THE UNITED STATES AND SOUTH AFRICA
Three South African Perspectives

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Messrs. Qoboza, Barratt and Vosloo visited the United States together in May 1977, under the auspices of the United States/South Africa Leader Exchange Programme (USSALEP). They held discussions on South African developments and American policies towards South Africa with a wide range of leading Americans in the business, media, political and government fields, as well as in the black community.

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It should be noted that, as the Institute is precluded by its Constitution from itself expressing an opinion on any aspect of international affairs, opinions expressed in this paper are solely the responsibility of the authors and not of the Institute.

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There is understandably wide-spread speculation in our country today about the eventual policy which the Carter Administration will adopt towards South Africa, and already relations between this country and the United States are strained. There are three major causes of this situation. Firstly, the utterances of the United States Ambassador to United Nations, Mr. Andrew Young, seem to send many people in the northern suburbs of Johannesburg into a state, while they get a lot of approval from people in Soweto. Secondly, there has been the commitment by the President of the United States on the issue of human rights generally and the condemnation of South Africa's racial policies in particular. Thirdly, Vice-President Mondale adopted a strong line at the recent meeting with Prime Minister Vorster in Vienna.

As far as Mr. Young is concerned, the response to his remarks in this country has unfortunately been very silly and very childish. There has never been in Mr. Young's approach any suggestion that whites in South Africa are expendable. On the contrary he has adopted a very definite view that the survival of whites in South Africa depends on their ability to drop the acquisition of privilege and start sharing decision-making co-operatively with their black fellow-men, in addition to creating an open society where merit and not colour will be the criterion by which people must be judged. The South African press generally illustrated how many people here went into hysterics over Mr. Young's comparison of the South African situation with that which prevailed in the southern states of his country. There was no need for those hysterics, because Mr. Young, I believe, was describing a situation which he can very well relate to and very well understand. It is a situation where race plays a major role in the lives of the people of the United States.

After the "Hate Young" campaign which was developed in certain quarters, South Africans will have to readjust their responses and face up to the fact that, with apartheid having reached its present state - whether you prefer to call it separate development, differentiation, separate nationhood or, to use the currently more fashionable phrase, plural democracy - the Youngs of this world will continue to be around. In the end the hostility of white South Africans directed at the Youngs cannot be reconciled with the jubilation of black South Africans when Young directs his views at South Africa.

Another indication of the dilemma facing our nation today, which demonstrates our tragic division at a time in history when such division could become a most dangerous exercise, related to President Carter's stand on human rights, I believe that it will assume the type of missionary zeal demonstrated by the Kennedy Administration in their stand on Russian expansionist policies. President Carter, I believe, is fully committed to the issue of human rights. South Africans have again responded negatively to his stand on this issue. They speak vaguely of double standards; they love to point to the fact that there is an absolute silence when it comes to other societies which have demonstrated a similar disregard for human dignity and values. This is negative thinking in my view, because it is hoped to wish away our problems by pointing at the problems of other nations. I am convinced that Carter will extend his human rights campaign to wherever human indignity exists in the world. South Africa, I believe, is being singled out by the present Administration, because this country is more vulnerable than most.

Discussions with State Department people in Washington show that this country is really not justified in wallowing in self-pity and anxiety, and in suffering from this persecution complex that seems to have gripped the nation.
There is as yet no definite policy, as far as I can see, towards South Africa. Everything is still in the melting pot. Americans are convinced of one thing, however, that they must go down in history as the Administration that finally nailed down apartheid. But they are concerned, and very concerned, that whatever pressure they exert here, must be clearly defined as to what effect it is required to produce.

I believe that the response of the South Africans has been to try to play up to the emotions of the American public. They are producing the stale argument about the dangers of communism in Southern Africa, and that the interest of the West can only be guaranteed by supporting the present political course. This is an approach nobody is prepared to accept now, because in my view there has suddenly been a realisation among many influential Americans that it is precisely the qualities of this government that cause the present danger to the long-term interests of the Western world. Americans now realise that their credibility and initiatives have suffered tremendously, because they have in the past tended to give moral and physical support to former colonial governments, and they were thus involved in the repression of the peoples of Mozambique and Angola by the Portuguese. They are now trying to recapture some of their credibility, and they see their role quite clearly as being to give active support to the people who still suffer under the minority governments in Southern Africa. One can safely predict that they are going to be increasingly aggressive in this area in the future.

Former American Administrations tended to be less aggressive, because the average American showed very little interest or knowledge about Southern Africa. Only two years ago when I spent a year there, the level of knowledge was appallingly low. The press generally played it very low key in reporting about this country. But this is not the case now; Soweto changed all that! The interest shown in this country is now very high indeed. Because of this growing constituency of concerned Americans, the Carter Administration, I believe, will have no alternative but to continue with its forceful attitude.

It is clear to me that our only hope is to respond to this concern in a very positive and realistic manner. People must be aggressive in their efforts to transform the unjust society to a just society. We will have to engage in a vigorous campaign to remove racial discrimination in all its forms. It is no use people telling me that job reservation is no more applicable, when that law is still gracing our Statute Book. It is no use to know that people are saying that races can play soccer together now, while the Group Areas Act - which makes it an offence for people to play soccer together - is still on the Statute Book. It is no use telling me about changes in South Africa, when I am still subjected to those humiliations of arbitrary arrest, because I forget my pass at home. It is no use talking to me about change, when the white man still decides what is, or what is not, good for me. It is no use trying to draw the sympathy of the outside world and to say increasingly that we do have changes, when whites still do not want to consult with the accepted leaders of the blacks and have to consult with people whose leadership came up through white-established institutions.

These are the types of things we must settle, if we are to avoid the rough and bitter road facing us ahead. We cannot avoid that road, if we do not institute a new political dispensation in our country. There is no way in my view that relations between South Africa and America can ever be cordial again, unless this country removes the cancer of racism which is gnawing at the very soul of the nation. This must be the top item on the agenda of social change in South Africa.
In our thinking about the United States we should not forget that relations exist at many levels; they are not all at the governmental level. These various links interact and influence one another, making up the overall pattern of relations between the two countries. In my initial remarks in this discussion I shall confine myself mainly to the governmental level - that is the policy-making levels on the American and the South African sides. In particular, I wish to refer to some possible misunderstandings and misperceptions that I think there are behind this policy-making on both sides. But first I wish to refer to one of the obvious links between our two countries in the economic field; this link is provided, of course, by the presence of a large number of companies in South Africa that belong to American groups or perhaps are direct American subsidiaries.

The activities of these American-linked companies are, of course, of great importance to South Africa in respect of investment, trade, the transfer technology and so on. In March of this year twelve leading American companies agreed to accept a statement of six principles, dealing with the improvement of the conditions of employment of their workers in South Africa. This week it was announced that a further twenty-one companies had committed themselves to applying these principles. Both the United States and the South African Governments have been kept informed of these developments and the South African Government has raised no objections. In fact, according to a statement by the Minister of Information in Parliament, the government accepts these principles as standards for application here.

The decision of the thirty-three American-linked companies to commit themselves publicly to remove discriminatory practices where they exist and to improve the opportunity for training and living conditions for their black workers, is to be heartily welcomed. It is a constructive contribution towards healthy economic and social development here, and it should benefit all South Africans in the long run. Of course, these principles are by no means radical, and it is claimed that much has already been done in the same direction by South African companies and other foreign firms. However, I feel that this is a time when a public commitment and clear leadership is needed, in order that South Africans generally will see the need to remove discriminatory practices in the economic and social fields for the sake of our own healthy development and, in fact, our security. It is also needed in order to demonstrate to the outside world, including the United States, that there is now a clear commitment by business leaders - with government support, it can be added - to move rapidly away from discrimination. It is somewhat surprising that there have not yet been more than thirty-three American companies that have been willing to make this commitment, but perhaps more time is needed for the necessary decisions to be taken, and before the end of this year we shall see most of these companies accepting and applying the principles.

However, one must also ask the question: Why is the lead in this field being left to American companies? If it is true that these principles are not very radical and already being applied by other companies in South Africa, then what is stopping them from joining together and making a public commitment in the form of a similar statement of principles? A South African spokesman in the industrial field is quoted as having said yesterday (21 June 1977): "Basically these American firms are not pioneering, they are merely underscoring certain existing codes. The targets are those which any socially conscious South African firm is trying to achieve." Possibly this is true, but there is still the matter of giving a public lead and making an open commitment which would have more of an impact on the attitudes of Blacks
and Whites in this country and which would in fact make it much easier for all concerned to move more rapidly, in a unified way, to take the necessary action in applying these principles, rather than simply talking about them.

I have mentioned this matter because on our visit to the United States we met with a number of groups of leaders in the business field, representing corporations active in South Africa, and the question of these principles and their application was one of the major topics of discussion at those meetings.

Turning now to the question of possible misunderstandings and misconceptions behind policy-making, let me say first that there is a basic problem, I think, in approaching this question, because quite frankly it seems to me there is no clear policy on either side towards the other. South Africa's policy towards the United States (and I am afraid this is unfortunately true too often of South Africa's foreign policy in general) is still largely a matter of reacting to developments.

On the American side, although there has been much talk about a new policy towards South Africa, this would not seem to have emerged yet in any coherent sense. The differences between the approach of this Administration and the previous one still seem to me to be largely differences in rhetoric and style, with a few shifts in emphasis. It is difficult to find anyone in Washington who will give any credit at all to Dr. Henry Kissinger, but I think it should be recognised that in some fundamental respects it was he who changed the American approach towards this region. By this I mean the decision that the United States should become directly involved in efforts to influence the direction of change in Rhodesia, South West Africa/Namibia and South Africa itself through negotiations. As far as the general attitude towards black/white relations is concerned, one could even say that there has been no basic change since long before Dr. Kissinger. Since the 1950's at least, the United States has expressed opposition to the political system in South Africa. What has changed now, is the degree of commitment to become involved, and that decision was taken last year.

It appears that there is still considerable confusion about what the objectives of American policy towards South Africa should be now, in the changed circumstances of Southern Africa. Statements about full political participation, about majority rule, are in my view rather vague and do not add much to statements made by American spokesmen about South Africa for many years past. But, in any case, these are goals projected by the United States for South African policy, and are not goals which the Americans can implement for us, as they readily admit. When one speaks of American policy one should rather be looking for a policy which would indicate how the United States itself will relate to South Africa and how it plans to influence developments here in a direction which is considered to be in line with the United States' own interests. In other words, what do they wish to achieve and how will they go about it? It is difficult to find answers to these questions in the statements made by official spokesmen, and even in private conversations.

It may be that this apparent confusion is due to the fact that the new Administration has only been in office for less than six months, and it may be that we are expecting a policy to emerge too early. There is not the recognition of the need for continuity in foreign policy which one finds in other political systems, and this is aggravated by something which I have already hinted at, namely the apparent feeling that the Nixon-Ford-Kissinger policies have to be changed - not only towards Southern Africa but doubtless also other regions - almost regardless of the merits of those policies previously. So perhaps the search is still going on and we shall have to wait a little longer.
However, there may be a more fundamental problem in this regard, namely that those dealing with the policy towards South Africa have not yet attempted to answer the basic question: What are the real American interests in this region? If, as some say, the economic and strategic importance is very small in relation to America's world-wide interests and commitments, then there is no serious reason why the United States should become involved in trying to change the status quo here, and the best course probably would be to disengage as much and as fast as possible, politically and economically.

If, on the other hand, an objective assessment shows that there is at least some validity in the arguments that Southern Africa does have long-term economic and strategic importance, then I would think that the stable development of the region should be a primary American concern, and policy should be designed to that end. Now, I hasten to say that this does not mean preserving the status quo (and I will come back to that when we are looking at the South African side), but it would mean finding ways of ensuring that the economies of Southern Africa are not seriously disrupted in the transition process. Then there is also the question of the interests of America’s allies in Europe, which countries, of course, have considerably greater at stake in this region than the United States has itself, relatively speaking.

There is also the question of Soviet policies in Africa. I believe this question is exaggerated here, and perhaps this is one of the reasons why there is a tendency to dismiss it in the United States. But I still feel it deserves more serious attention than it receives there.

Another problem which may be contributing to the apparent confusion, is the strong comparison which has been drawn by some people in the new Administration between the South African situation and that which existed in the American South. Here I may differ somewhat from Mr. Qoboza's view, because I feel that there is reason to fear that this comparison may be seriously misleading the Administration and that it may be trying to develop policies on the basis of a completely inadequate understanding of the real differences between the two situations. I do not wish to pretend that there are no parallels; quite obviously there is racial prejudice in South Africa, as there was - and still is in fact - in the United States, which seriously inhibits constructive political, social and economic development. Moreover, I should add that the South African arguments one sometimes hears, that Blacks in the United States are all Americans while Blacks in South Africa have their own separate cultural and national identities, is at best only partially true, because it cannot be denied that at least the Blacks in the industrialized sector of our country increasingly see themselves as South Africans without any strong separate tribal identity. And, of course, one must also go on to say that there is no doubt that they themselves do perceive parallels between their situation and that which existed - and no doubt to some extent still exists - in the United States.

However, having said that, I think there are vital differences which make a closer comparison misleading. There is the obvious difference in the black/white proportions of the respective populations. There is also the fact that the Whites in the American South are part of a larger political system which gives them an underlying sense of security, which the white minority in South Africa does not have, when it envisages possible concessions of power to a black majority. And then there is the question of external involvement in South Africa from various sources, combined with the question of militant
African nationalism and the existence of liberation movements supported by
the O.A.U. and many other States - all of which have had no parallels in
the American situation. The civil rights movement there used political
and economic pressure within an established democratic political system,
where recourse could also be had to the courts as part of their struggle.
The nationalist movements in Southern Africa, especially the more militant
and now the more marxist-influence d ones, do not see their salvation as com-
ing through votes or through the courts, because they argue that the politi-
cal systems in the white-ruled countries cannot be reformed; they have to be
overthrown. This revolutionary element was not present to any marked de-
gree in the American civil rights movement. Finally and briefly, in the
comparison with the American South, one aspect seems to be largely ignored
- the reality and strength of Afrikaneer nationalism in South Africa. This
could lead to serious miscalculations in American policy-making.

To return to the South African side of this relationship, with which I
shall deal somewhat more briefly, there seem to be equally serious misunder-
standings or misperceptions in the approach to the United States, ranging
from a lack of understanding about how the American political system works
to a lack of appreciation of what influences there are on American foreign
policy globally - and we do have to see policy towards South Africa in the
context of American global policies and commitments.

One of the problems in my view is that many South Africans apparently
feel that they can tell the United States what its interests are. For in-
stance, an objective assessment could well show that South Africa's geograph-
ical position and its mineral resources do have a strategic importance for the
West. But this assessment has to be made by the Americans themselves in
terms of their own interests, and unfortunately it is my impression - and
I got this impression in the U.S. - that the exaggerated and rather simplis-
tic claims made by some South African spokesman tend to be counter-productive in this regard. It almost seems that, because these claims are made by South Africa, there is a special effort abroad to prove that they are
not valid - and this is an unfortunate reflection of our weak political
position internationally.

There is also another aspect to this question that is difficult, I feel,
for South Africans to appreciate. It is widely assumed here that, if we
can only prove to the West South Africa's importance strategically and eco-
nomically, then we would receive Western support for the Government's poli-
cy as being the best means of maintaining stability in the region and of
keeping South Africa in the Western camp. However, the American view is
that the status quo is changing inevitably in this region and that sharing
power with a black majority cannot be avoided, one way or another, in the
long run. Moreover, they regard the refusal of white governments to en-
gage in processes leading towards such sharing of power as being, in fact,
the main cause of instability. Now, this may be an over-simplified ap-
proach which neglects the essential question of how the transition to full
political participation of Blacks is to take place. But nevertheless South
Africans have to appreciate that no American government, and this is true
also of other Western governments, is going to be convinced that the main-
tenance of white political control will contribute to stability or to the re-
tention of Western influence in this region.

We are bound, therefore, to find that criticism and pressures from the
United States and from Western Europe will increase, unless we can demon-
strate clearly that black South Africans are participating fully - through
credible representative leaders - in decision-making about the future political dispensation in this country. And we will not be able to ignore these Western pressures, because we simply cannot cut ourselves off from the industrial democracies. We can only hope that the influences which they try to bring to bear are constructive and helpful in the transition stages which we are going to have to go through. But in the final analysis, of course, the decisions on our future will have to be made here; they cannot be made for us in the United States or anywhere else.
On our recent American visit I had the privilege of a discussion with a senior White House official, who amazed me by his lack of basic information, such as whether Lesotho and Botswana were independent countries, whether white people here speak two languages, and whether Mr Harry Oppenheimer belongs to the opposition. I must admit that I felt a shiver up my spine when reflecting on the power of such an official, in the sense that he is part of the team making decisions that could influence the lives of everyone of us living here.

However, the visit as a whole was not as discouraging as this anecdote may suggest. In fact, I found top officials of the Carter Administration very open and keen to discuss fresh viewpoints on these intractable problems. Once discussions got to the internal issues, the most important attitude posed was a polite one of "we would like your country to find a political system that accommodates the aspirations of all its people". Not once was the loaded phrase of "one man, one vote" used. (Anyway, Americans these days speak of "one person, one vote"!) Not once was this mentioned—that is, until Mr Mondale blew it in Vienna. I still maintain that the Carter Administration wants to play a positive and constructive role, and that they look forward to a gesture by South Africa, indicating that we do intend to move forward in coming to terms with our problems.

The door, therefore, remains open for dialogue, and our Government has a fine opportunity to state its case. I am heartened that Mr. Pik Botha is doing so right at this moment. Any other course, such as embarking on a policy based on the experience of Messrs. Carter and Young in Georgia, would be a disaster for us, as it would be based on a simplistic point of departure; I would rather that the policy be based on the perceptions of the professionals in the State Department or in the United States Embassy over here.

On the economic front American corporations, I found, are as keen as ever to continue their association with South Africa, but they are waiting for us to move politically, so as to make it easier for them to associate with us. They are also alarmed at the incipient instability they see; they are keen to put the six principles of the so-called covenant into practice, but they would like to know, for instance, what government reaction would be if they challenged statutory job regulations.

After that brief resumé of attitudes I encountered in the U.S., I would like now to mention what I believe are attitudes and actions on our part that could lead to a healthier relationship, not only with the U.S., but also with other countries and internally here at home. I think, firstly, it would be advisable to tread lightly on the independence aspect of our homeland policy. It is an unsaleable commodity overseas, and it becomes even more so when you mention it in regard to a homeland like Qwa-Qwa. Rather we should see South Africa as a totality, but encourage decentralisation, with the homelands being built up as autonomous regions. That would create a new bargaining process. This does not mean that the only political alternative to independent homelands is the "one person, one vote" on a common roll concept. One could think of alternatives to the present parliamentary system, giving each group a share in determining matters of joint concern, and I must stress here that our realpolitik dictates policy based on groupings. There is no other way.
We must also move to bring the other two minority groups - the Coloureds and the Asians - into the political system with the Whites. This should already have been done. We - I should, of course, say I am not the Pope, but I could perhaps speak for a large segment of Afrikanerdor or of the Afrikaans Press - we are really looking forward to some courageous action by the Cabinet Committee looking into the Westminster system.

Once one saw not all the homeland areas as independent countries, it would be easier to grapple with the aspirations of urban Blacks. This should be done in full consultation with black people, and my submission is that we, on a non-governmental level, could do much to identify, and get into discussion with, the leaders of the black people to find a jointly-arrived at modus vivendi.

If we have any ambitious and imaginative political plan in our kitty - and Heaven help us if we do not - it would seem to me to be a wise course to spell it out in the form of a formal undertaking, allied to a timetable. If what we envisage is jointly arrived at, we could well find that many people with critical attitudes overseas may get tough on our behalf, rather than against us.
DISCUSSION

(Mr Qoboza was only able to participate in the first part of this discussion).

**Question:** Can the speakers tell us briefly what action should and can be taken in South Africa now on our internal problems which at present obviously have a very negative effect on our relations with the US and the rest of the world?

**Mr Qoboza:** Really, when it gets to the practicalities of the situation, one has to approach this with a two-pronged attack. First of all, in our daily lives, in our daily relationships and in our industries and commerce, we can do quite a lot to defuse the situation in this country. I am afraid there are too many people who are hiding behind the petticoat of government policy to stop them doing the things that they ought to be doing. This is the one area where we can vigorously and aggressively do a lot in trying to make progress in relationships here.

The second thing we ought to do cannot be done by those of us who do not have the vote. I am not crazy about the vote, because the more I see of "one man, one vote" in white society the more disillusioned I become about it. But I believe that you ought to urge the Government, you the voters ought to urge them, to get off their ox-wagons and get used to a more conventional way of travelling in the Twentieth Century, because at the present rate at which they are implementing changes here, little can be achieved. Indeed, the degree of change has no dramatic impact, because it does not really exist at all. If they say to me that job reservation has in any case fallen apart, for heaven's sake why has nobody got the courage to stand up in Parliament and say we should throw this all out of the window? If the Group Areas Act is making it very difficult to maintain the credibility of the policy that black and white can play together on the same soccer field, why not throw the law out of the window where it belongs? I feel the whole tragedy with the National Party at the moment is that very little is being done in a conventional way and in a conventional place like Parliament. You get all kinds of things happening in the second six months in Pretoria, rather than letting it come out in open debate. I can understand Mr Vorster's problem; he has got Treurnicht and he has got Connie Mulder; and he has got some other guys whose names must not be mentioned in South Africa. But eventually he has to take a decision that the continued presence of Treurnicht in the National Party is not more important than the survival of South Africa. If he can have the moral courage to do that, then he would do South Africa a great service.

**Mr Vosloo:** I do not know how to answer this question on South African politics in a few sentences, but let me say, just on a practical level, that we have Soweto next door to us, and at least it would be my wish that Soweto could be transformed by mobilized capital into a normal suburb of Johannesburg. That is a practical thing to do. Secondly, on a governmental level, I think we should decide that we dare not take any answer from the Westminster committee, which would involve less than political participation by minority groups in the white system. That is something which would give us a pointer to where we are going. If the answer is a flat refusal, then it will be a terrible setback. I think that on the political scene that is vital, and on the other hand I would suggest that it is also something practical.
Mr Barratt: I have already suggested that I think on the economic front there are things which are being done and things that still could be done faster. I would also agree with the need to deal more effectively with certain legislation involving discrimination, and I do not think there would be any major problems if that were done. But I do feel that the necessary extension of Mr Vosloc's second point is that we also have to find ways or processes in which black leadership, credible black leadership, can be brought into negotiations with the Government about the future. I feel that until we can do that, until we can negotiate, and until it can be seen that there is equal participation in the decisions about the future (while I think it is too early to talk about what the actual blueprint for the future should be), I think we are going to have problems. That negotiating stage should therefore be started now.

Question: The Washington Post has suggested in an editorial that President Carter's policies are influenced by a sense of guilt, stemming from his experience in the American South. We have heard about the impact of the television series, based on the book "Roots", on the American conscience. How far is American policy influenced by its own historical experience of black/white relations, and is there an attempt to transfer attention from their own problems towards another country and even to make South Africa a "whipping boy" in this regard?

Mr Barratt: Obviously you cannot divorce the basis of the American approach from their own historical experience, that would be expecting too much. But as I have already suggested, I think the comparisons of the racial situations could be misleading if pressed too far. On the question whether President Carter personally is so motivated by his experience in the South, as was suggested in that "Washington Post" editorial, I would not like to attempt to answer that categorically. Rather let me look at it from another angle and suggest that the question of conscience and idealism is, of course, important and cannot simply be dismissed as the result of a guilt feeling. It is argued, for instance, that the approach of President Carter on human rights is a response to a need in American society to have again a sense of idealism, after the experience of the past few years - Watergate and Vietnam. Now, I cannot see anything wrong in that; perhaps we need something similar in this country in the form of a widely accepted idealism. How successful President Carter is going to be in applying the national ideals on the international scene is another matter. But one also has to recognise that it is not just a sort of idealism which is divorced from reality, because it is involved in this whole question of East/West relations and the Security Conference in Europe. The issue of human rights, which was part of the Helsinki Agreement, is coming up now in the Belgrade meetings where they are monitoring what has happened since the Helsinki Conference and preparing for the next stage.

It is, by the way, an interesting thing, if you look at the latest issue of "Newsweek", where the main cover story is on the current emphasis on human rights, you will not find South Africa mentioned in this examination of the American approach to human rights. There are references to other countries, particularly complications in relations with the Soviet Union. So I think we must see this whole human rights matter in context; it is primarily not South Africa that is involved; it is a global question as far as American foreign policy is concerned.
Mr Vosloo: I really have not much to add, but I can put it to you that America is much larger than the South and that President Carter, as a shrewd politician, will not push this issue too far. There is just the faintest chance that greater America would react adversely to that in their political terms, and that is something that he will have to watch.

Question: With regard to the six principles adopted by American companies, what guarantees can these business people give that they will carry out their commitments?

Mr Barratt: The questioner has raised a very important and a very real issue, but quite frankly I cannot answer this on behalf of these companies, and I do not want to start doing that. All I can say, in my personal view, is that I think they have to start somewhere, and I think that it is important that such a start be made by them. As regards seeing whether they carry out their commitments, this is perhaps a question Mr Qoboza's paper should keep an eye on - and maybe Mr Vosloo's paper as well. There are ways of watching these things. We met someone in the United States who has had a large hand in the drawing up of these principles, and he told us that he would be watching very carefully. Perhaps I could add that he told us that, if the principles are not applied, there is a seventh principle - which he did not spell out!

Mr Qoboza: I met a very respected black brother in Boston and, when we talked about the implementation of these six principles, he was very sceptical about the willingness of companies, even in the US, to take meaningful action for the advancement of blacks in management positions.

Question: Does the American Government appreciate the steps taken by the South African Government to find solutions for the Rhodesian and South West African problems, and does this influence their approach to South Africa?

Mr Vosloo: They do make allowances and they are very appreciative, even in the State Department. They are very open about it, but they make a distinction between the South African question itself and the question of South Africa helping with Namibia or Rhodesia. They treat these cases completely separately and, while they are grateful for what we are doing in Rhodesia and Namibia, they say they want to deal with the South African issue completely on its own. So this is not going to buy us any time there.

Mr Barratt: I would agree with that, but I just wish to add that I think many people - and that includes people here - see the achievement of negotiated peaceful settlements in Rhodesia and Namibia as being increasingly important in strengthening those who feel that this type of settlement is possible. In other words, any negotiated settlement will serve to counter the growing trend towards violence, and the fatalistic attitude that only violent solutions are possible. It is in our interest here - more so than for the Americans - that this trend towards violence should be halted.
Question: Are there many other Afrikaners, especially Afrikaans journalists, who share Mr Vosloo's views? If they could only stand up and be counted, we would be nearer a solution of our basic problem.

Mr Vosloo: I do not think I am alone, but it would be unfair to mention any other names.

Perhaps I should indicate the background or the rationale behind my saying that we should not press the homeland independence issue too hard. When the Transkei opted for independence, in the sense that we (by this I mean the Nationalist Government, the Afrikaners and even white South Africans generally) led the millions outside the Transkei to believe that they would enjoy the rights of foreigners in other countries. Well, nothing has come of this. We have to face that fact, and we shall have to face the same with Bophuthatswana; those Tswanas living outside the six portions of the homeland, they will remain here. In other words, the realisation is coming through that this all creates a new ball game, and we have to have a rethink about the situation. If you push people, or if they go over the brink into independence, where no-one recognises them, it creates problems, more problems probably than the Government would have wished for. So, once you have this realisation and you start rethinking the question, it seems to me to be easier to think about developing the homeland areas as provinces. If we redraw the provincial lines of South Africa, that will lead to a new shake-up of South Africa on a different basis, which could possibly, to my mind, lead to a political accommodation where the nationalisms of black and white could be accommodated.

That is the rationale behind my saying this about the homeland policy, and I do not think I am alone in the Afrikaans press circles, or even in government circles.

Question: With regard to South Africa's strategic mineral resources, one gets the impression that, while we feel these are extremely important, Americans in official circles do not regard them as very significant in the global context. What do the people in the corridors of power in Washington think about Southern Africa (not only South Africa) in this respect?

Mr Barratt: As I suggested in my introductory remarks, I frankly do not feel this is being looked at seriously and objectively. I do not mean to suggest that this aspect, particularly our mineral resources, is dismissed as being of no importance at all, but there is a tendency generally to regard it as not being a factor of any great importance and as not really affecting the relationship. The trouble may be that no objective analysis and study of this matter has been done, either on that side of the Atlantic or on this. The problem is aggravated by the fact that we also have a simplistic approach to this question; we do not realise that the United States is very largely self-sufficient and that many of our resources can be obtained elsewhere, or there are substitutes for them. But there are, of course, certain of our mineral resources which, I understand - not being an expert on this myself, are very important, not easily obtainable elsewhere, and which could be vital in certain special circumstances which may arise. Quite frankly, this all worries me, because I think it is not being looked at seriously and objectively on either side.
Mr Vosloo: Regarding this simplistic outlook, it has been said that the US now has a larger trade with Nigeria; so South Africa is not so important any more. It has also been said that the communist or marxist governments in Mozambique and Angola will soon be in economic trouble and that, as the Russians have never built a factory in Africa, these governments are going to have to run to America and then the West will move in again, with access to their resources, etc. But I think that this has not really been thought through properly - well not at the levels in which I moved in Washington.

I think there are business men here who would probably confirm that trade is a two-way affair: South Africa has a lot of minerals and is very valuable to America, but more so to America's allies in Europe, who have a far larger trade with South Africa than America. I do not think the people of Western Europe will want the Americans to "throw us to the wolves".

Question: Do Americans make a distinction between the white groups in South Africa and do they appreciate the role of the Afrikaners?

Mr Vosloo: Well, as I indicated earlier, they do not make much allowance for differences between groups. Most people think of us as whites only, and they do not take into account what I would call the dynamo of the whites in South Africa, in the sense that the Afrikaners form the government. I do not want to sound arrogant, but Afrikaners have been in power for nearly thirty years. Nationalist Afrikanerdum is all-embracing; it covers the whole spectrum of life. But Americans have basically no real perception of it. I have always felt that the Americans would never dream of sending a diplomat to Moscow, if he could not speak or read Russian. But they have sent diplomats here without the ability to even read Afrikaans. Until they get to that stage, where the diplomats can read Afrikaans and get all the nuances and get to understand the soul of the Afrikaner and what goes on here, they will not really fully understand us. There is at present this basis of misunderstanding and, of course, they will never really then be able to come to terms with what motivates us.

Question: While there are indications that the Government is moving towards giving the Coloureds and Indians a certain political status in this country, there does not seem to be any attention given to the question of blacks in the urban areas, who do not have, or do not want, citizenship in the Homelands. Is this matter taken seriously by the Government?

Mr Vosloo: This question touches the "nitty-gritty" of our problem. I have my own personal opinion. Percy Qoboza has written this week that they have practically dismantled the Urban Bantu Council in Soweto. The big thing now is to get results, and they want leaders in Soweto. From an Afrikaner point of view, and without sounding arrogant, I would think it is a very good starting point to find leaders of urban Blacks who are not afraid - the people who can really be identified as speaking out for the Blacks. And, if you want to start this difficult process going, why not start at the Soweto level, by indentifying black leaders? Let them come forward and run Soweto. There is also another aspect, which may seem a marginal one, but, as the Turnhalle in South West was a starting point in negotiations, I think the first job of the Nationalist government now is to start with Coloureds and Asians as the fellow minority groups, and see how the thing works from there. Americans generally do not appreciate that there are other minority groups.
If we want to have a new political set-up, or if we want to get real change, this will have to be done in consultation with all the peoples in this country. We will never have peace, unless all the people in this country, all the groups, buy what is up for sale, what is offered. For instance, with regard to this important Cabinet Committee going into the Westminster system, as it pertains to the Indians and Coloureds, the Government has said there will be consultation, and we would now like to see what form that consultation is going to take. Is it going to be with Sonny Leon or with Mrs Jansen, or with both? The point is, if both will accept, then we will have peace from that sector.

The lesson is that we will have to do our own thing here in South Africa, and then hopefully that thing will become self-generating.

Question: If, as is often suggested, most ordinary white people are ahead of the politicians, as far as readiness for changes is concerned, is there any chance of the Government holding a referendum on proposed legislative changes to do away with discrimination?

Mr Vosloo: I have just got one comment on that. I do not think there will be a referendum, because of the art of politics. This art is to keep power, and the National Party knows where its power lies. So they will not deviate from that.