

THE BRIDGE AND THE LAAGER

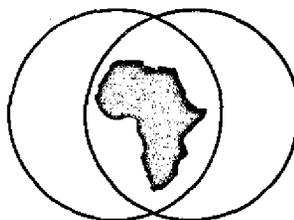
South Africa's Relations with Africa, with Specific
Reference to Malawi

by

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(Student Essay)

THE SOUTH AFRICAN INSTITUTE OF INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS



DIE SUID-AFRIKAANSE INSTITUUT VAN INTERNASIONALE AANGELEENTHEDE

Mr. David C. Preiss is a B.A. student at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. He submitted this paper as part of his course in International Relations in the second half of 1972. The Institute agreed to issue this paper on the recommendation of the Department of International Relations of the University of the Witwatersrand, and in order to encourage a serious interest among students in international affairs.

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ISBN 0 620 00037 6

The South African Institute of International Affairs
Jan Smuts House
P.O. Box 31596
Braamfontein
Johannesburg

September 1973

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South Africa and Africa 1945 - 1969 : Background to Dialogue

In 1969 the South African Prime Minister, Mr. B.J. Vorster said, " ... (My outward looking policy is) not a new policy; it is a continuation of the foundations laid down by my predecessors."¹ There have been those who have seen the 'outward looking' policy as a new facet in South African foreign policy. It would be well thus to trace briefly some aspects of South African policy towards Africa to see how continuous the 'outward looking' policy is.

The first point to note is that South African foreign policy has, at least since 1948, been subordinated to the considerations of the ideology of apartheid or separate development and the entrenchment of the white man in South Africa; since "the foreign policy of a country is based on a priori interpretation of her national interests".² The dilemma of foreign policy makers in South Africa is how best to "fit" foreign policy into an apartheid framework. As Shaw noted, "(the) substance of white control is not in question, but how to defend and advance it - by external liberalism and internal separation or by external isolation and internal totalitarianism".³

J.C. Smuts, Prime Minister of South Africa (1919-1924, 1939-1948) saw Africa as a unity. He aimed at a federation of Africa including South Africa, the Rhodesias, Nyasaland, Basutoland, Swaziland, Bechuanaland and Kenya. His Pan-Africanism was soon abandoned since Smuts was frustrated by the heterogeneity of population and latent nationalism in Africa. The National Party, then in opposition, had fiercely opposed Smuts fearing that a federation would eventually be dominated by Blacks.

In 1948 the National Party came to power, under Dr. D.F. Malan, who was the first South African Prime Minister not to handle foreign affairs personally. He appointed Mr. Eric Louw to the position of Minister of Foreign Affairs. Both Malan and Louw realised that South Africa had a role to play in Africa, but as a bridge between Africa and the West rather than as part of a federation which was Smuts' objective. Malan said in 1948 in Parliament, "We in South Africa, as one of the countries of Africa, cannot dissociate ourselves from the destiny of these countries ..."⁴ Louw wanted a policy of co-operation in Africa to combat communism. He noted that "(the) relationship between South Africa and non-white states in Africa ... should be one of mutually interested parties ..."⁵ Malan appointed Charles te Water, as roving ambassador in Africa to improve South Africa's image, but because of her race policies and the dispute over South West Africa, South Africa's overtures were rejected.

Under the next two Prime Ministers, J.G. Strydom and Dr. H.F. Verwoerd,

South Africa moved into an even more isolated position.

In 1961, South Africa left the Commonwealth formally. From 1960 onwards decolonisation in Africa gained pace, and with the proliferation of independent Black States in Africa and their admission to the United Nations, increasing pressure was brought to bear on South Africa by Africa and the rest of the world. From 14-24 June, 1960, a Conference of emergent African States was held in Addis Ababa, where the principle of total political and economic boycott of South Africa was accepted. This hard line was confirmed at the Conference in Addis Ababa on 22nd May, 1963, when the Organisation of African Unity was established. The O.A.U.'s aims in Southern Africa were threefold. They sought :

- 1) to give material and financial aid to armed struggle
- 2) to impose an economic boycott on South Africa
- 3) to isolate South Africa politically and culturally.

One of the first cracks in this O.A.U. framework came in 1964, when Mr Moise Tshombe of secessionist Katanga asked South Africa for medical aid and food. South Africa was the first country to exploit this break in the facade of African unity. The O.A.U. took steps to pull the rebel back into line. At the First Assembly of the Heads of State and Government of the O.A.U. in Cairo in 1964, the Committee of Liberation presented a report :

Noting ... the consistent refusal of the South African Government to give consideration to appeals made by every sector of world opinion ...

Noting further that the attitude of certain states towards the Government and their continued close relations ... only encourage it to persist in its policies of apartheid ...

Calls on African States to implement forthwith the decision taken in Addis Ababa in May 1963 ...⁶

The O.A.U. received another set-back to its South African policy when Malawi, in 1966, chose to remain in the General Assembly of the United Nations to hear the South African Foreign Minister - the only Afro-Asian state to do so - and also rejected Afro-Asian attempts to wrest South West Africa from South Africa. It should have been clear to the O.A.U. that in addition to Malawi, the former High Commission Territories, because of their geographical location, would be hard pressed to follow the line formulated in Addis Ababa. These States were caught between being Pan African outposts or South African buffer states. Zambia, with its copper resources, was able to stand alone, but Lesotho and Swaziland and, to a lesser degree, Botswana were unable to form an economic or military point of view. South Africa has become the supplier of finance to these countries and their dependence on South Africa is great. Botswana has managed to escape the pincer movement, largely because, unlike Lesotho and Swaziland, she is not surrounded on all sides by South Africa. The President, Sir Seretse Khama, is aware of the danger of becoming too reliant on South Africa. "We did not win our independence from Britain," he said "to lose it to a new form of colonialism."

Dr. Verwoerd saw that the only way out of African isolation towards détente was through economic and technical assistance in particular to states, who by reason of geography were poor, undeveloped and dominated by South Africa. This policy showed signs of success when Verwoerd met the

Prime Minister of Lesotho, Chief Leabua Jonathan, in Pretoria in September, 1966, just before he (Verwoerd) was assassinated. Dialogue was launched, but it was left to Verwoerd's successor, Mr. Vorster, to expand it.

Malawi is not geographically at the mercy of South Africa as Lesotho and Swaziland are. Yet Malawi has been at the forefront of the move in Africa to accept and to enter into some sort of dialogue with South Africa. It is thus necessary to examine the development of this relationship.

In February, 1967, a three-man Malawian team visited South Africa. On 10 September of the same year, South Africa and Malawi announced the establishment of diplomatic relations. Malawi thus became the first Black African State to enter diplomatic relations with Pretoria. President Kamuzu Banda has on numerous occasions spelled out his reasons for seeking a closer relationship with South Africa. His first motive was an economic one.

"...do you know what would happen if I detached Malawi from South Africa?" he asked. "There would be economic chaos, after that political chaos." ⁸ The following year he remarked that, "We cannot boycott South Africa -... that would mean the breakdown of Malawi's economy." ⁹ Banda's second reason is one of reality. "South Africa is here to stay", he said. "It is no use trying to deceive ourselves." His third possible motive was to win support by South Africa for 'Malawi irredentist' claims on Southern Tanzania. Banda's fourth reason is a political one. He would hope to soften apartheid by showing White South Africa how well a country can be run by Black Africans. "Let the White people in South Africa visit us, see how we live, see how things are in countries under black government ..."¹⁰ he said. Denunciation of South Africa had achieved nothing, as far as Banda was concerned, except to drive the country further 'into the laager'. Banda's last motive is to improve the lot of his nation, if necessary by any means. "My first duty", he said, "is towards my people. If, in order to look after my people, I have to deal with the devil, I will do so."¹¹ Addressing the United Nations in 1967, he pointed out that communist countries did not shun diplomatic relations with capitalist nations because their ideologies differed, so why should Black Africa shun South Africa. Connected with this is Malawi's demographic problem - having far too many people for her economy to support or utilise. South Africa has absorbed many of these into her mining industry through the Witwatersrand Native Labour Association (Wenela).

In April, 1969, the Fifth East and Central African Conference was held in Lusaka, Zambia. This Conference produced the Lusaka Manifesto on Southern Africa and was signed by 13 states (Burundi, Central African Republic, Chad, Congo (Brazzaville), Congo (Kinshasa), Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, Somalia, Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia). The Manifesto was designed to form the basis for future relations between Africa and South Africa, Rhodesia and Portugal. The Manifesto places the onus on the white states in Southern Africa to change their policies and to come to terms with Black Africa. It stresses human dignity and human rights.

Art. 2 ... our acceptance of the belief that all men are equal...

Art 3 ... on the basis of these beliefs, we do not accept that one group within a society has the right to rule that society without the consent of all the citizens.

Art. 6 ... in ... the Republic of South Africa there is an open and continued denial of the principle of human equality and national self-determination.

Art. 7 We are not hostile to the Administration of these States (that is, South Africa, Rhodesia and Mozambique) because...they... are controlled by white people ...(but rather because they are racist minority administrations).

Art. 11 Liberation of Africa does not mean reverse racism".¹²

The foundations for relations between Southern Africa and Black Africa are laid down in Clause 12. It expresses a preference for non-violent change in Southern Africa if possible.

Art. 12 We would prefer to negotiate rather than destroy, to talk rather than to kill. (However this is not possible) ... If peaceful progress to emancipation were possible, or if changed circumstances were to make it possible in the future, we would urge our brothers in the resistance movement to use peaceful methods of struggle".¹³

The opponents of dialogue have cited the Manifesto as the only basis for a relationship between South Africa and Africa and that 'changed circumstances' have not yet come about to justify any policy of negotiation. The Lusaka Manifesto was endorsed by the O.A.U. in September, 1969, and by the United Nations in November. It is also said that the Manifesto has committed Black Africa to a policy of dialogue. Peter Enahoro views the Manifesto more as an exercise in counter propaganda.¹⁴ None of the authors of the Manifesto believed that 'circumstances would change' and that dialogue would become a reality. Whether dialogue is in fact a result of 'changed circumstances', is however somewhat doubtful. The fact is that the majority of African States are opposed to dialogue, hostility increasing as one moves up the continent. Like Newton's Law of Gravitation, antipathy is the square of the distance.¹⁵

The South African Prime Minister has said, "We are of Africa, we understand Africa, and nothing is going to prevent us from becoming the leaders of Africa in every field".¹⁶ The latter half of this statement probably accurately sums up South Africa's motives in seeking dialogue. It would perhaps be wise to examine the factors which go to make up the policy of dialogue from South Africa's point of view. There are three main aims in the dialogue policy.

South Africa is in an isolated position at the southern tip of Africa. Besides the Simonstown Agreement, South Africa has no formal defence pacts with any other State. South African foreign and domestic policy is directed along extremely anti-communist lines. Hence South Africa fears that the communists, be they Russians or Chinese, or any one else, are interested in the country for strategic motives: The closing of the Suez Canal in the Six Day War of June, 1967, has further shown the strategic value of the Cape sea route. Increasing Russian naval movements in the Mediterranean and Indian Oceans, have stressed the danger to the Cape sea route. Thus one of South Africa's aims must be to find defence allies and the logical place to do so, is in Africa. South Africa's concern over the building of the Tan-Zam rail link from Zambia

to Dar-es-Salaam in Tanzania, financed by Red China, has shown South Africa's fear of communist domination in Africa and the resultant threat to her. So South Africa's first aim in seeking dialogue is to keep communism out of Africa and out of the Cape sea route.

The second aim is to win, through acceptance by Black Africa, tacit approval for the ideology of apartheid. This would weaken both liberation movements in Southern Africa and also diffuse opposition to South Africa in Western Europe from states like Denmark and Sweden.

The third aim is to create a so-called 'co-prosperity sphere' in Southern Africa - to create a common market in which South Africa would be the dominant country. The British entry into the European Economic Community makes this even more urgent - to give a new outlet for the South African economy. The basis for the formation of such a system is obvious. South Africa, if it has to, can stand alone economically. Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland cannot. It is this hold over Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland, which South Africa wishes to exploit. Through economic co-operation South Africa can win political approval and support from Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland. In December, 1969, South Africa, Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland met to sign a new agreement governing their relations in the Southern African Customs Union. This replaced the old agreement of 1910. Generally speaking the new agreement is more favourable to Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland, but South Africa's dominance is shown by the fact that she accounts for 98% of the total production of the four countries. It is this economic dominance which South Africa wishes to extend and through it to win political support. Obviously if the cycle were to be reversed, and political support preceded the economic advantages, this would be acceptable to South Africa.

But South Africa's friends in Africa at the start of 1970 were few. South Africa could see the advantages of dialogue. Could Black Africa? It was thus up to South Africa's policy makers to spell out their policy to attract attention in Africa, of a favourable nature.

A Tentative Start

In May, 1970, Mr. Vorster visited Malawi, but in terms of broader scope for dialogue this had little effect on the rest of Africa. This was shown by a resolution passed at the Third conference of Non-Aligned States held in September, 1970, in Lusaka. This resolution noted :

...that South Africa arrogantly continues to pursue the policy of racial discrimination and apartheid in flagrant violation of various U.N. Resolutions of Human Rights and fundamental freedoms ... Denounces South Africa's so called 'outward' looking policy whose objective is to create by means of economic and financial pressure a buffer zone of puppet states on its border to defend and entrench apartheid and White supremacy in Southern Africa.¹⁷

At the same conference, President Kenneth Kaunda, one of South Africa's most implacable enemies made a sweeping attack on colonialism and racism in Southern Africa. "South Africa," he said "is committed not only to the expansion of her so called 'area of co-prosperity' but also to the extension of her influence ... north of the Zambezi. Her objective is to undermine the liberation movement..."¹⁸ President Seretse Khama of Botswana showed his reluctance to fall totally under South African domination. He condemned the proposed renewal of British arms sales to South Africa. Coupled

with improving relations between Botswana and Zambia, this was a minor setback to the South African Government.

In view of the attitude of the Conference of Non-Aligned States, Mr Vorster decided to clarify his Government's position with respect to the rest of Africa. A year before he had said, talking about South Africa's isolated position since 1948, "I am not afraid to stand alone ... But it is only a fool who would stand alone when he could have company."¹⁹ In the House of Assembly he reiterated this. "We have," he said, "a policy of seeking friendship with African States."²⁰ Mr. Vorster also wished to allay fears in Africa that South Africa would attack Black Africa with force at any time. A year before he had tried to do the same thing. "... no one understands the soul of Africa better than we do, who live in this country ... (We) have no hostile intentions towards any African state. There are few countries ... so fortunate as ... our neighbours they do not have to spend a cent on armaments ... because... they have nothing to fear from us..."²¹ In the House of Assembly, Mr. Vorster went further. "I want to say ... that I am prepared to enter into a non-aggression pact with any Black State ... in terms of which we shall not attack them..."²² Of course, a non-aggression pact with African States would serve South Africa's interests in terms of a counter to communist penetration in Africa. President Julius Nyerere of Tanzania clearly spelled out the O.A.U.'s attitude towards the non-aggression pact when he said in the General Assembly of the United Nations in October, that to talk of non-aggression was 'such nonsense'. Racialism is an aggression and "it is impossible for us to sign a non-aggression treaty with aggression itself". It seemed very much as if stalemate had been reached. Dialogue seemed to be confined to Southern Africa.

On 4th November, 1970, President Félix Houphouët-Boigny of the Ivory Coast, provided Mr Vorster with the breakthrough he had so eagerly sought. Speaking in Abidjan he announced that he was in favour of dialogue to cure the political 'leprosy' of apartheid. "We wish to open talks with this country (South Africa)" he said, "but that does not mean we are going to recognise it. Negotiations with South Africa will not be easy but we will be actively patient."²³ He announced plans to call a meeting of African leaders to urge direct talks with South Africa. He said that force was no use against South Africa and that "the only invasion of South Africa that I would like to see should be that of African diplomats".²⁴

Reaction from the rest of Africa was immediate. The announcement by President Houphouët-Boigny was a severe setback to the O.A.U. It regarded President Banda as an eccentric and recognised the geographical problems of Lesotho and Malagasy but the 'defection' of the most powerful economic state of the former French colonies, the Ivory Coast, with a population of four million, a budget in excess of \$225m and a stable political situation, was a shock. In Addis Ababa, the Secretary-General of the O.A.U., Dr. Dialo Telli, said that any assistance to South Africa would only help to strengthen apartheid. The O.A.U. was joined by separate States in their condemnation of President Houphouët-Boigny. Senegal, Guinea, Cameroun, Nigeria and Tanzania all slammed the policy of negotiation as a betrayal to Africa. The A.N.C. in Algeria said that Houphouët-Boigny's move was the 'meanest' blow that the O.A.U. had ever suffered. It could spell the end of African unity. The Senegalese Minister of Culture, Mr Aliovne Sene, said, "... there is no question of starting a dialogue with a racist government".²⁵ President Nyerere said that dialogue issued "a certificate of respectability to South Africa",²⁶ which could not be tolerated. President Ahmadou Ahidjo of Cameroun rejected dialogue except

on the basis of the 'olive branch' offered to South Africa in 1969, namely the Lusaka Manifesto.

There is still a good deal of support for Houphouët-Boigny from the rest of Africa. Support came from President Philibert Tsiranana of the Malagasy Republic, President Hubert Maga of Dahomey, President Bernard-Albert Bongo of Gabon who associated himself 'absolutely' with the decision, President Jean Bokassa of the Central African Republic and Prime Minister Kofi Busia of Ghana.

Reaction in South Africa was guarded but nonetheless exuberant. *Die Vaderland*, in an editorial, noted that the Ivory Coast was 4 000 miles from South Africa and that its policy towards South Africa could not be explained away by economic or geographic dependence on South Africa. Said the editor "... die Ivoorkus is geen kale Afrika sukkelstaat nie."²⁷ *Die Transvaler*, mouthpiece for the Government, said that Houphouët-Boigny's policy ushered in a new era of realism in Africa. It noted his influence in Africa, particularly on ex-French colonies, like Chad, the Central African Republic and Upper Volta all of whom use the Ivory Coast as an outlet to the Atlantic, and Dahomey, which is economically dependent on the Ivory Coast. The hand of France was seen by some to be behind the moves towards dialogue. The reason for this was French anxiety to maintain their arms-trade with South Africa and at the same time to remain on friendly terms with Black Africa.

The O.A.U. and the anti-dialogue states received a further setback in late November, 1971, when the Malagasy Republic signed plans with Dr. Hilgard Muller, South African Foreign Minister, for the development of Nossi Bé in Madagascar, involving R2-3 million. The Malagasy Government said that the O.A.U.'s policies were unrealistic, negative and on the wrong path, and for these reasons it had moved closer to South Africa. Despite political differences, Madagascar would still seek co-operation in future. Obviously, given the island's geographic position, reasons for economic co-operation with South Africa are easily explained. Dialogue received a slight setback with the 'invasion' of Guinea on 22nd November, 1970. Guinea accused the Ivory Coast and Portugal of being implicated in the invasion and this caused some feeling against the Ivory Coast in West Africa and further mistrust of colonial powers.

Africa Divided

In January, 1971, the members of O.C.A.M. (Organisation Commune Africaine, Malgache et Mauricienne) met to discuss dialogue. Little was achieved but the meeting highlighted the diametrically opposite views of the two leading states in French-speaking Africa, the Ivory Coast and Senegal.

On 6th April, the new leader of Uganda, General Idi Amin, added his country's name to the list of pro-dialogue states, but carefully avoided incurring the wrath of his neighbours leaving himself an escape route. Speaking at Kampala he said :

I believe in action and if the heads of state in Africa want to know South Africa, ... they should do so practically rather than just sit in their offices. I would be happy to be the first African President to go to South Africa to see how the people are suffering there ... (with the approval of the O.A.U.)²⁸

This statement was a blow to the O.A.U. even if it was obvious - when coupled with the stand the O.A.U. had taken at its meeting in Addis Ababa in March - that Amin would not go to Pretoria.

Emperor Haile Selassie of Ethiopia defined the O.A.U.'s attitude towards dialogue.

It will be self deceiving and a waste of time to advocate a dialogue with those who are not ready to listen because it is obvious that the freedom of millions is not a commodity subject to bargaining. 29

In an interview on March 11, Mr. Vorster made his reply to Haile Selassie.

We ... want to establish good and close relations with all non-communist countries of whatever colour ... (When) it comes to to this sort of discussion, the question of colour does not enter into it at all, (because) ... I am at all times prepared to receive leaders of other countries on a footing of equality... I think the simplest way (to implement dialogue) is ... to talk ... (The) dialogue is not necessarily about differences, but about the many things ... in common... But there is a condition without which the dialogue would not be fruitful : I have no intention of meddling in the other country's internal affairs. And I accept that this is also the spirit in which the other man will approach me. 30

Mr. Vorster's statement was welcomed by Houphouët-Boigny and President Jean Bokassa of the Central African Republic, who expressed his readiness to enter into dialogue and inter-state relations. *The Pioneer* (Ghana) said, "... there can be no doubt that the advocates of the humane strategy of dialogue have already begun to win the moral round for Africa." Both Nigeria and Zambia attacked the Ghanaian's attitude and Mr Vorster. The policy of dialogue risked objectionable compromise and there was no point in a dialogue with a country which refused to talk to its own people. Prime Minister Busia defended dialogue as another weapon in the battle against apartheid and a weapon the O.A.U. should consider using. The Cameroun joined Nigeria and Zambia in the anti-dialogue campaign and Africa appeared to be split down the centre. Almost as a coup de grace to the O.A.U. Mr. Vorster announced that President Banda would visit South Africa and he extended invitations to the rest of Africa.

In April, President Houphouët-Boigny reconfirmed his position on South Africa. He said, "... the system of Apartheid outrages us all ... but it is not by force that it will be eradicated." 31 He said that he would not yet visit South Africa but was considering a visit at some later date. President Houphouët-Boigny's stand was welcomed by Washington, Paris, London, Tananarive and Pretoria. Mrs. Helen Suzman, M.P. for Houghton, welcoming President Houphouët-Boigny's announcement remarked saliently that she hoped that Mr. Vorster would realise that dialogue would be short-lived if it consisted only, "of his explaining the advantages of apartheid to (President Houphouët-Boigny)". 32

President Houphouët-Boigny's stand was condemned by Tanzania, Zambia and the Congo (Brazzaville) which called it "a stab in the back for the African people struggling for dignity". 33 In fact dialogue received its most severe set-back from an unexpected source. In a most undiplomatic

fashion Mr. Vorster announced that he had been exchanging letters with President Kaunda of Zambia. Mr. Vorster's lack of discretion inserted an element of real doubt into the dialogue picture.

In May, 1971, the South African Minister of Foreign Affairs, Dr. Hilgard Muller, made his Government's policy towards Africa clear.

... We are part and parcel of Africa ... as Africans we have duties and obligations towards Africa, which we fully accept ... The objective of our African policy is friendly relations with other African states and co-operation with them in matters of common concern.³⁴

(Dialogue) ... has produced good results ... I would like to pay tribute today to the heads of government ... in neighbouring countries ... for the spirit in which they are ... co-operating³⁵ with us ... Dr. Banda has done pioneering work ...

We welcome the lead taken by President Houphouët-Boigny of the Ivory Coast and some of his colleagues in advocating a dialogue with South Africa ... We believe that South Africa is able to make an important contribution to the development and security of the continent.³⁶

Dr. Muller was supported by Dr. P.S. van der Merwe, Chairman of the National Party's Foreign Affairs caucus, who said that "(Dialogue)... is the only door of hope to progress, and indeed of peace, offered to Africa in the past fifty years".³⁷ He stressed the threat of Red China through its involvement in the Tan-Zam railway project to South Africa which he described as a "Trojan Horse".

The O.A.U.'s reply to this feeler for friendship came at its Eighth Summit Conference in Addis Ababa. The Conference was less of a success than it might have been because many O.C.A.M. states did not attend. Nigeria's Dr. Okoi Arikpo said that his country would "oppose to the last drop of its blood that the O.A.U. (should enter dialogue with South Africa)".³⁸ A motion was passed opposing dialogue by 27 votes to 4 (Swaziland, Malagasy, Lesotho and Malawi), and non-participation by Upper Volta and Togo. The Ivory Coast and Gabon walked out. President Houphouët-Boigny was undeterred. "Resolutely, I shall carry on - even if I am alone - a policy of peace in Africa,"³⁹ he said.

In July, President Banda announced that he was going to South Africa. He was supported by President Bongo of Gabon who said, "Those who think we can liberate our unfortunate brothers in South Africa with guns are making a mistake."⁴⁰ *The Star* (Johannesburg) praised President Banda and President Houphouët-Boigny. Their's was a realist's attitude, which realised that Africa is governed by trade, work, food, health and education not by polemics and race politics. "When the currents run deep," the editor observed, "Black and White are on the same side, as Dr. Banda and Mr. Boigny perceive."⁴¹ Dr. Kofi Busia of Ghana reiterated his support for dialogue and Dr. Banda, as his "moral obligation". He criticised African leaders who rejected dialogue but paid only lip service to the pan-Africanist O.A.U. Guerrilla action in Southern Africa could escalate to all out African war, something Africa could not afford. Busia was joined in support for dialogue by President Hamani Diori of Niger.

Banda in South Africa

The hopes of the South African Government pinned on Dr. Banda's visit were articulated by its mouthpiece, *Die Transvaler*, which suggested that, "Dit kan die wêreld met ander oë na die Republiek laat kyk."⁴² Banda was known as being anti-communist, even refusing a R36 million loan from a communist source. This was one 'devil' with whom he would make no pact.

Banda arrived in South Africa on 6th August, 1971, the first head of an African State to visit South Africa. He said that he was coming to see things for himself. He was not going to achieve miracles, or to lecture or preach. The problem of South Africa could not be solved by boycott or war. His was a policy of contact. He referred to a statement he had made in 1958 when he returned to Nyasaland, when he told his people, "I have come to act as a bridge ... between you and the Europeans."⁴³ This is how South Africa now could see him.

Speaking to Stellenbosch students, President Banda said, "I reject the idea of force. I reject the idea of isolation ... There is a future in Africa for us all - for the majority and the various minorities."⁴⁴ President Banda rejected the idea that either the United Nations or the O.A.U. should dictate to him how to conduct his foreign affairs.

Speaking to miners at the mine where he had worked as a youth, President Banda said, about the Black leaders who opposed him, "I have defied them and I will go on defying them."⁴⁵ In Soweto he said, "I do not like this system of apartheid but I prefer to talk. Because if I isolate South Africa and boycott her, I isolate you, my people, my children."⁴⁶ Banda confirmed Mr. Vorster's line on dialogue, saying, "If we do not agree and we do not meet, how are we going to resolve our problems?"⁴⁷ After meeting Mr Vorster, he said, "This is how I do things. I don't do things like over there in Addis Ababa."⁴⁸ In addition to talks with White Government officials, President Banda met the eight homeland leaders in an historic meeting. Talking about the security of Africa, President Banda said he had no fears of attack from South Africa and supported proposed British arms sales to South Africa to combat communist penetration. He said, "I do not want that body of water between Gibraltar... and Singapore to become a private swimming pool of either China or Russia."⁴⁹

Much of the reaction to President Banda's visit - whether for or against - took an extreme form. Radio South Africa said that it was a pioneering visit and that the dialogue pattern had been established. Radio Malawi saw the visit as "the culmination of years of sincere effort on the part of (Banda) - to prove ... that a policy of dialogue and contact is the right policy towards solving the problems of Black and White in Southern Africa."⁵⁰ *The Economist* (London) noted that Banda had done more to dent the attitudes and institutions of apartheid than anything else in 23 years. His objective of showing that a Black ruler could be intelligent and friendly had succeeded. *The Daily Express* (London) noted that "the road to better relations between South Africa and the world must be signposted by more talks (and) more contacts".⁵¹ *The Times* (London) suggested that a policy the United Nations and the O.A.U. could consider if force failed was to support the Bantustans and to "develop their potential nuisance value to improve the Black man's lot in the Republic".⁵² Mr. Japie Basson, United Party M.P., noted that Dr. Banda made apartheid look totally out of place.

To opponents of dialogue, the visit was a betrayal of African ideas and made the task of breaking apartheid down more difficult, since it would now

"be difficult to question successfully his (Vorster's) sincerity in seeking rapprochement with African countries".⁵³ It was a betrayal of African humanity for an African leader to engage in dialogue with a government which refused to talk to its own African population. As *The Observer* (London) perceived it, "It is one thing (for South Africa) to waive every law and convention that they use against their own people to enable them to accommodate a ... black dignitary, and quite another for them to contemplate removing these laws and conventions".⁵⁴ The *Kenyan Daily News* said that if others followed Banda, it would "set in motion a train of diplomatic events that may well make nonsense of Africa's commitment to the liberation of millions ... who still live under ... racist subjugation."⁵⁵ Algeria called Banda "an apostle of treason". The Cameroun said that the visit 'makes Africa ashamed'. The *Nigerian Daily News* saw it as a 'sad chapter' in the history of the struggle of the Blacks against White oppression, colonialism and economic exploitation. The *Times of Zambia* criticised Banda for compromising with racism in return for economic aid. The A.N.C. called for Malawi's expulsion from the O.A.U. and was backed by Tanzania. But Banda ignored all these criticisms as he had always done and proclaimed the value of the visit to his people on his return to Malawi.

Dialogue in Flux

South Africa waited now to see the effects of Banda's visit. In September, 1971, General Amin announced a proposal to send a 10-man fact-finding mission to South Africa. Mr Vorster rejected this proposal but did invite General Amin to Pretoria. The General remained distant but promised to consider a visit. Chief Leabua Jonathan called for greater dialogue on his country's independence day. If there was no dialogue he foresaw violent confrontation as a result of apartheid. The Ivory Coast announced plans to send a team, headed by Mr Kofi Ndia to Pretoria. The delegation arrived on 7th October, 1971, and stayed a week. The dialogue stocks were on the up.

The start of 1972 saw a softening in Senegalese attitudes towards South Africa, but Chad's President, Francois Tombalbaye called for dialogue within South Africa and favoured a boycott of South Africa. This was followed by President Bongo's call for dialogue, but within the framework of the Lusaka Manifesto. President Nixon of the United States of America called on Africa to aim at peaceful co-existence. "We look towards Black and White in Africa," he said, "to ... encourage communication between races in Africa." ⁵⁶

In March, 1972, President J.J. Fouché of South Africa paid a State visit to Malawi. It was not regarded as a highly significant visit as the President has no executive powers, and was viewed rather as 'the icing on the dialogue cake'. ⁵⁷

In June, a change in the Government of the Malagasy Republic, brought General Ramanantsoato power. He announced that Malagasy was going to review its relations with South Africa, and broke off official links with South Africa. This was described by Professor Willem Kleynhans of the University of South Africa as "a major setback for the outward looking policy",⁵⁸ and brought fears that Madagascar would fall under communist influence. The *Times of Zambia* saw "the sun setting on South Africa's project of dialogue with African States".⁵⁹ South Africa, said the newspaper, would never get anywhere with dialogue until she stopped treating her neighbours as if they were 'Bantustans'. A further setback was the refusal of either O.C.A.M. or the O.A. U. to discuss dialogue in their July meetings. This left President Houphouët-Boigny on his own in West Africa.

Madagascar's considerations of trade agreements with the U.S.S.R. pose a threat to South Africa, as Pretoria sees it. If Madagascar was willing to take South African aid, there is no reason why she will not take aid from Moscow.

The Pros and Cons of Dialogue

The division in Africa between those who support and those who oppose dialogue with South Africa, obviously indicates that each side has a different perspective of what is to be gained by such a policy. It would be well to examine what Houphouët-Boigny and Banda expect to get out of dialogue and what it is that persuades Kaunda and Nyerere that such a policy is not in their interests to follow.

As far as states like Lesotho, Swaziland and Botswana are concerned, their small size, geographic isolation, encirclement and economic dependence, make an anti-dialogue policy extremely difficult. If they pursued such a policy they could be cut off from the outside world, resulting in economic paralysis.

The most used argument in favour of dialogue by both President Banda and President Houphouët-Boigny is that since the armed struggle against South Africa has failed dialogue is the only realistic policy, and that threats are counter-productive. Support from South Africa would help check the spread of communism from the east to the west coast of Africa. They point to the multiplicity and disunity of the various liberation movements and at the lack of support they received from Africa, as apathy has set in. Africa certainly does not have the military resources to defeat South Africa. South Africa has more planes than all of Africa, except Egypt, whose planes are needed in the struggle with Israel. The liberation movements' struggle with the 'unholy trinity', South Africa, Rhodesia and Portugal, has made relatively little progress. Reasons often given for this are firstly, the spirit of the regular forces opposing them who having nowhere else to go, are fighting for their land, and, secondly, the savannah country, which is unfavourable to guerrilla activity. Lack of support from free Africa has not aided the liberation cause much either. As guerrilla activity in Vietnam (33 years) and the Middle East (24 years) indicate, the struggle is likely to be a long one, if it continues. Pro-dialogue statesmen would thus abandon the armed struggle.

The anti-dialogue camp is adamant that the armed struggle must continue. Alfred Nzo, Secretary General of the A.N.C. has said, "The substitution of dialogue for armed struggle is a gross betrayal of the peoples of South Africa".⁶⁰ The fear in this camp is that dialogue will split Black Africa and destroy the unity so carefully constructed. It hopes to make Western Europe choose between Africa and South Africa and the effectiveness of this lies in being united. Dialogue is a blow to such schemes.

It will bring much needed comfort to ...Pretoria ... timely relief to the embarrassed Western nations that make blood money by supplying arms to South Africa and to Africa, nothing but a disastrous split in the ranks of a people already weak enough.⁶¹

Dialogue would allow South Africa to break out of its position of isolation and to strengthen her position at the tip of the Continent. Black Africa could never be secure as long as southern Africa, with 40 million people in an area of 1½ million square miles, is ruled by white racist régimes. Another fear of the anti-dialogue campaign arises from the strategic value of Madagascar and Malawi to South Africa,

particularly in relation to Tanzania. The airport in Malawi is open to the South African Air Force and South Africa has a military attache in Malawi.

The second broad aim of states favouring dialogue is the economic benefits it will bring their countries. It seems that isolation and embargo will not affect South Africa too adversely. Let us examine the benefits which economic co-operation will bring Malawi. South Africa has given Malawi two large loans. The first loan was of £1 million to build the new capital of Malawi at Lilongwe, and the second was £6,4 million to build a rail link from Balaka to Nacala in Mocambique. In the field of trade, Malawi's exports doubled to R1,1 million in the first 8 months of 1968 compared with the corresponding period in 1967. Furthermore the presence at any one time of 80,000 migrant workers in South Africa, has relieved Malawi of the pressure of the population on the land, eased unemployment and even augmented the national income through the wages the workers bring or send home. Finally Malawi et al hope that they will be able to import cheap South African goods.

All these apparent advantages have serious drawbacks. The 'export of unemployment' disregards the cost to the individual worker. The foreign worker in South Africa receives no side benefits such as sick benefit, unemployment benefit, holiday pay or pension. They may not bring their families with them. They cannot choose their employer and they live in a racist society. In addition, as far as Malawi is concerned, this export of unemployment is only a temporary measure and aims at no long terms solution of unemployment and overpopulation. As far as South African investment and capital is concerned, it is rarely connected to industry but aims more at mining. Yet it is industry that Malawi needs, to build up its economy and to solve its unemployment problem. The building of a capital and a rail link are relatively non-productive in such terms. South Africa's investment is usually tied to the use of its own companies and their goods. Such tying is a well known disadvantage to the country receiving the capital. There is a danger of South Africa exporting her discriminatory labour system along with her capital. The final disadvantage is the lack of control a country will have over the ventures sponsored by foreign capital. As far as trade is concerned, there is no market in South Africa for manufactured goods from Africa. There is a further danger that relying on South African goods is to tie the economy too closely to South Africa, with resulting disadvantages. Anti-dialogue states also oppose economic ties because they fear that South Africa will be able to persuade European and American firms to continue investments in South Africa and that South Africa will be able to build markets in Africa to the detriment of the undeveloped states. Anti-dialogue states point to possible South African interference in those countries to which she has given aid. In 1970 South Africa gave help to Chief Leabua Jonathan, after he had lost the general election of that year. This enabled him to crush the opposition and establish a dictatorship in Lesotho. In the same year, South Africa put pressure on Botswana to abandon plans for breaking out of the South African stranglehold by building a road and ferry link to Zambia. South Africa has also threatened the sovereignty of African States, particularly Zambia. So economic intrusion can lead to political intrusion to the detriment of Black Africa.

The third argument used by those in favour of dialogue (an argument used particularly forcefully by President Banda and Dr. Busia) is that dialogue is just another weapon in the struggle against apartheid - that Black Africa's friendship with South Africa will lead to an abandonment of racialism. They hope that the South African Government will lose its fear of the Black man and liberalise its rule, by their showing South Africa

that majority rule and multiracialism can work. The stationing of a Malawian Ambassador in Pretoria is given as an example of a crack in the apartheid wall which should be followed up. However, this whole argument seems to be based on false assumptions and facts. Firstly, it disregards the ideology of apartheid, which is based on a determination to preserve power for the White man whose privileged position depends on that power. Secondly there has been no liberalising of South African rule since 1967, when dialogue was first aired; on the contrary the whole apparatus of race legislation and restriction on civil liberties has been intensified. Far from even easing the burden of the Blacks in South Africa Banda and Jonathan have not even been able to improve the position of their nationals working in South Africa. Thirdly, dialogue will not be about apartheid, as Mr. Vorster has clearly stated, and hence will not be directed towards the improvement of conditions for the Blacks of South Africa. Anti-dialogue states emphasise this. They point to the Lusaka Manifesto, which is clear that until the South African Government enters a dialogue with its own people, Black Africa should not do so. In reply to the argument that Mr. Joe Kachingwe's presence in South Africa amounts to a crack in the apartheid wall, it is argued that "African diplomats will have the humiliation of being honorary Europeans to escape daily humiliation of being Africans."⁶³ The pro-dialogue states' argument that South Africa, by talking to the homelands leaders, is talking to its own people, is spurious. Anti-dialogue states also point out that South African Black leaders are all on Robben Island, serving prison terms and that the Bantustans are not a manifestation of Black self determination. "To pretend that the Bantustans are anything other than servile 'authorities' is to lend authenticity to the South African government's claim that it is handing over power to these areas."⁶⁴ Is dialogue not "... a compromise with apartheid ... (and) a complete betrayal of the long suffering people of South Africa?"⁶⁵

Whither Dialogue?

Dialogue seems to have reached a stalemate with both South Africa and the states in Africa waiting for the other to make the next move. The reason for South Africa's tendency to shelve dialogue for a while seems to be an internal reason. The greatest threat to the outward looking policy comes from Africa's two most extreme national camps - Black nationalists in the north and the White verkrampte South African nationalists. It is the latter towards which the South African Government has in the past year found itself obliged to turn its attention. The right wing, emotional election campaigns in recent bye-elections and the shuffling of the Cabinet in a move to the right, through the exclusion of moderate (for South Africa) Mr. Theo Gerdener and his replacement in the Ministry of the Interior by right wing Dr. Connie Mulder, indicate a pre-occupation in the Government with winning back those who have strayed from the Nationalist flock. Harsh treatment of dissident students, black and white, is another such "kragdadige" stand designed to appeal to the rank and file of Government supporters. The danger of such a swing to the right is obvious. It is likely to draw attacks on South Africa and on those who favour dialogue from anti South African states, who will point to the Lusaka Manifesto as the only basis for discussions. A further oppression of South Africa's people will obviously comprise "changed circumstances" but in the wrong direction. Even Chief Jonathan, a pro-dialogue leader, in March, 1972, condemned racial discrimination and said that it had escalated in South Africa to a point "where even the moderates begin to doubt whether force may not be the only solution."⁶⁶ This swing to the right will undoubtedly ruin any chance the South African Government has of showing the world that the Bantustans can really work.

Coupled with the refusal by Mr. M.C. Botha, Minister of Bantu Administration, to consider giving any more land than the meagre amount specified in the 1936 Land Act to the Bantustans, this policy is likely, as it has in the past, to antagonise rather than to win friends. Furthermore Mr. Vorster's blunder over the Kaunda letters incident had led many to be suspicious of whether South Africa can be trusted in the field of diplomacy. Such lack of trust can only harm prospective relations.

There remain three other major stumbling blocks to the advancement of dialogue. The first involves (Southern) Rhodesia. Continued support for Rhodesia by Pretoria is seen in Africa as an insurmountable hindrance to dialogue, all things else ignored. The second block is the question of South West Africa. South Africa naturally wishes to keep South West Africa for a number of reasons, amongst them an important strategic reason. South West Africa's proximity to South Africa makes her an important strategic area, especially to the liberation movements as a base from which attacks could be made on the Republic. The recent visit of the United Nations Secretary-General Dr. Kurt Waldheim, and the impending appointment of a special envoy by him, indicate a softening in attitudes by both sides to the dispute and a possible political settlement to the satisfaction of all but the extreme wings. The third block is South Africa's support for Portugal's continued administration of her provinces, which the rest of Africa and the world see, as the last of the colonial areas of the world. Colonialism is a particularly nasty swearword in Africa and arouses a great deal of anger and resentment. South Africa's support for Portugal, like that for Rhodesia, and her stand on South West Africa, is obviously related to strategic considerations.

In the same sphere, South Africa has been particularly careful, and should continue to be so, in her relations with Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland. Any hostile moves could incur the wrath of Africa and the world. South Africa cannot afford any further world hostility in addition to that she already bears and in particular African anger will destroy all chances of further dialogue. In one area, South Africa has shown herself willing to pressure Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland, and this is when any of them attempts to break out of their dependence on South Africa. South Africa opposed Botswana's opening of diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union in 1970 and opposed her links with Zambia. Such further interference could well injure the outward looking policy. In addition, for South Africa, Botswana, Lesotho, Swaziland, Malawi and Madagascar occupy strategic positions in Africa, particularly in relation to Tanzania and Zambia, the two countries where the liberation movements have bases to train guerrillas for action against South Africa. This in particular is the reason why British arms sales to South Africa were opposed by Africa, which still does not trust the military power of South Africa. There will be further attempts by Africa to persuade European powers to implement the arms boycott on South Africa. The Tan-Zam railway link from Lusaka to Dar-es-Salaam, built with Red Chinese money, has alarmed South Africa, which fears communist penetration into Central and Southern Africa. This again emphasises the strategic value of Malawi, Madagascar, Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland and in part explains the two large projects which the South African Government has undertaken on a regional basis to counter the Tan-Zam rail-link. The Cabora Bassa Scheme and the Angola-Kunene project are both strategically placed, hoping to attract settlers to the area and to draw away support from the liberation movements like Frelimo. South Africa also hopes that economic co-operation on a regional basis like this might lead to political co-operation. South Africa feels that it has the necessary natural resources, power, knowledge and economic capacity to help southern Africa. These are her hopes for the Southern African Common Market, where she would hope to and probably would be, the leading partner. With the impending entry of Britain into the Common

Market, such an economic union becomes more important - as an outlet for surplus South African products when Britain's markets become more restrictive. South Africa is prepared to put much effort into such a scheme. The sale of Ferret Scout Cars to Malawi in December, 1971, the first military equipment sale by South Africa to Black Africa, underlines the determination of South Africa to improve her relations with Africa. The Republic is aware of the terrorist threat to Malawi and feels that she should help. In return, of course, she gains a friend in Africa.

The recent change of Government in the Malagasy Republic and resultant breaking of political links has shown how tenuous the dialogue policy can be. President Banda is old and has no obvious successor. If he were replaced by a younger man in the Kaunda mould, dialogue between South Africa and Malawi would come to an abrupt end. This is true of most of the pro-dialogue states. Any change in government with a swing to the left could destroy the outward looking policy. Thus South Africa will have to make efforts in the pro-dialogue countries now, to build up grass roots support for dialogue with her. This would involve economic aid, trade fairs, and propaganda.

The Ivory Coast seems to be alone in West Africa in supporting dialogue, though supported in theory by some other O.C.A.M. States. The recent reconciliation between President Houphouët-Boigny and Guinea's Sékou Touré may well result in less of a split in West Africa and closer ties between the Ivory Coast and her neighbours, with possible resultant moves towards South Africa. It is unlikely that Houphouët-Boigny, having committed himself so far, will back down at this stage.

For anti-dialogue states, the most immediate aim is to pull the dissidents back and to rebuild African unity, at best a facade. The Arab States, particularly Egypt, Black Africa's most powerful military state, will continue to pay lip service to the O.A.U. but will be involved with Israel as they have been for the past 25 years. The possible merger of Egypt and Libya will mean further divergence of funds, from Black Africa's most wealthy state, to the Middle East struggle and a resultant depletion of liberation funds. On the other extreme, were any settlement to be reached in the Middle East, which seems far distant at present, it would include some provision for the opening of the Suez. This will mean a lessening in the strategic value of the Cape's sea route, one of the reasons Britain has resumed arms sales. African states will be less open to persuasion that the Cape is important strategically and less liable to enter the defence pacts South Africa so sorely needs. With Red China's recent emergence from political isolation and her seating in the U.N. South Africa can expect Chinese attempts to penetrate Africa and possibly one day to seek bases in the Indian and Atlantic Oceans. The prospect of an agreement of this nature between the U.S.S.R. and the Malagasy Republic is a pointer towards such a threat to South Africa.

Dialogue has had its casualties, but South Africa and some other African states feel it is the only way to stability and progress, which the whole of Africa needs in the 1970's and 1980's. Some African states feel that such stability and progress cannot come about as long as southern Africa is dominated by white racist regimes. The alternatives open to Africa and South Africa are threefold. The first is violence, by either side; the second, economic co-operation for political quiescence; and the third, continuing economic relationships, political dialogue and military pressure.⁶⁷ Such a policy is optimistic but realistic, and appears to be the one. South Africa and Africa will continue to follow. Change is inevitable in South Africa. What emerges is "that change in South Africa will come not by design and preparation, but by accident. Whether it be the accident of violence or of contact and dialogue remains to be seen."⁶⁸

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