

SUB-SAHARA AFRICA 1970: THE MAIN TRENDS

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SUB-SAHARA AFRICA 1970: THE MAIN TRENDS

William E. Griffith

Three major trends dominate sub-Saharan Africa¹ today: greater stability in the major Black African states, the growing power of White Southern Africa, and except for France, the relative disinterest of the Great Powers in the area.²

Greater Stability in Black Africa

Too many observers in the West, their initial expectations of post-independence black African stability destroyed by intermittent military coups, the 1960 and 1964 Congo rebellions, and the 1968-1970 Nigerian Civil War, continue to see the Black Continent as returning to the trees. But the present trend there is toward more, not less, stability. Congo-Kinshasa, Nigeria, Ghana, and Mali have all within the past few years moved toward more orderly, indeed essentially monarchical³, not democratic, government. Moreover, with the end of the Nigerian Civil War, the last area of major rebellion on the continent returned to peace.⁴ Why was sub-Saharan Africa initially so unstable, why is it now more stable, and what are the prospects for its future?

Why were the initial hopes for peace and stability in the newly-independent Black African states so cruelly disillusioned in the 1960's? Above all, because Africa's reach exceeded its grasp. The hopes raised among its new black elites and masses for rapid economic development, rise in living standards, economic as well as political independence from the white Great Powers, and Pan-African unity, contributed to the rise of radical leaders such as Lumumba, Nkrumah, Touré, and Keita, who proved themselves incapable of satisfying, or even containing, them. In short, social mobilisation led to political decay.⁵ Socialist experiments in Ghana, tribal wars in the Congo and Nigeria, and above all the failure of radical African leaders to improve the standard of living of the poverty-stricken masses led to military coups, bloody and barbaric civil wars, and to these leaders' overthrow. They had tried to do far too much: to fight simultaneously many of the westernised African intellectuals, the remnants of white colonialism, the traditional chieftains, the economic power of Europe, and the rising power of White Southern Africa. Support from Russia and China was too little and too late. Of them only Sekou Touré of Guinea still rules, in a Guinea stagnating in economic near-chaos, supported by U.S. and West German aid.

The recalcitrant problems of independence and economic development, the failure of many of Black Africa's initial rulers, particularly the radical ones, to keep popular discontent under control, and the rebellions and civil wars have resulted in a situation which resembles somewhat the pre-independence political system. Such African military dictators as Mobutu in Kinshasa and Gowon in Lagos play the role of the colonial governors, with their countries, run, as they were before independence, by African civil servants, intellectuals, and chieftains. There are also great differences with the colonial era, for independence has not been meaningless to Black Africa, either in economics or in national pride. But most large African countries are now run by more or less efficient black bureaucracies dedicated to economic development, educational progress, and national integration rather than to revolution and pan-Africanism

Having risked these generalisations, let me turn to the specifics of some of the major areas of Black Africa. I shall begin with the most exceptional one: French-speaking Africa, which means, except for the Congo, a case for itself, the former French African colonies.⁶ These states are the most exceptional primarily because French influence remains so high in them. Whether paternalistic authoritarian states still ruled by the men who brought them to independence, such as Houphouët-Boigny in the Ivory Coast, Senghor in Senegal,⁷ or Tsiranana in Madagascar,⁸ or unstable military dictatorships like Dahomey or Togo, or military dictatorships replacing former radical regimes such as Mali,⁹ all of these states bear the stamp of French influence, and react to French power, far more than the colonies of any other European power on the continent. Why? Certainly the much higher level of French economic aid to its ex-colonies, both directly and through their association with the European Common Market, plays a large role, for these countries are small and poor.¹⁰ Certainly, also, the French military presence at Dakar, Abidjan, and Fort Lamy, even reduced as it is, plus the airborne division near Marseilles earmarked for African use, play an important role as well. But it is not only French military presence but also demonstrated French will. General de Gaulle showed by his style and his aid to French-speaking Africa, but also by his military intervention to restore Mba in Gabon, by his refusal to intervene to save Youlou in Brazzaville, and by his ruthless break with Guinea when Touré refused to remain within the French Community, that France, unlike Britain in Rhodesia, was not only not to be trifled with but also should be admired.¹¹ Moreover, Pompidou has apparently successfully used the French Foreign Legion to repress an anti-centralist largely northern-based revolt in Chad.¹²

But all these together do not explain the depth and persistence of French influence in their ex-colonies in Africa. The attractiveness of France to French-speaking black Africans is in my view fundamentally cultural. In less than a century the French created a small elite of French-speaking Africans, who are, and regard themselves to be, a part of French culture. Neither the British, the Belgians, the Germans, nor the Italians ever created the equivalent; indeed they never really tried. This was particularly true of the British, who prided themselves on their indirect rule through native chieftains and who took little pains to conceal their unshakeable feelings of racial and national superiority. France, on the other hand, offered to educated Africans a culture and civilisation, arising out of Catholicism and the French Revolution, which believed in its universal validity and was prepared at least in theory to welcome educated Africans into its fold. When General de Gaulle, reluctantly - but with what style! - gave independence to the French African colonies, their leaders had had long experience in the French government and parliament and recognised Paris as their cultural capital. Ever since, although the French have gradually cut down their economic aid and military commitments to francophone black Africa, their influence there has remained strong.

Not, of course, that everything in French-speaking Africa is milk and honey. On the contrary, most of its states are very small and poor. Yet one of them, the Ivory Coast, is a remarkable exception: its rate of economic development is the highest in all of Black Africa, and Abidjan, as I saw during a short visit, is Black Africa's most impressive capital city. The Ivory Coast is not particularly rich: its coffee, cocoa, and hardwood exports are inferior to its neighbour Ghana's. Its spectacular, essentially capitalist¹³ economic growth had as a pre-condition the political stability established by Félix Houphouët-Boigny, its paternalistic, authoritarian president since its independence, a physician and tribal leader who was a minister in French governments in Paris in the 1950's. Houphouët also encouraged the resultant massive foreign investment and the presence of 35,000 Frenchmen (many more than before independence!). The upper class Africans of the Ivory Coast live in great luxury, and are often corrupt. This may eventually create the kind of popular resentment that contributed to the coups in Nigeria. Yet rapid economic growth there is also creating an African middle class, and even in the countryside prosperity is trickling down in the form of new houses, roads, electricity, etc. Moreover, the Ivory Coast's prosperity has attracted hundreds of thousands of poor labourers from Upper Volta, Dahomey, and Touré's economically prostrate Guinea. Houphouët openly concentrates on economic development and close relationships with France, and gives little more than lip-service to pan-

Africanism and the struggle against South Africa.¹⁴

The contrast between the flourishing Ivory Coast and its neighbour Ghana is striking indeed. When Ghana became independent it was far richer than the Ivory Coast, but Nkrumah's reckless extravagance dissipated the country's resources and his socialism drove away foreign investment and wrecked the economy. It will be years before Ghana can regain its former prosperity. Yet its prospects are better than one would have expected when Nkrumah fell. To the surprise of most people in and outside of Ghana, the military junta which replaced him has given way to a democratically-elected government headed by one of Nkrumah's exiled opponents, Dr. Busia. Nkrumah's regime, which ruled against the traditionalist chiefs, the intellectuals, and the civil service, was staffed largely by half-educated "verandah boys". Busia has largely brought back the old elites into power. Not surprisingly, tribal loyalties played a large role in his election, (his Akan peoples voting for him and the eastern Ewes for the ex-Nkrumahist Ewe Gbedemah), and he has shown a few indications of an authoritarian attitude toward oppositional elements. Still, Ghana's prospects today are much more hopeful than one had any reason to expect.¹⁵

Although it is still too early to tell, the same may happen with Nigeria. This vast, energetic, and now oil-rich country, the most populous (over 40 million) in Africa, which initially seemed to be avoiding the radical extremes of Ghana and Guinea, fell prey in the late 1960's to tribal strife among its three main groups, the western Yoruba, the northern Fulani and Hausa, and the eastern Ibo. After two resultant military coups, the Ibo revolted and seceded to form Biafra. The resultant civil war dragged on for several years. Finally in early 1970 massive famine in Biafra and the Federal Government's military superiority crushed the secession. During the civil war the Soviets supported the Federal Government completely and sold it (for cash!) all the arms it wanted to buy, including jet fighters and heavy artillery. The British also supported it, but would only sell light arms. The United States officially also supported Lagos but clamped an arms embargo on both sides. The French, Portuguese, and South Africans supported Biafra, as did many private British and Americans. The not surprising result was that Soviet influence gained greatly in Lagos, and the American and, to a much lesser extent, the British positions seriously worsened.¹⁶

The head of the Nigerian military government, General Gowon, is by all reports a remarkable man: still in his thirties, incorruptible (which in Nigeria is,

to say the least, exceptional), and able. He has recently gained greatly in prestige. Largely due to his policies, the Ibos from Biafra are being rapidly reintegrated into Nigerian society and government. Nigeria's rapidly-growing oil revenues (this year nearly 300 million dollars) are helping the country to overcome the scars of the civil war. A return to civilian rule has been announced for 1976.¹⁷ Finally, the most important political result of the Nigerian civil war has been the great increase in the political power of the minorities - those near-half of Nigerians who are not Yoruba, Fulani, Hausa or Ibo. This may well soften ethnic antagonisms and help reconciliation.

Zambia, Tanzania, Kenya, Uganda and Malawi were the other black African states colonised by the British. They shared geographical propinquity in East Africa and certain common problems. The first two of them, however, are much closer to each other politically than either is to Kenya. They share relatively radical domestic and foreign policies, extreme enmity for the White South, and less pro-Western attitudes.

Nyerere of Tanzania is a radical who has tried to mobilise Tanzanians by "self-reliance" toward the goal of agrarian socialism.¹⁸ (That Tanzania is so poor that it has little alternative but self-reliance makes this goal easier to attain, but is not the main reason for his policy.) Moreover, Tanzania is the one country in Africa, except small, weak Congo-Brazzaville, where Communist Chinese influence is the most extensive of any foreign power.¹⁹

Kaunda of Zambia, like Nyerere, is a charismatic leader who also inclines, if less strongly, toward a form of "African socialism". Increasingly serious tribal strife in Zambia (of which Tanzania is, almost uniquely in Africa, free) has pushed him farther in a radical direction. He seems also to be moving toward a one-party state. He has acquired majority control over Zambia's rich copper mines (still run by their former white owners) and Italy has partially replaced Britain in Zambia's economy, whose prosperity remains dependent on the high world price of copper, resulting primarily from the Vietnam War. Land-locked Zambia borders on Rhodesia, Mozambique, and Angola and is primarily dependent upon them for rail communication with the outside world and thus for the export of its copper and for all its imports. Yet Kaunda, like Nyerere, is genuinely and deeply devoted to the liberation of Southern Africa from white rule, and Zambia's resources allow him more lee way. He therefore permits the black freedom-fighters (of which more below) to operate from his territory toward white Southern Africa, limiting their activities only because of his fear of white reprisals.²⁰ (Nyerere does the same in Tanzania vis-à-vis Mozambique)

Kaunda has therefore been determined to find rail communication to a black African port, and, when the West refused to finance it, turned to the Chinese to build the Tanzam Railway from Lusaka to Dar-es-Salaam.

Kenya under Jomo Kenyatta remains, like the Ivory Coast, an island of free enterprise capitalism, foreign investment, and prosperity in Black Africa. Not only is Kenya, like the Ivory Coast, wealthy from agricultural exports, but it has developed foreign tourism much more than any African state: it is now Kenya's major single source of foreign exchange. Yet its fate after the patriarchal 81-year old Kenyatta goes is uncertain indeed. Kenya is rent by tribal strife: the energetic Kikuyu, although a minority, are determined to retain their dominating position, and the second largest tribe, the Luo, are determined to break it. The assassination last year of the pro-Western Luo Tom Mboya and the subsequent arrest of the Eastern-financed other Luo leader, Oginga Odinga, have intensified Kikuyu-Luo rivalry. Moreover, Kenya's prosperity, like the Ivory Coast's, has gone primarily into the pockets of the black upper five per cent, and urban unemployment and social discontent are rife. Yet although the Kenyan political situation is becoming potentially increasingly unstable, Kikuyu energy may well insure order and central control even after Kenyatta goes.²¹

The other significant ex-British colony in East and Central Africa, Malawi, is the undisputed domain of Dr. Hastings Banda. (Uganda is small and relatively unimportant.)²² He rules it with an iron hand and has driven into exile most of its prominent leaders. More importantly, however, he is the only Black African leader who publicly follows a pro-South African policy.²³

There remain only two other major Black African states, who fall into no category except perhaps that of predominant American influence: Congo-Kinshasa and Ethiopia. The former, in the early 1960's a world-wide symbol of rebellion, terror, bloodshed, and chaos, has by 1970 recovered under Mobutu a degree of stability that for someone like this writer who had also observed the previous chaos, seemed amazing indeed. Tribal strife, initially the Congo's curse, has been largely eliminated. Public order has generally been re-established. The immensely rich Katanga copper mines have officially been nationalised but are in fact still operated, under contract with the Congolese government, by their original owners the Belgian Union Minière. (The Congo is not uniquely "neo-colonialist" in this respect: a similar arrangement prevails in "progressive" Zambia with the former South African and American owners.) Of the 60,000 Belgians who first abdicated and then precipitously fled from the Congo in

1960, some 45,000 have returned, plus a Belgian military mission of some 400. Foreign investment is pouring in again in response to Mobutu's express invitation. Mobutu has eliminated from power not only such original opponents as Lumumba and Tshombe but also most of his original associates such as Bombo and Nendaka (the so-called "Binza group".) Finally, American influence, which replaced Belgian in 1960 and repulsed the two (Soviet-supported) rebellions in 1960 and 1964, remains predominant in Kinshasa. With only one major proviso, that Mobutu remain alive, the Congo seems likely to become not only stable and prosperous but also what its size, wealth, and central geographic position entitle it to be: one of the most powerful states in Black Africa. Mobutu's present priorities, like Houphouët's, are economic development and nation-building, but he intends to play a major role in African politics as well. It will be toward moderation, pro-Western, anti-Eastern policies, and de-emphasis on priority for the struggle with White Southern Africa.

Ethiopia is by far the oldest Black African state. Indeed, Ethiopians hardly consider themselves Black Africans at all. Except for the brief 1936-1942 Italian colonial period, Ethiopia has been independent for centuries. Moreover, it is genuinely an empire; its dominant Coptic Christian Amhara minority rules over the other Muslim and animist tribal groupings. The Amhara see themselves surrounded by enemies: the Muslim Arabs in the Sudan,²⁵ territorially revisionist Somalis,²⁶ and more recently the Communist Russians who support these now radical Muslim states. Ethiopia is tremendously underdeveloped, and Emperor Haile Selassie I, by far the senior ruling monarch in the world, has long had to balance his own desire, and that of the growing educated, urban, younger groups, for modernisation and economic development against the resistance to it of the reactionary Amhara feudal aristocracy and the hierarchy of the state Coptic Church. Violent and bloody student demonstrations at the University of Addis Ababa, plus the memory of the unsuccessful 1960 coup, have made some foreign observers feel that the Emperor's regime is feudal and reactionary. On the contrary, I think the Emperor remains the single most effective force for modernisation in Ethiopia. When he goes, and he is in his late 70's, his replacement is likely to be a constitutional monarchy in form but military-technocratic rule in fact. The radical students' protests against Amhara domination backfired badly against them; the Emperor has developed an impressive group of relatively young technocrats; and the fear of Arab and Soviet encirclement drives Ethiopia toward unity and toward continued alliance with its best available powerful outside protector, the United States.²⁷

The Growing Power of White Southern Africa

The second and probably the most important trend in Africa today is the growing power of white Southern Africa. This is above all true of South Africa, upon whose power white-ruled Rhodesia and the two Portuguese colonies of Angola and Mozambique depend for their ultimate security.

The more than four million whites who dominate twelve million Africans and several other million Coloureds and Indians in South Africa have as their core one of the most stubborn, cohesive, and authoritarian racial groups anywhere in the world: the two and one-half million Afrikaners, the descendants of the Dutch Boer settlers, who, although defeated by the British at the turn of the century, in 1948 finally got control of the country. Their Nationalist Party has kept firm control of it since, and there is no prospect in the near future that it will, or can be forced to, surrender it. Indeed, during the next decade basic change in South Africa can only come, if it comes at all, from within the white Afrikaner community.

Ten years ago, after the Sharpeville massacre, many Western observers saw white rule in South Africa as doomed within a decade. They were mistaken. For the last decade, South Africa's growth rate has been around 7 per cent per year. Its military power has steadily increased. Its white elite has become less provincial, less fearful, more confident, more supportive of its government, which is stable, resolute, and completely self-confident. Its black African opponents, the exiled black "freedom fighters" and the black African states themselves, have shown themselves impotent in the face of steadily more effective South African police and security operations.²⁸ Most recently, South Africa's Prime Minister Vorster's "outward policy" in foreign affairs, of trying to improve relations with black African states, has scored significant gains in Malawi, Madagascar,²⁹ and Mauritius, as well as in the French-speaking African states and Congo-Kinshasa and in former High Commission territories: Lesotho, Botswana and Swaziland.

Have there, then, been no changes in South Africa except for its rising power, and are none likely? On the contrary: South Africa's prosperity is inevitably modernising, urbanising, and industrialising the whole society, and most importantly the white Afrikaners themselves. The serious shortage of white labour caused by prosperity is forcing Pretoria, while continuing to pay lip-service to increasing jobs reserved for whites, to give "under-the-table"

exceptions which actually increase non-whites in semi-skilled jobs. This is directly contrary to the still official policy of separate development: moving the Africans to rural Bantustans, tribal areas which are scheduled to become officially independent black states but which actually, because of their inevitable dependence on white South Africa, will remain as much de facto South African protectorates as are the former British High Commission territories, now officially independent as Lesotho, Swaziland and Botswana.

The Nationalist Party's Bantustan ideology is both idealistic and impractical. It was meant by its author, Vorster's assassinated predecessor, the brilliant intellectual fanatic Verwoerd, to maintain white power but to avoid total white domination (baasskap) over the Africans. In contrast, the Nationalists' chief opponents, the United Party (once led by the late General Jan Smuts), while rejecting the most humiliating forms of "petty apartheid" directed against the Africans, have offered no variety of African self-rule at all.

But Verwoerd's separate development ideology offers no real solution for the problems of South Africa, even if one is determined, as the overwhelming majority of white South Africans are, to maintain white rule. The Bantustans are very poor and Pretoria has given them nothing like the economic aid that even its own programmes called for. (Moreover, the two heads of already-created Bantustans, Matanzima in the Transkei and especially Buthelezi in Zululand, are hardly mere agents of Pretoria.) It offers no solution either for the urban Africans (for example, the some 800,000 who live in Soweto, the African suburb of Johannesburg), and it inhibits continued rapid economic growth.

The urban Africans are increasingly detribalised. University-educated African youth feel themselves African nationalists and are increasingly influenced by U.S. black power ideology. But they reject tribalism and rural life, and practically none of them want to leave the cities to return to the rural tribal areas, independent or not. Moreover, continued rapid economic growth attracts more, not fewer, Africans to the urban areas, although separate development requires that they be transferred out of the cities to the future Bantustans.

A few idealistic Afrikaner intellectuals are prepared to give separate development priority over economic growth. Moreover, the defeated baasskap Afrikaner minority (the verkramptes, as opposed to Vorster's victorious, relatively moderate verligtes) want to go back to total, obscurantist Afrikaner domination. But the growing urbanised, modernised Afrikaner intelligentsia, and particularly the Afrikaner business community, now strong and assertive, insist on priority

for economic growth. So, in fact, does Vorster, who is a pragmatist, not an ideologist. Therefore, while Pretoria will continue to give lip-service to separate development to satisfy Afrikaner intellectuals and churchmen and rural Nationalist voters, it will in practice increasingly cut it full of holes. Thus the number of urban, employed Africans will rise and economic development will proceed.

This change in Afrikaner policy reflects the transition from traditional and rural to modern, industrialised, urban Afrikaner culture: less religious and political fanaticism, more pragmatism and materialism. There are even some signs of liberalisation among educated Afrikaner youth. Yet there is no realistic prospect in the near future of anything but white rule in South Africa. "Petty apartheid" may decline somewhat; more Africans may be employed, and in better jobs; but the Afrikaners will remain firmly in control. For they have both the power and the will to maintain their rule, and neither the English-speaking whites nor the Coloured, Indians or Africans do. The exiled African "freedom fighters" from South Africa are weak and divided and can accomplish little or nothing. Inside the country, all revolutionary elements, white or black, have been penetrated and rendered impotent by the police and security forces; their leaders are either in prison or exile; and their potential followers have been frightened into passivity. Finally, were South Africa ever to be seriously menaced from abroad, it could rapidly attain nuclear capability. The only really oppositional party, the Progressive Party, whose one member in Parliament, Mrs. Helen Suzman, is one of the bravest and ablest figures on the South African scene, has few voters and no prospect of taking power. White South Africa will remain white, and grow stronger, for the foreseeable future.³⁰

The future of Rhodesia and the Portuguese colonies is less certain, but on balance I cannot foresee an end of white rule in any of them within at least the next few years. To begin with Rhodesia, where independence (UDI) from Britain was declared in 1965 by the 234,000 whites who rule over some 6 million Africans: its capital, Salisbury, looks and is considerably more prosperous than when I last saw it in 1963. U.N. sanctions against Rhodesia, in which Britain and United States have taken the lead, have been a sorry fiasco. They have forced Salisbury to subsidise heavily Rhodesia's major export, tobacco, but South Africa, although it was not happy about UDI, and Portugal have enabled Rhodesia to foil them and the absurd British naval blockade off the Mozambique port of Beira, and to import all it really needs. Moreover, sanctions have in fact acted as a high protective tariff, favouring the

establishment of the light consumer industries which now surround Salisbury. The whites in power, Prime Minister Ian Smith and his Rhodesian Front party, supported by white farmers and urban artisans, unabashedly support white domination. They are convinced that they can and will run Rhodesia, that the Africans cannot and will not, and that South Africa will support them. Their confidence seems basically justified. The ineffective U.N. sanctions are clearly awaiting only a more or less decent burial. Heath's new Conservative government in London wants to come to some agreement with Smith, but Smith is much less concerned about coming to an agreement with London. The Rhodesian African "freedom fighters" in Lusaka and Dar are badly split, infiltrated, and so far impotent; the few guerillas they have sent across the Zambesi into Rhodesia have been slaughtered or imprisoned by the Rhodesian security forces. Rhodesia does have one weakness: its relatively few whites. If the Africans could ever start an effective rural or urban guerilla movement, of which there is at present no sign, the flight of fearful whites might force a change in policy. Unless or until that happens, however, Ian Smith sits securely in power in Salisbury.³¹

Only in the Portuguese colonies in Africa, Angola,³² Mozambique and the small Portuguese Guinea, is serious guerilla warfare between the whites and African guerillas going on, in Angola for a decade, in Mozambique for five years.³³ The Angolan guerillas, who operate out of the Congo and Zambia, are divided and largely ethnically based. Their success has varied but has never challenged Portuguese control of urban areas. Although Portuguese military activity continues high, Lisbon can and will for the near future maintain its control over the settled areas of Angola. The same is, on balance, likely in Mozambique. There the only united guerilla movement in Africa, FRELIMO, has for several years been carrying on active guerilla warfare in northern Mozambique and appears to have wrested control from the Portuguese of the rural areas in perhaps the northern fifth of the country. But this area is poor and thinly populated, it is dominated by the Makonde tribe, and it remains unclear whether or not guerilla activity will expand much beyond the Makonde area; and it is very far from the two main ports and urban areas; Beira in central and Lourenco Marques in southern Mozambique.

Two other recent developments have made it even less likely, in my view, that Portugal will give up Angola or Mozambique: the discovery of considerable oil off the Cabinda enclave of northern Angola and (on land) south of Luanda, its capital,³⁴ and the planned construction of the enormous Cabora Bassa dam on the Zambesi River in Mozambique. The oil discoveries, which are being

exploited by Gulf Oil, will make not only Portugal but also South Africa and Rhodesia independent of outside sources of oil, thus improving their balance-of-payments situation and removing even a theoretical possibility of an oil blockade. The Cabora Bassa dam will produce 8 per cent of all the electricity requirements of South Africa after 1975, and will also enable Portugal to bring in many more white settlers. Thus the oil and electricity resources of white Southern Africa are much greater than before, and the whites are therefore even less likely to abandon their rule.

Ultimately, the duration of Portuguese rule in Africa will depend on developments not in Africa but in Portugal itself. There Salazar's successor Caetano is somewhat less authoritarian and would reportedly like to liberalise Portuguese colonial policy somewhat. But even he shows no signs of wanting to give up Portuguese Africa to the Africans, and if and when he were to want to, the Portuguese Army, which holds the real power in the country, plus the Portuguese economic oligarchy which profits from the colonies, would almost surely sweep him away. True, 40 per cent of Portugal's budget goes to the military, almost entirely to support the anti-guerilla struggle in Africa. But Portuguese national pride is deeply tied to its sense of imperial mission, and no army is likely to give up such a budget unless it is forced to.³⁵

Finally, one should beware of applying the analogy of European decolonisation in Africa to the future of the white-ruled states in the southern part of the continent. Britain, France, and Belgium left Africa not because the African nationalists were more powerful than they, but because their peoples at home would no longer tolerate the killing, imprisoning, and expense required to hold their African colonies. But in white Africa European technology remains far superior to black African power. South Africa and Rhodesia have no white metropolises to force their abandonment to African rule, and Portugal remains an authoritarian state ruled by an imperial military-economic elite. It seems likely, therefore, that just as only active Soviet intervention in Egypt could turn the tide against Israel, so only the - unlikely - active intervention of some great power on the side of the black Africans could turn the tide in their favour and against the White Redoubt.

The Great Powers in Africa

The third major trend in sub-Saharan Africa is that, compared to the first half of the nineteen sixties, and with the exception of France, the major world

powers are relatively disinterested in it as compared to other areas of the world.

The case of France is so exceptional that I have already treated it within the context of internal African affairs. French influence is a major part of the domestic scenes in its ex-African colonies. There remains only one additional point to make. French influence in Black Africa is greatly strengthened by the association of its black African allies with the European Common Market, through which the French-speaking states get considerable development aid and major trade preferences (at the expense of Germany, Italy, and Benelux more than of France, but to France's political profit in Africa.) This is the more important because of the decline in the world prices of growing African agricultural products. If and when Britain joins the Common Market, the English-speaking African states may well become associated with it as well. Moreover, as the Common Market moves, however slowly, toward political federation, it will increasingly have a more common policy in Africa. Thus Western European influence in Africa is likely to rise. (But French influence, due to cultural and military ties, is not likely to decline seriously as a result.)

The influence in Africa of Great Britain, the other major ex-colonial power, has declined sharply, for two reasons. British policy in Africa as elsewhere has become almost purely commercial, rather than, as French policy, involving major expenditures to maintain political and military power. Moreover, British investment in South Africa is so great (around 3 billion dollars, more than in all of Black Africa) and its refusal to use force to suppress UDI in Rhodesia has been in part so racially based, that its prestige in Black Africa has sunk very low indeed. More generally, British racialism and lack of cultural attraction left a much shallower reservoir of good will in Black Africa than did the French. Finally, the new British Conservative government's declared intention to resume arms sales to South Africa, plus its hesitation, under Black African pressure, to carry it through, are weakening British influence there still further. (That the French have sold nearly \$600 million of sophisticated arms to South Africa over the last five years does not, ironically, hurt their position in Black Africa much, since their African allies do not really care too much about South Africa and in any case fear French reprisals should they criticise her too strongly.)

What, then, of the Soviets and the Chinese? Over the last decade both have learned the lesson of their lack of success in revolutionary and subversive warfare in Africa: they have gone over to a very long-term strategy of exer-

cising influence on African governments.

In 1960 the Russians and the Chinese felt that Africa was, as Chou En-lai said in 1965, "ripe for revolution". The Soviets,³⁶ who entered Africa first, were encouraged by the rapid shift to the left of Nkrumah, Touré and Keita, as well as by similar figures elsewhere such as Sukarno, Ben Bella and Castro, and were so impressed by the unanticipated chance to gain influence in the wake of the Belgian abdication in the Congo that they were twice deeply, and unsuccessfully, involved in the logistic support of the Congolese revolutions, those of Lumumba in 1960 and of Gbenye and Soumaliot in 1964. Both rebellions failed, in large part because of U.S. support of their opponents. Later, Nkrumah and Keita fell, Touré was isolated and far from friendly, and Sukarno and Ben Bella were deposed as well.³⁷ Thus, particularly after Khrushchev's fall in 1964, drawing on the lessons Moscow learned from dealing with Nasser, Breshnev decided to concentrate on the Middle East and to put Africa on the back-burner. This meant continuing some aid and cultural projects and giving minimal arms and financial aid to the guerrillas and to other radical groups, in which Moscow has continued to keep the upper hand over the Chinese.

With one major exception, Nigeria, the Soviets still pursue this long - term policy. Where Soviet arms aid is most extensive in Africa, in the Sudan, Egypt and Somalia, it is far more related to Soviet Middle Eastern policy than to Black Africa. But the Soviets bet so correctly in the Nigerian civil war, and have gained so much influence in Lagos as a result, in the one area which has always paid off for them throughout the underdeveloped world, arms aid and military training, that Moscow is trying to exploit further their advantage. How much more the Soviets can gain in Nigeria will depend upon how sophisticated they are in dealing with General Gowon (and so far they are clearly giving preference to their relations with him over their not inconsiderable covert support to radical Nigerian groups) and on Nigerian domestic politics. Nigeria thus may mark, if things go well there for Moscow, a renewed Soviet interest in Black Africa.

The Chinese³⁸ came to Africa later than the Soviets. They knew even less of the continent and they overestimated its revolutionary potential far more. They too supported Nkrumah, Touré and Keita, but the Soviets had first and the Chinese never got more than a small piece of the pie. The same was true for the guerrilla movements, all of which except FRELIMO split, essentially because of internal rivalries, and then polarised with respect to the Sino-Soviet split. The Soviets, having been longer on the scene, kept their

predominant financial support of, and consequent political influence over, the stronger guerrilla groups, while the Chinese had to be satisfied with the weaker ones.

Only in Tanzania have the Chinese acquired more influence on a radical African government than that exercised by any other major power. Their success there was the result of their sophistication and low posture of Soviet and East German blunders, and of Nyerere's attraction to the austerity and self-reliance of Chinese domestic policy. But the Chinese do not control Tanzania and are not likely to do so in the near future. Only in the military sector, where they have replaced the Canadian military training mission, are they approaching the vital centres of Tanzanian power, and even there they do not, at least as yet, dominate them.³⁹

The other source of Chinese influence in Dar, and in Lusaka as well, is their construction of the Tanzam Railway, which will make Zambia independent of Portuguese and Rhodesian rail connections and turn Dar into a much more significant port. This major project, which will cost some \$ 400 million, is the major single Chinese foreign aid project and, next to the Soviet-constructed High Dam at Assuan in Egypt, the biggest one on the African continent. The major African and Chinese motives for it are political, not economic. The Chinese are hard at work constructing it, with its completion scheduled for 1975. Whether it will be economically justified is another question, particularly because Mobutu is reportedly planning a new rail line to connect the Congolese (and therefore the Zambian) Copperbelts with Kinshasa and the Atlantic. Moreover, the Chinese will probably not acquire much lasting influence in either Dar or Lusaka by its construction, except in the negative sense of making it unlikely that either will oppose Chinese policy. Peking probably sees it more as a world-wide example of massive aid without strings. In any case, Chinese policy in Dar and Lusaka shows that they, like the Soviets, give priority not to subversion but to influencing existing friendly African governments.

The Chinese are also established in force (perhaps 5,000) in Brazzaville. But Brazzaville politics are so confused and changeable, the country itself is so small, weak, and easily intimidated by Kinshasa, and, recently, its president Ngouabe has so improved his relations with Mobutu at the expense of his most extreme pro-Peking associates, that the Chinese can hardly gain much from their presence there.⁴⁰

Finally, the United States. Along with many observers in Africa, I consider American policy there to have been largely successful in terms of its own actual, as opposed to its professed, aims. The main American objective in Africa has been, in my view correctly, to deny its strategic areas to predominate Soviet or Chinese influence. This was clearly the motive behind American policy in the Congo, which on balance has turned out to be a major success. The United States has also cultivated its influence in such areas as Ethiopia and Liberia where it has long been strong. Like the Congo, whose central geographic position and rich natural resources make it one of the keys to Africa, Ethiopia is important historically, for its military power, for the Emperor's international prestige, and a fortiori to the United States because of its Red Sea position. Conversely, Ethiopian raison d'état requires a powerful, distant Western ally and protector, and the United States is now the obvious one.

As for the rest of Africa, the United States has preferred to leave it to the British and the French as long as there was no immediate Soviet or Chinese threat to any vital area. American support of the Common Market has made this policy the more attractive, and in my view George Ball is quite right in urging us to continue and intensify it. What economic aid for it Congress will approve should be used in projects, if possible regional ones, which Africa really needs. (Let the Chinese spend 400 million dollars for the Tanzam railway if they want to.) The U.S. should also intensify educational aid, particularly scholarships to the United States. Above all, the U.S. should concentrate its attention on Congo-Kinshasa and Ethiopia.

The greatest problem for the United States in Africa is what policy to take toward South Africa. It is so powerful that nothing short of a U.S. naval blockade could bring it to its knees, and post-Vietnam hostility to overseas commitments, American investments in it, and above all the rising American domestic conservative mood make this even more out of the question than before. Yet the pressure of American blacks, church groups, and the left, plus above all American commitment to racial integration at home, make it impossible for Washington to support any of the white states in the South.

This is particularly true of Pretoria's continued rule over Southwest Africa (now, for the U.N., Namibia), which shows the limits of purely rhetorical American opposition to them. The United States strongly supported the U.N. decision to deprive South Africa of the mandate over it, a decision which Pretoria successfully defied. As this shows, the United States would in my view be well advised not to commit itself so much to objectives which it,

the Africans, and the world know cannot be attained without a level of U.S. force which Washington is clearly, and realistically, not prepared to use. This kind of futile, rhetorical policy only discredits the U.N. and U.S. policy in Africa.

Conversely, should Washington improve its relations with Pretoria for strategic reasons? Whites in Southern Africa, and Conservatives in Britain,⁴¹ argue that the present Soviet threat in the Middle East and the probable future Soviet threat in the Indian Ocean require Western, notably American, naval aid to South Africa to defend the sea route around the Cape of Good Hope. I find this argument remarkably unconvincing from the U.S. point of view. In the first place, the South African Navy, without U.S. and with only British aid, could not stand up to a serious Soviet naval presence in the Indian Ocean and southern African waters: only the U.S. Navy can do that. In my judgment the United States should maintain naval superiority over the Soviets in the Indian Ocean as well as in the Mediterranean, but the problem in the Indian Ocean is not yet pressing,⁴² and the United States now has difficulty enough to maintain decisive naval superiority in the Mediterranean. Moreover, to put the matter quite bluntly, South Africa, Rhodesia, and Portugal have nowhere else to go for help except the West: the Russians and Chinese will not have them anyway. The Africans do have elsewhere to go, and although they are most unlikely wittingly to surrender their independence to Moscow or Peking, some of them might unwittingly do so - one more reason against U.S. support of the white South.

American multiracist policy at home, its interests in black Africa, its general world-wide posture, and the necessity to make its policies clear to its friends and foes in Southern Africa, require that Washington continue to make clear its rejection of white racism in the southern part of the Continent. Yet this alone is merely trumpeting at the walls of Jericho. Like the ritualistic Cold War denunciations of the "international communist conspiracy", it will have little effect in South Africa. Major changes there, as in communist Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union, will only come about in the foreseeable future within the political elite itself. If the U.S. rejects communism in Europe but hopes to influence it, by a policy of peaceful engagement, toward liberalisation, why should it not follow the same policy, mutatis mutandis, in South Africa? This would mean intensification of cultural exchange and search for an active dialogue. It should not mean, any more than in Eastern Europe, massive government-encouraged intensification of American investment, but Washington is in no position to stop such investment, decisions about

which will be made by American corporations, subject to public pressures. There are forces in South Africa working toward gradual liberalisation. By a judicious combination of condemnation and dialogue, Washington can and should give them more effective aid.

As to Rhodesia, if and when London comes to terms with Salisbury the United States should follow the same policy there as in South Africa. As to Angola and Mozambique, NATO considerations alone prevent the U.S. from taking an actively anti-Portuguese policy. Yet Washington should continue to make clear its rejection of Portuguese colonialism and participate in welfare and educational, but not military aid, to the Angolan and Mozambique (as to the South African and Rhodesian) rebels.

One final point: Africa is not a pressing problem for American foreign policy: it is a peripheral one. Washington has a continued interest to deny crucial economic and strategic areas of the continent to Soviet and Chinese influence. It should continue to aid Kinshasa and Addis. It should do what it can to influence Southern Africa toward liberalisation. But it should devote most of its attention to more important areas of the world.

N O T E S

1. For Africa generally, I have found particularly helpful the special African number of International Journal (Toronto), Summer 1970; Marion E. Doro and Newell M. Stultz, eds., Governing in Black Africa (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1970), with a good bibliography; and Waldemar A. Nielsen, The Great Powers and Africa (New York: Praeger, 1969). I am grateful to my colleague Professor Robert Rotberg for comments.
2. This paper is primarily based on discussions in July and August 1970 in Ethiopia, the Ivory Coast, Ghana, Nigeria, Congo-Kinshasa, South Africa, Rhodesia, Zambia, Tanzania, and Kenya.
3. Ali A. Mazrui, "The Monarchical Tendency in African Political Culture", in Doro and Stultz, op.cit., pp. 18-32. This does not mean that African one-party systems are all that effective; see the trenchant case against them by Sir Arthur Lewis, "Politics in West Africa", Encounter, August, 1965, reprinted (condensed) in Doro and Stultz, op.cit., pp. 83-92.
4. The much smaller rebellion in Chad is also declining.
5. Karl W. Deutsch, "Social Mobilisation and Political Development", American Political Science Review, September, 1961; Samuel P. Huntington, "Political Development and Political Decay", World Politics, April, 1965; S.N. Eisenstadt, "Social Change and Modernisation in African Societies South of the Sahara", Cahiers d'Etudes Africaines, 1965, No. 3, reprinted in Doro and Stultz, op.cit., pp. 236-250.
6. Louis Sabourin, "Les États africains de succession française après dix ans d'indépendance", International Journal, Summer 1970. By far the best regular coverage of francophone Africa is by Philippe Decraene in Le Monde and that of Revue française d'études politique africaine. (Le mois en Afrique)
7. See Philippe Decraene in Le Monde, April 20, 1970 et seq.
8. Decraene in Le Monde, February 17, 1970; Delcourt in Revue française d'études politiques africaines, April, 1969.
9. Pierre Biarnès from Bamako, "Mali after Keita's fall: Snail's Pace Recovery", Le Monde Weekly Selection, June 3, 1970.
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14. Efrem Sigel, "Ivory Coast: Booming Economy, Political Calm", Africa Report, April 1970; Biarnès from Abidjan in Le Monde, October 7, 1970.

15. See the balanced, penetrating analysis by Dennis Austin in International Journal, Summer, 1970; Edward Feit, "Military Coups and Political Development: Some Lessons from Ghana and Nigeria", World Politics, January, 1968, reprinted in Doro and Stultz, op.cit., pp. 221-235; "The USSR and the War in Nigeria", Mizan Jan-Feb., 1969.
16. See Kaye Whiteman, "A Last Look at Biafra", Interplay, August, 1970; Decraene in Le Monde diplomatique, February, 1970.
17. Borders from Lagos in The New York Times, October, 4, 1970.
18. For this "African Socialist" model of African economic development, see Pratt, loc.cit.
19. For Tanzania, see H.M. Othman, "The Arusha Declaration and 'The Triangle Principles' of Tanzanian Foreign Policy", East Africa, May 1970 (Marxist); and especially Le. (Fritz Lüdecke), "Tanzanias Balance-Akt zwischen Ost und West", Neue Zürcher Zeitung, August 28, 1970. For Tanzanian-Chinese relations, see the excellent, balanced analysis by George T. Yu, China and Tanzania: A Study in Co-operative Interaction (Berkeley: University of California, Berkeley, China Research Monographs, No. 5, 1970).
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22. For Uganda, see the penetrating analysis by Ali Mazrui in International Journal, Summer, 1970.
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40. Gilbert Comte from Brazzaville in Le Monde Sélection hebdomadaire, March 26 - April 1, 1970.
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