

CHAPTER 7

"The Whites Are Here to Stay": Southern Africa in the Nixon-Kissinger Era

The whites are here to stay and the only way that constructive change can come about is through them. There is no hope for the blacks to gain the political rights they seek through violence, which will only lead to chaos and increased opportunities for the communists.

—U.S. NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL,
Study in Response to NSSM39, 1969

Durante Séculos Esperamos

*Como dizer-vos o tamanho
do nosso sonho?*

*Durante séculos
esperámos
que um Messias viesse libertar-nos . . .*

Até que compreendemos.

*Hoje
a nossa Revolução
é uma flor imênssa
em que cada dia se acrescentam
novas pétalas.*

*As pétalas são a terra
reconquistada,
o povo libertado,
as escolas, os hospitais.*

*O nosso sonho
tem o tamanho
da Liberdade.*

*How to tell you
the size of our dream?*

*For centuries we waited
for a Messiah
to free us . . .*

Until we understood.

*Today
our revolution is
an immense flower
to which each day are
added new petals.*

*The petals are the land
reconquered,
the people freed,
schools and hospitals.*

*Our dream
has the size of
Freedom.*

—FRELIMO

New Year's greeting card, 1969

FOR HENRY KISSINGER, who as President Nixon's National Security Advisor ordered the study quoted above, African issues were low priority at best. Preoccupied with classical balance-of-power politics, he was in-

clined to dismiss those without power as beneath his notice. Perpetually amazed that a "third-rate" power like Vietnam stood up to the United States, he and President Nixon opted for heavier and heavier bombing, to ensure that the Vietnamese would be punished for their insolence in forcing the United States to withdraw. In June 1969, Kissinger told visiting Chilean Foreign Minister Gabriel Valdes that Latin America and the world's south in general were "of no importance." The foreign minister, angered, accused Kissinger of ignorance, only to be told, "I don't know, and I don't care."¹

The operational assumption of Option 2 in the NSSM study—"the whites are here to stay"—enabled the fledgling national security adviser to maintain his ignorance of African affairs largely intact. The entire fifteen-hundred-page first volume of Kissinger's memoirs, dealing with 1969–73, contains only four perfunctory references to Africa, two of them to the civil war in Nigeria and two to the later (1975–76) crisis in Angola. No other southern African country even appears in the index. Evidently what involvement Kissinger did have in African issues he was not anxious to recall.

Other U.S. officials at lower levels did, of course, pay closer attention to Africa. Nigeria, Rhodesia, and South Africa were live issues for U.S. ally Britain. But there was plausible justification for the view that there was no need—from a power-politics point of view—for an urgent response to crisis. In 1969 and 1970 guerrilla warfare in Namibia and Zimbabwe was little more than a token threat; in Angola and Mozambique the fighting was largely confined to remote nonstrategic areas. The respected president of the Mozambique Liberation Front, Eduardo Mondlane, had been assassinated by Portuguese agents in February 1969, and the future of the movement was unclear. In South Africa black resistance appeared quiescent and business was booming.

The moral imperative to condemn colonialism and racism might in theory be just as strong as in the Kennedy era, but the practical incentive was weak. With a new Republican administration in Washington in 1969, and the Conservatives returning to office in London the following year, official sympathy for African rights was less in vogue. On the European continent, both France and Germany were more interested in the economic opportunities in southern Africa than concerned about the potential political pitfalls.

Until April 1974, when the complacent assumption of stability was abruptly shattered by war-weary Portuguese army officers, the costs of tilting to the white regimes seemed marginal. But little-noticed signs of turbulence were visible even in this period for those who wished to look. The determination and hope in FRELIMO's New-Year message reflected

undercurrents elsewhere in southern Africa as well. In Western countries, the echoes were felt among student, church, and political activist groups. Protest against Western collaboration began to be institutionalized.

The seeds of defensive arguments against the critics were also sprouting, even within the internal administrative debate of the Nixon-Kissinger policy review. What appears to be collaboration with colonial and racist regimes, defensive officials or businessmen would increasingly respond, isn't that at all. "We too are for constructive change," began the refrain. "We just think we should work with those who run the present system, not against them."

This theme of "communication," as the Nixon policy was labeled, would largely predominate over the "symbolic disassociation" current of the early 1960s. But, just as in the earlier period, the evolution of economic ties between the West and the subcontinent would in fact proceed largely unaffected by direct political decisions. As long as the challenge in the region stopped short of a crisis in control, "business as usual" would remain the primary guide to conduct.

Getting Closer to Pretoria

WASHINGTON POLICY IN REVIEW

"The ambition of the administration's Southern Africa policy was to cover itself so thickly with grease that nobody could get hold of it," reported John Chettle of the South Africa Foundation in January 1971.² Obfuscation and secrecy, not an open embrace of Pretoria, was obligatory even in a conservative Republican administration. Still, the Nixon years showed an unmistakable U.S. option for closer ties with the white regime in South Africa.

Major General Sir Francis de Guingand, South Africa Foundation president, attending his old friend Eisenhower's funeral in Washington in March 1969, could sense the shift. In a friendly conversation, President Richard Nixon indicated his own personal sympathies. More generally, the climate in Washington was unsympathetic to appeasing African nations with symbolic condemnation of South Africa. Elder statesmen such as Dean Acheson and George Kennan were advocating "realistic" ties with the white regimes.

Without a crisis to elevate Africa on the policy agenda, the easiest course was to continue old patterns and delay any new departures. Changes were slow, therefore, as decisions waited on policy reviews. The NSSM39 study, begun in April 1969, pitted the traditional State Department view of "straddle" (Option 3: symbolic disassociation from the white regimes

while preserving substantive ties) against a new policy of "communication" (Option 2), in which closer ties with the white regimes would be rationalized by claiming they might produce moderate change.

In classic bureaucratic style, the two real options were framed by other alternatives to be taken less seriously. Option 1 projected an even stronger tilt to the white regimes; their domestic policies would be judged irrelevant for the purpose of deciding U.S. relations. Option 4 would dictate cuts in ties, although sanctions or support for African liberation movements would be excluded. And Option 5 was simply to adopt a lower profile, striving to minimize the U.S. role in the region.

President Nixon gave his approval in February 1970 to Option 2, favored by the NSC, which had the unique advantage of presenting a liberal cover over a conservative content. NSC staffer Roger Morris, who helped draft the document, had reportedly been much influenced by a feature article in the *Economist*, "The Green Bay Tree," by Norman Macrae.³ This article was a classic presentation of the industrialization-liberalization thesis advocated by white English-speaking South African capitalists. The United States, Morris apparently thought, could give an additional push to this process of constructive peaceful change.

Anthony Lake, a colleague of Morris on the NSC staff, wrote in his 1974 dissertation on U.S.-South Africa policy that "communication" could theoretically have been an effective anti-apartheid policy. But that would have required high-level attention and a commitment not to let the policy be a screen for an easy accommodation with South Africa. Lake admits that it "seems at least partially to have become such a screen."⁴

The fact that a few officials may have had anti-apartheid sentiments seems a weak thread on which to have hung hopes for success. And even if the commitment to act had really existed, there was still the inherently flawed basic premise that reform could be induced by feelings of security and acceptance by Western states. An examination of the specific policies carried out under Option 2 makes it clear that promotion of "constructive change" by "communication" was at best a farfetched fantasy.

The February decision mandated "a general posture [toward the white governments] of partial relaxation along the lines of Option 2." Of six specific measures, one recommended increased economic aid to Black states and three referred to South West Africa, Rhodesia, and Portugal (see next section). Two defined actions vis-à-vis South Africa: (1) the embargo on arms sales should be relaxed generally to favor any U.S. firm applying for a license, and (2) existing policy on U.S. investment should be relaxed to permit full Export-Import Bank facilities, while avoiding conspicuous trade promotion.⁵

The effect was to nibble away at the marginal steps of disengagement that had been taken under Kennedy and Johnson. "Grey area" arms-embargo items were reexamined. In September 1970 Assistant Secretary of State David Newsom announced in a low-key Chicago speech that the South African government could purchase "limited numbers of small unarmed civilian-type aircraft." The Lear-type jets that were specifically referred to were known to be for Defense Force use, but apparently they were considered nonmilitary since they would not be used in combat but only for the transport of generals.⁶

It is still difficult to determine how substantially Nixon administration decisions on "grey area" items differed from the practice in earlier years. The Africa Bureau continued to argue for tighter restrictions, while the Commerce Department wanted no restriction at all on "dual-use items" that could be civilian in character.⁷ Even under previous administrations, however, the "civilian aircraft" loophole had vitiated the arms embargo. Cessnas and Piper Cubs enjoyed a large market in South Africa, and many were in the hands of white reserve forces, which were an integral part of the defense structure.⁸

More generally, the multiple economic links enabling South Africa's military buildup remained in place. The difference was primarily one of symbolism: just as the arms embargo had been a signal designed to win African approval and express disapproval of apartheid, so loosening the embargo was a signal of the new stance. The white government would be pleased and, to the extent the decision could be blurred in public, African diplomatic reaction could be minimized.

Export-Import Bank policies were also an adjustment at the margin. There was no major new action until 1972, when a loan guarantee of \$48.6 million facilitated a General Electric sale of diesel locomotives to South African Railways. Guarantees rose to \$80.6 million in 1973 and \$162 million in 1974. Bank Chairman William Casey (later CIA Director under President Reagan) pledged "active efforts to increase trade with South Africa."⁹

These actions in favor of South Africa seemed, even on their own terms, to have little potential for promoting "constructive change." And in spite of the efforts at concealment, both South Africa and its critics correctly perceived the direction of the tilt. In response, Assistant Secretary of State Newsom increasingly developed the rationale for "communication." The key point was that violence or other pressure could "harden—rather than soften—attitudes." In contrast, in words that might equally well have come from his successor in the Reagan administration a decade later, Newsom cited "a lessening of rigidity. Change is a central theme of discussion; there is psychological and intellectual ferment within the Afri-

kaner community; . . . [businessmen] are beginning to focus on the need for improvement of working conditions for non-Whites."¹⁰

Earlier Newsom had argued against "penaliz[ing] those who are seeking to change [the South African system] by throwing a curtain around them and their country."¹¹ Decoding this reference, it is clear that the seekers of change he refers to were not the vocal opponents of the system, many of whom had called precisely for such pressure. Rather, the reference was to those—from the South Africa Foundation to the so-called *verligte* (enlightened) Afrikaners—who combined advocacy of "change" with an equally firm commitment to preserve the essentials of the status quo.

TO ARM OR NOT TO ARM

In London, as well as in Washington, South African officials could see hopeful signs as the sixties gave way to a new decade. In 1967–68 the Labour government resisted arguments to lift the arms embargo and seek trade benefits estimated, perhaps extravagantly, in the hundreds of millions of pounds. But both officially and through industry channels, British leaders expressed eagerness to expand trade in other areas. The government's Board of Trade chairman Anthony Crossland spoke of "determination to cultivate the opportunities [of] the South African market."¹² The UK–South Africa Trade Association (UKSATA) in London and the South Africa–British Trade Association (SABRITA) in Johannesburg stepped up efforts to increase trade. The Conservative opposition promised even brighter prospects. Anglo American Chairman Harry Oppenheimer, speaking in mid-1968, predicted a Conservative victory in the next election, followed by "a new period of cordial cooperation between Great Britain and South Africa in the economic sphere and beyond it."¹³

The Conservatives did win the election of June 1970, pleasing South Africa's Prime Minister Vorster and U.S. President Nixon alike. Edward Heath, the new British prime minister, and his foreign minister, Sir Alec Douglas-Home, had long argued for resuming arms sales to South Africa, excluding only weapons deemed particularly suitable for internal repression. Only four days after the election, Sir Alec announced the government's intention to resume sales.

The decision provoked a domestic political outcry and a diplomatic crisis within the Commonwealth. In the end, the government approved the sale of seven WASP antisubmarine helicopters in February 1971. Other items of British manufacture continued to find their way into Pretoria's military inventory, but the hopes of deals with huge balance-of-payments benefits did not materialize. And the debate imposed a defensive tone, if not any substantive concessions, on Conservative apologists.

The arguments for the sales were economic, political, and military. Britain, as a trading country, could not permit internal questions such as apartheid to affect trade decisions, even in arms, went one line of reasoning. The 1969 Duncan report on the Foreign Service, prepared for the Labour government under the chairmanship of Sir Val Duncan of Rio Tinto Zinc corporation, advised that diplomacy should be guided largely by commercial considerations. The report stressed the continuing importance to Britain—and to Western Europe as a whole—of the African continent and the Indian Ocean area.

The 1955 Simonstown agreements for securing southern Africa and its sea routes "against aggression from without" were a British commitment that must be honored, it was also contended.¹⁴ Some admitted that the agreements imposed no legal obligation to sell weapons, but still said sales were needed to keep South Africa friendly and open to British trade. Others cited the need for defense against the presumed Soviet threat to the security of the Indian Ocean. As Conservative MP Patrick Wall put it, "The Cape is the crossroads of our trade and the back door of NATO. Therefore, it is vitally important to see that it is defended at almost any cost."¹⁵

Observers such as J. E. Spence, writing for the Royal United Service Institution, were skeptical.¹⁶ Admittedly, he conceded, the Cape route was increasingly important, given the closure of the Suez Canal in 1967 and the growth in oil-supertanker traffic. The Soviet military presence was modest, however, and the chance that they would try to disrupt the traffic remote. Most decisively, even if there should be such a danger, it was dubious that closer ties with South Africa, bringing with them political liabilities elsewhere on the continent, would actually enhance security—that is, unless the real commitment was to South Africa's internal security as well. Openly to admit that, however, was rejected by mainstream opinion in the Conservative Party itself, where expressions of abhorrence for apartheid were already becoming *de rigueur*.

Vocal critics, including a Labour Party more vehement once out of office, church spokespersons such as the Archbishop of Canterbury, and leaders of key African countries, regarded the distinction between arms for internal and external use as transparent hairsplitting. Such sophistry could not disguise the alliance with the South African regime, particularly since African countries were potential victims of Pretoria's weapons. Through the United Nations, the Organization of African Unity, and the Commonwealth, African states tried to mobilize their diplomatic leverage. Taking the lead were Presidents Julius Nyerere of Tanzania, Kenneth Kaunda of Zambia, and Milton Obote of Uganda, with talk of "serious consequences" for the Commonwealth if sales went through.

President Kaunda visited London and Washington at the head of an

OAU delegation in October 1970. In Washington, a proposed meeting with President Nixon failed to fit into the U.S. leader's schedule.¹⁷ Earlier, in July, the State Department had expressed U.S. "agreement to disagree" with London on the issue. But at the beginning of October, President Nixon implied a contrary view when he and Prime Minister Heath issued a joint expression of concern on the "Soviet threat" in the Indian Ocean.¹⁸

In London Kaunda encountered a vigorous rebuff from Heath, who was bristly at being "pushed around" by Africans. One commentator noted that the British leader "is not interested in Africa and does not understand Africans."¹⁹ He is reported to have argued that Russia was the real enemy, not South Africa; that the distant future did not concern him; and that issues of morality were irrelevant to a nation's right to trade.

In a briefing note for a speech to the January 1971 Commonwealth Summit in Singapore, Heath incorporated the "constructive change" theme. "We are at one in condemning apartheid," he affirmed, although "we may differ deeply about the method and the approach. . . . Recourse to violence causes misery and suffering and only strengthens the forces of oppression. . . . [moreover] isolation strengthens the forces of oppression where contacts—economic, cultural and diplomatic—tend to encourage elements which favour more liberal attitudes. . . . With increasing industrialization it is being realized that efficient management is incompatible with apartheid."²⁰

The British prime minister, counseling patience in dealing with South African whites, apparently set aside that virtue when dealing with other, less well-established regimes. At Singapore Heath reportedly speculated jokingly how long his African interlocutors would remain in power in their own countries. Simultaneously British intelligence officers were backing a coup against Uganda's Obote by army leader Idi Amin. Obote had been pursuing an increasingly nationalistic economic policy that displeased the British, who saw in their former army sergeant a more reliable ally. The brutal and erratic Amin was to disappoint London as well, but in the meantime Obote went from Singapore into exile in Tanzania. And African spokesman Nyerere had another problem to preoccupy him right in East Africa.²¹

It would be an exaggeration to link the African campaign against arms to South Africa directly to the Ugandan coup, which had multiple causes. But for African and Third World observers one logical implication was manifest: London's opposition to stronger pressures against Pretoria did not grow from a principled stand against such methods. It rather derived from the judgment that indeed the white regime in South Africa was a legitimate ally.

The same was perhaps even more true of the United States, with its

activist stance in defense of "free world" security. In October 1970, as President Kaunda was failing to meet President Nixon, the White House was pursuing covert efforts to prevent the election of Salvador Allende in Chile. After the assassination of moderate General Rene Schneider that month failed to derail Allende's taking office, the National Security Council decided on a policy of economic warfare against the new government.²²

African arguments for pressure on South Africa fell on the deaf ears of Western leaders. The option simply was not within their frame of reference. And while the debate over arms sales did attract considerable public attention in Commonwealth countries, in the United States the increasingly polarized foreign-policy battle focused almost exclusively on Indochina. In April 1970 President Nixon opted for open invasion of Cambodia and renewed bombing of North Vietnam. Unprecedented demonstrations erupted around the United States; at Kent State University in Ohio four students were killed by National Guardsmen, in Mississippi police killed two at Jackson State University. Several staff members of the National Security Council, including Roger Morris, the drafter of the southern Africa "communication" policy, resigned quietly in protest of the Cambodian action.

For South Africa, the polarization of U.S. and international controversy over Indochina would produce both new friends and new enemies among political activists in the West, as more people came to see the conflict in southern Africa within a context of global struggle. The most substantive and immediate effects were more arcane, however. As the Vietnam war accelerated the decline in U.S. global economic predominance, managers of South Africa's gold-based economy struggled to readjust and take advantage of the shift. In a process not free from conflict, but remote from debates about the morality of apartheid, South Africa ended up with new gold-marketing arrangements and with closer economic links to continental Europe.

GOLD AND THE EUROPEAN CONNECTION

The United States, leader of the world's economy since World War II, had faced a rising balance-of-payments deficit since 1958. The dollar, officially "good as gold" with the U.S. Treasury-guaranteed exchange rate of thirty-five dollars an ounce, had served as the pillar of the international monetary system since the Bretton Woods conference in 1944. With the growing deficit, however, the risk was that other countries would trade in their excess dollars for gold, eating away at U.S. reserves.

Two countries who welcomed such a trend were France and South Africa. Under General de Gaulle and his successor, Georges Pompidou,

French economic policy aimed at expanding the role of gold and increasing European independence from the dollar. South Africa was even more interested in enhancing gold's international role. This put Pretoria at odds with Washington and in league with France.

From 1964, when Vietnam-related costs began to increase pressure on the dollar, U.S. officials sought short-range measures to stem the outflow. After the devaluation of the British pound, in 1967, speculators turned even greater attention to the dollar, selling dollars for gold. In March 1968, the United States engineered a "two-tier" system, by which central banks would sell gold to each other, but not to the private sector. Seen as a first step toward demonetizing gold, this was accompanied by plans to create new Special Drawing Rights through the International Monetary Fund. During 1968 and 1969 South Africa sought to undermine the plan, refusing to sell gold on the free market and hoping to drive the price up. But the United States held the line against purchase of South African gold.

At the end of 1969, agreement with South Africa was finally reached—on U.S. terms. South Africa was permitted to sell gold to the International Monetary Fund, but not to other central banks, and only when the price fell below thirty-five dollars an ounce. This set a floor for the price, but was a serious disappointment to South African hopes. The private market price failed to rise.

Pressure on the dollar continued, however, and the U.S. payments deficit dramatically worsened. In August 1971 President Nixon took the dramatic step of "closing the gold window": the United States would no longer exchange gold for dollars. The gold price would have to find its own level in the market, a prospect with an uncertain future for South Africa.

In fact, the new arrangement paid off handsomely for South Africa, although not at first. Carefully limiting the supply of gold, Pretoria waited, hoping that the world would continue to trust the precious metal more than vacillating paper currencies, including the dollar. In mid-1972 these hopes were rewarded, when the price almost doubled to over sixty-five dollars an ounce. In 1973 the twin crises of the Watergate scandal in Washington and the Arab oil embargo further eroded confidence in the dollar, and the price climbed past one hundred dollars an ounce. In the midst of the escalating internal tumult of the 1970s, South Africa would have a new cushion, as each international tremor boosted the income from gold.

In its campaign for higher gold prices, South Africa found allies among the resurgent capitalist economies of Western Europe. This alliance on the monetary front was paralleled by development of other economic ties, including increased trade and arms sales in particular.

France, enthusiastic to enhance the price of gold, was also the least

restrained of the arms sellers. After the 1963 UN arms embargo, France sold South Africa Mirage jets, Alouette helicopters, Panhard armored cars, and submarines. Over the ten-year period from 1962 to 1971, estimated the *Daily Telegraph*, almost 60 percent of the 4.7 billion francs of French exports to South Africa were for military equipment.²³ When OAU delegation chairman Kenneth Kaunda met with French President Pompidou in October 1970, Pompidou pledged to restrict certain exports. But by that time moves were well under way for the French to cooperate in manufacturing the equipment inside South Africa. Armored vehicles were already being produced under license, and in 1971 South Africa's state-owned ARMSCOR reached agreement for assembling Mirage jets with the aid of the French manufacturer.

France could get away with such a policy while provoking less protest because the ex-French colonies as a group had less involvement in and concern with southern Africa than did the inheritors of British colonialism, such as Tanzania or Zambia. As the South Africa Foundation representative in Paris remarked with relief, "South Africa is not, and shows little sign of becoming, an important issue in French public life."²⁴ With the notable exception of Guinea and Algeria, French-speaking Africa was ruled by conservative advocates of close ties with the West. In November 1970 one such leader, President Houphouët-Boigny of the Ivory Coast, issued an open appeal for "dialogue" with South Africa. His arguments closely paralleled the "communication" line of Washington and London.

The other major European power of particular interest to Pretoria was the German Federal Republic (West Germany). Like the French, the West Germans approached southern Africa primarily from the point of view of business opportunities. The racial and colonial issues, when raised at all, were generally dismissed as irrelevant to business-as-usual ties. The German economy, a resurgent presence on the world scene, spread its tentacles to southern Africa, but no more so than to other areas. From 1965 to 1970 German direct investments in Africa roughly doubled, to almost one billion DM, with 15 percent of that in South Africa. But this South African involvement still represented less than 1 percent of German direct investment around the world.²⁵

Writers in the South Africa Foundation journal expressed their satisfaction, in 1971 and 1972, that South Africa had not yet become an issue in German politics.²⁶ Most large companies had some links to South Africa, they noted, and refrained from all comment on apartheid. South Africa placed second only to the United States among Germany's trading partners outside Europe. And, most importantly, even the Social Democratic leaders of the coalition government agreed that economic ties should not

be affected by political considerations. Chancellor Willy Brandt, who took office in the fall of 1969, had served as foreign minister under the previous Christian Democratic-led coalition. Innovative in his policy of opening up ties with eastern Europe, he nevertheless maintained what the South Africa Foundation called a moderate position on South Africa.²⁷

Speaking in a Brotherhood Week celebration in March 1971, on the anniversary of the Sharpeville massacre, Brandt called for less rhetoric about "human rights" abroad and asserted vigorously that "politics and trade do not mix."²⁸ During the 1970s, West German companies and government agencies aided in developing South African capacity to enrich uranium. When the African National Congress attacked the link, citing leaked documents, Bonn denied the charges, but its evasive explanations convinced neither the critics nor the press.²⁹

With sanctions ruled out, the fact was that collaboration with South Africa could take place largely without specific political decisions. French arms sales and German involvement in nuclear research were only the most visible manifestations of this dense network of ties.

Less easily tracked were the transfers of capital directly and indirectly derived from changes in the gold market. With gold excluded, South Africa's balance of trade with the industrialized world was consistently in deficit. From 1967 to 1971, for example, South Africa ran an annual deficit of R260 million with the United Kingdom, R255 million with West Germany, R270 million with the rest of Europe, and R379 million with the United States. Gold output, at R832 million, reduced the annual deficit to R428 million. In 1972, with the gold price rising, over R1.1 billion in gold sales pulled the current account balance out of deficit.³⁰

An increasing proportion of these sales passed through Zurich, Switzerland, where South African gold fed into international networks obscuring the nationality of the ultimate owners. Capital movement to South Africa also increasingly lost its identification with specific companies or nations. The emerging Eurodollar finance market facilitated a shift from direct to indirect investment in South Africa. Syndicated bank loans and bond issues grew rapidly.

In the late 1960s net capital movements to South Africa were composed roughly equally of direct and indirect investment. From 1971, however, indirect investment quickly outpaced direct investment, particularly in Europe. In 1971-72 the EEC countries supplied a net R182 million of direct investment to South Africa, while indirect investment flows totaled R676 million.

In the troubled period that was to come in the mid-1970s, the European financial connection was to prove a valuable protection for South Africa,

even as internal resistance again escalated and the ring of surrounding white-ruled states began to crumble. More fragile than South Africa, these states too gained extra leeway from Nixon's communication policy and similar tolerance from the major European powers. But countervailing trends were also increasingly visible, trends that would soon undermine the Kissingerian faith in the permanence of white rule.

From Lisbon to Windhoek: Propping up Pretoria's Perimeters

By the mid-sixties, African opponents of all the white-minority governments in southern Africa had opted to include guerrilla warfare in their campaign for freedom. In South Africa the early sabotage efforts of the African National Congress and others were effectively suppressed. Farther north, repression was less consistently effective. The guerrilla actions in Angola and Mozambique—and in Guinea-Bissau in west Africa—were a substantial drain on Portuguese resources. In Rhodesia and Namibia the military efforts of the guerrillas, begun in 1966, were on a smaller scale, but did keep going with the occasional infiltration of new guerrilla cadres.

Buoyed by renewed Western tolerance after 1969, the regimes in Lisbon, Pretoria, and Salisbury sought to reinforce and legitimize their control. But stability eluded them. Angolans, Mozambicans, and the people of Guinea-Bissau forced up the costs of Portugal's colonial wars. Namibians launched an unprecedented general strike and expanded the political presence of the nationalist movement. And Zimbabweans organized a massive political protest against an Anglo-Rhodesian settlement that would have given international legitimacy to the Smith regime. Each of these popular initiatives took place despite Western predictions and policies to the contrary.

CAETANISMO UNDER SIEGE

"*Contra Salazarismo lutaremos até vencer*," proclaimed a popular Mozambican freedom song of the mid-sixties, "We will fight till victory against Salazarism." When aging dictator António Salazar was incapacitated by a stroke in mid-1968, dying several months later, hopes were stirred in Portugal for liberalization. Successor Marcello Caetano, many

thought, might even arrange a compromise solution for the African territories. But in the FRELIMO camps the songs revealed a less optimistic expectation as "*contra Salazarismo*" was soon replaced by "*contra Caetanismo*."

There were some reasons for thinking there might be opportunities for change. Caetano had, as university rector, argued for more critical discussion of social issues. He had spoken of the need for greater "autonomy" in Africa. He reportedly favored a young group of technocratic economists who argued that Portugal's future lay with Europe, not Africa. Trade with Europe was rising as a proportion of Portugal's foreign commerce, while that with Africa was declining. Between 1967 and 1972, for example, exports to the colonies declined from 24.4 percent of the total to 14.7 percent, while exports to Europe rose from 50.9 percent to 61.3 percent. Imports showed a similar, if less dramatic, trend.

As plans moved ahead for British membership in the European Common Market (French President Pompidou lifted the French veto in 1971), Portugal faced the prospect of losing its privileged access to the British market. Portugal's manufacturing industry was expanding, but would find it difficult to compete in a united Europe. The colonies could not provide an adequate market. These territories, with increased Portuguese settlement, were importing more from Portugal, but they couldn't pay for it. And Portugal was covering its own balance-of-payments deficits with remittances from emigrants in France and other Western countries (some 1.5 million people out of a total population of 9 million) and with income from the tourist industry.

While overall Africa was becoming less important for the Portuguese economy, the largest Portuguese financial groups were also establishing a firmer base in the Angolan and Mozambican economies. Banks associated with conglomerates such as Companhia União Fabril, the Quina group, the Espírito Santo group, and the Champalimaud group, set up new subsidiaries and increased their stake in nascent industries as well as agricultural ventures. With such a base, one could argue, the Portuguese might even have been able to follow the British or the Belgian example, withdrawing from direct political control and hoping to find African successors who would respect their economic interests. In 1969, one could further contend, the liberation movements in Angola and Mozambique might have been vulnerable to a major campaign to outflank them with offers of reform and promotion of "moderate nationalists."

The Caetano regime did not try that option. In the national assembly election of October 1969, for example, liberalized campaign rules still explicitly excluded any discussion of the war. The reasons were largely

internal—the top military command was adamant on maintaining control in Africa, and the financial groups were unwilling to risk too much political experimentation. Caetano himself was unwilling to challenge hard-line Salazarist politicians such as President Américo Tomás and former Foreign Minister Franco Nogueira, and his own reformist views had probably been exaggerated by wishful-thinking observers. A more reformist course might have gained some force with pressure from Portugal's NATO allies. On that external front, however, the tendency was in the other direction.

In Washington, for example, the Option 2 premise that "the whites are here to stay" applied also to Portuguese colonialism. Kissinger, author of a 1965 book on NATO that failed to mention Portugal at all, was nevertheless well aware of the military importance of the Azores base. If he was conscious at all of the fragility of the Portuguese regime, his instinct was to prop it up rather than to press for reforms. The NSC recommendations of January 1970 included provisions for easing the arms embargo to permit sales of "non-lethal equipment which has dual civilian and military use," and for relaxing any limitations on Export-Import Bank facilities for Portugal.

The arms embargo was far from consistent even under earlier administrations. But the nuances of the shift can be seen, for example, in sales of transport aircraft. With three wars a continent away, two in spread-out territories such as Angola and Mozambique, Portugal required efficient troop transport. Between 1966 and 1970 the Portuguese airline TAP purchased, with Export-Import Bank credit, five Boeing 707s, three 727s, and four 747s. Used for commercial flights, they regularly carried military passengers. In late 1970 a further sale of two Boeing 707s was approved in spite of the fact that they would be used directly by the Portuguese air force.³¹ Later, additional Boeing 737s were sold to the Mozambican airline DETA, which held a long-term contract for military transport. According to Assistant Secretary of State David Newsom, in October 1971, "Though these air and freight services can obviously carry military as well as civilian passengers, the sale of passenger transport planes to Portugal has not been deemed to come within the terms of our 1961 arms embargo."³²

This stand facilitated renegotiation of the Azores-base treaty. President Nixon, who had chatted cordially with Premier Caetano at the Eisenhower funeral in March,³³ was able to sign the agreement at a meeting in the Azores in December 1971. The deal provided for a four-year extension of rights, in exchange for grants of some \$6 million, a Food for Peace loan of \$30 million, and access to \$400 million in Export-Import Bank credits. In fact, Portugal realized only limited benefits, since the funds were contingent on private export deals that failed to materialize as hoped. But the

total, approximately equivalent to Portugal's annual military budget, was an impressive signal of support.

Portugal's other allies also continued to provide the routine cooperation that allowed the war to continue. France supplied equipment such as Panhard armored cars, and Alouette and Puma helicopters, without any restriction on their use and without provoking critical debate in the French national assembly.³⁴ Until 1971, West Germany permitted arms supplies without demanding even token assurances that they would not be used in Africa. The German Dornier DO-27, a light counter-insurgency plane, was used extensively in Africa, including at least twenty sold in 1969. And the Mercedes-Benz Unimog truck, a "NATO" model, served as one of the workhorses of the ground war.

In Britain the new Conservative government in 1970 openly showed itself sympathetic to Portugal. Foreign Secretary Sir Alec Douglas-Home, visiting Lisbon for two days in June 1971, held friendly talks seen, in the words of the *Financial Times*, as a "vote of confidence." Later that year the Foreign Office refused to meet with Guinean leader Amílcar Cabral, noting that he was "committed to violence against a government with which we have friendly relations."³⁵ Within the NATO military alliance, Secretary-General Joseph Luns, a former Dutch diplomat who took the NATO post in 1971, was a strong advocate of closer ties with Portugal. Responding to criticism of his attitude, he told the press in June, "Portugal sheds its blood for our freedom."³⁶

There were contrary pressures developing within Western countries, but the overwhelming impact of the signals from Portugal's allies was to reinforce those who wanted to carry on with Portugal's "mission" in Africa.

The year 1970 saw a marked escalation in Portuguese counter-insurgency efforts. In midyear General Kaulza de Arriaga, fresh from a tour of U.S. military installations and a meeting with U.S. General William Westmoreland, launched Operation Gordian Knot, a Vietnam-style search-and-destroy campaign aimed at devastating FRELIMO's liberated zones in northern Mozambique. In November, Portuguese commandoes assaulted Conakry, Guinea. The operation, ordered by General António Spínola, sought to overthrow Sékou Touré's regime and kill or capture the exiled leadership of Amílcar Cabral's PAIGC. The effort failed, but came perilously close to success.

In all three territories, the Portuguese secret police stepped up efforts to infiltrate and divide the nationalist movements. In Angola the military command succeeded in reaching a secret deal with one movement, Jonas Savimbi's UNITA, to concentrate their joint efforts against Agostinho

Neto's MPLA, the movement that would eventually rule independent Angola.³⁷

The Portuguese efforts failed to block new guerrilla advances. In Guinea-Bissau the PAIGC, with the aid of more sophisticated arms from the Soviet Union, escalated the war, succeeding for the first time in launching attacks on urban centers. The movement also stepped up its political organization, carried out elections for a national assembly in 1972, and in September 1973 proclaimed an independent state that was recognized by the United Nations General Assembly and more than seventy countries. In Mozambique FRELIMO not only preserved its liberated zones against Arriaga's assault, but by 1971 had launched guerrilla operations south of the Zambezi River. In 1972 and 1973 the war moved even closer to strategic settler areas, in central Manica and Sofala provinces. In Angola the Portuguese had the military situation more under control, but still the MPLA at least sustained its insurgency in the east. The war costs continued to mount.

Portugal, which spent an estimated 3.7 percent of GNP on defense from 1956 to 1960, was spending 6.6 percent from 1961 to 1965 and 7.1 percent from 1966–1970, in addition to new military allocations from the separate budgets of the African territories.³⁸ At the same time, the war itself was beginning to come home; underground groups opposed to the regime began sabotage actions in 1970, hitting troop ships, the Tancos Air Force base, and other targets. Premier Caetano warned against internal subversion in a dramatic speech in April 1971, charging that the guerrillas had a "fifth column working for them" in Portugal.

Economic developments in the colonies were providing some income to compensate. South Africa provided an indirect subsidy of at least \$60 million a year by valuing gold payments for Mozambican miners at the official rate, enabling the Portuguese to profit by reselling at the free-market price.³⁹ Gulf Oil's operations in Cabinda, Angola, where oil had been discovered in 1966, were coming on stream. In 1972, Gulf payments to the Portuguese authorities came to over \$60 million, almost twice the total for all the previous years. South Africa was increasing its military involvement in both Angola and Mozambique; the Rhodesians were helping out in Tete province. But the wars just would not go away.

In the Arab-Israeli war of 1973, the United States found the Azores an invaluable aid to its airlift of arms to Israel. Henry Kissinger, in his new post as secretary of state, visited Lisbon in December 1973, expressing his gratitude and pledging continued good relations. The fragility of the Portuguese link in such plans, however, was soon to be revealed. Portuguese colonialism, at least, was far from being "here to stay."

A THOUSAND YEARS FOR SMITH?

In 1965 Rhodesian Prime Minister Ian Smith reportedly predicted that his country, just proclaimed independent, would last "for a thousand years." In 1969, Smith's Rhodesian Front formally installed a new constitution billed as the "death knell for majority rule in Rhodesia."⁴⁰ Under its terms, the maximum representation attainable for Africans, in some remote future, was set at half the seats in the legislature. In June 1969, over 70 percent of the white electorate approved the new constitution and a parallel proposal to create a Republic.

The Labour Party took the move as a signal that new talks with Salisbury were futile, and even the Conservatives were persuaded not to oppose renewal of sanctions in October 1969. The British government, however, remained adamantly opposed to escalating pressures against the white regime. Britain called for withdrawal of consulates from Salisbury as a symbolic step to indicate nonrecognition of the new Republic. But the Labour government opted for a veto when faced with a Security Council resolution calling for the use of force to restore a legal regime in Salisbury. The United States joined in the March 1970 action, Britain's first veto on Rhodesia and the first ever for the United States. Instead of abstaining and letting London take the brunt of criticism, Washington decided to stress its opposition to "extreme" measures.

The Conservative Party, installed in office in mid-1970, contained a strong lobby in favor of lifting sanctions. Prime Minister Edward Heath, in secret contacts with the Rhodesian government before the election, had stressed the need to make new efforts to compromise with Smith. In office, Heath hesitated to lift sanctions immediately, fearing the reaction from African countries. At the Commonwealth Conference of January 1971, he agreed to stick by the previous British pledge that any settlement would have to be acceptable to the people of Rhodesia as a whole. That concession, it turned out, would undermine what otherwise might have formalized British—and American—acceptance of the Smith regime.

In November 1971, Foreign Secretary Sir Alec Douglas-Home reached an agreement based substantially on Smith's 1969 constitution. Rhodesia's independence would be recognized. African representatives in Parliament, eight appointed by chiefs and eight elected on a highly restrictive franchise to join the fifty white members, would be increased by two every time the number of African voters meeting the income and education requirements passed another 6 percent of the white electorate.⁴¹ On the most optimistic estimate, calculated constitutional lawyer Claire Palley, the more than five million Africans might have the same number of seats as the 250,000 whites by the year 2035.

Washington was moving toward accepting the Smith regime at an even more precipitate pace than London. The new Rhodesian constitution prompted Britain to call on its allies to remove their consulates. The United States balked, while NSC staffer Morris explored with Rhodesian lobbyist Kenneth Towsey whether the United States, by staying, might position itself to mediate between Britain and Rhodesia. The State Department argued for following the British lead, but in January 1970 the President decided to postpone the issue. Conservative emissaries from London indicated that if they won the forthcoming election, withdrawing the consulate might no longer be necessary.

In March 1970, after Rhodesia officially declared a Republic, State Department views finally prevailed, and the consulate was withdrawn. But the delay had given clear indications of the administration tilt. During 1969 and 1970, a long bureaucratic debate culminated in import of some 150,000 tons of chrome ore that had been ordered before formal imposition of sanctions. The beneficiary was Union Carbide Corporation, which owned the largest chrome mines in Rhodesia, as well as chrome and vanadium mines in South Africa. Kenneth Rush, a former Union Carbide official, had been Nixon's law-school professor, and served under him as Ambassador to Bonn, later moving to Deputy Secretary of Defense and then Deputy Secretary of State. Rush reportedly played no direct role in the NSC decision of August 1970. But he was a visible symbol of the administration's preference for corporate interests over international legality.

Union Carbide's exception, won in executive branch maneuvering, was minor, however, compared to what happened the next year. In the even more favorable legislative arena, Union Carbide lobbyists, working closely with Kenneth Towsey of the Rhodesian Information Office, mobilized conservative legislators and successfully imposed the Byrd amendment. This measure, which passed the Senate in October 1971 and the House of Representatives in November, explicitly authorized violation of sanctions to permit import of "strategic and critical materials" from Rhodesia. The United States thus became the most prominent sanctions-buster just as Sir Alec Douglas-Home and Ian Smith were reaching accord in Salisbury on perpetuating white-minority rule.

The passage of the Byrd amendment and the failure of repeal efforts for the next five years are revealing indicators of the strength of different views on southern Africa in the United States. Supporters of the antisanc-tions legislation could rely on a hard core of support among southern members of congress, many of whom made little secret of their sympathy for Rhodesia's whites. Lobbyists for chrome-importing companies Union Carbide and Foote Mineral were joined by representatives of industry

groups such as the Tool and Stainless Steel Industry Committee. Together with the Rhodesian Information Office, whose presence in the United States was already arguably a violation of UN sanctions, this well-connected group argued that Rhodesian chrome was strategic for U.S. security and for the ferrochrome industry. Sanctions, they contended, put the United States at the mercy of the Soviet Union, the other major supplier of the metal.

Proponents of maintaining sanctions were put on the defensive, forced to resort to arguments about international legality and African opinion, or to subtle refutations of the "strategic" character of Rhodesian chrome that lacked drama in spite of their cogency. At crucial times there was no full-time lobbyist at all working against the Byrd amendment, and such efforts were never more than sparsely funded. Legislative opponents, such as Representative Charles Diggs, were less well placed in congressional power structures than those on the other side. And, most decisively, while the State Department advocated sticking to the sanctions, the White House was ambivalent on the issue. President Nixon and Henry Kissinger never formally renounced support for Rhodesian sanctions, but their failure to take a stand left congressional sentiment to find its own course—one in which the fate of Africans under the Rhodesian regime was hardly a significant consideration.

Given the international climate, advocates of the Anglo-Rhodesian settlement could argue to Rhodesia's Africans with some plausibility that this was the best deal they could get. The Smith regime was convinced that it could produce a display of African approval. British negotiator Lord Goodman too thought Africans would approve, once the proposals were explained. Goodman candidly confessed he was no expert on Africa, and later admitted the evidence went against him, but cited his acquaintance with "the very agreeable waiters at the Meikle's Hotel" who favored the settlement terms.⁴² But when the British commission headed by Lord Pearce arrived in January 1972 to take evidence on African opinion, the image of acquiescence quickly evaporated.

The commission was largely composed of and staffed by former colonial officials with a paternalistic outlook, somewhat skeptical of African nationalism and initially inclined to favor the settlement. But the evidence of opposition was overwhelming. Although the banned and exiled nationalist movements could not function openly, their supporters campaigned against the settlement under the banner of the African National Council, formed in December 1971 and headed by Methodist Bishop Abel Muzorewa. In spite of detentions and forcible suppression of demonstrations, crowds repeatedly gathered to shout "No" to the commissioners. Even government-appointed chiefs expressed similar views, at the risk of

losing their jobs. The commissioners had no credible option but to report, in May 1972, that the agreement was unacceptable to the African population.

The pressure by African Commonwealth countries had forced Britain to stick by the principle of a "test of acceptability," and Africans under Rhodesian rule had therefore had their say. Smith remained in power, the United States openly violated sanctions, British and American oil companies continued supplies to Salisbury. To all appearances the status quo was intact. There was an important difference, however. The popular mobilization of early 1972 had produced a new mood of skepticism about "settlements," a readiness to undertake the sacrifices of a sustained war against the white regime, and a sense of a people in motion, no longer willing to wait for outsiders to find a solution.

The end was not in sight, but future negotiations would no longer be between London and Salisbury, with Zimbabwe's Africans on the sidelines. From late 1972, guerrillas of the Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU) began a sustained insurgency in the northeast, operating through rear bases in the areas of Mozambique controlled by FRELIMO. Adopting a strategy of "people's war," the ZANU units built up a strong network of political support, finding fertile ground among the peasants of the "Tribal Trust Land" areas.

In reprisal Rhodesia closed the border with Zambia in January 1973, hoping to pressure President Kaunda into barring the Zimbabwean nationalists from crossing Zambian territory on their way from Tanzania to Mozambique. Zambia turned the tables by keeping the border closed, cutting off Rhodesian income from copper exports that were still passing through from Zambia to South African ports. South African Prime Minister John Vorster, who had not been consulted before Smith acted, was reportedly disgusted at his Rhodesian colleague's shortsighted action, which also disrupted South African exports to Zambia. Still, a South African police contingent, which had entered Rhodesia in 1967, stayed to help with the newly augmented guerrilla threat.

By 1974 the guerrilla war had escalated significantly. Guerrilla units of Joshua Nkomo's Zimbabwe African Peoples Union (ZAPU) operated in the northwest while ZANU's campaign both expanded geographically and built solid roots among the rural people. In February of that year the regime doubled the intake of white draftees into the army. The same month, petrol rationing was reintroduced. With the 1973 jump in world oil prices, the Rhodesian economy was feeling more seriously the extra cost of evading sanctions. The Conservative government in London, though it might incline to lifting those sanctions, was reluctant to imperil growing investment and trade elsewhere in Africa, especially in the booming oil

giant, Nigeria. In September 1973 Rhodesia suffered its first net loss in white migration.

Ian Smith was not yet on the way out, but his thousand-year prediction, or even Kissinger's less specific verdict of permanence, was beginning to wear thin.

"THE UNITED NATIONS HAS DONE NOTHING"

In 1969 the Security Council, following the lead of General Assembly actions since 1966, affirmed the revocation of South Africa's mandate over Namibia. Several months later it condemned South Africa's refusal to comply. Finally, in 1970, the Security Council appealed for a new advisory opinion from the World Court on "the legal consequences for states of the continued presence of South Africa in Namibia."

In the culminating act of the legal battle over Namibia, the World Court held, in June 1971, that the mandate had been legally terminated. South Africa had a legal obligation to withdraw, it ruled, and other states were under obligation "to refrain from lending any support or any form of assistance to South Africa with reference to its occupation of Namibia."⁴³ This dual decision, by a court infused with new judges elected in 1966 and 1969, was approved by a significant majority.

The unprecedented clarity of the legal results led to gestures of compliance by Western powers. Yet in more concrete terms, a SWAPO conference in Tanzania in January 1970 concluded, "the United Nations has done nothing." Namibians would have to free themselves by their own efforts. As the South African administration moved to implement its Bantustan plans for separate tribal governments, and Western governments resisted all but token measures to withdraw support from South Africa, SWAPO organizers were able to channel a growing surge of popular protest inside the country. This mobilization provided the base for intensified war after the mid-decade collapse of Portuguese colonialism and, of equal importance, consolidated the position of SWAPO as the clearly dominant representative of African nationalist opinion.

Already in 1968 South Africa moved ahead with setting up a separate tribal government for Ovamboland, in northern Namibia. Similar structures were devised for Kavango and Eastern Caprivi in 1970 and 1972. At the same time, the 1969 South West Africa Affairs Act transferred certain functions from local South West African administration to the central South African government.

The UN Council for Namibia made ineffective protests against these changes. South Africa paid no attention, even when the dispute went to the Security Council. Pretoria's leaders could be confident that the West-

ern countries there would block measures that might go too far. The voting record shows this Western reluctance, although African states moderated their demands to avoid provoking a veto.

France and Britain, for example, abstained on the 1969 resolutions revoking the mandate and calling for South African withdrawal, on the 1970 resolution asking nonrecognition of South African authority over Namibia, and even on the October 1971 vote accepting the World Court's opinion. Britain held back from voting, in 1970, to refer the issue to the Court. The United States, impelled by international-law advocates in the State Department, had a more positive record, abstaining only from the August 1969 resolution, which included a clause recognizing "the legitimacy of the struggle of the people of Namibia against the illegal presence of the South African authorities in the territory."⁴⁴

In 1970, urged on by the U.S. UN mission and the State Department's Office of Legal Affairs, the United States announced a policy of discouraging new investment in Namibia and cutting Export-Import Bank loans for the territory. The NSSM 39 decisions had included the judgment that the Namibia issue should not be allowed to affect bilateral relations with South Africa. A further NSC review (NSSM 89) sufficiently watered down the proposals that, it seemed, neither South Africa nor major U.S. investors would be seriously concerned. The discouragement of new investment, it was tacitly understood, would not apply to expansion by firms already there, such as the owners of the Tsumeb mine.⁴⁵

Elizabeth Landis, a U.S. lawyer who had served on the legal staff for the Ethiopian-Liberian appeal to the World Court, detailed in a 1970 monograph steps the United States could take to implement UN resolutions. The United States could, she noted, accept membership in the Council for Namibia, which it had refused in order to keep open the door for "dialogue" with South Africa. The United States could formally terminate the applicability of treaties with South Africa concerning Namibia. The United States could prohibit, rather than just nominally discourage, U.S. investment in Namibia. And, among the most effective of a variety of other measures, the United States could refuse tax credits to U.S. companies for taxes paid to South Africa on their operations in Namibia.⁴⁶

Such actions would have indicated a serious intention to comply with the World Court's ruling on refraining "from lending any support" to South African occupation. They were, however, unlikely even to be considered seriously in U.S. policy circles—U.S. direct investment in Namibia was estimated at some \$50 million in 1970, some 90 percent of it accounted for by shares in Tsumeb owned by American Metal Climax and Newmont Mining. In 1970 Tsumeb's \$14 million tax payment provided 8.6 percent of the territory's annual budget. Tsumeb earned more than 30 percent return

on total investment that year, and paid dividends of \$8 million to Newmont and \$7 million to AMAX. If the United States had required payment of taxes, disallowing the credit for payments to South Africa, the U.S. firms would have seen their dividend income virtually wiped out.⁴⁷

While the Namibian issue was shuttled from Security Council to World Court and back again, more and more Namibians were heeding SWAPO's call to take their own initiative. After the June 1971 World Court ruling, leaders of the Lutheran churches, the largest denomination among black Namibians, issued a pastoral letter. They denounced apartheid, called for support of the World Court ruling, and charged that "peace" in the country was being maintained by force. Anglican and Roman Catholic leaders joined in supporting statements. School students throughout the country, and particularly in Ovamboland, organized protests and boycotts, and large numbers were expelled from school.

Most dramatic, however, was the action by contract migrant workers. These workers, some forty-five thousand in number, provided the essential unskilled labor for Namibia's mines, canneries, docks, and other urban jobs. Since 1968 scattered and often unreported wildcat strikes had hit the fishing canneries and the docks, to be met by deportation of workers back to Ovamboland. Workers in the Katutura migrant-labor compound in Windhoek had organized themselves to bypass the location stores and canteens, and to evade police pass raids. During 1971 SWAPO organizers, many of them ex-students, began to prepare for a strike. Between November and January, beginning in Walvis Bay and extending to other areas, more than twenty thousand workers—some 70 percent of those outside the scattered farming sector—left their jobs, most returning to Ovamboland or being deported there by the government.

At the U.S.-owned Tsumeb mine, about 90 percent of the mine's black workers went on strike. Their grievances included the contract system as such, which separated them from their families and barred them from seeking other employment, as well as working conditions and wages. Average wages in 1971 amounted to \$28 a month in cash and \$25 a month in kind for Africans, as compared to \$375 a month for whites, not counting noncash benefits.⁴⁸

The massive strike, with the workers showing an ability to maintain their organization after returning to Ovamboland, forced some concessions from the companies and government. Tsumeb, for example, offered raises averaging 25 percent in February. The government officially abolished the labor-recruiting organization, although in fact its functions were largely turned over to the Ovambo tribal government. Returning workers, however, found the system of contract labor little changed. Police and troops moved into Ovamboland in force, hundreds were arrested, and,

according to a SWAPO account, the "year of open confrontation brought few immediate tangible gains."⁴⁹

It did, however, build political support for SWAPO and destroy the credibility of South Africa's newly created tribal authorities. In August 1973, South African-sponsored elections in Ovamboland were met by a SWAPO-organized boycott. Only 2.5 percent of the registered electorate voted, less than 1 percent of those potentially qualified to vote.

In the meantime the United Nations had spent two years on efforts by Secretary-General Kurt Waldheim to entice South Africa into some form of negotiations. And an international consortium was showing its confidence in South African control by a long-term investment in the Rossing Uranium Mine, which would eventually have a capacity for some five thousand tons of uranium oxide and \$300 million in revenue a year. Britain's Rio Tinto Zinc took the lead, with 46.5 percent of the stock directly and through its Canadian subsidiary. South Africa's General Mining, the state-owned IDC, and companies from Germany and France were other important investors. Contracts signed as early as 1968 provided for future sales to Britain's Atomic Energy Authority, as well as to France and other European countries. The operating assumption for *de facto* Western policy in Namibia was still that South Africa was there to stay.

The Hand of Solidarity

In the 1950s and 1960s, African nationalists in search of freedom for their countries turned again and again to explicit Western ideals. They sought to persuade the colonial masters and allied countries that their struggle was both morally right and a force that it was better to reckon with than to ignore or repress. As we have seen in earlier chapters, this strategy had some success in the British- and Belgian-ruled countries of southern Africa. In the case of the "triple alliance" of Portugal, Rhodesia, and South Africa, the formal institutions of the international community endorsed the African consensus in favor of majority rule. Repeatedly, however, African activists were reminded that effective power lay with the white regimes. When repression was intensified, the West counseled patience, discouraged efforts to counter white military force with black, and balked at repeated calls for effective sanctions.

In response, African opinion moved, not uniformly but unmistakably, toward seeing the major Western powers as the allies and bulwarks of white-minority rule. A corollary, which each new refusal by the West

reinforced, was that this alliance was based not on ignorance or inadvertence, but on deeper grounds—on the West's own attachment to white racism and European ethnocentrism, on the profits that London, New York, and Paris drew from the existing order of minority rule. While Western governments affirmed their abhorrence for apartheid and colonialism, Western actions contradicted the words.

In the years from 1961 to 1966, nationalist movements in all the territories decided that they could no longer rely exclusively on nonviolent protests. More broadly, they concluded that only wider popular mobilization and disruption of the colonial and racial status quo gave any chance of victory. The hope of outside pressure through the United Nations was not abandoned, but it was regarded with a great deal more skepticism than at the beginning of the sixties.

Disillusioned with the West and in search of aid, including arms and military training, the movements and the front-line states that gave them asylum devoted increasing efforts to finding counterweights to the superior resources of the white regimes. They sought support from other African states, from the "Third World" bloc at the United Nations, and, with more or less ideological trepidation, from the countries ruled by Communist parties.

LOOKING TO THE EAST

Some looked in that direction out of conviction. Activists of the Communist Party of South Africa had since the 1930s participated in and won respect from the leaders of the African National Congress. Nationalists of the Portuguese colonies had made common cause with communist opponents of the Salazar dictatorship. Far more frequently, however, southern African nationalists visited Moscow or Peking simply out of elementary common sense. If one reached the conclusion that the white regimes would abandon their recalcitrance only when faced with a strong physical challenge, it made sense to seek resources for that confrontation wherever they could be found. Even for Africans who had absorbed an anticommunist ideology, Western exhortations to stay away from such "dangerous" aid rang hypocritical.

For the communist-ruled countries, there were natural reasons, ideological as well as practical, to make some favorable response to these requests. These countries had few vested interests, economic or other, in preserving the old order. Since Lenin, Marxist theorists had stressed the links between the struggle for socialism and that for nationalist self-determination in oppressed countries. The enemy was the same: the expansionist capitalist classes of the industrialized West. The trend of history itself was to over-

throw the colonial order, and it made geostrategic sense to be on the side of the winners.

In fact, until the Angolan confrontation of 1975, the involvement of the Eastern countries in southern Africa proved quite limited. The Soviet Union, in theory and practice, was quite cautious about the prospect for "wars of national liberation." In the Congo crisis, Moscow refrained from matching the Western intervention with more than token material involvement. By 1969, even the ties which had developed with radical African leaders such as Sékou Touré of Guinea (Conakry), Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana, and Modibo Keita of Mali had shown their fragility, as only Touré remained in power. The Soviet Union did develop stable ties with a set of movements in southern Africa—FRELIMO, MPLA, and PAIGC in the Portuguese colonies, SWAPO in Namibia, ZAPU in Zimbabwe, and the ANC in South Africa. Each sought and received aid, such as scholarships, military training, some supply of arms. These supplies were appreciated, but fell short of satisfying the movements' needs.

In theory, the Chinese leadership was more enthusiastic about the prospects for guerrilla warfare than was the Soviet Union. Their own experience of protracted people's war seemed to have more direct relevance to Africa, and in competition with the Soviet Union Peking preached against the moderation of "revisionist" collaboration with the West. The Chinese ventured to supply aid to the Congo rebels in 1964. In 1967 they responded to Zambian and Tanzanian requests for aid and volunteered to build the Tanzam Railway that had been turned down by Western aid agencies. The \$400 million project stirred Western and South African fears that it would not only lessen Zambia's dependence, but also unleash trained revolutionaries on pro-Western governments, black and white.

In fact, Lin Piao's famous 1965 speech about world revolution also contained the characteristic caution that each people must rely on its own resources to make revolution. China, like the Soviet Union, supplied scholarships, some arms, and guerrilla training to movements such as Mozambique's FRELIMO and Zimbabwe's ZANU. Chinese instructors helped out in training camps in Tanzania, and Mao Tse-Tung's military writings were read in Portuguese and Swahili translation as well as in English. But this aid too was limited, and China developed little positive connection with movements such as the MPLA in Angola and South Africa's ANC, which were seen as too closely linked to Moscow. African countries deplored the divisive effect of Sino-Soviet contention on the liberation movements, but only those without significant rivals, such as FRELIMO and SWAPO, seemed to be able to insulate themselves from the division.

As liberation movement leaders toured the world seeking support for their cause, they often found their most friendly welcomes from smaller

communist-ruled countries with their own historical reasons for sympathizing with anticolonial struggles. Yugoslavia's regime had established itself in guerrilla war against the German Nazi occupation, and President Josip Tito was one of the leaders in the Non-Aligned Movement. A European Communist country, Yugoslavia nevertheless stood independent of Moscow and sought its diplomatic identity in close ties with Afro-Asian countries. Southern Africans could find a friendly reception in Belgrade, some material aid, and understanding of their desire to remain independent even of close friends.

The German Democratic Republic, one of Moscow's closest European allies, had its own particular reasons for identifying with antiracist struggles. In competition for diplomatic support with the richer Western-oriented German Federal Republic, the GDR had the advantage of its strong and genuinely felt repudiation of the heritage of German Nazism. In the Federal Republic, an ambivalent silence was often the response to discussion of Hitler and his ideas; to the east, both feeling and propaganda linked anti-Hitler, antiracist, and anticapitalist themes. Berlin offered scholarships, educational aid, publication facilities, and some military supplies to the same set of movements as did the Soviet Union. GDR schoolchildren made their own contributions of pencils and paper, and learned about the freedom fighters in Angola and Mozambique.

Across the Atlantic, leaders of Cuba's revolution also paid close attention to Africa. Che Guevara spent several months with the Congo rebels in 1964. Under attack and boycotted by Washington, Havana turned for material and ideological support to Moscow. With genuine passion Castro and his colleagues also sought close, direct links with those involved in anticolonial struggles, whether in South Africa, Southeast Asia, or Africa. The Tricontinental secretariat in Havana, emerging from a conference in 1966, provided a forum for Third World revolutionaries. The slogan "Two, Three, Many Vietnams" crystallized a common feeling of Third World struggle against "imperialism"—a word targeting the United States in particular, as well as the older colonial powers.

Vietnam itself, though hardly in a position to offer material help to southern African revolutionaries, won unique prestige and empathy for the example of its resistance to the United States. As the war escalated in the second half of the sixties, and then again as Nixon prolonged the U.S. withdrawal with periodic frenzies of bombing and invasion, southern Africans confronting the white regimes felt an instinctive sympathy. At meetings in Dar es Salaam commemorating the Sharpeville massacre or other anniversaries, introductions of "our Vietnamese comrades" would invariably provoke spontaneous and prolonged applause.

Such a sense of common plight molded attitudes and reinforced ideolog-

ical radicalization. It was the concrete situation in each country that was still determinative, however. In material terms, the West remained the dominant outside influence for all the countries in the region. Even the Soviet Union, nuclear superpower that it might be, was more comparable to small Belgium than to the United States, in terms of its participation in the international economy and potential for economic influence. And while southern Africa might be of unique significance for exposing Western hypocrisy, it was too geographically remote and peripheral to Soviet strategic concerns to warrant major commitments in arms aid. Neither movements nor African states could pay the hard-currency prices the Soviets often required for purchase of arms. The Eastern bloc could and did vote for sanctions at the United Nations, but ultimately only the Western countries with ties to southern Africa could exert pressure by diminishing or cutting those ties.

Nor were liberation-movement leaders willing to give up hope for some favorable response from the West, even when disappointed again and again. Most of the leaders had grown up in churches that were the recent products of Western missionary enterprise. Many still maintained a Christian faith and saw their revolutionary commitments as an outgrowth of religious concerns for justice. Though there was less of a developed theoretical Christian-Marxist dialogue than in Europe or Latin America, in practice there was a convergence of religious and secular advocacy of the need for revolutionary change. Movements in the Portuguese colonies, more explicitly Marxist in perspective, emphasized the universal character of their struggle. The peoples of Portugal, and the West, they repeatedly stressed, were potential allies, though their governments and capitalist classes might be enemies of freedom in Africa.

LEGITIMIZING RESISTANCE

In the Lusaka declaration of April 1969, African states reiterated their readiness for peaceful transition in southern Africa, and called on the world community to put pressure on the white regimes. In the absence of movement in that direction, they added, the peoples of southern Africa were fully justified in taking up arms against their oppressors. The United Nations General Assembly, in October 1970, adopted a program of action against colonialism, affirming "the inherent right of colonial people to struggle by all necessary means" for their freedom and independence. Five negative votes were cast—South Africa, Australia, New Zealand, Great Britain, and the United States. Fifteen other countries abstained.

In 1971 the United States and Great Britain withdrew from participation in the UN Decolonization Committee, signaling their disapproval of the

radicalization of committee resolutions. But if the major Western powers refused to heed the Lusaka Declaration or General Assembly resolutions, there were Western governments, most notably in Scandinavia, that responded by offering a hand of solidarity, endorsing the southern African struggles and providing material, if not military, aid. Small voluntary groups in most Western countries, often inspired by the civil-rights movement in the United States and opposition to the war in Vietnam, built links in southern Africa as well. And, strikingly, Western protestant churches, through the ecumenical World Council of Churches, became involved with direct grants of nonmilitary aid to the southern African movements.

From 1966 to 1974, for example, the Scandinavian countries provided two-thirds of the total \$2.7 million contributions for a United Nations trust fund to aid South African exiles, compared to twenty-five thousand dollars from the United States and forty thousand dollars from Great Britain. In bilateral aid the Scandinavian countries played a similar role. The Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA) was one of the major sources of funds for the educational, medical, and development programs that FRELIMO, MPLA, and PAIGC undertook in the liberated zones of their countries.

There were a number of reasons for this response. While Norway and Denmark were NATO members, in contrast to Sweden and Finland, all four had strong socialist parties. Missionaries from the Protestant churches had worked in a number of African countries, notably the ex-German colonies of Tanzania and Namibia, where they had replaced German Lutherans during both World Wars. Without colonies themselves, these countries had fewer vested interests in the old order in Africa. Being small countries, they had an incentive to establish themselves as friends of developing countries, an interest that businessmen as well as humanitarians and leftists could understand. The Scandinavian role in supporting southern African liberation movements was well known to those on the spot but rarely even visible in the East-West schemas that so often framed Western debate on the region.

Even more incongruent with such schemas, and profoundly provocative to conservative groups in the West, were the grants to liberation movements announced by the World Council of Churches in September 1970—some \$200,000 to nineteen antiracist organizations around the world. The largest grants went to movements in Guinea-Bissau, Angola, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, and Zimbabwe. The South African Foreign Minister denounced church support of organizations "whose actions consist of crimes of violence."⁵⁰ The South African Council of Churches disassociated itself from the action, and its member churches decided to stop support for the WCC budget. A storm of protest erupted in churches in

Britain, West Germany, and the United States, with articles denouncing backing for "terrorism" and charging communist infiltration into ecumenical church leadership. The theme would be played with increasing volume over the next decade as conflict intensified in southern Africa.

The church-council decisions did reflect radicalization of some church leaders, but influence from communist countries or communist parties was a minor factor at most. Far more significant was, in the first place, the increased voice of Third World churches in the ecumenical movement. By 1968, 103 of the 253 member churches of the WCC were from Third World countries, forty-one of them from Africa. Most leaders of these churches, inheritors of the missionary legacy, were far from radical in their political views. But they regarded opposition to colonialism and racism as axiomatic. The U.S. churches, which played a large role in Council affairs, had been much affected by the civil-rights movement in the U.S. south, and those church leaders involved in ecumenical church-unity efforts were likely to be the same ones most concerned about social justice.

At the 1968 Uppsala Assembly of the World Council of Churches, the fourth worldwide representative congress since the organization was founded in 1948, delegates were profoundly affected by the assassination only months earlier of Martin Luther King, Jr., who had been scheduled as a keynote speaker. United States black novelist James Baldwin made a powerful address to the gathering. From southern Africa itself, ANC elder statesman Z. K. Matthews had for several years played an active role in Council studies of social issues, and FRELIMO President Eduardo Mondlane was well known and highly respected by many church leaders. Their cause, the majority were convinced, deserved support, and the issue of racism deserved more than token action by a church that professed to be universal.

A consultation in May 1969 in England, chaired by U.S. Senator George McGovern, produced recommendations for combating institutional racism in society, as well as individual prejudice. The advisory group recommended that the WCC establish a special Programme to Combat Racism. Later the Central Committee and Executive Committee decided that part of the program would be grants to liberation movements. These grants, to be funded by money from WCC reserves and by voluntary contributions from member churches, were specified for humanitarian objectives, not military, but they were also a signal of solidarity, implicit endorsement of the movements' legitimacy.

Over 1970 to 1974, the Special Fund raised over \$1 million, some \$688,000 of it allocated to southern Africa. Contributions from Swedish churches came to some 12 percent of the total. But that figure was sur-

passed by donations from the United States, the Federal Republic of Germany, and, most notably, the Netherlands. Money raised from church-people in that country provided approximately one-fifth of the Fund's resources.

The Netherlands was also the country where activists implanted the most firmly based grass-roots movement of solidarity with southern Africa. An internationally oriented trading country, Holland also had historic links with South Africa, but without the same range of vested interests as England. The cultural and linguistic ties provided a basis for understanding South Africa, but the direct colonial link was over 150 years removed. The more relevant historical image was the Nazi occupation of Holland, an experience that bolstered opposition to the parallel regimes in southern Africa.

Under the leadership of the Angola Comité, formed in 1961, Dutch groups mounted a sustained campaign of support for the guerrilla movements against Portuguese colonialism and for antifascists in Portugal itself. Using access to both church and secular communications networks, they publicized colonial atrocities, denounced NATO collaboration, organized a boycott of Angolan coffee, and sent supplies to the schools and clinics of the movements.

In the case of Portuguese colonialism in particular, such campaigns, together with the demonstrated capacity of the movements to administer development programs in their liberated areas, further eroded the legitimacy of counterinsurgency efforts. In 1970 the Pope met with representatives of PAIGC, FRELIMO, and MPLA, who were attending a conference of solidarity groups in Rome. In Mozambique, Catholic priests, often non-Portuguese, were becoming increasingly critical of the war. In Tete province in December 1972, two Spanish priests managed to get details of the slaughter of at least 138 villagers at Wiriyamu. Their report reached the international press just as Prime Minister Marcello Caetano was visiting England the following July, provoking a widespread outcry.

From 1969 also, international campaigns, with local activist and church involvement, targeted multinational corporate collaboration with Portuguese colonialism. The furor led to withdrawal of Swedish, German, and U.S. companies from the Cabora Bassa hydroelectric project in Mozambique. The opposition to Gulf Oil investments in Angola, by contrast, attracted significant publicity and alerted a wider constituency to the issue of Portuguese colonialism, but had little discernible impact on the company itself.

The broader campaign to isolate South Africa's apartheid regime,

though it took on institutional shape in the early 1970s, also achieved only modest successes.

ISOLATING APARTHEID: FROM CRICKET FIELD TO CORPORATE BOARDROOM

In the second half of the sixties, Western activists on southern African issues became more and more disillusioned with the major Western governments. Proposals for economic pressure on South Africa foundered on the clear unwillingness of Washington and London even to consider such options. The Democratic administration of Lyndon Johnson provoked outrage with its escalation of the Vietnam war and the 1965 U.S. invasion of the Dominican Republic. Harold Wilson's Labour Party betrayed its ambivalence over Rhodesia. Successor administrations—Nixon and Heath—left even fewer openings for the possibility of action against Pretoria.

If governments would not respond, however, the other ties linking the West and South Africa provided targets for protest. In sports, escalating protests achieved major successes by 1974, largely isolating South Africa and provoking it to undertake reforms designed to counter the boycott. Another set of targets, Western companies with subsidiaries in South Africa, proved more resilient. The controversy served to spread the debate about apartheid into churches and universities, particularly in the United States. But there were only minor victories at best in the effort to force firms to withdraw. Instead, the arguments rapidly congealed into justifications for maintaining the South African involvement; companies under attack discovered, at least for the purpose of public relations, a vocation for reforming the apartheid system.

International protest against apartheid sports, already shown in several demonstrations in the 1950s, took on force with the organization of the nonracial South African Sports Association in 1959 and the South African Non-Racial Olympic Committee (SAN-ROC) in 1963. Key organizer Dennis Brutus, banned and then arrested in 1963, was shot and wounded while trying to escape. Partially in response to this incident, the International Olympic Committee (IOC) suspended South Africa for violating Olympic provisions against racial discrimination. In 1968 the IOC attempted to reinstate South Africa, arguing that the South African Olympic Committee, if not the government, was making some effort to reform. SAN-ROC in exile joined with the American Committee on Africa and the recently formed Supreme Council for Sport, representing African countries, to mobilize a boycott of the 1968 Mexico Olympics.

The IOC backed down, but their actions had already provoked rising

attention to the issue. United States black athletes, who had threatened a boycott to protest U.S. racism as well as South African participation, gave black-power salutes from the victory stands. The following year, a coalition of groups launched a campaign to block the upcoming 1970 tour of Britain and Ireland by a South African cricket team. A rugby tour in 1969 served as a warning, as thousands of nonviolent demonstrators picketed the games; hundreds were arrested, thousands of police mobilized, and the British Labour government thoroughly embarrassed. Finally the government persuaded the cricket association, described as more conservative than the Tories, to call off the tour. Later that year South Africa, already on suspension, was officially expelled from the Olympic movement, until it should abolish racialism in sport.

South Africa's sport isolation, while not complete, was substantial. Even those events that still took place often faced harassment. A 1971 rugby tour of Australia, for example, resulted in some 700 arrests and a strike by 125,000 workers. Being boycotted even by traditional partners such as Britain and Australia deeply affected the intensely sports-conscious white South Africans. White sportsmen themselves began to press for reforms. In a 1971 speech Prime Minister John Vorster announced that teams from South Africa's different "nations" (races) could compete against each other under certain conditions; foreign blacks could compete in South Africa; and blacks could be selected (without multiracial trials) for certain foreign competitions.

The concessions fell far short of threatening apartheid in sport. But they did indicate that pressure could have an effect. In an area of highly charged symbolism, action overseas could be taken with relatively little cost, while dramatically signaling to white South Africans their moral isolation. Activists had leverage, through public demonstrations, over even conservative sports bureaucrats. Corporate boards, however, proved much better insulated from moral outrage than did the cricket fields.

The organized focus of protest on particular companies, as distinguished from consumer boycotts or simply exposés of Western economic support, began in the United States with the campaign against a consortium credit of \$40 million to South Africa from ten large U.S. banks. The credit, arranged by Dillon, Read and Company, had been in effect since 1947, increased to \$40 million in 1959, and was renewed every two years. In March 1965, a coalition of student groups, including the Students for a Democratic Society, the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee, and the National Student Christian Federation, organized demonstrations outside Chase Manhattan Bank calling for withdrawal of the loan. At the same time the American Committee on Africa, together with student activists and sympathizers in the churches, pressed churches and universities to

withdraw their bank accounts or investments in the consortium banks. The campaign met with mixed results, the most prominent action being withdrawal of a \$10 million account of the Methodist Board of Missions from First National City Bank in January 1969. Student demonstrations raised the issue at such universities as Cornell, Princeton, the University of Wisconsin, and Spelman College. Episcopalian, Presbyterian, and United Church of Christ national assemblies also voted to withdraw funds, but before they acted the consortium loan was canceled, in November 1969.

The South African Finance Ministry and the banks claimed cancellation had no connection to the protests, since the credit was actually no longer necessary. Cancellation probably did impose only minimal costs on South Africa, since other facilities for credit were available. Bank spokespersons refused to accept that there was any impropriety in doing business with South Africa. The move nevertheless encouraged activists, who saw it as evidence that popular pressures could produce a corporate response, even if only to get rid of a public-relations hassle.

Thus, just as the Nixon administration was implementing its communication option, critics were moving to demand a different response. Research in South Africa showed that the easy assertion that foreign companies were a "force for change" had little, if any, empirical justification. Church researcher Tim Smith reported South African survey findings showing that only one in ten U.S. businessmen in South Africa felt apartheid was "altogether incorrect," while almost two-thirds said they would vote for the National or United parties, both supporters of continued white-minority rule. Smith also noted that the U.S. businessmen he interviewed had virtually no contacts with blacks other than their servants, and cited a Ford manager's remark that "I didn't mix with them in the States, and I don't mix with them here."⁵¹ Data dug up on particular U.S. companies showed enormous disparities in wage rates between whites and blacks, shocking to well-meaning Americans. Several years later, in 1973, British journalist Adam Raphael, in a series of articles in the *Guardian*, described appalling conditions in British-owned firms in South Africa, sparking a parliamentary inquiry. More and more U.S. firms were compelled at least to reveal the embarrassing details of their South African operations.

In this period, too, radical academics, primarily British and white South African, began a more systematic discussion of the thesis that "industrialization brings racial reform." The conflict between capitalism and apartheid, they noted, was over peripheral aspects of the system, such as the extent of flexibility in job allocation and housing. More importantly, South African capitalism had profited enormously and continued to reap dividends from the system of cheap labor provided by the apartheid state.

Activists radicalized by the antiwar movement or civil-rights struggle welcomed such analyses, but the broader debate was still set in a more familiar perspective.

Church organizations took up the campaign for action on U.S. companies in South Africa, selecting General Motors for a shareholders' resolution at the 1971 annual meeting. Using stock held by the Episcopal Church, the critics presented a resolution calling for withdrawal of GM from manufacturing operations in South Africa. Rev. Leon Sullivan, a black minister recently appointed to the GM board in a gesture to the domestic civil rights movement, supported the demand, which won 1.29 percent of the stockholders' votes. In 1972 General Motors in South Africa initiated, with much publicity, a program to improve black wages and benefits. In this move it followed the example of Polaroid, which had been attacked for involvement in South Africa by a group of its black employees in Boston. After sending a study group to South Africa, the company launched a program of support for black education in South Africa and improvement of wages at its small distributorship, announcing the measures in full-page ads in twenty-six U.S. newspapers.

From 1971, with the formation of the ecumenical Corporate Information Center, stockholders' resolutions by churches on southern Africa and other "social responsibility" issues became a regular annual activity. On occasion, the issue also sparked protests at universities. These actions kept the issue alive. At the same time, however, the terms of debate most often retreated to the companies' newfound emphasis on reform, rather than the activists' stress on withdrawal as a contribution to the downfall of the whole apartheid system.

On a fellowship at the Council on Foreign Relations in 1971-1972, State Department official Donald McHenry, later to serve as Ambassador to the UN under President Carter, studied U.S. corporate involvement with an eye to "enlightened practices which would make more defensible the continued presence of American business in an essentially unjust political and economic system."⁵² Although publications of the churches' Corporate Information Center cogently made the case for withdrawal, refuting the notion that minor changes by a few companies could alter the apartheid system, the sponsoring churches were more cautious. In the first half of the seventies, after the GM debut, they were willing to present a straightforward withdrawal resolution only in the case of Namibia. Instead they opted for resolutions demanding disclosure of information on working conditions, prohibition of strategic sales to the South African government, or other specific reforms.

At the level of tactics, just as the companies themselves refused to withdraw from South Africa, so churches and universities under challenge

from activists balked at divesting themselves of company stock. Better, they argued, to keep the stock, present resolutions, and carry on a private or public dialogue with corporate executives. Some cynically hoped that the issue would simply die down and go away, buried in obscure committees and position papers; others genuinely believed in the reformist potential of U.S. companies. Others accepted the measures as temporary expedients to keep the issue alive while building support for divestment by stockholders and withdrawal by corporations. Only in a few cases did workers at the companies under attack get involved in the debate.

Corporations were forced to pay attention, at least to defend their public image. Institutional investors—preeminently the universities—even established an organization, the Investor Responsibility Research Center, to provide them with “impartial” reports on issues of social responsibility. The details of arguments grew increasingly complex. The basic framework for discussion, however, stayed reformist. The contextual assumption was that the South African government would remain in control, and that U.S. companies would provide more or less of a good example to inspire an eventual withering away of racial discrimination. The companies, in turn, would be compelled to move in this direction by public scrutiny, not by coercive measures such as stock divestment or boycotts. Protesters who had come to identify with the struggle of black South Africans might point out the naïveté of such hypotheses. But as long as it appeared that the white government was “here to stay,” their arguments could make only limited headway.

A QUESTION OF POWER

By 1969 there was a substantial constituency in the United States open to a more radical critique of Western ties with white southern Africa. In Greenwood, Mississippi, in 1966, Stokely Carmichael had launched the call for Black Power. Each summer, ghettos in additional U.S. cities erupted in violence. After Martin Luther King, Jr., was assassinated in April 1968, riots broke out in some 130 cities; police and national guard were used to quell the outbreaks, with a toll of forty-six dead and some twenty-seven thousand arrested. In the antiwar movement a parallel radicalization was punctuated by police beating demonstrators at the Democratic party convention in Chicago in August 1968. In the Nixon years, filled with frustration and outrage for advocates of civil rights at home or peace abroad, more and more people were ready to sympathize openly with Third World revolutions. The American government and American capitalists, many argued, would inevitably oppose such revolutions, preferring friendly right-wing regimes to possible communist allies. But the

American people owed it to justice to make a different choice, and join in the linked struggles for human dignity at home and abroad.

The black movement, the antiwar movement, and other activist movements had decisive impact on the U.S. politics of the time. Conservatives might rage against them and liberals disassociate themselves from movement "radicals," but even Nixon knew the unrest meant he had to get U.S. troops out of the Indochina war. Even conservative Republicans, with talk of black capitalism, acknowledged that some blacks had to be incorporated within the mainstream of U.S. society.

This impact, however, was by no means equivalent to winning lasting institutional influence. The movements of the late sixties where southern Africans might expect to find solidarity were diffuse, fragmented along racial, ideological, and a multitude of other fault lines, and still on the periphery of society's power structures. In the United States, powerlessness was accentuated by the absence of any strong socialist party or established leftist tradition. But similar weaknesses could also be found in other key Western countries. Except in Scandinavia and the Netherlands, the impact of solidarity movements on national governments was limited.

In the United States, for example, the groups and individuals concerned with southern Africa barely made a start at institutionalizing lobbying in Congress, the possible counterweight to administration policies. In 1969 Congressman Charles Diggs of Detroit, one of six blacks in the 435-member House of Representatives, became chairman of the House Africa Affairs Subcommittee. Diggs and his staff turned the committee into an effective forum for exposing the business-as-usual ties of U.S. government agencies with South Africa. But even after the number of black representatives more than doubled to thirteen in 1970, and a Congressional Black Caucus was formally organized, the Caucus remained on the periphery of Democratic power structures and had no leverage at all on Republicans. Few representatives, black or white, gave political priority to African issues. The congressman who inquired at one of Diggs's hearings if Libya was one of the countries in South Africa was probably only slightly more confused than the average politician about basic African geography. Activism around the country was growing, but the base of public knowledge and interest was weak. And only in a few cases did the active concern about southern Africa touch constituencies who had influence with their representatives in Congress.

In 1972 a predominantly black coalition of groups, ranging the liberal-to-radical spectrum, mobilized some ten thousand people for a May 27 African Liberation Day demonstration in Washington, D.C., along with smaller rallies in other cities. African Liberation Support Committees were organized in more than a dozen cities around the United States. Later that

year the American Committee on Africa, with church and labor support, set up a separate Washington Office on Africa, which provided the first sustained lobbying presence in favor of southern African liberation.

None of these efforts was sufficient to reverse the line-up already established in Congress. Senator Edward Kennedy's effort to revoke South Africa's sugar quota—not even a negative sanction but simply the removal of a special privilege—lost in 1971 by 47–45 in the Senate and 213–166 in the House. The senator in subsequent years backed off from support of investment withdrawal, expressing his approval of the “Polaroid experiment” in reforming apartheid from within. Efforts to repeal the Byrd Amendment and reinstate Rhodesian sanctions failed year after year. By 1973 there were significantly more voices speaking in favor of African liberation than four years previously, but the power to change government policy eluded them.

In South Africa itself at the end of the sixties, resistance to the apartheid system was not only powerless but in large part voiceless. Liberation-movement exiles kept up their struggle, but felt increasingly cut off from events inside, where silence seemed to prevail. Pamphlet bombs in South African cities, scattering reminders that the ANC was alive, seemed isolated squalls in a sea of discouragement. A new generation, however, was beginning to discover its voice, and forces were gathering for the storm that would again compel the world to pay attention to South Africa.

The South African Students Organization (SASO), formed by Steve Biko and others in 1969, was the spearhead of an emerging Black Consciousness movement. It had its start, ironically, in the segregated universities set up under the apartheid Bantu Education system. With strong links to a minority of radical thinkers in church circles, and not a little indirect influence from the U.S. black movement, SASO leaders stressed the need for black self-assertion and confidence. In contrast to earlier “Africanist” trends in the South African struggle, they defined black to include Coloured and Indian victims of apartheid as well as Africans.

In a parallel movement, black workers in South Africa also began to emerge from a decade of relative quiescence. Over the years from 1962 to 1971, fewer than 4,500 black workers a year were reported as involved in strikes. The economic downturn South Africa experienced beginning in 1971 hit this group particularly hard—between 1971 and 1973 the Poverty Datum Line, an estimated minimum survival income for urban workers, rose by 40 percent, while wages failed to advance. At the end of 1972 discontent erupted in a series of strikes among Durban factory workers. More than 100,000 went on strike before the end of 1973, and, importantly, many succeeded in winning wage increases. In September 1973 miners went out on strike at Carltonville. Police repressing the strike killed

11 miners. From 1973 to early 1975 at least 140 miners were killed in strikes and other conflicts on the mines. The mineowners gave priority to keeping order by force, but they also got the signal that at least some of their earnings from increased gold prices would have to go to raising black wages held static for some sixty years.

There were other signs that the years of apparent quiescence might be waning—demonstrations by white students, bannings of white clergy, trials of ANC and PAC guerrilla cadres. By and large, however, Western governments took little note. The gathering storm would hardly be noticed until Lisbon's empire precipitously collapsed and, two years later, Soweto's students took to the streets and photos of South African police killing demonstrators again hit the front pages of the world's press.

These events would inaugurate a new era of Western activism in the region. Amidst the changes, however, there would still persist the assumption that the South African regime, at least, was "here to stay."