November 1950, according to a recently declassified U.S. Defense Department Document, the Joint Chiefs of Staff recommended to the Secretary of Defense that: “Based upon current United States war plans, including logistic requirements and support thereof, the ability of the Union of South Africa to defend itself or to participate in the defense of the area of which it is a part is important to the security of the United States.” Today, the Reagan Administration argues that the apartheid government is a “friendly country.” A few weeks after taking office in 1981, Ronald Reagan, citing historically inaccurate information, said in a television interview:

As long as there’s a sincere and honest effort being made, based on our own experience in our own land, it would seem to me that we should be trying to

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be helpful. Can we abandon a country that has stood beside us in every war we’ve ever fought, a country that strategically is essential to the free world? It has production of minerals we all must have and so forth. . . . if we’re going to negotiate with the Russians . . . surely we can keep the door open and continue to negotiate with a friendly nation like South Africa.  

The current militarization of South Africa is the product of that relatively new “Free World” thinking, especially in the U.S., which argues that a war with the Soviet Union over global mineral resources is eminent and that, given the history of insurgent conflict, racial and tribal unrest in the Southern Africa region, it is imperative to expand “security” in the region. Therefore, one must overlook the mild excesses of apartheid in order to preserve the alliance with South Africa and to safeguard the southern oceans and regional sources of manganese, uranium, chrome, gold, diamonds, and other mineral resources. As the former Secretary of State Alexander Haig lamented to Time in 1981:

The escalating setbacks to our interests abroad, increasing lawlessness and terrorism, and the

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so-called wars of national liberation are putting in jeopardy our ability to influence world events... and to assure access to raw materials.  

The entire plan is well summarized in a May 1981 memorandum from Chester Crocker, Assistant Secretary of State for Africa, to Secretary of State Haig labelled "Talking Points." The purpose of the memorandum was to brief Haig for an upcoming meeting with then South African Foreign Minister Pik Botha. Crocker noted:

We will not allow others to dictate what our relationship with South Africa will be as evidenced by our recent veto of sanctions. But just as we recognize your permanent stake in the future of Southern Africa, so you must recognize our permanent interest in Africa as a whole. We must consider these interests in our Southern Africa policy and expect you will take them into account in your dealings with us. This will require restraint and good will by all parties. We cannot consent to act as a smokescreen for actions which excite the fears of other states in the region, and encourage impractical, emotional responses to regional problems. Although we may continue to differ on apartheid, and cannot condone a system of institutionalized racial differentiation, we can cooperate with a society undergoing constructive change. Your government's explicit commitment in this direction will enable us to work with you. You must help to make this approach credible. You also should recognize that this period represents your best shot, a rare opportunity because of our mandate and our desire to turn a new leaf in bilateral relations.  


As of June 1983, there was a minimum of $3.9 billion worth of outstanding loans to South African entities that U.S. banks had partially provided. Continental Illinois Bank, for example, participated in at least two 1975 loans to the South African Iron and Steel Industry (ISCOR) valued at $150 million.27 ISCOR has in turn exported 550,000 tons of steel annually to the U.S.28 Therefore, a large Midwest bank, using the deposits of many present and former steel workers, made loans to South Africa enabling it to export more steel to the U.S., possibly hastening the closing of midwestern U.S. steel companies.

In addition, since 1981, the U.S. has trained various members of the South African Coast Guard and increased the cooperation between U.S. and South African military police and intelligence personnel. For example, in 1982, South African police participated in a police-media program in Chicago. Cooperation between the U.S. and South African intelligence apparatuses is at all time high, but details are little known. An article in the New York Times pointed out that the South Africans give U.S. intelligence and surveillance planes landing facilities and in return "the U.S. provides South Africa with intelligence on black governments and organizations."29 In another sphere, the Reagan administration has relaxed the U.N. arms embargo against South Africa through the 1981 sales of 2,500 electronic shock batons to private buyers for crowd control in South Africa, the 1982 sale of six turbos jets to the South African Air Force, and the sales of $500,000 worth of nonmilitary arms and ammunition and $28.3 million worth of "dual-use" military equipment and technology to the government in the past four years. A recent United Nations study points out that despite the fact that the U.S. is a signatory nation to the U.N. Arms Embargo passed by the U.N. Security Council in 1977 and despite at least three federal agencies with the potential to enforce the embargo (State Department, Firearms and Tobacco Agency, Customs Service), numerous illegal operations like the use of U.S.-made Colt and Browning automatic weapons at commercial "anti-terrorist" training centers in South Africa take place openly.30 The study further noted that during 1980-1982, $706 million worth of commercial or civilian aircraft and related parts, all of which could be easily converted to military usage were exported to South Africa. The study also reported that Goodyear Tire and Rubber Company distributes a directory locally in South Africa which offers Goodyear "products serving commercial, military and private aviation."31

30George Houser, "Relations Between the United States and South Africa," United Nations Center Against Apartheid, Notes and Documents, August, 1984.
Finally, with the green light of the Reagan administration, U.S. companies supply over 75% of all the computers and related hardware sold in South Africa and control 40% of the South African oil products market. Many companies openly acknowledge that they sell oil to the South African military and police, as is the case with IBM, that they have assisted in computerizing the shipment of ammunition to the South African military and police.\textsuperscript{32} South Africa has become the third largest recipient of U.S. nuclear exports and expertise with regular exchanges taking place between U.S. and South African nuclear technicians. The Washington Post on January 20, 1985 indicated that at least forty American atomic reactor operators, many of them lured to South Africa with tax free $100,000 a year salaries, were working in South Africa, possibly violating U.S. nuclear nonproliferation laws. It is not just that South Africa has developed, according to the United Nations Center Against Apartheid, a dozen or more nuclear weapons, but more significantly that the U.S. embrace of South Africa has facilitated, almost singlehandedly, the development of the biggest modern weapon of them all: South Africa's apartheid system.

But there is more to the story of the United States-South Africa axis. It is not simply that U.S. banks are making loans to South Africa and that its economy by its very nature must have massive infusions of capital from overseas. It is not simply the outgoingness and good will of U.S. corporations (promoting implementation from Johannesburg to Pretoria of the affirmative action and union recognition programs called the Sullivan Principles while spending millions combating similar programs in the U.S.) that has created the close partnership which Pretoria has with the U.S. The current closeness is a result of the history of U.S. involvement in sub-Saharan Africa.

It is a common and erroneous belief that the story of U.S. involvement with South Africa begins after World War II when many European economies were shattered and U.S. economy and its multi-national corporations exploded. Certainly, it is true that U.S. direct investment in South Africa began snowballing after WWII and went from $140 million in 1950 to $750 million in 1970 to the 1983 figure of 2.31 billion.\(^3\) And certainly it is true that during 1960-1970, the majority of U.S. corporations began expanding their operations into sub-Saharan Africa, mostly into the Republic of South Africa.

But, in fact, the U.S. has had deep historical ties to both South Africa and to the system of apartheid. As early as the 1790’s, American whaling ships were to be found all along the coasts of Southern Africa.\(^4\) American whalers assisted the Dutch East India Co. in investigating and claiming the coast of


Namibia. In 1796, according to historian Alan Booth, there was even an initial and tentative proposal for American colonization of South Africa.\textsuperscript{35}

Throughout the first half of the nineteenth century, American commercial interests were active in South Africa. American miners explored Namibia for gold, silver, and diamonds in the 1850's and 1860's. A business acquaintance of President Ulysses Grant, Mr. Bedee, was actively seeking concessions from the Cape Government for mining. By 1896, half or more of the engineers in South Africa's mines were from the U.S. Also, Congregationalist, Presbyterian, and Reformed Church missionaries were spreading throughout both South Africa and Namibia. The spirit of the time, reminiscent of a parallel thrust inside the U.S. itself to pacify the West and civilize the natives, is captured in a plea from an American trader, Benjamin Morrell, who had built extensive networks with the Khoikhoi, Hereros, and Damaras. Asking the U.S. government for financial support to colonize Namibia, he wrote in the mid-1840's:

There can be no doubt that a vast field for commercial enterprise remains to be developed in this part of Africa . . . I ardently hope and trust that my country will be the first to engage in exploring this interesting region of the World and open its boundless riches to her adventurous sons. I for one, should glory in leading the way, being perfectly willing to encounter all personal hazard which might attend a solitary pilgrimage across the Continent, for the purpose of opening a permanent and lucrative trade with different tribes and nations. If the general Government withholds its patronage for such a laudable undertaking, a joint-stock company of able capitalists will be all-sufficient for effecting the purpose and would be morally certain of gold and returns . . . \textsuperscript{36}

The U.S. government didn't directly respond to his request, although President Lincoln did dispatch troops to Angola to quell a native uprising in 1860. Nonetheless, American commercial interests thrived throughout the period of German colonization of southwest Africa from 1883 to 1915. The first five years of the 20th Century were especially significant when the German forces under General Von Trotha virtually exterminated the Herero people (50,000 or 85% of the people perished). The United States was second to Germany in exploiting the Namibian copper mines. In 1917, William P. Thompson of the Newmont Mining Corporation and J.P. Morgan of the famous Morgan banking group, participated as major partners in the vast Anglo American Corporation of South Africa. In the 1920's, led by an American financier, Chester Beatty, the copper mining industry in both South Africa and neighboring Rhodesia nearly became dominated by American companies like American Metal Climax. Ford Motor Company opened its first automobile


In the mid-1950s, the U.S. government joined the South African government in a joint Atoms for Peace program, set to expire in the year 1977. In the 1960s, the United States joined Israel, other western powers, and South Africa in assisting the illegal Rhodesian government in evading the 1966 mandatory economic sanctions imposed by the United Nations.

Throughout the 1960s, South Africa and the U.S. were an iron fist and velvet glove duo, providing political, economic, and military support to Portugal as it desperately sought to maintain its overseas colonies in Africa. South African troops fought side by side with the Portuguese both in Angola and in Mozambique. President Richard Nixon followed up the 1970 U.N. sanctions stemming from the contribution of 22 Cessna duo-purpose light planes to the South African military in December, 1971 with what he called a Christmas gift of $436 million in economic assistance to Portugal, all part of the Azores Pact between Portugal and the U.S. (The Azores Pact was a supplement to the over $320 million in direct military assistance given to Portugal during 1950-1970, which included military training programs, Boeing 707s, and regular shipments of napalm and herbicides.)

But the U.S.-South African relationship was not partisan. Both the Kennedy and Johnson administrations, gallantly, but more subtly, sang the Lusitanian war hymns. After 1960, the Johnson administration joined the South African government and Portuguese secret police (P.I.D.E.) in subsidizing another nationalist figure, Jonas Savimbi. In this way both the U.S. and South African governments, recognizing the imminent destruction of the colonial Portuguese empire, were seeking to install African-led and moderate governments which would be friendly to the "Free World." The South Africans directly supported the Portuguese. The U.S. sought to avoid seeing Angola become independent under the M.P.L.A — the third and most radical of the Angolan nationalist movements. It is at this point that the U.S. and South Africans could come together. John F. Kennedy summarized his general approach to third world nationalist movements in a 1957 speech on Algeria:

The sweep of nationalism is the most potent factor in foreign affairs today. We can resist it or ignore it but only for a little while; we can see it exploited by the Soviets with grave consequences; or we in this country can give it hope and leadership, and thus improve immeasurably our standing and our security.37

Two episodes, however, dominate the historical landscape of U.S. relations with sub-Saharan Africa in general and South Africa in particular. Both illustrate a recurring theme throughout history, namely the extent to which the "Cold War" competition between the U.S. and the Soviet Union governs all policy decisions taken by the U.S. towards Africa.

The 1960-1964 crisis in the Belgian Congo (now Zaire) was a case study of the willingness of the U.S. government to go to any lengths necessary to install a government sympathetic to American values, institutions, and interests. Although the Congo affair was, like most, an international political phenomenon, complex and multi-dimensional, the essence of the U.S. role was to intervene and prevent the ascension to power of the popularly supported Patrice Lumumba government and install a pro-Western choice, Joseph Mobutu. This was done by working bilaterally, through the U.N. and/or various Western governments.

On September 21, 1960, CIA Director Dulles briefed President Eisenhower and the National Security Council. He pointed out that the ‘danger of Soviet influence’ was still present in the Congo and said that while Lumumba had been deposed as Prime Minister he still represented a threat, particularly in the light of recent reports of an ‘impending reconciliation’ between Lumumba and the new government. He concluded that ‘Mobutu appeared to be the effective power in the Congo for the moment but Lumumba was not yet disposed of and remained a grave danger as long as he was not disposed of.’

To achieve this goal, the U.S. government both attempted and participated

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in the assassination of a democratically elected leader, Patrice Lumumba, arranged and financed a mercenary invasion by 400 predominantly white mercenaries from South Africa and Rhodesia, conducted an airborn rescue mission, and aided in militarily installing at the reins of power a man who by all accounts is one of the world’s most corrupt leaders, Joseph Mobutu.\(^39\) While Zaire became impoverished in the 1970s, with unemployment there reaching between 60 and 80 percent amidst the lowest wage scale in all of independent Africa, Joseph Sese Seko Mobutu by 1978 is estimated to have amassed personal holdings of some $4 billion, held primarily in private Swiss banks. By executive decree he took personal control of 20 percent of the Zairois budget and 30 percent of its capital expenditures. Despite all this and further scandals, such as the killing of protesting students at the University of Zaire by his personal gendarme, every U.S. President since Eisenhower has lauded and financed Mobutu. Only two countries other than the U.S. have so enthusiastically embraced Zaire; South Africa and more recently, Israel.\(^40\) South Africa has used Zaire as a staging ground for raids into Angola, such as that on the Gulf Oil installation in Cabinda, Angola in May, 1985. Israel’s Ariel Sharon, in one of his last acts as Defense Minister, arranged for Israel to train Mobutu’s personal guard forces and assist Zaire’s army.

A chilling possibility exists that the U.S. role in the Congo crisis may well be the archetype for the U.S. role in the unfolding saga of South Africa. In South Africa, the U.S. may attempt to identify or create another Mobutu; in other words, a figure who would boost local elites in order to maintain U.S. economic and strategic hegemony.

A second and even more disastrous instance of U.S. disregard of African aspirations and open allegiance with apartheid South Africa was the attempted 1975-1976 military operation against the newly independent Angolan government conducted by South Africa during the Gerald Ford administration. On October 23, 1975, South Africa invaded Angola by crossing the Cunene River. Ostensibly, the reason the South Africans sent 12,000 forces into Angola was to: 1) protect the Cunene Dam and hydro-electric project; and 2) engage SWAPO forces. At the time, however, South African leaders loudly proclaimed that they were also protecting the interests of the Free World “from the advancing forces of international communism.”

The real reason South Africa made such a bold move was that it assumed it would have the moral support of the West and that the U.S. would invade militarily. In fact, Prime Minister Vorster made a “liar” out of former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger. Kissinger denied then, and still denies, that the

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U.S. colluded with South Africa in its invasion of Angola. But Professor John Marcum, a prominent U.S. scholar on Angola, quotes Pretoria officials as saying that their intervention was based on an understanding with the Ford Administration that the action would have U.S. support. Marcum goes on to say: "To the question of whether Washington had solicited South African involvement, Prime Minister Vorster subsequently responded that he would not call anyone who said that a 'liar.'" Both countries clearly affirmed that "South Africa entered Angola with the knowledge and approval of the USA."41 By mid January 1976, it was clear that U.S. back-up would not be forthcoming and that the forces of the M.P.L.A., which had been joined by Cuban forces invited by Angola after South Africa's invasion, were too strong to be defeated. Thus, in March 1976, the South Africans withdrew from Angola, defeated.42

There are several reasons why the Ford administration never sent troops into Angola. The most obvious is that the Congress, led by Senators Clark and Tunney, successfully passed legislation prohibiting the Ford administration from intervening in Angola. Second, a popular movement (which included a protest march of over 10,000 people in New York City) similar to today's Free South Africa movement, put pressure on Congress to rein in the Ford administration. Third, the specter of the U.S., Zaire, Zambia, the Ivory Coast, F.N.L.A. and UNITA and South Africa, all combining against the M.P.L.A., mobilized a hitherto hesitant Organization of African Unity (OAU) in support of the young M.P.L.A. government. Angola, like the Congo crisis of the 1960's, illustrated how the anti-communist credo stimulated Washington not only into the embrace of its historic ally, South Africa, but also into the dead end street of disastrous decisions.

As these U.S. interventions in southern Africa illustrate, several themes appear again and again in the saga of the development of the Pretoria-Peoria axis. These themes have been best discussed by long-time activist George Houser, former head of the American Committee on Africa, in an August, 1984, U.N. publication, "Relations between the United States and South Africa." He writes that in the 30 years from the 1950's to the 1980's, in all seven presidencies, "three major themes predominate: 1) Southern Africa is viewed within the framework of East-West confrontation; 2) South Africa is seen as the dominant and friendly power in the entire Southern Africa region; 3) economic considerations are central in determining United States policy."

As we have seen in the discussion of the history of U.S. involvement in southern Africa, that involvement reflects these themes throughout the history of U.S.-Africa relations, not just during the 1950s-1980s. Another important theme of U.S.-Africa relations is the systematic racism which permeates and motivates the policies, structures, personnel and practices of successive U.S. administrations in their interaction with Africa.

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During the Nixon-Ford era, in 1969, Henry Kissinger promoted, as the major U.S. policy option on South Africa, the famous National Security study Memorandum 39 (NSSM 39) (later President Reagan's "constructive engagement" policy) with its statement that:

_The whites are here to stay and the only way that constructive change can come about is through them._

There is no hope for the blacks to gain the political rights they seek through violence, which will only lead to chaos and increased opportunities for the communists. We can, by selective relaxation of our stance toward the white regimes, encourage some modification of their current racial and colonial policies and through more substantial economic assistance to the black states...help to draw the two groups together and exert some influence on both for peaceful change."^{43} (Emphasis added.)

More, much more, lay behind the immediate black and white print. Some of what informed and informs the U.S. approach to Africa in general and southern Africa in particular was revealed in a February 1984 comment by businessman William Coors. Addressing a Denver meeting of minority businessmen, he said:

One of the best things slave traders did was to drag the ancestors of American blacks over here in chains because today American blacks are exposed to greater opportunity than African blacks.^{44}

Mr. Coors also reputedly said Zimbabwean blacks "lack the intellectual capacity to succeed, and it's taking them down the tubes." His remarks assume more significance when one is reminded that Coors and his money are the main pillars behind two organizations which actively lobby on behalf of South Africa and are looked to as major formulators of policy by the Reagan administration: the Heritage Foundation and the American Legislative Exchange Council. Thus, the historical development of U.S. corporate and governmental embrace of apartheid (the Pretoria-Peoria axis) can, at least in part, be situated at that juncture where two historic forms of racism, one from the U.S., the other from South Africa, grimly lock arms.

**South Africa's Public Relations Campaign**

Yet it is not simply history that has brought the U.S. and South Africa so close. The Pretoria-Peoria axis is, at least in part, the result of a specific offensive waged by South Africa to gain friends and "neutralize" enemies in the U.S. In 1983, the South African government spent a minimum of $1.5 million hiring 31 professional lobbyists (largely lawyers and/or public relations personnel) as registered agents for the South African government. Since 1974,

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the South African government has doled out a minimum of $7 million on lobbyists in the U.S.\textsuperscript{45}

In addition to those mechanisms, the quasi-governmental South Africa Foundation and the South Africa Tourist Corporation are two institutions whose sole reason for being in the U.S. is to create a positive image of South Africa in the eyes of the American public. Each institution functions with a multimillion dollar budget. One of the major functions of the South African Foundation is to finance trips to South Africa for U.S. corporate and government leaders. An example of one such visitor is Hobart Taylor, a black American businessman, who, besides being on the board of directors for Westinghouse, A&P, and Burroughs, was also on the board of the Export-Import Bank from 1965-1968 when some key bank loans to South Africa were facilitated. Another of the foundation's more prominent guests was Clarence Randall, former chairman of Inland Steel. Randall went on one of the junkets in 1963 while serving as financial adviser to President John F. Kennedy. In 1964, just in case the International Court of Justice ruled against South Africa, Randall threatened U.S. military intervention to occupy Walvis Bay, Namibia's main harbor, to assure continued South African — illegal — occupation.\textsuperscript{46}

In addition to the propaganda vehicles cited above, South Africa maintains operations in foreign countries which function at another level, the level where "no rules need apply." In what later became known as "The Muldergate Scandal," it was revealed that, beginning from approximately 1972, the South African Information Department, then headed by Eschel Rhoodie, spent a minimum of $100 million on 180 secret projects aimed at thirteen countries on five continents. The projects included secret political programs and "dirty tricks" ranging from bribes and clandestine purchases of media outlets to possible murder.\textsuperscript{47} Moreover, it has come to light that the Muldergate offensive was one of several offensives conducted by various South African departments and officials. According to several informative and reliable articles in recent years, other programs were and probably still are carried out by the South African Department of Defense, the Department of Foreign Affairs, and various branches of the South African police. A well documented article based on South African government figures in The Nation of April 19, 1980 revealed that "the South African Department of Defense spent at least $110 million on secret projects between 1974 and 1979."\textsuperscript{48}


\textsuperscript{46}Allan Cooper, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 180.


In November 1978, liberal Senator Dick Clark (D-Iowa) was a victim of one of the South African "projects" when he was defeated in his reelection bid for the U.S. Senate. According to Eschel Rhodie's later revelations, the South African Information Department provided $250,000 to the campaign war chest of Clark's opponent, Republican Roger W. Jepson. Additionally, funds of unknown quantity were put into the Right to Life Movement's door to door effort against Clark because of his alleged pro-abortion stance. Interviewed subsequently by *TransAfrica-Forum* magazine, Senator Clark highlighted the significance of the South African role in his defeat, reminiscing that:

> The first time I went to South Africa in 1976, I met with Prime Minister John Vorster. It was the most difficult meeting I ever went to in my life. For an hour he quoted to me things I had said or done . . . . they've obviously got (our) country well covered in terms of what's happening where and who is doing what and why. . . . The Prime Minister had more information and knew more about what I had said than I remembered. 49

Why Senator Dick Clark? Previous South African intervention projects in U.S. politics were targeted at the Presidential level. Specifically, South African functionaries had developed ties to candidate Jimmy Carter and reputedly had donated $20,000 to his primary campaign in New York state. Even more important, according to *The Sunday Express* of Johannesburg dated March 25, 1979, President Gerald Ford's 1976 campaign had received an infusion of some $3.9 million in secret funding which came via various third party front organizations. Whether or not former President Ford was aware of the source and channelling of this sum is not known. But subsequent policies implemented by the Ford Administration show Ford to be supportive of South Africa. As Richard Leonard points out in his recent book:

> In 1975 and 1976 the Ford Administration, carrying out policies shaped by Secretary of State Henry Kissinger, cooperated with the South African invasion of Angola in the clandestine CIA intervention aimed at defeating the MPLA. The intervention failed but the South Africans certainly would have had every reason to want Ford to win the 1979 presidential election. In 1979 Ford gave a speech on relations between the United States and South Africa at a seminar in Houston for the South African Foreign Trade Association and the SenBank of South Africa. SenBank paid Ford $10,000, but according to Rhodie the bank was reimbursed by the Information Department. Ford's speech was used in a special supplement on South Africa in *Business Week* magazine (October 1979). That

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supplement was also secretly underwritten by the Information Department.\textsuperscript{50}

But why Dick Clark as a target of the South African political influence? The answer is to be found in a now little-known official Senate study done by the Senate Sub-committee on Africa in 1978. Chaired by Senator Clark, this prestigious Senate Sub-committee concluded in its study that:

By end — 1976, South Africa’s overseas debt equaled $7.6 billion of which $2.2 billion, or nearly one-third of all bank claims on South Africa, was owed to U.S. banks and their foreign branches. . . .
The $2.2 billion of American credit outstanding in 1976 is roughly equivalent to the amount of foreign exchange required to cover South Africa’s defense and oil imports costs for the same year. . . .\textsuperscript{51}

In addition the study reported that “the net effect of American investment in South Africa has been to strengthen the economic and military self-sufficiency of South Africa’s apartheid regime. . . .”\textsuperscript{52} Given Senator Clark’s role in stopping the entry of U.S. troops into Angola to back up the October, 1975 South African invasions, he was clearly not a favorite son of the Pretoria regime. And with the study coming so soon after the events of 1976 (including the Soweto shooting of 1,000 students, and the Fall, 1977 bannings of nearly 20 black and white organizations), and in addition, its being one of the very few U.S. Senate pronouncements on foreign affairs in 1978, the study was a serious blow to South Africa’s international image. Therefore, South African government operatives had reason to deploy substantial means to defeat Senator Clark.

The famous Rev. Allan Boesak, a colored Dutch Reformed Mission Minister, President of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches and a founder of the militant new organization the United Democratic Front (UDF), has recently experienced how the South African government can lay aside the velvet gloves and strike more painfully with the iron fist. After months of taping and monitoring his life and movements, the South African police “discovered” that Rev. Boesak was having a love affair with a white staff member of the South African Council of Churches. The police passed the information about the affair, including a bedroom scene tape, to the Johannesburg Star newspaper, hoping to smear Boesak and wreak havoc on his personal life.

The project failed largely because the church did not expel Boesak but merely suspended him temporarily and because some of the reporters involved also discovered and exposed the role of the South African police in creating the entire situation. But the importance of the cases of Rev. Boesak and Senator Dick Clark is the range of methods, such as systematic “disinformation,” which the South African government and its various apparatuses will employ in order to achieve a given goal. As Brigadier Johan Van der Merwe, a leading

\textsuperscript{50}Richard Leonard, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 183.


\textsuperscript{52}\textit{Ibid.}, p. 13.
officer of the South African security forces, commented after Rev. Boesak’s reinstatement:

[I]... see nothing immoral in spreading false information about “subversive” organizations, such as the South African Council of Churches, to which Boesak belongs, “so long as it does not harm the morals of the community we serve.”

These cases, however, are not the worst of South Africa’s repressive tactics. Assassinations and killings under suspicious circumstances are not novel in South Africa. In addition to the well-known deaths in detention of Steve Biko (1977) and trade unionist Dr. Neil Aggett (February, 1982), Lutheran lay preacher, Tshilhiwa Muefhe (January, 1982), and Transkei opposition leader Manana Mgqweto (September, 1981), the following deaths point to the work of “hit squads” acting in the interest of, or as an arm of, the South African government: 1) Griffiths Mxenge, found with his throat cut in the city morgue (November, 1981); 2) Hennie Ferrus, killed in a “questionable car accident” (August, 1981); 3) Diliswa Roxiso, fiancee of activist trade unionist Thozamile Gqweta, killed by “questionable” police fire in 1981; 4) Rev. Frikkie Conradie, white colleague of Alan Boesak, killed in a “questionable car accident” (March, 1982); 5) Joe Mavi, President of the Black Municipal Workers Union, killed when his car overturned in 1982; 6) Tebogo Noko, and 7) Paul Leboea, organizers for the black National Union of Mineworkers, killed in a car accident (March, 1983); 8) Stephen Maseko, organizer for the National Automobile and Allied Workers Union, killed in an automobile collision; 9) Rev. James Gawe, Anglican rector, found dead and drunk where his car had overturned in an accident considered questionable because of his 22 year history of abstention (June, 1984); 10) Bongani Khumalo, Secretary of the Soweto branch of the student movement, COSAS, shot dead as he walked out of his Soweto home (September, 1984); 11) Jeanette Schoon, a teacher, and 12) her daughter.

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COSAS members in a funeral march for a student killed by police in Pretoria during student boycott, August, 1984.

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53 Allister Sparks, “South African Cleric Cleared.” 
Katryn, killed opening a parcel bomb at their home in Angola (June, 1984); 13) Vernon Nkadimeng, son of the general secretary of the banned South African Congress of Trade Unions (SACTU), killed in a car bomb explosion in Gaberone, Botswana (May, 1985); and 14) Matthew Goniwe, Fort Calata, Sparrow Mkhonto, and Salaelo Mhlawuhi, whose four bodies were found mutilated and burned near their hijacked car in the Eastern Cape where they had been “missing” for nearly a week. At a July 4, 1985 press conference other Eastern Cape community activists reported that another 27 people had disappeared in the Eastern Cape, the Transvaal, and Orange Free State and 20 others were on “hit lists” — including Bishop Desmond Tutu and Rev. Alan Boesack — drawn up and circulated by the regime or its agents. Less than a month later, on July 31, 1985, Victoria Nonyamezelo Mxenge, wife of Griffiths Mxenge and the key attorney for 16 defendants in a treason trial, was shot to death as she arrived home.

Substantial evidence points to three types of assassins: the authorities themselves, extreme right-wing groups of whites with police or military connections, and blacks hired by either the government or right-wing groups. As in the case of death squads elsewhere, the regime attempts to place blame for the killings or disappearances on the opposition groups seeking to change the government in power. In South Africa, the government and police simply attribute such deaths to the tensions and quarrels between the two major opposition groups, the United Democratic Front (UDF) and the Azanian People’s Organization (AZAPO). But further evidence of the existence of South African government sponsored assassination units is provided by U.S. Defense Department classified intelligence reports released by Randall Robinson of TransAfrica in 1981. These documents discuss the activities of a “hit squad” authorized by the South African government for the purpose of killing African National Congress leaders. Finally, the comments of General van den Berghe, former head of the South African Bureau of State Security (BOSS), to the 1978 Erasmus Commission of Inquiry into Muldergate are suggestive:

Mr. Commissioner, I really want to tell you that I am able with my department to do the impossible. This is not bragging. . . . I don’t have weak men, I have good men. . . . I can tell you here, not for your records, but I can tell you, I have enough men to commit murder if I tell them: Kill. . . . I don’t care who the prey is, these are the type of men I have. . . .

54 Mervyn Rees, op. cit., p. 16.
Reagan's Policy of "Constructive Engagement"

The Ronald Reagan administration and its policy of "constructive engagement" towards South Africa is a change from previous administrations. No administration has gone so far or has been so crude in its initiatives as the Reagan administration in seeking to dominate the African continent. If the approach of the Carter administration was to coyly cozy up to the Southern African liberation movements (for example the African National Congress (ANC) and the Southwest African People's Organization (SWAPO)) and then "manage" them, the approach of Ronald Reagan today is to: 1) isolate the Southern African liberation movements, represented by organizations such as the ANC and SWAPO; and 2) label them "terrorist" in various systematic press and media treatment, opening the door to American hostility or attack. This approach follows Ronald Reagan's basic perspective toward the "Third World" nations of Africa, Asia, and Latin America. Reagan's first Secretary of State, Alexander Haig, stated this view very succinctly within weeks after assuming the reins of the State Department: "The so-called wars of national liberation are putting in jeopardy our ability to influence world events . . . and to assure access to raw materials."\(^5\)

The Carter administration, like the Reagan administration and other pas: U.S. administrations, believed that southern Africa and South Africa, with its rich and vast mineral resources was an area that the "Free World" could not afford to lose. The Carter administration believed that the best way to keep Africa in the U.S. orbit of influence was to be close to the liberation movements and to manipulate them. In order to gain respectability within independent Africa, it condemned and chastized South Africa on certain levels, though not economically. For instance, the Carter administration, with few exceptions, did not permit military or related equipment to be exported to South Africa. The Reagan administration, by contrast, allowed $28.2 million worth of such equipment to be exported between 1981 and 1983 and more than $88 million in the first part of 1984.

\(^5\)Robert Suro, op. cit., p. 25.
Police interrogate a worker during municipal workers' strike, 1980.

Only two weeks after the 1981 inauguration of Ronald Reagan, South African commandos raided ANC houses in Maputo, the capital of Mozambique, coldly assassinating 13 key ANC and trade unionist cadre. This attack can be seen in the context of the Congressional hearings convened later by Senator Jeremiah Denton (R-Alabama), allegedly held in order to examine the Soviet links to the ANC and SWAPO but really designed to expose and harass ANC and SWAPO networks and supporters in the U.S. The Maputo raid can also be seen in the context of the U.S. Internal Revenue Service's investigation into the Africa Fund during 1983-84 which, like the National Council of Churches, was a longtime supporter of ANC and SWAPO humanitarian projects. In addition, the South African government-backed U.S.-Southwest Africa Trade and Cultural Council attempted to get the IRS to terminate the World Council of Churches' tax exempt status in 1981-1982 because of its relationship and humanitarian grants to the ANC, SWAPO, and other liberation movements.
The aggressive foreign policy approach of the Reagan Administration was also evident in 1983 at the time of the Grenada invasion when African governments suddenly found their food aid packages reduced or cancelled. Most notably, Zimbabwe learned in December 1983 that a grant of $75 million had been cut in half because of "its support for a UN resolution deploping the intervention in Grenada and its failure to support various American resolutions in the UN." The food weapon was also employed against Angola and Mozambique in 1983. It was employed against Mozambique because Mozambique expelled several CIA functionaries from the U.S. embassy in Maputo and because the Soviets made a naval port call at Maputo. Longtime U.S. foreign policy commentator Claudia Wright summarized the whole approach when she observed in 1983:

The Reagan administration is confident that the frontline states that support South Africa's guerrilla movements will crumble under direct South African attack and indirect American economic pressure. The economic part of the strategy is intended to demonstrate, in the words of Richard But, the State Department's Director of Politico-Military Affairs, that 'it pays to be an American friend.'

But why is the Reagan administration different? Ronald Reagan personally has had long standing sympathies with South Africa's white government. In 1965, when he was running for governor, he visited then Massachusetts Attorney General Edward Brooke in Massachusetts. While there, during a luncheon speech on the emergent African nations, he joked, "when they have a man for lunch, they really have him for lunch." While governor of California, he hosted South African business and government leaders, publicly identifying South Africa as an old friend.

In 1976, running against President Ford, Reagan proposed sending U.S. occupation troops to Rhodesia in order "to prevent further bloodshed." He suggested this after seeing a St. Louis newspaper advertisement showing numerous dead black Rhodesians and one white Rhodesian, a small white girl, with the caption "Bayonet a Dozen Times." Prior to the 1980 election, one of Reagan's Africa advisors characterized his boss's views on South Africa as singularly one-dimensional, remarking: "The problem with Reagan is that all he knows about Southern Africa is that he's on the side of the whites."

But such positions and racist jokes should not be surprising. In the 1940s, Reagan placed restrictive covenant leases on his and his neighbors' properties in California enjoining any non-Europeans, except for hired help, from occupying the premises. In 1967, he fought fair housing legislation, stating that he was opposed to telling people what to do with their property and that "This has nothing to do with discrimination. It has to do with our


Reagan's record as President speaks for itself. His administration's policies are predictable and consistent with his personal stance of embracing the South African apartheid system.

Some of Ronald Reagan's appointments also clearly show his human rights sentiments. Marianne Mele Hall, $70,000 a year chair of the Copyright Royalty Tribunal, co-authored the 1983 volume *Foundations of Sand* which alleges that:

One of the problems confronting America is that blacks 'insist on preserving their jungle freedoms, their women, their avoidance of personal responsibility and their abhorrence of the work ethic.'

Also culpable, it contends, are the social scientists who 'put blacks on welfare so they can continue their jungle freedoms of leisure time and subsidized procreation.'

Peter J. Duignan, Reagan's proposed (later confirmed) Director of the National Archives, was called "controversial" by the May 18, 1985 *Washington Post* because of his view that the U.S. should "extend rather than diminish contact with South Africa." In fact, Duignan, a specialist in African Studies at the Hoover Institution on War, Revolution and Peace, is renowned for his negative and racist views towards Africans despite the years he has spent cataloguing and bibliographing African history and achievements. In one of his more classic works, he asserts that the:

... colonial empire in Africa was one of the most efficacious engines of cultural diffusion in world history. Imperial rule involved a vast transfer of human and physical capital to Africa. Much of Africa benefited not merely from enormous private and public investments in brick and mortar, but also from a great transfer of human abilities to Africa. The efforts made by privately subsidized mission societies and similar organizations alone form an outstanding chapter in the history of civilization."

This apologetic and ahistorical stance along with such additional beliefs as his thesis that the slave trade was a stimulus to population growth in West

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Africa because it introduced American plants and fruit are quite consistent with his long-held and deeply cherished belief that South Africa’s whites are “destined to prevail over the African continent.”

It is an undisputable fact that Ronald Reagan’s policies and actions reflect a systematic disposition against black people as a group. However, Ronald Reagan’s personal racism, whether reflected in his words or deeds, is not an adequate explanation of the U.S. posture towards the Pretoria regime. Reagan’s personal actions are not the full story. U.S. foreign policy-making does not operate in a vacuum. The overwhelmingly white and male American officials who formulate and implement policy do so within specific socio-economic and historic circumstances. Decisions are made in a specific context. That context is one in which racism permeates every facet of American society and therefore affects most decisions related to Africa.

![Cartoon appearing in The Washington Post, Sunday, January 20, 1985.](image)

U.S. policy toward Pretoria has long been shaped by a thinly veiled desire to side with the white minority, or, at minimum, to do nothing fundamentally against that group and the inability to see U.S. interests linked to those of the black majority. This “racist” view towards Africa is at once both economic and social. It is derived from the U.S.’s own history as a slave-holding nation, its brutal settlement of the West, its pacification of native Americans, and from the profit return rates which cheap labor in South Africa and elsewhere in the “Third World” have long provided U.S. multinationals.

U.S. foreign policy towards Africa is rooted in a historical topsoil which saw, as prominent critic Manning Marable recently noted, “over 5,000 black Americans lynched between 1882 and 1927 and many publicly burned.” But it also stems from the thorough and systematic negation or cooption of black and other non-white peoples’ cultures and values in U.S. society, an

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institutionalized practice which has driven overseas some of America's "best," its actors and writers, scholars and athletes, to places where they could be embraced and appreciated, countries where they could participate. That American cabinet officials would beat upon the table mocking natives playing drums or joke about cannibalism comes as no surprise given a generation raised on Africa as "the dark continent," "the Zulu warrior," "the sleeping giant" and countless other images projected by movies like The African Queen, King Solomon's Mines and authors like Edgar Rice Burroughs and Robert Ruark. It is the same generation fed a steady diet of black America as "Amos and Andy," "The Jeffersons," Beulahland, or Mr. T, all mystified by the racist theories of William Shockley and Arthur R. Jensen. And it is within this historical context of attitudes and practices toward black people, that most white South Africans and most white Americans potentially become kith and kin.

America's Need To Win

Beginning in 1980, there has been a resurgence in racism on an international level. In Europe and North America a dramatic rise in the incidence of racial violence has been noted. The Ku Klux Klan, the Nazi Party, the Aryan Nations have enjoyed revived support. A number of conservative administrations have come to power (led by President Reagan, Prime Minister Begin of Israel, President Botha of South Africa, and Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher of Great Britain) which either explicitly or implicitly condone, arouse, or sustain organized racism. In both Europe and the U.S. there has been greater and greater use of rituals and decorations to reinvigorate dominant cultures. In Germany, increased reference to "greater Germany," in Britain, increased reliance on the throne as a national symbol, and in the U.S., a widespread, state-backed appeal to the values of "God, family, and country" has been revived. In this setting, the Larry Byrds and Mary Lou Retton's of sports fame personify the right values.

The 1970's, with the defeat of the U.S. in the Vietnam War and anti-colonial victories in Portuguese Africa, marked the decline of overseas empires. Nicaragua, Angola, Ethiopia, the handover of the Panama Canal, and the heightened struggle in El Salvador represent important setbacks to the emperors and empire brokers of the "Free World."

The historical period in which these dynamics appear is one characterized on the economic level by deep global crisis. The former dominant industries, like the U.S. auto and steel industry, are close to total collapse. Structural changes, with much job displacement and loss, are ushered in throughout the world's labor market, bringing with them intense social insecurity and tensions. Enter the Ronald Reagan Administration in 1981, an administration which represents an important departure from previous administrations. It is not simply that the Reagan Administration represents the ascendance of Western oil and the interests of the energy barons over traditional East Coast capital, the victory of the West's cowboys over the East Coast's bankers and the Midwest's industrialists. It also represents a new style of politics — one that is more
coarse and crude. The world-view of the newly triumphant "Rambo" conservatives allows for no grey tones. For them, especially the old guard such as Reagan, Jesse Helms, Pat Buchanan and Howard Phillips of the Conservative Caucus, the world is an apocalyptic struggle between the forces of darkness and the forces of light, between good and evil, capitalism and communism, the United States and the Soviet Union. Though there are splits and distinctions to be made among the conservative forces which vie for dominance in the Reagan Administration, they share one fundamental belief: that only fast, decisive action by (white) Americans can resolve the world's problems.

Thus, with the inauguration of Ronald Reagan we have the reintroduction of the U.S. as a global policeman, one which relies on formal allies and other countries as deputy policemen. During the fall of 1983, Grenada was invaded by the U.S. government, backed up by deputized Caribbean countries. It was an invasion aimed at toppling a small island populated by black people who were militarily incapable of being a threat to the U.S. It also aimed at freeing white American medical students, allegedly threatened by a black, Cuba-leaning Marxist government. And another specific objective was to prove to the Third World and U.S. populations that post-Vietnam America was once again "walkin' tall!"

It is at this same historical juncture that the Ronald Reagan administration, immediately after the inauguration, began a policy towards South Africa which gave the Boer Republic more support and encouragement than had been given by any previous U.S. administration. And it is this historical context that fueled the Wall Street Journal editorial, quoted below, which was published on November 30, 1983, shortly after the U.S. invasion of Grenada. Entitled "Why Not Victory?" the editorial heralded the end of defeatism in U.S. foreign policy and called for Angola to be invaded next:

Big Oil, and the Chase Manhattan Bank, have been the main American lobby for the Cuban and Russian backed Luanda regime. . . . American interests don't require keeping the U.N. or Big Oil happy. But they do have something to do with stopping the Soviet-Cuban romp through the Third World, especially when the people who live there are asking American help against the new Marxist colonialists. Whatever the defeatist habits of the foreign policy establishment, the public response to Grenada shows that the American people are ready to start winning again.

The Corporatization of U.S. Foreign Policy

The U.S. policy debate on South Africa has changed considerably since the 1960's and 1970's. The divestment movement, the effort to withdraw organizational and public funds from companies and banks involved with South Africa, gained momentum in the early 1980's. According to a statement
from the American Committee on Africa, by June, 1985 the seven states of Connecticut, Iowa, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Nebraska and Wisconsin, the territory of the Virgin Islands, 28 cities including Washington, New York and Boston, and three counties had divested or otherwise restricted $1.8 billion from U.S. companies and banks involved in South Africa. Rushing to create a cabinet-level post to deal with divestment, the South African government characterized the divestment lobby as “taking action that could strike telling blows on South Africa.”

Beginning in 1984, powerful black American organizations like TransAfrica and the NAACP are more engaged and have been organizing public demonstrations through the “Free South Africa Movement.” From Texas to Minnesota, from Maine to California, hundreds of thousands of black people and their allies have mobilized. Organized labor, specifically the AFL-CIO, is also beginning to mobilize on the South African apartheid question in a manner which it never did during the Vietnam War period. The serious entry of these two constituencies with their numbers and organizational resources has significantly altered the stakes from the days when apartheid was largely a concern of the churches, some campuses, and a few small groups whose full time work was on behalf of Africa. And undoubtedly as more municipalities and state legislatures examine their investment portfolios and pension funds, as more people learn the details about the Pretoria-Peoria axis, the organized black community, labor, and some church bodies will raise the stakes even higher.

But the group which has most altered and will continue to alter the terms of the debate, is the U.S. corporate community. According to one recent and reliable source, today there are 284 companies which operate directly in South Africa, which include Citicorp, Continental Illinois, General Motors, IBM, General Electric, and Mobil. In 1981, the value of these companies’ operations in South Africa was $2.6 billion. By the end of 1983, this figure had dropped to $2.3 billion.

Those direct operations, however, are not the whole picture of the U.S. corporate community’s contribution in South Africa. The key factor is that U.S. companies dominate the most important sectors of the economy: oil, computers, electronics, communications, and the motor industry.

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Additionally, beginning in late 1983, U.S. nationals, both companies and individuals, hold 57%, or $8 billion worth of the foreign investments in gold, diamonds, and other commodities on the Johannesburg stock exchange. At the end of 1984, U.S. banks had loaned $4.7 billion to South African borrowers, making U.S. banks South Africa's most important source for big capital. These loans, incidentally, are a dollar flow to the South African public and private sectors and to banks in South Africa. Currently, the bulk of the loan flow goes to private customers. But the loans to banks are crucial for an economy which is currently very depressed.

An excellent illustration of the critical role played by the loans to private customers is a 1982 $100 million loan to South Africa's African Explosives and Chemical Industries (AECI) negotiated by Citicorp.65 Reportedly, the loan was for AECI's "general financing requirements." AECI, however, besides being the sole source of explosives for the gold mines, also runs three munitions plants and has an exclusive monopoly on packing explosives into shells. A 1977 investigation supported by the British Council of Churches found that AECI also makes nerve gas, defoliants, and napalm and manufactured most of the tear gas used against protesting children in the 1976 Soweto uprising.66

Today the U.S. corporate community is worried. It has encountered protest since the 1960s, but nothing like the scale of the protest today. Nor has it experienced anything as visible as the anti-apartheid mobilization of today. Divestment, as a means of both isolating apartheid and of intensifying the pressure on the South Africa state, clearly threatens both U.S. and South African corporate and governmental circles. Though the campaign for divestment began as a whisper in the Oregon state legislature in 1980-1981, it steadily grew as a tactic and as of May, 1986 divestment bills had been introduced into the legislatures of over 40 states. Additionally, seventeen states, sixty cities, and nine counties had successfully enacted various laws ranging from selective purchasing to limiting pension funds, all of which restricted state and/or municipal funds from being implicated in supporting apartheid. By the end of 1985 the value of the withdrawal of this funding was estimated at over five billion dollars. John Chettle, director of the Washington, D.C.-based South Africa Foundation, attested to the impact of the divestment campaign when he candidly commented in South Africa's equivalent of the Wall Street Journal, the Financial Mail (Johannesburg) on February 1, 1985:

In one respect at least, the divestment forces have already won. They have prevented — discouraged, dissuaded, whatever you call it — billions of dollars . . . . (from) . . . new investors who were looking for foreign opportunities from coming to South Africa.

Recently, Steve Bishen, head of the American Chamber of Commerce in South Africa, one key organizational vehicle for U.S. corporations involved


66Counter Information Service, Black South Africa Explodes (Amsterdam: Transnational Institute, 1977), p. 49.
with South Africa, has called upon his colleagues to be serious about the near tidal wave threat which the U.S. divestment movement, led by "Castro and Arafat-led TransAfrica," is posing.67

The U.S. business community and its lobbying forces have begun to gear up in response to the divestment movement. The Heritage Foundation, with its $7.1 million budget, and the American Legislative Exchange Council (ALEC), both backed by Coors Company and the Mellon family's banking, oil and industry fortune, have already started targeting specific organizations. The Heritage Foundation has been attacking the African American Institute (AAI) in New York — an organization involved in Africa questions, with many east coast corporate and church linkages — because of its "too liberal policies" and extensive ties to the liberation movement, the African National Congress. ALEC has been organizing systematically, often using South African government materials, to inundate legislators with anti-divestment and pro-South Africa arguments and literature.

Thus, when Ronald Reagan says his administration will embrace South Africa as a "friendly country," an ally, it is not just the office of the presidency speaking. It is the presidency expressing the corporate special interests and powers which increasingly determine the ebb and flow of U.S. foreign policy. It is the Hoover Institute on War, Revolution and Peace, with its corporate directors from Mellon Bank, Standard Oil of Indiana, Sun Oil, and United Technologies, all deeply invested in South African apartheid, which is speaking. It is the will and perspective of the American Enterprise Institute (AEI), with its staff of 135 and $10 million annual budget and corporate funding from American Cyanamid, Dow Chemical, and Chase Bank, all of whom have been beneficiaries of the 12-17% profit return rates from the apartheid system, which is also being expressed.

The well-organized and well financed activities of over 30 Washington, D.C. professional lobbyists, acting on behalf of their own and their clients' interests, have stimulated and helped to buoy the U.S. historical embrace of South Africa. These lobbyists are mostly law firms headquartered in Washington, D.C. Some are little known law firms like Rubenstein, Wolfson and Company which canvasses and pressures Congress and Congressional staff regarding South African gold. Other firms like Smathers Symington and Herlong are more well known and even include prominent liberal personalities like former Missouri Democratic Senator Stuart Symington. In 1981, Symington's firm received $400,000 from the South African government for its assistance in defeating legislation aimed at limiting new investment in South Africa. The most well connected of the currently active lobbyists is John Sears, who was Ronald Reagan's campaign manager in 1980. The South African government views the $500,000 a year which he receives as money well spent because it gives them easy access to the President and other Cabinet members.

The lobbyists do many things. They host dinners and parties. They arrange all expenses paid trips to South Africa, and hostesses at places like The Sun City Hotel in the Bophuthatswana bantustan. They arrange hunting safaris to Kruger National Park. In between, the lobbyists present arguments on the

mineral dependency of the U.S. on South Africa and the necessity that U.S. corporations teach the black South African workers how to be good trade unionists. And sometimes they write speeches for politicians who need them. Or, at times, they quietly arrange the speaking engagement, write the speech, and forward the speaker’s honorarium from the South African government. This was the case at a June 1979 Palm Springs Conference arranged by lobbyist Sidney Baran featuring General William Westmoreland who received $4,000 for his appearance. But the speechwriting is complimentary work. It is the insiders clout, the secret contributions, and fringe benefits that do most to get the attention of the Washington, D.C. decision makers.

Most significantly, during the 1980’s, corporations have learned to act as a unified group. They are now more adept at submerging their individual interests in order to act jointly based on their shared national, class, and racial interests. Thus, International Harvester and Mobil will join with competitor companies like Standard Oil of Indiana and Caterpillar to link up with the Chicago South African Consulate to defeat an Illinois divestment bill. The question becomes: will the major South Africa-linked U.S. corporations gear up the 2,800 state and local Chambers of Commerce and National Association of Manufacturers offices across the U.S. to oppose, with massive direct mail campaigns and advertising, any and all efforts at withdrawing U.S. investment from South Africa? Also, will the 1,467 corporate and trade association PACs in Washington be mobilized to oppose divestment initiatives on the federal level?

The race factor is one which is rarely addressed, even by anti-apartheid critics. Most of the American executives who manage the U.S. corporate operations in South Africa are white men. Publicly, all claim they abhor apartheid. Almost all of them would favor a modification of apartheid but only insofar as current profit maximization levels were maintained.

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Incidentally, current profit return rates from apartheid enterprises hover at about 7%. Though high compared to global averages, this 1982-1983 figure is down from the 31% after-tax profit rate available in 1980.\(^{69}\) Most white American businessmen in South Africa would probably modify apartheid only so far, even if such modification might mean more streamlined operations, lower labor costs, and higher profits.

An issue of *Fortune* magazine in 1972 cites a 1969 market research poll's finding that three quarters of the U.S. businessmen living in South Africa "approve of apartheid as an approach that is, under the circumstances at least, an attempt to develop a solution."\(^{70}\) The same article quotes then managing director of International Harvester's South African subsidiary as having publicly told a visiting U.S. church group:

> I am sympathetic to what the South African government is trying to do. I don't want hundreds of Africans running around in front of my house.\(^{71}\)

The racist attitudes which many, perhaps most, American business and governmental representatives bring with them to South Africa are sometimes even less veiled in the 1980s than in the 1960s and 1970s. In March 1983, Illinois Senator Roger Keats went on an all expenses paid junket to South Africa. He lauded South Africa as a great country by reporting that "many areas looked better than the west side of Chicago and one could walk their blacks' streets." He returned brimming about the things he had learned. Noting that before he'd gone he "couldn't tell the difference between blacks, coloureds, whites or Indians," he shared some of the knowledge related to race which he had acquired. He had learned that:

> Although the Zulus are the most numerous, they are not very popular. Like our Irish who often want to be police, Zulus are often policemen. . . . Whites, Indians and coloureds worked on punctuality, but blacks worked on the idea of eventualty. It's a warm and pleasant country, they [the blacks] take their time. It makes Mexicans look efficient.\(^{72}\) (Emphasis added.)

The May 23, 1985 public comment of Cornell University Vice President, William Herbst, also demonstrates that a truly base predisposition really regulates a veneer of corporate calm. When asked by a black South African student in front of a live television audience if he would have been prepared to invest in corporations dealing with Nazi Germany, employing the argument that some of the people living under Nazism would thereby be benefited, Herbst replied:

> If they had a Sullivan Code (labor standards

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\(^{71}\) *Ibid.*

employed voluntarily by U.S. corporations, I would think so... I would have felt comfortable at the time, if they had a standard against which they were operating, and if they were trying to operate responsibly. 23

But there is also another level at which the corporate community will garner its clout and influence. It is the "old boy" network which will gear up to strengthen the administration's stance of embracing the apartheid state. Former Secretary of State and President of United Technologies Corporation, Alexander Haig, will meet with the President or his aides to remind them how critical South Africa's minerals are to the Free World and especially for United Technology's being able to retain a cheap way of procuring platinum. Or he will appear at a public forum to endorse Reagan's "constructive engagement" with South Africa. For example, in February 1984, he was the guest speaker at several public occasions (including South Africa's Israel United Appeal's fundraising dinners) in South Africa sponsored by the South African Manpower and Management Foundation. 24

William Simon, former Treasury Secretary, lauded South Africa in a November 21, 1977 Business Week article as the place where "foreign investors could avail themselves of the opportunities to reap handsome rewards." The article reported that he will write a series of editorial opinion pieces for several of the country's big newspapers. Each will be published — without question or challenge — and each will open with the phrase "like all good Americans I too abhor apartheid." 25

Standard Oil of California, Mobil, Dow, Fluor, General Electric, General Motors, Caterpillar and Readers Digest Association are a few of the companies heavily involved in South Africa. They are Ronald Reagan's friends and contributors. These are the forces which influence the Reagan administration. It is these corporate voices, not those "strident tones" of the United Nations, Sweden, Holland or India, the World Council of Churches (WCC), the United Methodist Church, the U.S. Catholic Bishops Conference or the Organization of African Unity (OAU), which are heard.

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South Africa's War in the U.S.

Meanwhile, today the South African government is intensifying its war in the United States. The war includes various tactics. Pretoria is following the 1981 advice offered by Assistant Secretary of State for Africa, Chester Crocker. When commenting to then Secretary of State Alexander Haig, he said, "You will need to respond with an artful combination of gestures and hints." At the same time that the reform "gestures" are being made, South Africa also pursues the path of "unconventional offensive" suggested by Eschel Rhoodie, former South African Information Department Secretary in the U.S.

Lobbyists As Ammunition

The South African government-paid U.S. lobbyists are busier than ever at the federal, state, and municipal levels. They are providing information packages and writing speeches for their elected officials. The South African Tourist Corporation, working hand-in-hand with the lobbyists and the South African Foundation, is gearing up to maximize the numbers of elected officials who will get the paid junkets to see the wonders of Kruger National Park. The packets of literature, filmstrips, feature films and books form hundreds of full page advertisements which are scheduled for regular appearances in major U.S. dailies and magazines from the Phoenix Sun to the Wall Street Journal.

What is at stake in this war is South Africa's image. The very word "apartheid" will have to be "neutralized," erecting in its place a vision of wild animal parks, smiling natives, and endless sunny beaches. All in all, as part of the total war, this image-building effort will necessitate a relentless offensive involving the expenditure of millions and engaging hundreds coast to coast, both South African and American.
South Africa’s Use of the U.S. Media

The Columbia Broadcasting System’s show, 60 Minutes, with its 35 million viewers weekly has already shown how the major U.S. media, especially TV, can be utilized to improve South Africa’s image. On December 16, 1984, a lengthy segment hosted by Morley Safer provided a picture of South Africa which Safer himself characterized as being meant to provide only the apartheid government’s perspective. It was a show full of inaccuracies, distortions, and incomplete facts. It showed, for instance, the extremely comfortable houses of a few blacks, but no shots of the endless rows of squalid cardboard and tin shacks miles from the cities where the Group Areas Act confines urban black workers. Nowhere during the show was it mentioned that in the four months before airing, over 200 black people had been shot and killed and thousands injured in constant demonstrations and protests.

The South African government loved the the 60 Minutes segment. The program was broadcast in total on South Africa’s whites-only TV and was front
page news. President P.W. Botha commented, "we are finally getting through to the public abroad." When the Free South Africa Movement challenged the show and demanded equal time to correct its false and misleading impressions, a CBS Vice President denied the request saying, "We stand by Mr. Safer's reporting."76

It is not the first time 60 Minutes has done such excellent work for the South African apartheid machinery. On January 23, 1983, 60 Minutes aired a forty-minute segment attacking the World Council of Churches and the National Council of Churches, U.S.A. (NCCUSA). In a piece full of distortions and inaccuracies, the program left uninformed viewers with the impression that both church bodies were sending funds to guerrillas for armed struggle and functioned as the dupes of Moscow and Havana. Like the later piece on South Africa, it was a prime example of a one-sided piece of TV journalism. And given that the World Council of Churches is viewed by the apartheid government as one of its foremost enemies (after the African National Congress), it raises the fundamental question of why CBS' 60 Minutes has decided to be such a good "team player" on behalf of the South African apartheid offensive.

But 60 Minutes should not be viewed as the only media player performing for Pretoria. After a 1976 all-expenses-paid trip to South Africa, editor Beurt SerVaas published a dozen different articles promoting South Africa in his Saturday Evening Post, virtually turning his magazine into a pro-apartheid vehicle. An August 1982 article in Reader's Digest which attacked the World Council of Churches was entitled "Karl Marx or Jesus Christ: Which Master is the WCC Serving?" and reads like a piece produced by the South African Department of Information. So too does a March 4, 1985 editorial commentary in Barron's National Business and Financial Weekly by Peter Brimelow. Entitled "'Eating People is Wrong': Divestment Would Claim Many Victims in South Africa and the U.S.," the editorial contains the usual South African government distortions such as the glaringly misleading statement that "there is no apartheid in the 'national states' of Venda, Bophuthatswana, the Ciskei and the Transkei."

The results of a recent investigation by one journalist show that this type of coverage may be part of a pattern. The author alleges that since 1982 "more than 200 U.S. journalists — including some of the most powerful and influential reporters, columnists and editors — made all-expenses paid trips to South Africa. In almost all instances they returned to the U.S. to provide favorable news coverage of South Africa."77

White South African critic and author, Donald Woods, former editor of the Daily Dispatch newspaper in South Africa, also sees a pattern. He feels, however, that South Africa seeks more than just "favorable" coverage. In a report entitled, "Study and Memorandum on South African Propaganda,"

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76Jan. 3, 1985 Letter from Eric Ober, Vice President of Public Affairs Broadcasts, CBS, addressed to Randall Robinson, Executive Director of TransAfrica.

Mr. Woods demonstrates decisively that the South African government seeks "to promote a false image of South Africa's stability and reform." He points out, for instance, that few of the bombing or sabotage actions inside South Africa are even reported in the South African media, let alone in the overseas press, TV, or radio. He also underscores the often-neglected fact that many areas of insurgent activity are dubbed "operational zones" by the South African security. When this happens, all media reports, both domestic and foreign, issued from or about such a zone, must be cleared by the police. When the South African government declares a state of emergency, media coverage is so severely limited that it is virtually impossible for foreign press to "cover" South Africa at all.

What lies ahead is that the media, especially the big municipal dailies, will face regular challenges as to whether they will substantively share with the American public the true details of the U.S.-South Africa story. Will they overcome the clout which big corporate advertisers can wield in: 1) influencing whether a story does or does not appear; 2) determining the section of the paper in which an article appears; or 3) determining the arguments and direction of a particular article? Another question is whether a largely white corps of journalists covering the South African apartheid saga will be able to transcend the racist instincts and outlooks with which they've been socialized in the racially polarized U.S.

The probable answer to these questions is that basically the media, especially in the Midwest and small towns, will remain captive to the corporate forces and a "preserve the status quo" perspective. A few papers and commentators, especially those with significant black readership and/or an organized group of black staff, will give thorough and insightful coverage. But it will largely be the responsibility of the Free South Africa movement and other anti-apartheid groups to both present the true and full picture of South African apartheid and pressure the U.S. media machinery to do the same.

This is no small task because the impact of South Africa's apartheid system is often only reluctantly faced by the majority of U.S. citizens. One reason is that many Americans believe that South Africa should take care of its own problems. Another reason is distance and the apparent futility of the situation. But more importantly, Americans would have to face up to the deep-seated residual racism in this country as well. Currently, very few Americans will admit that despite the 1960's civil rights movement and a larger, more visible widely heralded black middle class, the U.S. today is still two societies, one black (brown-Latino, yellow-Asian, and red-Native American), the other white — two societies separate and totally unequal.

U.S. Political Right Helps South Africa

One major source of Pretoria's new energy for the war in the U.S. is the revival of a conservative political sector, the U.S. political right wing. This sector's arsenal includes such publications as the American Legion magazine, Reader's Digest, the Conservative Digest, and National Review and

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letters to the editors. It includes syndicated columnists such as Pat Buchanan, Evans and Novak, and the organizational resolutions and votes at hundreds of conventions and conferences allied with South Africa. It also includes such unexpected organizations as the Boy Scouts, which has ties to apartheid South Africa.

For example, the U.S. National Board of the Boy Scouts includes eleven corporate directors with operations in South Africa. The list includes luminaries like Amory Houghton, board member of both IBM, source of computerization of South African ammunition distribution schemes and Citicorp, world’s largest single lender to South Africa, and M.T. Stamper, a Boeing director of South African Airways. Boeing’s planes are used to transport South African troops to the front in Namibia. The Boy Scouts have a branch in Namibia actively orienting young Namibian white boys. As of 1979, the Scouts Father in Namibia was Commandant Radmore, a full time explosives expert and military officer with the South African Defense Forces illegally occupying Northern Namibia and Southern Angola.79

The support the Right provides is not limited to relatively benign transatlantic Scouting ties. According to the Washington Office on Africa, Jeremiah Denton, right-wing Republican Senator from Alabama, having concluded his terrorism hearings on the Soviet links to SWAPO and the ANC, is now allegedly organizing a McCarthyesque fishing expedition into the U.S. anti-apartheid movement. The clear purpose of such hearings would be to intimidate and curtail the extensive educating and mobilizing being done by the various anti-apartheid organizations in the U.S.80

In November 1984, the Heritage Foundation issued a report calling for increased support of the CIA and Department of Defense in order to undermine governments in nine countries that “threaten United States interests.” Angola, the southern African country which the U.S. and South Africa alone among the world’s nations have refused to recognize, stands out prominently in the report. The report underscores the importance of capturing U.S. hearts and minds as you overthrow the government saying, “the only hope for these limited endeavors lies in a . . . more consistent U.S. policy, which in turn must be based on a stronger public consensus than exists today.”81

South Africa is also aligned with another right-wing movement led by Lyndon LaRouche which includes various manifestations: the U.S. Labor Party, the National Caucus of Labor Committees, the National Democratic Policy Committee, New Solidarity Newspaper, the Executive Intelligence Review, Fusion and Campaigner Magazines, the Schiller Institute, and the Fusion Energy Foundation. On November 15, 1984, LaRouche’s group attacked and disrupted a press conference being conducted by a group of Catholic bishops and the

79 Allan Cooper, op. cit., p. 178; Windhoek Observer, November 17, 1979, p. 6.
Washington Office on Africa. The press conference had been convened to release a Catholic Bishops' statement condemning the South African apartheid system and calling for more U.S. attention to the African famine.

Such an action by LaRouche was not extraordinary. During the 1970s, in addition to physical attacks on various progressive and activist organizations, the LaRouche group infiltrated and spied on black organizations in the U.S. and anti-apartheid organizations in both the U.S. and England. According to articles in the New Republic magazine and the Washington Post, intelligence reports on these groups were prepared and sold to the South African government by LaRouche followers.\(^2\)

LaRouche's connections and activities may mean that he is also an asset for the Reagan administration. A lengthy series in the Washington Post on January 15, 1985 reported that LaRouche regularly contacts and briefs U.S. governmental bodies such as the National Security Council (NSC) and the Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA). A comment by one former DIA director, Daniel Graham, about how the LaRouche associates came up with "good intelligence about the situation in Angola and Mozambique" may indicate that LaRouche serves as a conduit for intelligence from the South African government.\(^3\)

Violence in the U.S.

There are additional measures to which the Right in this country has resorted in order to bolster the South African apartheid cause: attacks on anti-apartheid speakers in Colorado and Southern California by mercenaries; the 1985 beating of a black divestment leader in Texas; repeated threats on the lives of leading anti-apartheid activist Dennis Brutus, ANC representative to the U.S. Mfanafuthi Makatini, and others; bombing threats at the ANC and SWAPO missions to the United Nations in New York; the 1977 stabbing of American sports activist and campus professor, Richard Lapchick, in Virginia by attackers who carved the misspelled word "nigger" in his stomach. Like the bombings of abortion clinics, these physical attacks naturally are "deplored" by the Reagan administration, an administration which embraces countries with governments such as those of South Africa and Chile as "anti-communist friends and allies."

What The Future Holds

What lies ahead? For the South African people? For the Southern African region? In the U.S.? There are certain basic patterns and dynamics which can be abstracted from the situation of intense and rapid change. As a recent clandestine radio broadcast of the ANC characterized the situation in South Africa, "Events in our country are moving with astonishing speed. The face of the country is changing before our very eyes."

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\(^2\) Dennis King and Ronald Radosh, "The LaRouche Connection," The New Republic, November 19, 1984, p. 15.

One pattern is that the South African government and its corporate allies are devoting more and more resources to the image war in the U.S. even as South Africa maximizes and diversifies its means of waging war and repression in Southern Africa. There is a veritable landslide of articles, TV, and radio coverage celebrating the reforms inside South Africa, such as the recent constitutional changes which gave Asians the vote but excluded the black majority. A type of limited home rule for the black townships is being widely projected. Both the U.S. and South African machinery will increasingly focus on South African urban blacks. One important Reagan administration response may be to bring many more black South Africans to the U.S. to study while those black South African refugees who have been here for years go destitute because the U.S. government cut off many of their educational scholarships and other forms of support.

Meanwhile, the small group of black businessmen inside South Africa will be given broader and broader public relations coverage. This will be part of a strategy aimed at siphoning off some leadership of the black community and fortifying that group as a strata of blacks supportive of the government and the status quo situation. This strategy includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Stricter laws will be introduced regulating the flow of African labor into white (or "urban") areas. The government-appointed Reickert Commission outlined the strategy as early as May 1979, when it said that the basic goal would be more (and better) control of "employment," "accommodation," the "rights" and living of the African population.

- The bantustan governments will be lauded as independent black governments which are peacefully solving the problems of multi-racial coexistence.

- Black "development" projects will be paraded before the U.S. public as places for investment.

- The bantustan "leaders" like Kaiser Matanzima and other government-appointed officials like Chief Cetsha Buthelezi with his Inkatha movement may be brought to Washington and other major cities as part of a general effort to identify and project alternative black leadership to ANC leadership.

Those developments will occur even as the South African government enhances the capacities of the same bantustans' police and military forces to rule by violence, to wreak repression and havoc on the populations already suffering in those barren lands. This strategy has already begun. In the Ciskei, in 1983-1984, hundreds of people, mostly youth and students, were regularly rounded up and systematically tortured in the Sisa Dukashe stadium.

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In the U.S., there will be a renewed effort by the government, as well as corporate, and university administrative elite to placate an American public which steadily becomes more informed and agitated about South Africa. Some type of legislation might be passed which will attempt to curtail the sale of Kruggerands, ban bank loans to the South African government, and limit future investment. But such legislation would have to be of minimal effectiveness in order to gain the wide House and Senate support that it will need to override an almost certain Reagan veto.

The corporate community will up the ante. It will respond to the growing clamor by a more conscientized and aroused public, especially from the black and student communities, against the role of U.S. corporations in supporting the South African government. At the center of the debate will be the famous Sullivan Principles, tailored by black preacher and General Motors Board Director, Leon Sullivan, which call for desegregated work places, equal pay, training programs for blacks, supervisory positions for blacks, improved living conditions outside the workplace, and the working of signatory companies to end apartheid and recognize black trade unions. These principles will be more widely projected and urged as the alternative to what will be dubbed “the radical options,” such as divestment and/or U.S. corporate withdrawal from South Africa.

What will not be discussed about the Sullivan Principles is that U.S. companies in South Africa, given their highly mechanized, computerized operations, employ less that one percent of the South African labor force and that less than one-half of the U.S. companies have signed onto the principles. Further, only one-third of those companies who follow the principles have received passing grades for their implementation efforts by the monitoring company, Arthur D. Little, which also has operations in South Africa. The corporations, as they talk to the U.S. Congress, city and state legislatures, unions, churches, and others will also neglect to mention that many of the same companies lauding their role as Sullivan signatory companies spend hundreds of thousands of dollars in union-busting efforts and in fighting affirmative action principles for minorities and women in the U.S. Finally, the supporters of the Sullivan Principles will fail to point out that the call for an end to U.S. corporate presence has come most persistently from individuals and organizations inside South Africa despite the fact that advocating for divestment and withdrawal of foreign corporations or capital is a criminal offense under the South African Terrorism Act and potentially punishable by imprisonment or death. Little quoted will be what the Motor Assemblers and Component Workers Union of South Africa (MACWUSA) representing workers at Ford Motor Company’s Port Elizabeth Factory had to say about the Sullivan Principles in 1982. They called the Sullivan Principles Code “a toothless package of piecemeal reform that allows this cruel system of apartheid to survive.”

86Dr. Jean Sindab, Testimony before the Subcommittee on Africa, Committee on Foreign Affairs, U.S. House of Representatives, January 31, 1985, p. 10.
Both South African Nobel Peace Prize winners, Chief Albert Luthuli and Bishop Tutu, as well as Nobel recipient Dr. Martin Luther King, have called for corporate withdrawal from South Africa as a means of non-violent pressure on the apartheid government. Also among those who have called for corporate withdrawal are organizations like the African National Congress, the banned Christian Institute, various black consciousness organizations, and individuals like Steve Biko, Dr. Neil Aggett, and Nelson and Winnie Mandela. In 1984, the largest federation of trade unions in South Africa, the Federation of South African Trade Unions (FOSATU) had this to say about disinvestment:

FOSATU as a trade union organization concerned with the jobs and livelihood of its members has to give careful consideration to the question of disinvestment. However, it is FOSATU's considered view that the pressure for disinvestment has had a positive effect and should therefore not be lessened. FOSATU is definitely opposed to foreign investment that accepts the conditions of oppression maintained by this regime. 67

In early July 1985, the South African Council of Churches (SACC) officially decided that, despite the possibility of being prosecuted for treason, the time had come to issue a call for economic pressure on South Africa, including disinvestment. 68

In November, 1985, the newly-formed Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) held its formative convention. With 558,000 members, it began its political life as a trade union federation by going on the offensive and adopting militant and openly political positions. The founding conference declared its support for divestment and sanctions as "an essential and effective form of pressure on the regime that must be supported." The President of COSATU sent a special message to the British and U.S. governments saying:

They tell us they are against divestment because the black people would starve, but black people have been starving here since the first white settlers arrived in 1652. 69

In terms of the Southern African region, there are certain patterns, too, which can be discerned. The treaty called the Nkomati Accords, forced on Mozambique by both South Africa and the U.S. in March 1984—one pledging Mozambique to cease support for the ANC and South Africa to terminate its support to the group fighting the Mozambiquan government, the MNR—is widely advertised, especially by the U.S. as a model, the path to a resolution of the Southern African conflict. This velvet glove initiative is being taken, even as both South Africa, and to a lesser extent the U.S., increase their "iron

fist” amounts of covert aid to the MNR in Mozambique and to UNITA in Angola in order for them to continue their military efforts to subvert the economies and terrorize the civilian populations. From the 1970s to July 1985, this covert aid from the U.S. was secretly forwarded along with official expressions of “concern about the actions of the MNR and UNITA guerrillas.”90 But on July 12, 1985, even as the U.S. Senate was voting limited but history-making sanctions against South Africa, the gloves came off. The U.S. House of Representatives passed a foreign aid bill containing a provision to lift the Clark Amendment’s nine-year ban on American support to UNITA in Angola thus paving the way for the U.S. to assume a more active role in shaping events in Southern Africa. As Congressman Henry Hyde, conservative Republican from Illinois, said,

Cancelling the (Clark) amendment was like taking a cast off a broken leg. It shows we're no longer paralyzed by Vietnam-guilt legislation.91

The U.S. can easily move both to sanction South Africa with one hand and proffer more support to one of South Africa’s main allies with the other. There is no contradiction. For the U.S. and South Africans have twin objectives and agendas for Southern Africa. Both countries always come together when it comes to fighting communism. And the U.S. government has a history of linking with any force which will help preserve U.S. interests and global hegemony. The U.S. would like to see the Cubans out of Angola, a new or an accommodated Mozambiquan government, and an organization other than the ANC and SWAPO come to power in South Africa and Namibia. Pretoria’s

United Democratic Front rally.

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agenda is to indefinitely postpone a SWAPO victory in Namibia, and above all else, to prevent the ANC from gaining power in South Africa.

At the moment, the governments of both the U.S. and South Africa have reason to be worried. It is understandable that both must step up their various wars both in South Africa, Southern Africa, and abroad. Never before has the apartheid regime been under such a serious threat to its very existence as today. The growing demonstrations in U.S. cities and elsewhere, the passage of an anti-apartheid bill by the U.S. Congress, the massive support inside the country for the ANC and its related bodies, the continuing armed acts of sabotage and attacks on the installations and symbols of apartheid, the two day work stoppage by over 1,000,000 workers in Johannesburg November 5 and 6th, 1984, the call in late June, 1985 by the ANC for a total uprising inside South Africa, all demonstrate momentous numbers of organized people worldwide participating in organized actions aimed at a single clear and shared objective: the ending of the apartheid state.

The history of the African continent's freedom struggles show that setbacks and reversals are part of the road. The U.S. Congress may not, for example, impose meaningful economic sanctions on South Africa. Those struggling inside South Africa will be disappointed but not defeated by this. More and more people inside South Africa will be detained, arrested, or meet death in the hands of the authorities. Inside South Africa, people accept this as a part of their daily reality. The movement to "make South Africa ungovernable and apartheid unworkable" and "to establish peoples' power" as called for by the ANC's President, Oliver Tambo is one in which there are necessarily defections and splits. Some people weaken. Some remain strong. This, too, people struggling "inside" have come to accept. People there accept that there is a long and difficult road ahead which few of them will completely traverse. As Beyers Naudé, former Dutch Reformed Church clergyman and today the Secretary-General of the SACC, put it in a January 1985 Dutch newspaper, Trouw, "I do not know when the time of liberation in South Africa will come, but I do know that when the time comes it will be clear where I shall stand and for what I am prepared to give my life...." For the single inevitable fact about South Africa remains that, as an ANC representative put it:

South Africa is like a man who owned a house besieged by a cyclone. When he closed the front door, the wind blew in the back. When he shut the windows, the roof blew off. And when he tried to build a temporary covering, the walls caved in.

The cyclone is blowing too in the United States and it affects us all.

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Mr. Nesbitt is currently a member of the board of directors of TransAfrica, a consultant to the American Committee on Africa, and Chairman Emeritus of CIDSA, Coalition for Illinois Divestment from South Africa. He is working on a book on U.S. involvement in Angola.
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