

## **Dear Seminar Participants,**

Please take note that this is a work in progress. Many difficulties have been experienced in pulling the various threads of my argument together.

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### ***“A Turning Point at which many turns were made”! The Impact of the Soweto Uprising on ANC-USA Relations: 1976-1981.***

The 1976 uprising in Soweto was a milestone for the liberation struggle being waged in South Africa. Yet the African National Congress had no hand in the uprising. In fact, the revolt took the movement as well as the apartheid state by surprise. But it provided numerous opportunities for the ANC to strengthen its position inside the country, to resume the armed struggle and to isolate South Africa internationally, in this case, specifically in the USA. For the apartheid state, contrary to its own statements, the revolt did untold damage to the country's image abroad. Newly opened files of the South African Department of Foreign Affairs provide a lucid account of the impact of the events on the country and on her relationship with the United States of America. These files will be used as part of my evidence.

This Chapter will demonstrate that Soweto aided, if not grudgingly, the ANC's attempts to draw the attention of the international arena, especially the US, to the extent of the apartheid atrocities. Undoubtedly it provided the ANC with many opportunities in world politics, including the attempts to develop a favourable relationship with the US. It will also demonstrate how the ANC's domestic strategy was complemented by a parallel campaign to gain the recognition of the international arena as the sole representative of the South African oppressed majority. In July 1977, the ANC's National Executive held a meeting to assess the kind of post Soweto strategy that needed to be adopted. In describing its international perception of the movement and its work, the NEC reported its frustrations at being ignored by the UN Security Council. The report proposed that an urgent campaign be launched by its international department for the “eventual exclusive

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<sup>1</sup> This title was drawn from Kane-Berman's observation that the uprising “was a turning point at which no turn was made”. John Kane Berman, *Soweto: Black Revolt, White Reaction* (Johannesburg, Ravan Press, 1978), p.232..

recognition of our organisation” as the sole representative of the oppressed people of South Africa.<sup>2</sup>

For John Kane Berman, the revolt that occurred in Soweto in June 1976, was “a turning point at which no turn was made”<sup>3</sup>-at least by the government. Given the views expressed in the preceding discussion, I will challenge Kane-Berman’s perception arguing that there is much evidence to support the view that ‘turns’ were made on every front, including on the part of the South African state. Aside from focusing on the impact of the uprising on the ANC and the South African government, it will also be vitally important, for the purposes of this study, to trace the developments in the USA by focusing on the state department initiatives, the role of civil society and the American media—as growing awareness of the South African dilemma gradually set in. As the Soweto uprising, which began on 16 June 1976, has been well documented in a range of studies, my study will not focus on the events that led to the uprising or the uprising itself.

Adelaide Tambo, in assessing the impact of the uprising, indicated that because the ANC played no role in this event, it had certain limitations. She alluded to the lack of political direction to guide the outbreak arguing that whatever the strengths the uprising may have had, they were negated by the lack of strategy and tactics which could “only be found in the leadership of the ANC”.<sup>4</sup> But, for her, there were two distinct advantages of the ANC’s lack of involvement. Firstly it was her observation that the youth involved in the uprising had undertaken a re-evaluation of the effectiveness of Black Consciousness. Secondly, she came to the conclusion that certain Black Consciousness thinkers such as Steve Biko came to accept the policies and leadership of the ANC.<sup>5</sup> This view was supported by Tambo who was of the opinion that Biko and his colleagues had accepted that the ANC was “the leader of our revolution” and that the Black People’s Convention

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<sup>2</sup> NEC Minutes, ANC Archives, NEC Minutes, 1977.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>4</sup> Adelaide Tambo, *Preparing for Power: Oliver Tambo Speaks* (London, Heinemann, 1987), p. 114.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p.115.

should function “within the context of the broad strategy of our movement”.<sup>6</sup> While these views are indicative of ANC perceptions, I would hesitate to accept whether the leaders of the BCM really arrived at these conclusions. Further investigation will have to be undertaken to provide verification of the ANC view. Adelaide Tambo’s assessment provided crucial evidence to indicate that she, like many others in the movement, believed that the ANC would have been unable to undertake the kind of re-evaluation, undertaken by the youth, in their current form in the 1970’s. Perhaps this was also a significant acknowledgment that the ANC was really out of touch with the expectations of the youth in the 1970s.

In a report to National Consultative Conference in June 1985, Oliver Tambo lamented the fact that the ANC

... had not recovered sufficiently to take full advantage of the situation that crystallised from the first events of June 16 1976. Organisationally, in political and military terms, we were too weak. We had few active ANC units inside the country. We had no military presence to speak of. The communication links between ourselves outside the country and the masses of our people were still too slow to meet the situation such as was posed by the Soweto uprising.<sup>7</sup>

This report perhaps sums up the dilemmas that the ANC faced in 1976. Gail Gerhart has put forward a very convincing argument in which she provides support to my view that the ANC was taken by surprise and could not take any credit for the events of 1976. This argument is strengthened by her reference to the ANC flyer prepared for the anniversary celebrations of the 1960 Sharpeville massacre, and entitled “*People of South Africa-Sons and Daughters of the Soil*”.<sup>8</sup> The flyer was drafted by the ANC in exile and sent to the internal cells with the instruction that it be reproduced for circulation around March 21 1976. The document, as pointed out by Gerhart, had no evidence of any anger of the youth of the country that was about to erupt into a major uprising. Instead, it focused on

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<sup>6</sup> Political Report of the National Executive Committee to the second National Consultative Conference, Lusaka, 16-23 June 1985, in ANC Archives, Minutes and Reports, Lusaka Collection.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>8</sup> Gail Gerhart, *From Protest to Challenge: A Documentary History of African Politics in South Africa, 1882-1990, Vol. 5: Nadir and Resurgence, 1964-1979*(Pretoria, Unisa Press, 1997), p. 280.

the struggles in Namibia, Zimbabwe and Angola, with particular attention been drawn to the defeat of the South African forces in Angola, which the movement alluded to as “an outstanding victory over the forces of racism and imperialism”.<sup>9</sup>

But once the uprising began, the ANC tried to make use of the event by infiltrating student networks such as the Soweto Student’s Representative Council (SSRC). This was evident in the case of ANC operatives in Mozambique who made contact with the SSRC through Elias Masinga.<sup>10</sup> Another such link was established by ANC veteran in Soweto, Elliot Shabangu, through his nephew, Super Moloi, who was an SSRC insider. But there is no significant evidence to suggest that the ANC laboured to intensify the revolt, once it broke out. Neither, says Gerhart, did it use the revolt to produce any written propaganda. The only documentary evidence produced in the early weeks following the revolt, was a flyer entitled “*People of South Africa: The African National Congress Calls on you. Amandla Soweto*”.<sup>11</sup> Aside from the usual rhetoric calling on its supporters to unite against the oppressor, the flyer contained no meaningful propaganda exploiting the uprisings. The first coverage of the uprising by its official journal, *Sechaba*, only occurred in the first quarter of 1977.<sup>12</sup>

What accounts for such a blatant omission. I would argue that the movement failed to capitalize on the event for two reasons; firstly the organization, being unprepared for the revolt, was still trying to find a suitable strategy to deal with, or benefit from the outbreak; secondly, although Adelaide Tambo might have thought otherwise, the movement, still lacked the capacity undertake any significant action inside South Africa. Hence it exercised caution in its underground efforts. From discussions with leadership figures who were in exile, it would appear that by the end of 1976, the ANC objectives, rather than actually fanning the revolt, were really to cool the revolt and to use militant high school activists as possible recruits for MK activities.<sup>13</sup> This was in keeping with

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<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>10</sup> Masinga was one of those backroom strategists of the Soweto Student’s Representative Council. His father was an ANC loyalist.

<sup>11</sup> ANC Archives, Paris Mission, Box 23, flyers.

<sup>12</sup> *Sechaba*, Vol. 11, First Quarter, 1977, “Whites Reaction to Soweto” and “message of the NEC”.

<sup>13</sup> Conversations with Pallo Jordan, Joe Matthews and Ebrahim Ebrahim.,

the ANC focus on using military activities, or “armed propaganda” as an instrument of politicizing blacks and building the image of the organization.<sup>14</sup>

For these leaders, with the Soweto uprising the liberation struggle had moved onto a whole new phase, one that would be characterized by greater confrontation between “masses of our people” and the apartheid state and one that would place the resumption of the armed struggle high on the movement’s agenda. This period was characterized as one of “Consolidation and Further Advance”<sup>15</sup>

As a result of internal evaluations, between 1977-1979, the movement succeeded in once more carrying out military operations. During 1977, guerillas, recruited from these ranks of high school activists, embarked on numerous acts of sabotage inside South Africa, having infiltrated the country through Swaziland and Mozambique.<sup>16</sup> Targets of vital economic or military importance were selected for attack. The most famous of these incidents was the “Gooch Street incident” on 13 June 1977, which resulted in the first guerilla martyr to be executed-Solomon Mahlangu.<sup>17</sup>

Towards the end of the 70’s it was clear, that, as a result of the events of 1976, the ANC faced new and unexpected problems, caused specifically by the influx of new recruits to MK to camps in Tanzania and Zambia. For leaders in exile, the question that dominated political debates and plagued strategic planning initiatives was that of how to build a political base within the country and how to build on its strategy of isolating South Africa internationally. While pondering these issues, a delegation, led by Tambo, was

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<sup>14</sup> See Morogoro Conference Documents, Strategic Planning, ANC Archives, Conference Files, 1969.

<sup>15</sup> Political Report to NEC, 1985.

<sup>16</sup> The ANC was held responsible for six bomb explosions on railway lines, hiding arms and explosives in seven different locations, and several shootouts with police.

<sup>17</sup> Solomon Mahlangu had left South Africa in 1976. In June 1977, he returned to South Africa with two other MK recruits to travel to Soweto for the first anniversary of the uprising. While walking down a street in Johannesburg, with a shopping bag filled with weapons, they were confronted by a private guard. During the confrontation, one of the men escaped, one ran into a building where he shot and killed two whites and Mahlangu surrendered. Although he did not fire any shots, Mahlangu was sentenced to death. This action drew much international attention with Jimmy Carter even appealing against the sentence. The ANC named its school in Tanzania, the Solomon Mahlangu College.

dispatched to Vietnam in October 1978 to learn from the Vietnamese revolutionary experience.<sup>18</sup>

As a result, a meeting of the NEC and the Revolutionary Council was held in Luanda from 28 December 1978-January 1979 to assess the report of the group's visit to Vietnam. Of significance was the conclusion of the participants at the meeting that "the Vietnamese experience reveals certain shortcomings on our part and draws attention to areas of crucial importance which we tended to neglect"<sup>19</sup> Thereafter the meeting elected a commission of six members which was mandated to scrutinize strategic options and make recommendations in the light of the Vietnamese experience. This group, which came to be known as the *Politico-Military Strategy Commission*, was headed by Tambo and included Thabo Mbeki, Joe Slovo, Moses Mabhida, Joe Gqabi and Joe Modise. After many consultative and discussion sessions held in Luanda, Maputo and Lusaka, the commission produced a final report, drafted by Joe Slovo. The report was known as the "Green Book" named for its green cover.

For Joe Slovo, the "green Book" was the most thorough investigation, from every angle, of what was wrong with the organization".<sup>20</sup> The report comprised three sections; Part One was of an introductory nature, with Part Two entitled "Our Strategic Line" and Part Three comprising fourteen annexures. The significance of Part Two lay in its ability to provide clear evidence of the ANC's strategic path after the Soweto uprisings, asserting that the "main task is to concentrate on political mobilization and organization so as to build up political revolutionary bases throughout the country", with armed struggle being considered to be "secondary".<sup>21</sup> In referring to structural changes, the report recommended the establishment of a central organ responsible for the implementation of the NEC's internal policy. The members of this body should be chosen from amongst "the most experienced, talented and leading cadres". On the issue of whether the ANC,

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<sup>18</sup> The delegation, led by Tambo, included Joe Modise-the commander of the Central Operations Headquarters, Joe Slovo-Modise's deputy, Moses Mabhida-secretary of the Revolutionary Council, Cassius Make-assistant secretary and Thabo Mbeki, a promising young man in the NEC. They met with General Vo Nguyen Giap and representatives of the Vietnamese Workers Party.

<sup>19</sup> "Report of the Politico-Military Strategy Commission to the ANC National Executive Committee, August 1979", in ANC Archives, Mission Records, Washington Office, Correspondence Files, Boxfile 12.

<sup>20</sup> A thorough analysis of the report has been undertaken by Gerhart in *From Protest to Challenge*, Vol. 5, p. 304.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*

should "...publicly commit itself to the Socialist option", the report declared that "No member of the commission had any doubts about the ultimate need to continue our revolution towards a socialist order"<sup>22</sup>

The "Green Book" was approved by the National Executive Committee in August 1979 in Dar es Salaam, with one amendment. The NEC rejected the recommendation of the Commission for the establishment of a central organ, arguing that it could be turned into a vehicle for rivalry. Instead, by 1980 "senior organs", with combined military and political functions, were created in Mozambique, Botswana and Lesotho, and ultimately responsible to Central Operations Headquarters and the Internal Reconstruction Department.<sup>23</sup> In spite of the new focus on political rather than military action, ANC activity was dominated by acts of sabotage, with MK guerillas targeting crucial strategic installations as was evident in the June attack on three SASOL plants.

I could argue that had the ANC and other liberation movements been better organized inside the country, they may have succeeded in using the uprising to bring down the apartheid state in 1976. But, as pointed out in my preceding argument, in the case of the ANC, their ill preparedness through lack of organized underground networks and military preparedness as well as the increased distance between ANC leadership and the younger generation of black consciousness youth made this *perception* untenable. Moreover, I would argue that the visit to Vietnam, while it may have acted as pointer to these shortcomings, was not a useful exercise. An inward looking policy would have been far more effective in allowing the ANC to come to grips with the Black Consciousness Movement and to assess its impact on South Africa. The adoption of the policy of looking outward towards the Vietnam experience was a weak one which also provided evidence of a leadership out of touch with internal debates and issues. Although I contend that the movement did not capitalize on the uprising at the time, I would still emphasise my support for the Gerhart analysis that Soweto paved the way for international and regional recognition of the work of the ANC.

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<sup>22</sup> "Report of Politico-Military Commission", Boxfile, 12.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*

Moving to an analysis of the uprising on the state apparatus, evidence has supported the view that Soweto created a serious crisis for the apartheid state-notwithstanding the existence of advantages. These included the possession of a powerful military and police apparatus, the continued support of its electorate and the western nations, concerned with containing the “communist threat” as well as other benefits such as trade. The government, while never admitting to the existence of any crises, faced for the first time since 1960, a serious challenge to its power. But for Vorster, speaking at a public forum in Springs in late August 1976, there was really “no crisis” at all and there was no intention of changing any of its apartheid policies.<sup>24</sup>

The state interpretation of the uprising was interesting. They perceived the uprising to be caused, not by government policy, but by troublemakers, criminal elements and unpatriotic sections of the English press whose intention was to sow discontent and confusion regarding the language issue<sup>25</sup>. Blame was even apportioned to a certain conspiratorial sections such as “certain organizations and persons, working together to achieve...obvious objectives”.<sup>26</sup>

Within the National Party camp, conflicts began to grow regarding the future direction of state policy in respect of “separate development”. While the party’s hardliners challenged any attempts to placate liberal and foreign bodies, in spite of threats of international isolation, party pragmatists feared the looming effects of international isolation that could eventually lead to a collapse of the economy.<sup>27</sup> The latter acknowledged the existence of disastrous publicity generated by the uprising –the kind of publicity that seriously dented the image of South Africa abroad. The solution to this dilemma, for this group, was for the introduction of reforms, which could repair South Africa’s image internationally as well as compose black rage. This contention serves to strengthen my view that all was not well within the National Party camp.

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<sup>24</sup> Reported by South African Secretary for Foreign Affairs, in Foreign Affairs Files, 1/33/3, Secretary to Ambassador, September 1976.

<sup>25</sup> These were the explanations offered to the Cillie Commission investigating the disturbances.

<sup>26</sup> *House of Assembly Debates*, June 18, 1976.

<sup>27</sup> This group received the backing of the Afrikaner business community, academics and the media.



Given the call for reforms, the dilemma facing the National Party was how to introduce reforms' without alienating the conservative element while at the same time placating blacks enough to seduce them into project a more positive image of South Africa abroad. This was clearly a Herculean task and in the short term the government emerged relatively unscathed from the uprising. There was no reform to the calamitous school system and township conditions remained the same. 'Concessions' that were offered, were, in reality, no concession at all. Urban Bantu Councils were scrapped, only to be replaced with like bodies called Community Councils. Although rent hikes were postponed in Soweto, they were eventually imposed. The term "separate development" was replaced with the term "plural development". The department of Bantu Affairs changed its name to Department of Plural Relations. Despite the role played by the townships in the uprising, life in the townships remained much the same after June 1979. These so-called reforms, which were consistent with past apartheid policy, were passed off as being done in the spirit of democracy. That the revolt made no difference to the states resolve never to respond to demands for that truly democratic principle of one-man-one vote in South Africa was evident as it moved to even harsher methods of crushing resistance, of new strategies to divide the majority as well as of new strategies to improve its image abroad. This issue of improving its image abroad was one that needed to be addressed with some urgency. As I will argue further on in this chapter, there is overwhelming evidence to suggest that Soweto adversely affected South Africa's image in the US. If anything it did much to begin that process of legitimizing as well as recognising its adversary's activities in its quest for freedom for South Africa's majority.

Having provided the assessment of the uprising on the ANC and the South African State, it becomes appropriate at this juncture to move onto the primary goal of this study-to interrogate whether the uprising in Soweto did really capture the attention of officials in Washington, civil society and the media.. If so, was there any change in policy towards the Apartheid state, which could impact on liberation organisations such as the African National Congress and its subsequent relationship with that country. This necessitates a tracing of US foreign policy during the period under review and of developments of US

media coverage of South Africa and an exploration of contacts, if any between organisations and the ANC.

When the uprising occurred in South Africa in June 1976, the American administration was close to undergoing a drastic change in leadership as the country prepared for the Presidential election of that year. But before the current administration under Gerald Ford left office, American policy remained consistent. For it was the name of Henry Kissinger that really dominated foreign policy issues. Kevin Danaher has reminded us that it was Kissinger who “really called the shots on foreign policy”. Further he pointed out that while Ford was in command, it was “Kissinger who personified US policymaking”.<sup>28</sup> A former member of Kissinger’s National Security Council provided a good summation of this perception:

...Ford entered the foreign affairs responsibilities of the presidency as the epitome of the uninformed, unprepared, expert-awed American politician, all with the added burden of being the unknown, unelected successor to the most corrupt administration in memory. Without a sense of his own independent position in foreign policy...Ford found Kissinger indispensable in appearance and fact”.<sup>29</sup>

As pointed out in the previous chapter, with the collapse of Portuguese Colonialism, American attention to Southern Africa was heightened, resulting in greater internal conflict within the Ford administration. This conflict provided evidence of a US policy move slightly to the left. But the basic objectives of US policy remained the same.<sup>30</sup> Using the strategy of “shuttle diplomacy”, for much of 1976, Kissinger traveled around the Southern African region, in an attempt to persuade presidents of the Frontline States to coerce Zimbabwean liberation movements to the conference table. Simultaneously, he persuaded Vorster to do the same with Ian Smith. His concern with Zimbabwe lay purely in his desire to project the image that the resolution of the conflict in Rhodesia, was the result of his own efforts. From a policy point of view, it was his view that if a ‘moderate’ African government could be installed, through negotiation, in power in

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<sup>28</sup> Kevin Danaher, *The Political Economy of US Policy toward South Africa* (London, Westview Press), p. 179.

<sup>29</sup> Roger Morris, *Uncertain Greatness: Henry Kissinger and American Foreign Policy* (New York, Harper and Row, 1977), p. 292.

<sup>30</sup> This meant that those regimes that were friendly and open to western capital as well as hostile to Soviet interests.

Zimbabwe, vital western economic interests could be safeguarded. This strategy could also in turn curtail, not only future demands of radical groups in Namibia and South Africa, but also the spread of the Soviet influence in southern Africa.

That he was holding meetings, as Secretary of State, with the leader of the apartheid state was indeed a major concession to Pretoria. Scholars have viewed these meeting as a break with US policy, which discouraged public contacts with South African leaders. In June 1976, Kissinger, during an address to the US House International Committee, vehemently rejected allegations of his having made any promises to Vorster. Yet, it was later discovered that he, in fact, did make many positives overtures to Vorster in return for the latter's cooperation on Rhodesia. These included an invitation to the South African navy to send a frigate to the US as part of the country's bicentennial celebrations, an offer of US sponsorship and training of a Namibian military force in return for cooperation on transfer of power in Namibia and the granting , in 1976-1977 , by the International Monetary Fund of credits to the value of \$464 million to South Africa.<sup>31</sup>

The ANC's reading of Kissinger's "shuttle diplomacy" was not unexpected. The movement appeared disconcerted and labeled it "dangerous" for two reasons. Firstly, Secretary General Alfred Nzo, claimed that the purpose of US diplomacy was to "cut the umbilical cord" linking the liberation movements to "the world socialist system" especially the Soviet Union and Cuba.<sup>32</sup> Secondly, Nzo made the claim that the kind of policy result that the US envisaged for Africa was "neo-colonialist" and "pro-imperialist" because its objective was to safeguard western economic and strategic interests". He called on progressive support groups to build powerful lobbies to oppose the growing economic collaboration between South Africa and the governmental structures of Britain, the US, France, West Germany and Japan and to secure the international isolation of the apartheid state.<sup>33</sup>

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31. Foreign Affairs Files, 1/33/3, 109/3

<sup>32</sup> *Sechaba*, First Quarter, 1978, "New Phase of Struggle in South Africa".

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*

In trying to unravel the motives behind the “shuttle diplomacy”, and the interests that brought Kissinger and Vorster together, ANC thinking was that this formed part of a revised “strategic assessment” undertaken by the USA, of the events unfolding in the Southern African region since April 1974, after the collapse of the Portuguese regime. The view was that the policy adopted before 1974 differed from that after the collapse of the regime because previously the state department never viewed liberation organizations such as the ANC as being “strong” or “competent” enough to influence the course of events in the region.<sup>34</sup> Hence their continued support of the apartheid state and other white regimes. After 1974 all that changed. Given this and the situation in Zimbabwe, it was believed that these maneuvers were aimed at avoiding an escalating guerilla conflict, the success of which could have profound repercussions inside and outside of the region. For those inside the organization, these “political intrigues” of the “imperialists” were aimed at keeping South Africa within the world capitalists system and in so doing ensuring the domination of South African monopoly capital, isolating the African National Congress, defending South Africa’s strategic position and preventing campaigns in the US in support of liberation struggles. More important for many of the respondents involved in this discussion, this was an attempt to form some kind of anti-communist front in Southern and Central Africa<sup>35</sup>.

From these perceptions, it would appear that members of the organization overestimated their strength and influence at this time. But I would argue that neither anti-apartheid organizations nor Washington regarded the ANC as a movement of much substance at this point. But this will be explored at some length later on in the chapter.

On the domestic realm, Kissinger’s African policy received much criticism from the Conservatives in Washington. And since that was an election year, the Ford administration was concerned about the challenge from such Conservatives. It was alleged that Ronald Reagan’s victory in the Texas primary was assisted by the Secretary of State’s trip to southern Africa and his efforts to secure majority rule for Rhodesia.

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<sup>34</sup> ANC Archives, Presidential Office Files, Reports, Boxfile 32.

<sup>35</sup> Discussions with Pallo Jordan, Peter Pyise, Uriel Abrahamse, 14 October, 2002.

Kissinger also sought the support of the African American community for his southern Africa initiatives. In August 1976 Kissinger met with Reverend Sullivan's Opportunities Industrialised Centres, addressed the National Urban League and held private meetings with African American leaders such as the Reverend Jesse Jackson, Percy Sutton of the Manhattan Borough and William Booth of the American Committee on Africa.<sup>36</sup>

However, these black leaders, in turn made, almost others, the following demands on Kissinger; that Washington impress upon Pretoria its abhorrence of its racial policies, that Kissinger reveal the details of his meetings with Vorster, that the US grant political asylum to South African refugees, that an official African American fact finding team visit South Africa. There is no evidence to indicate that Kissinger was successful in gaining African American support for his policies or for matter, for the Ford administration. Instead one finds that Jimmy Carter gained 90% of the black vote in the 1976 election.

In regards to the Rhodesian conflict, Kissinger failed to bring the conflict to its conclusion. This had been attributed to his failure to understand African Affairs. Danaher substantiated this allegation by reference to an incident in which a certain CIA officer reported that at a briefing, the Secretary of State experienced difficulty finding Angola on the map of Africa.<sup>37</sup> Moreover, he failed to understand the importance of working with the African leaders of the Frontline States as instruments of change in Southern Africa. His total reliance on Vorster and Ian Smith was a disastrous strategy.<sup>38</sup> From a more objective position, I would contend that he was merely maintaining the consistence of his predecessor, when it came to African Affairs. The African continent never featured prominently in Washington. Given US interest in maintaining corporate and security interests, the US government remained wedded to the white minorities in the region. Granted that officials in Washington verbally attacked the racial policies of the apartheid state, they nevertheless maintained their friendly ties with the white regimes. No decisive action was taken against the latter.

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<sup>36</sup> Danaher, *Political Economy of the US*, p. 126.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, p.129.

<sup>38</sup> The liberation movements relied on the Frontline states for economic, political and geographic support. Also the OAU had charged the Frontline Presidents with the responsibility for African strategy in the Zimbabwean conflict. So for the state department to effect any change in the area, they would have to work with the Frontline Presidents and earn their trust. Kissinger failed to acknowledge this.

For the ANC, there appeared to be no positive developments to look forward to in regards to US policy. That was until Jimmy Carter became President of the United States of America. In preparation for the 1976 election, Carter ensured that African Affairs features prominently. As presidential candidate, Carter was also aware of the growing interest of the African American community in US policy towards Africa.<sup>39</sup> Using Vietnam to draw an important historical parallel, he called for the black community to take a more active role on African issues. The use of Vietnam was interesting. As indicated earlier on in this study, the ANC used Vietnam to reflect its own shortcomings. So too did the new liberal Presidential candidate. Thee socialist ANC leadership used the issue of Vietnam as a key case, but as it would appear, for very different reasons. Carter pointed out that:

...It would be a great help to this nation if people in public life were to be made aware of the problems of Africa through a significant Black interest in Africa. Americans might not have made the mistakes we made in Vietnam had there been an articulate Vietnamese minority in our midst<sup>40</sup>.

The high priority, though unusual, which was accorded to African affairs could be attributed to the key staff members that comprised the Carter Team. Although Carter himself had little knowledge of Africa, many of his advisors were well informed on events in southern Africa, and the problems resulting from white minority rule. Ruth Schacter Morgenthau, a respected Africanist, became the advisor to the UN Social and Economic Council. Goler Butcher, a black lawyer, went on to head the Africa section of the Agency for International Development (AID). Butcher called for a new policy of “providing no new support to the minority and of ending present support, while providing all the appropriate support to the majority and those working for change”.<sup>41</sup> Andrew Young, who was a former aide to Martin Luther King, was appointed US ambassador to the UN. Even Carter’s foreign policy advisor, Soviet expert, Zbigniew Brzezinski, acknowledged that:

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<sup>39</sup> He indicated that he reached this conclusion through his campaigns where he was questioned extensively by African-Americans about Africa.

<sup>40</sup> *Africa Report*, May/June 1976, p. 20

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*, January/February 1977, pp.3-4.

...Nothing could be more destructive than for the US to position itself as the ultimate shield of the remnants of white supremacy in Africa at a time when racial equality is coming to be accepted as an imperative norm.<sup>42</sup>

Aside from the expertise of Carter's team on African issues, prominent African-Americans began to assume a more dynamic stance on apartheid. As a result of the Soweto uprising of 1976, a meeting, the Black Leadership Conference on Southern Africa, was called by the Congressional Black caucus in September. This meeting brought together 120 representatives from organizations such as the NAACP, Africare, Operation PUSH, the Black Economic Research Centre and the National Council of Negro Women. This meeting was an important indication of the interest of the African American constituency in regards to the struggle being waged back in South Africa.

The African-American Manifesto, a document that emerged as a result of the conference was a significant because it went further than the Democratic Party's platform by announcing its support for armed struggle by the liberation movements and for any initiatives undertaken by these organizations to seek aid from any source available<sup>43</sup>. The document also rejected US support for any solution of the Namibian and Zimbabwean problems that "compromised the freedom of blacks". The Manifesto recommended US support for action under Chapter 7 of the UN Charter if South African continued its illegal occupation of Namibia and if negotiations were "unacceptable to African liberation leaders and the African people of Zimbabwe, Namibia and South Africa"<sup>44</sup>.

An encouraging development was the incorporation in 1977 of the newly formed organization, Transafrica which emerged as the African American lobbying organization

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<sup>42</sup> Quoted in Danaher, *US Policy Toward South Africa*, p. 139.

<sup>43</sup> The Democratic Party Platform committed the party to policies that granted recognition to Africa and its development, permitted greater involvement by the African-American constituency in foreign policy issues and decisions related to the African continent and increased aid to Africa. The platform further endorsed the principle of majority rule for countries suffering under minority oppression.

<sup>44</sup> The Congressional Black Caucus, "The African-American Manifesto on Southern Africa", ANC Archives, Mission records, Washington Office, Anti-Apartheid Activity, Box. 31.

for Africa and the Caribbean, under the leadership of Randall Robinson<sup>45</sup>. For this organization, its most “responsive pressure point” in the policy making process was House Sub-Committee on Africa. In 1980, Robinson had many meetings with President Carter and the Secretary of State. In spite of these developments, and given the eventual turn which that’s Africa policy took, it was clear that the African American constituency still remained a minor voice in their country’s African policy. But this was only a temporary one as the situation began to change in the mid 1980’s.

Following the outbreak of the Soweto uprising in late 1976 and early 1977, the NAACP intensified its activities relating to Africa. Aside from the establishment of a Task force on Africa, the organisation undertook tours to Africa and produced a 500 page report, in which it called for, amongst others, economic sanctions against South Africa and withdrawal of US investments.<sup>46</sup>

Within two weeks of his inauguration, the Carter administration embarked on a strategy to review US policy on Southern Africa. National Security Advisor, Brzezinski called for the compilation of Policy review Memorandum No. 4. In this regard, President Carter signed a ‘Presidential Directive’, which included amongst other the following distinctions; that the problem of Southern Africa should receive urgent action, that the new administration should take ‘visible steps’ to distance the US from the apartheid regime unless there is noticeable movement towards power sharing in South Africa, that because guerilla activity was usually linked to growing Soviet activity and influence, the US should commit itself to a peaceful solution in the southern African region and that there should be greater cooperation with African allies in the development of initiatives on the continent.<sup>47</sup>

These distinctions clearly pointed to the possibilities of new and exciting developments in state policy. While the fear of the ‘soviet menace’ remained on the agenda, the fact that

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<sup>45</sup> In 1980, Transafrica had 10 000 members. Its membership was broadly representative of black opinion on Africa. Members included those from groups such as elected officials, academics and other professionals who were considered to be specialists on Africa, religious leaders and other observers who had a keen interest in Africa and the Caribbean.

<sup>46</sup> Philip V. white, “The Black-American Constituency for Southern Africa, 1940-1980”, in Alfred O. Hero, Jr. and John Barratt, *The American People and South Africa* (Lexington, D. C. Heath and Company, 1981), p. 94.

<sup>47</sup> *Africa Confidential*, 19 August, 1977, PP.1-2.



Carter signed the directive so soon after his inauguration, clearly pointed to evidence of a commitment to African issues and dilemmas. But ANC perception of these changes was one of cynicism. For many, the Carter policy merely represented old aims being packaged under the guise of a new policy. As a result of the “tremendous strides” being made by the liberation movements, the ANC was of the opinion that the Carter administration was compelled to direct its policy at changes in order to “slow down the mounting process of the liberation struggle”<sup>48</sup>. The ANC was also convinced that the ‘changes’ would not survive the Conservative camp as Joe Matthews so candidly pointed out. For him, like for so many others, the expectation was that “Carter would not stay long”.<sup>49</sup> While this was the official view of the organization as reflected in its report on developments in the region, many individuals who were in exile, appeared ignorant of any “encouraging developments” in American policy. The reason for this, I would argue, are twofold. They were not well briefed on international developments. Also conversations with activists such as Phyllis Naidoo, Fred Dube and Peter Pyise, have revealed their reluctance to accept that any American administration had any good intentions. So Carter’s new Presidential Directive was not considered to be of any consequence in their attempts to advance the struggle or their attempts to develop a relationship with the USA.

Perhaps such cynicism was not so far off the mark. Andrew Young, as the new ambassador to the UN, was one of those who was to confront the real onslaught of conservative forces in Washington. One day after Carter named Young, his close friend, to be ambassador, he was invited to join Leslie Harriman, the Nigerian ambassador to the UN, Jesse Jackson from Operation PUSH and William Cotter of the African American Institute on the Public Television Service programme, *The MacNeil-Lehrer Report*. During the course of the programme he was reminded that it was he who at one time referred to this position as a “suicidal job”. He admitted that he used that description in the past, but that his perception had changed, as he was confident that “American foreign policy toward South Africa had changed with the election of Jimmy Carter”. Two key questions were then put to him by Lehrer.

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<sup>48</sup> *Sechaba*, ‘The Old Aims of the West’s New Policy’, Vol. Fourth Quarter, p. 43.

<sup>49</sup> Interview With Joe Matthews, 22 August 2002.

- “On the United States role in Africa, are you going to be involved in defining what that role is rather than just going to the UN and saying what it is?

And

- “On the issue of moving the nation towards a resolution of the constant friction between the United States position and the Third World position in the UN, can you move our nation?

To both questions, Young provided positives responses indicating that he was confident of accomplishing the goals inherent in those questions. Perhaps at that stage he was too naïve to acknowledge that in fact there were other interests in Washington who would, in the final analysis, determine foreign policy and kill his career<sup>50</sup>.

And so it was that within weeks of his new appointment, Young was hastily sent to the African continent to convey the new initiatives and trends in Washington’s African policy. More importantly, Young’s intention was to revive Kissinger’s failed attempts at reaching a solution to the Rhodesian dilemma<sup>51</sup>. The results of his endeavors were not very positive as the Presidents of the Frontline states indicated their reluctance allow the US to take on any significant role in Southern Africa. Given the US track record, in terms of its African policy, this reluctance came as no surprise. As if difficulties with the African leaders were not enough, Young already began to face intense pressure from the conservative quarter in the capital. As the ambassador prepared to depart for Africa, the US State Department undertook a number of key maneuvers aimed at sabotaging the new African policy, which Carter tried to implement.

On the day of Young’s departure for Tanzania, a report, purported to be deliberately leaked by ‘US intelligence sources’ referred to Cuban military advisors who, it was alleged, arrived in Tanzania to train Zimbabwean guerillas. This report clearly disturbed the ambassador whose intention it was to dissociate US policy from the cold war by according little emphasis to the presence of the Cubans or Soviets in southern Africa.

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<sup>50</sup> MacNeil-Lehrer Report, Public Television Service, Radio-TV Monitoring Service Inc., 17 December 1976.

<sup>51</sup> His key meetings were with Julius Nyerere of Tanzania, Kenneth Kaunda of Zambia, Agostinho Neto of Angola and Olusegun Obasanjo of Nigeria. These leaders carried the greatest influence over the liberation movements of Zimbabwe.

This was evident in his observation that “one of the most wholesome things about our administration is that ...it won’t be paranoid about communism”<sup>52</sup>. This strategy also drew much criticism from his country’s ally across the Atlantic. According to a report in the *Seattle Post* people in the British government as well as in political and diplomatic circles were appalled by the statements, which the newly appointed ambassador had been making about the southern African situation. His remarks before the Foreign relations Committee, on television and in interviews “that Cuban troops have brought ‘stability and order’ to Angola, that there is no reason to be concerned if militant black Marxists gain control of Rhodesia and South Africa and that communism has never been a threat to him” were received in London with shock. The report went further to allege that these statement had already caused the first quarrel in the American cabinet, putting Young at loggerheads with Zbigniew Brzezinski, the new Director of the National Security Council<sup>53</sup>.

Meanwhile it was not surprising that while still in Africa, his attempts should suffer further harm when the *New York Times* published a headline story, with a shocking title which read ‘7 White Missionaries in Rhodesia Slain in Raid by Black Guerillas’<sup>54</sup>. However the story left out many important facts. The report failed to add that there was no evidence to prove who committed the crime. Catholics missionaries were known to enjoy good relations with the Patriotic Front. Also, a special black unit of government troops were known to masquerade as guerilla forces and carry out atrocities as a means of discrediting the latter.<sup>55</sup> All of these facts were conveniently absent from the report, leaving no doubt as to the intention of the reporter.

Regardless of these maneuvers, Young continued with his attempts to sell his country’s new Africa policy to key African leaders. Following upon his visits with the frontline leaders, he met with Nigerian Head of State, Lt. General Olusegan Obasanjo and Angolan President Agostinho Neto.

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<sup>52</sup> *Baltimore Sun*, 6 February 1977, “Kaunda asks US Role In Africa”.

<sup>53</sup> *Seattle Post*, 30 January 1977.

<sup>54</sup> *New York Times*, 8 February 1979.

<sup>55</sup> Pamphlet entitled, ‘Young Visit to Africa’, in *ANC Archives*, Research Collection, Washington Office, Box. 12.

Developments in 1977 took on a new turn when Vice President of the Carter administration, Walter Mondale met with John Vorster in Vienna from the 19-20 May. This meeting was important because it represented the first senior level contact between the new American administration and the apartheid state. Regrettably, not much is known about what transpired at this meeting. But the press conference given by Mondale, was enough to get a sense of the discussions that took place behind closed doors. He admitted that there was “a fundamental and profound disagreement between the two governments” and warned that South African obstinacy was the “surest incentive to increase Soviet influence and even racial war”<sup>56</sup>. According to Mondale, a strong message was conveyed to Vorster that should their repressive policies lead to racial conflict with the majority, the US would not come to the rescue of the white minority- even if the conflict resulted in intervention by the communist countries. Mondale had just two demands for Vorster: the ending of racial discrimination and the “full participation by all of its citizens on an equal basis”<sup>57</sup>. The final demand raised intense interest in the press who pressed the Vice President for further details. The exchange on this issue went as follows:

QUESTION: Mr. Vice President, could you possibly go into slightly more details on your concept of full participation as opposed to one-man-one-vote? Do you see some kind of compromise?

ANSWER: No, no. It's the same thing. Every citizen should have the right to vote and every vote should be heavily weighted.

This confirmation surprised the international press as it illustrated that this was the first time that any US official, especially of the Vice President's level, had ventured into demanding democratic change in South Africa. Realising this, in June, State Department spokesman, Hodding Carter provided clarity by pointing out that the US was not really demanding one-man-one vote in South Africa. All the administration was calling for was

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<sup>56</sup> *U.S. News and World Report*, 30 May 1977, p. 31.

<sup>57</sup> Legum, *The Western Crisis over Southern Africa*, p.252.

“steps” in the direction of democratic reform. Secretary of State, Cyrus Vance confirmed that “we did not demand one-man-one-vote tomorrow”<sup>58</sup>.

All of these statements were really a contradiction in terms, which, the different US officials failed to confront. While Ambassador Young was trying to market a new image for his country’s policy in Africa, his countrymen in the state department were furiously contradicting one another. Although claiming that they were moving further from the Kissinger policy of proceeding delicately with South Africa in return for that country’s favorable cooperation on Rhodesia, they continued to emphasise that reform should come gradually, that while the administration was searching for progress on any one of the three areas(Rhodesia, Namibia and South Africa), it did not expect such progress to happen all at once. Moreover the approached preferred “is still one of reform by the white rulers at the top, assisted by selected Blacks, in opposition to the radical programmes of the African Liberation”<sup>59</sup>

Further expositions on American policy were discerned during a speech made by Secretary of State Vance during the annual convention of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People(NAACP). Three important points emerged from this exposition, firstly that “reactive American policy that seeks only to oppose Soviet or Cuban involvement in Africa would be both dangerous and futile”. Secondly, a long term approach was favored “that would depend more on our actual assistance to African development. than on maneuvers for short term diplomatic advantage”. The third point focused on the assumption that “US policy should recognize and encourage African nationalism” for “if we try to impose American solutions for African problems, we may sow division among the Africans and undermine their ability to oppose efforts at domination by others”<sup>60</sup>. This address to the NAACP provided the Carter administration with yet another opportunity to issue a warning to Pretoria that its relationship with the US would “inevitably suffer” unless South Africa began moving towards the democratic route.

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<sup>58</sup> *South African Digest*, 1 July 1977, p.21. The *South African Digest* was a publication of the South African government.

<sup>59</sup> *Southern Africa*, June/July 1977, p. 14.

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid*, p. 168.

The Mondale meeting as well as the NAACP address did not go down well with Vorster who believed that pressure from the Americans could be met well ahead by the South African state, warning that Carter's policy can "only lead to one thing as I see it—namely to chaos and anarchy in southern Africa."<sup>61</sup> Instead of making the changes required by the Carter administration, Vorster began unleashing the full might of the apartheid state on resistance activity. But before doing so, he embarked on reforms of a sinister nature. He unveiled his plans for the establishment of "three full-fledged parliaments, one each for whites, coloureds and Indians, each with its own prime minister, cabinet and assembly"<sup>62</sup>. In spite of the justifications for this new plan, it did nothing to change the realities attached to the apartheid structures. If anything, this 'new' structure was nothing short of being purely racial and was negatively received by black South Africans.

Continuing with their attacks on the Carter administration, the Prime Minister of South Africa dissolved parliament in late September and announced that early parliamentary elections would be held on 30 November 1977. when he made this announcement, Vorster emphatically stated that this step was aimed at showing the American officials that his party's resistance to international pressure and foreign interference had the support of the minority electorate. And sure enough, the National Party increased its majority to an unprecedented level.

The late 70's witnessed a massive crackdown by apartheid police, which dealt a severe blow to the efforts of the liberation movements such as the ANC as well as to South African blacks in general. The situation was exacerbated by the death in custody of Black Consciousness leader, Steve Biko which resulted in further repressive action such as a massive crackdown on the opposition<sup>63</sup>. Eighteen African organisations were declared illegal, 40 black leaders were arrested, 7 white opposition figures were banned and two African newspapers-*The World* and *The Weekend World* were closed down. And their editors arrested.

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<sup>61</sup> *South African Digest*, 12 August 1977, p. 1.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*, 26 August, 1977, p. 1.

<sup>63</sup> Steve Biko was the leader of South Africa's Black Consciousness Movement.

The international community reacted with shock and condemnation at such actions. The UN Secretary-General Kurt Waldheim expressed regret at the fact that “Biko suffered constant persecution, imprisonment and stringent restrictions But was never convicted of any offence even under the arbitrary South African laws”<sup>64</sup>. Interesting enough, while many speakers in the General assembly brought back their call for an arms embargo and an isolation of the apartheid regime, it is alleged that Ambassador Young remained indifferent and made no effort to address the gathering<sup>65</sup>.

Events in the UN were a clear indication of international responses to the apartheid state’s actions.. Members of the Security Council-Libya, Benin, Mauritius-submitted three draft resolutions in October 1977 calling for the following: comprehensive ban on all military aid to South Africa, an end to all nuclear cooperation, limiting foreign investment and trade with Pretoria. But when these resolutions came up for the vote, together with a fourth resolution called for a condemnation of apartheid, containing no punitive measures, the US, Britain and France “approved a non-substantive resolution”, but exercised a triple veto to block all the other resolutions. According to Danaher, this was the fourth time in UN history that the western permanent members of the Security Council exercised a triple veto, and on each occasion it was over South Africa<sup>66</sup>. For many observers, these vetoes clearly demonstrated the phony nature of US policy.

...The UN action constitutes a major setback for the Carter administration in southern Africa. The photographic image flashed worldwide of UN ambassador Andrew Young raising his hand in opposition to stiff antiapartheid sanctions did much to unravel Washington’s painstaking effort to put a new face on US Africa policy<sup>67</sup>.

Officials representing the western countries realised that their vetoes would place them in a poor light, called for a six-month arms embargo that did not invoke Chapter 7 of the UN Charter. After a denunciation of this measure by the African nations, on 1 November

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<sup>64</sup> *New York Times*, 24 September 1977, “South African Leader Eulogised at UN as Symbol of Black Hope”.

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>66</sup> Danaher, *US Policy toward South Africa*, p.171.

<sup>67</sup> *Guardian-New York*, 9 November 1977, “U.S. Vetoes South Africa Sanctions”.

a compromise resolution was worked out that called for “review” of licensing arrangements through which Pretoria produces heavy weapons such as the French mirage fighter-bomber. But this compromise resolution invoked Chapter 7 of the UN Charter. And by invoking that Chapter, the resolution marked a certain victory for antiapartheid groups.

But again the Carter administration tread carefully. This was evident when their attributed their support for the embargo to the specific events of October 1977 and not to the general structure of apartheid. On the 28 October, during an interview, Pres. Carter stated “we are supporting sanctions against South Africa because of the almost abolition of almost any voice of dissent in South Africa last week among groups representing black citizens”. According to one official source, “nothing short of a South African invasion of the United States” would persuade the US government of the need to lend their support to measures such as real sanctions”<sup>68</sup>. In any event the arms embargo was not a momentous event since the apartheid state was really self sufficient in arms production.

Although the Carter administration began its term on a high note raising expectations of liberation movements, from 1978, the administrations views on South Africa eventually took a rightward swing, spelling an end to the influence exercised earlier on in the administration by the regionalists. If anything, its position appeared more conciliatory towards the white minority regime. In already as early as the summer of 1977, the American Congress was characterised by a resurfacing of the right wing element which favoured the white minority rule in Rhodesia and the banning of aid to Mozambique and Angola. The influence of the regionalists was further undermined by the Cuban/Soviet intervention in Ethiopia beginning in late 1977.

In 1978, when guerillas operating from Angola, invaded Zaire’s Shaba province for a second time, it brought forth a hard anti-communist backlash from Washington. And Pres. Carter, who in the early months of his presidency provided the assurance that the “Russian and Cuban presence in Angola...need not constitute a threat to United States

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<sup>68</sup> Danaher, *U.S. Policy toward South Africa*, p.172.



interests”, was now issuing warning about the East West conflict on the African continent<sup>69</sup>. All of this did not augur well for the regionalists who suffered a serious loss of supporters in the 1978 Congressional elections. Senator Dick Clark and four other allies of a relaxation of the Cold War perspectives, were defeated by the right wing republicans. The former was the Chair of the Africa sub-committee and had played an innovative role in liberalising US Africa policy.

The resurgence of the Cold War view of Africa from 1978, the administrations swing to the right and Pretoria’s refusal to cooperate with Washington-all pushed the regionalists onto a retreat on South African policy. By October 1978, Carter and his officials returned to a Kissinger model of Africa policy that regionalists such as Young and Lake had criticized early in the Carter years. The new policy was very straightforward. The United States would hold in check its opposition to apartheid policies in return for South Africa’s cooperation over the Rhodesian dilemma. IN October Carter sent a confidential letter to South Africa’s new Prime Minister, P. W. Botha, elaborating on the new approach. And not surprising, the South African response to these initiatives was one of great enthusiasm as the new prime minister spoke of his “gratification” with the President’s letter<sup>70</sup>.

In effect, while Washington did pay more attention to southern Africa, US policy remained the same, not deviating from the ‘double standards of earlier years. Looking back to ANC assessments of the early Carter pronouncements on Africa, I would suggest then that the ANC description of the policy reflecting old aims under new guises, was an accurate one.

But in the ultimate analysis, I would boldly put forward the view that, notwithstanding the American practice of adopting double standards, the Soweto uprising and resultant state action no doubt succeeded in hardening international, and more specifically US sentiment against the apartheid state. The ANC benefited as its attempts to isolate the latter gained momentum. Chris Alden, in his analysis of the ANC’s foreign policy,

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<sup>69</sup> *Africa Report*, May/June 1976, p.19.

<sup>70</sup> *New York Times*, 3 December 1978, “U.S. Testing Policy on South Africa”.

supports this contention by pointing out that the behavior of the South Africa government in the wake of Soweto became ‘embedded in the politics of other countries such as the US which saw the Carter administration place human rights issues within the context of its domestic policy agenda’<sup>71</sup>. In 1977, South Africa became the first member of the UN, against which a resolution on mandatory sanctions was adopted by the security council. All this played favourably into the ANC’s strategy of isolating South Africa politically, culturally and economically from the rest of the world. Clearly, Soweto helped the process of enhancing the position of the ANC.

While official US policy never wavered towards South Africa, the events of 1976 had serious repercussions for the latter. Press reports as well as secret correspondence between the Department of Foreign Affairs in South Africa and its Embassy in the United States reflected the misfortunes of the apartheid state. Just after the outbreak of the protests, South Africa suffered a major setback with the rejection of the R390 million US loan guarantee for the large SASOL oil from coal project. While many observers linked the rejection to the Soweto uprising, officials in both countries declined to comment on this perception. US business and South African diplomats have lobbied vigorously for almost a year to obtain this guarantee<sup>72</sup>. Granting the facility had been seen by some as one of the ‘presents’ Kissinger was prepared to make to Vorster in exchange for his cooperation in Rhodesia<sup>73</sup>.

Again, after the uprising, the Secretary for Foreign Affairs, J. van Dalsen, found himself inundated with requests for assistance from South African companies, which imported goods from the US. One such request for help came from Mr. Jim Earl, the company secretary for Ramsey fasteners, a Johannesburg based company that had for many years imported kiln guns and kiln gun ammunition from the US for use as cleaning instruments for the rotary kilns which were used in the cement and steel industry<sup>74</sup>. It was reported that since the events of June, the supplier, Winchester Company of Connecticut, stopped

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<sup>71</sup> Chris Alden, “From Liberation Movement to Political Party: ANC Foreign Policy in Transition”, in *The South African Journal of International Affairs*, Vol. 1, Spring 1993, p. 66.

<sup>72</sup> *Rand Daily Mail*, 20 June 1976.

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>74</sup> Secretary For Foreign Affairs to South African Ambassador in Washington, 30 June, 1976, Department of Foreign Affairs Files, 1/33/3, 9/56/2.

further supplies. The company response was that the delay was due to the necessity of “obtaining government approval for export” and of obtaining assurances that the shipment of those products would not violate US embargo regulations on shipments of arms and ammunition to South Africa. For Ramset this episode smacked of US government interference in the normal trading relationship between the US and Sa. For observers, it was the fear of these shipments being used as weapons in South Africa that resulted in the punctuation of further consignments<sup>75</sup>. But although they looked like firearms, they could not be used as weapons because of their inadequate range and accuracy.

In the United States itself, the embassy and consulates was forced to deal with a number of problems related to the Soweto uprising. The South African Consul General in New York complained to the Secretary of Foreign Affairs of the series of demonstrations that plagued the missions and embassies as well as the offices of South African Airways. The New York office also fell victim to a number of bomb threats, which turned out to be hoaxes<sup>76</sup>.

For South African Consul General, Anthony Drake responsible for the 12 western states and based in San Francisco, writing in February of 1977, the “events of the last six months led to a heightened interest in Southern Africa’ on the part of the public in the western part of the United States. This observation was made on the basis on the many requests he received to provide speakers before public interests groups. Speakers were expected to provide explanations for the tragedy that was unfolding in their country<sup>77</sup>. He also reported on a press release sent to him from 13 Stanford University scholars in which they urged President Ford and Kissinger to publicly endorse majority rule in South Africa as a fitting way to celebrate the American bicentennial. A section of the text ran as follows:

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<sup>75</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>76</sup> Foreign Affairs Files, 23 June 1976, 1/33/3, 109/5

<sup>77</sup> Invitations were issued by groups such as Rotary Club, Oakland Piedmont Representative Assembly, Kiwanis Club of San Diego, Politico Military Affairs Company of the US Naval Reserve in San Francisco.

...The demonstrations and riots of the past week suggest that fundamental changes may be on its way to southern Africa. President Ford and Secretary Kissinger have quite properly voiced support for the principle of majority rule in Namibia and Rhodesia. We urge them to make it clear that the same principle applies to South Africa<sup>78</sup>

That the Consul general of San Francisco had his hands full was certain. In February of 1977, he wrote of the urgent need to protect the Consular residence because of the dangers posed by an organisation calling itself the 'New World Liberation Front'. He drew attention to an issue of its publication called "The Urban Guerilla", issue number 4, in which it named the South African consular residence as one of its principle targets. The publication listed the governments of the United States, England and France as the "cornerstones" of the "South African ruling class" Also included in that publication were instructions on the arming of revolutionaries and the techniques of bomb detonation.

Between June and September of the previous year, his consulate was bombed two times. Although "New World Liberation Front" did not take responsibility for those attacks, they did leave a copy of their "manifesto" on the doorstep<sup>79</sup>.

In view of the preceding developments unfolding in the US, there appeared no options available to South Africa other than to counter these damaging perceptions and actions by increasing its efforts to improve its image in that country. Amongst its innovative efforts was the hiring of black American Andrew Hatcher, a former Assistant Press Secretary in Kennedy's administration, to represent its interests. Hatcher joined Sydney Baron and Company in 1976 when the Public relations firm won a 365 000 dollar contract from the Department of Information. In August 1976, Hatcher made a speech to a Harlem gathering of an influential group of 100 black men. Appearing on the NBC *Today Show*, he confronted George Houser, the Executive Director of the American Committee on Africa. While he defended the South African Government, Houser attacked the government. For Houser, to see a black man defending South Africa for

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<sup>78</sup> Consul General Ney of New York to the Secretary of Foreign Affairs, 13 July 1976, Foreign Affairs Files, 1/33/3, 34.

<sup>79</sup> *San Diego Evening Tribune*, 22 September 1976.

money “is not unlike seeing a Jew hired by the Nazis”<sup>80</sup>. In reply to this attack, Hatcher said that “I went to South Africa where I talked to black South Africans whose views I want to expose in order to save them from the George Housers of the world”<sup>81</sup>. From this exchange, one could gauge why Hatcher was so valuable to South Africa.

Events in the US infuriated the South African authorities. In September of 1976, the Senate African Affairs sub-committee began its hearings on South Africa under the Chairmanship of Senator Dick Clark. The aim of the Sub-Committee was to review various aspects of US business involvement in South Africa. Opening the hearings, Senator Clark made the statement that very little had been done by US corporations for the economic advancement of South African blacks. He therefore called on home offices of American companies to apply intense pressure on their South African subsidiaries to improve the position of blacks in their employment. Concern was also expressed over the increasing investment in South Africa but US companies. For Clark, that might have had the effect of strengthening the economy of South Africa, its present government and its apartheid policies. Witnesses such as Jennifer Davis of the American Committee, reaffirmed her opposition to US investment in South Africa<sup>82</sup>.

In a strongly worded response to the Chair of the Hearings, South Africa’s Ambassador to Washington, R. F. Botha, made his countries objections of the hearings known<sup>83</sup>. He objected “most strongly to the way in which your sub-committee has become a forum for attacks on South Africa”. After all “we threaten no state...comply with our international obligations...and wish to live in peace with all our fellow African countries”. He advised that “your committee would do better to direct its attention to the real problems of our continent. Africa is faced with vast problems in many fields”<sup>84</sup>.

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<sup>80</sup> *New York Times*, 2 July 1976.

<sup>81</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>82</sup> “Report: Opening Statement-Senate African Affairs Subcommittee Hearings on South Africa, 29 September 1976. Foreign Affairs Files, 1/33/63(4)

<sup>83</sup> Botha to Clark, 30 September 1976, Foreign Affairs Files, 1/33/76.

<sup>84</sup> *Ibid.*

Two months prior to the Hearings, Congressman Stephen Solarz, a liberal Democrat from New York, visited South Africa, as part of a fact-finding mission to Southern Africa on behalf of the Committee on International Relations. A report on the visit was presented to the committee, the text of which was read to the House of Representatives. For the authorities in Pretoria, the remarks were found to be “rather disquieting”<sup>85</sup>. For Solarz, the policy of his own government-articulated by Kissinger, was based on an illusion.

The importance of this report could be discerned from its ability to showcase US attitudes towards liberation movements such as the African National Congress. As officials in the US state department either ignored the role of liberation movements in Southern Africa or remained reluctant to interact with them, Solarz alluded to the limiting nature of this strategy. In 1976, just before embarking on his African tour, Kissinger in a press conference, unequivocally stressed that in all of their diplomatic maneuvers, the US State Department and its officials had “not dealt directly with the black liberation movements”.<sup>86</sup> In view of these strategies, Solarz pointed out that black leaders in the region questioned the sincerity of US support for majority rule because they have “refrained “, in contrast to the Chinese and Russians, from provided support and assistance to these movements in their quest to achieve majority rule. The solution to this shortcoming was to be found in “ more actively identifying ourselves with the Liberation Movement”. For this to be achieved, he called for the provision of economic and humanitarian assistance, since the blacks in South Africa were “among the most repressed people in the world...and whose accumulated resentment constitutes a political volcano on the verge of erupting”.<sup>87</sup>

Solarze cautioned the house against possible recognition of the Transkei on the grounds that any support of the Homelands policy would inevitably be interpreted as an indication of US indifference to towards the plight of South Africa’s majority. He concluded his report as follows by advising his colleagues as follows:

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<sup>85</sup> Ambassador Botha to Secretary for Foreign Affairs, Foreign Affairs Files, 1/33/3.

<sup>86</sup> “Congressional Record”, House of Representatives, 4 August 1976, H8337.

<sup>87</sup> *Ibid.*

...The winds of change are blowing throughout Southern Africa. There are limitations to our ability to determine the future course of events. Certainly we must avoid any kind of military involvement on the African continent. But we can move with the tide of history than against it. And we should ...do more to promote racial harmony and majority rule in the region than we are at present.<sup>88</sup>

South Africa continued to suffer greater image damage. According to the press reports, 50 million Americans, heard reports in August of a weekend television statement by the South African Minister of Justice, Police and Prisons, Mr. Jimmy Kruger, which had become a severe embarrassment for South Africa throughout the world. The statement, made at a National Party meeting in Frankfort in the Orange Free State in response to the black disturbances in the country was "He (the black man) knows his place and, if not, I will tell him his place"<sup>89</sup>. Two of the three national television networks in the United States broadcast Kruger's statements during prime time news programmes on Friday and it was reported that several local television networks were referring to the statement for as long as 36 hours later. Even major newspapers in the US carried coverage of this statement. Reaction in the US was thus rapid and effective. Such reaction was not uncommon in diplomatic circles as well where it was predicted that Kruger's utterances could inhibit the American Secretary of State's continuing contacts with South Africa. Although Kruger tried to counter the embarrassment by issuing explanations that he was misquoted, his efforts proved unsuccessful in countering the damage already in place.

In regards to civil society, while other organizations may have been actively involved in anti-apartheid activity, particular attention should be paid to the World Council of Churches(WCC), which had a number of branches in the USA and which played a 'decisive role in boosting the support and recognition that the ANC began to draw in this period. According to Esterhuyse, the WCC, "more than any other non-governmental organisation, contributed to legitimizing the ANC as a liberation organisation, by justifying its use of violence"<sup>90</sup>. In many debates on the issue of the use of violence, the WCC argued that it was the apartheid state which should shoulder blame for the use of

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<sup>88</sup> "Congressional Record, House of Representatives", 4 August 1976, H8337.

<sup>89</sup> See *Pretoria News*, 23 August 1976 and *The Star*, 23 August 1976.

<sup>90</sup> W. P. Esterhuyse, "The International Political Status of the African National Congress", in *Africa Insight*, Vol 19, No.1, 1989, p. 32.

violence, for “violence is an in-built quality of the South African state against which the oppressed have no other option than to defend themselves”<sup>91</sup>. Beside such moral support, the WCC provided financial assistance to the ANC. In 1987, R300 000 was furnished as aid to the ANC. The WCC's support and recognition of the ANC as well as its use of violence, contributed towards world churches adopting a more sympathetic attitude towards the liberation movement-thus again further enhancing the status of the ANC in the eyes of the international community.

That the power of the Churches to influence public opinion was great, was even recognised by the South African state. In a confidential dossier of anti South Africa activities, compiled by the South African Secretary for Foreign Affairs, Mr. J. van Dalsen, it was pointed out that the churches played an “opinion forming role” in the United States and that the churches “are still active in their animosity towards South Africa” The dossier provided vital evidence on the power of the churches, their strategies and their partners. From this dossier, one learns that the prime goal of these Churches was to concentrate their efforts on influencing the investment policy of US firms in South Africa. Specific reference was made to letters of protest received by the South African embassy in the US from the United Presbyterian Church and the United Congregational Church at the expropriation of the Seminary at Fort Hare<sup>92</sup>. According to Dalsen, those churches concerned with interfering with investments in South Africa included eleven Churches with a total membership of 53 646 200 individuals<sup>93</sup>.

That the Churches worked with other bodies in protest against apartheid policies, was also evident. Those organisations identified as having links with the Church activities and of subsequently interfering with the internal affairs of South Africa included the African American Institute, The American Committee on Africa, the Washington Office on

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<sup>91</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>92</sup> Report of Secretary of Foreign Affairs entitled “Anti-South African Activities: United States of America”, June 1976, Foreign Affairs Files, 1/33/3, 109/5.

<sup>93</sup> These Churches included the National Council of the Churches of Christ, The National Baptist Convention of the USA, The American Baptists Convention, The United Methodist Church, The Lutheran Church, The United Presbyterian Church, The Protestant Episcopal Church, The International Convention of the Disciples of Christ, The Reformed Church in America, The United Church of Christ, The Zion Baptist Church.



Africa, the apartheid Committee of the United Nations and The House of Representatives Sub-Committee on Food Resources and Energy and the African Studies Association<sup>94</sup>.

This would be an appropriate point in my study to look back to the Kissinger era in order to trace the media portrayal of South Africa in the post 1976 period. A study of the American media has yielded some interesting evidence on how interest in South Africa, outside of the State department could be gauged. Aside from focusing on South Africa after major events such as Sharpeville, from the 1960's to the early 1970's, it was common practice for all articles about Africa to be relegated to the least desirable sections of newspapers and magazines. But after 1976, a change occurred and there appeared to be a growing interest in South Africa on the part of the American media. For example, in 1980, South Africa found itself in the midst of disturbances, which resulted through the commemoration of the fourth anniversary of the Soweto uprisings of 1976.. *Time* magazine and *Newsweek*, both carried lead stories about South Africa in their international sections. In the report presented by the former, focus was devoted to the spread of violence to various urban centers and Coloured areas. The perception of the violence was as follows:

...The new outbreak came after increasing protest and turmoil in recent months. The government's promised reforms, ranging from a gradual Phasing out of the hated passbook system to a plan for enabling blacks to buy their own homes, have either not materialized or largely failed. Organisers of the African National Congress, the outlawed Black political movement, operate with increasing ease<sup>95</sup>.

*Newsweek* provided the title of "Shooting to Kill in South Africa" to its report. In trying to uncover the reasons for the school boycott by Coloured students, the magazine pointed out that "the new surge of unrest was a dose of particularly unpleasant medicine" for Prime Minister PW Botha. "He had been seeking to humanize the face of apartheid", but the boycotts "were clearly warning that black and Coloured South Africans wanted more than he was ready to give"<sup>96</sup>. In other related stories, *Time* interviewed Gerrit Viljoen, the

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<sup>94</sup> "Anti-South African Activities".

<sup>95</sup> *Time*, 30 June 1980, "South African: Nights of Rage and Gunfire".

<sup>96</sup> *Newsweek*, 30 June 1980, "Shooting to Kill in South Africa".

Head of the Broederbond and *Newsweek* provided a profile on Joe Slovo<sup>97</sup>. For nearly every month of that year, reports on South Africa appeared in such news magazines featuring amongst others, warnings of continued isolation of South Africa from the international community, a repetition of the turbulence of Rhodesia in South Africa, and a race war.

Looking at coverage provided by the US daily newspapers of such events, it was found that when these demonstrations occurred in 1980, correspondents from most newspapers were present to file extensive reports. Front page articles and in many instances, headline stories appeared in *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, *The Chicago Tribune* and the *Los Angeles Times*. Most reports conveyed a perception of a crisis situation afflicting the country. The story in the *Washington Post* was written, with much of the information coming from the South African Press Association. This indicated that for the first time South African police tried to stop foreign correspondents from getting to the sites of these disturbances to provide first hand accounts. Editorials in major American newspapers also devoted much space to coverage of South African events. In December 1979, the *New York Times* drew attention to the plight of 80 000 blacks who were forced into undesirable resettlement areas against their will. This situation, pointed out by the *Times*, illustrated “the cruel costs” of South African’s dreams of an all white nation<sup>98</sup>. In October 1979, in the midst of the uproar over the possible nuclear explosion, the *Post* editorialized that “the very thought of the ruling white minority in Pretoria would secretly equip itself with a nuclear bomb...is chilling”<sup>99</sup>.

The handling of the South African problems by commercial television networks was difficult to gauge. But according to Sanford Ungar who carried out a survey of South Africa in the American media, it was found, through a computer check at ABC, during the first eleven months of 1980, there had been 27 mentions of South Africa on “the World News Tonight”<sup>100</sup>. This programme was the network’s prime time news

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<sup>97</sup> The Broederbond was an Afrikaner secret society.

<sup>98</sup> *New York Times*, 13 December 1979, “Chief Ramokgobpa’s Appeal”.

<sup>99</sup> *Washington Post*, 27 October 1979, “Nuclear Whodunnit”.

<sup>100</sup> Sanford Ungar, “South Africa in the American Media”, in Alfred Hero, Jr. and John Barratt(ed.), *The American People and South Africa*(Lexington, D.C. Heath and Co., 1981), p. 38.

programme. This was compared to 126 mentions of Europe during the same period. But the picture was different in public broadcasting coverage where South Africa featured prominently in in-dept discussions of foreign policy on the nightly “McNeil Lehrer Report”. The records of the National Public Radio(NPR) reveal that from October 1978-March 1980, there were about 86 pieces about South Africa. This brought the monthly average to about five. Reports consisted of reports from a part-time correspondent based in Johannesburg or an interview with an observer of events for about five minutes. Since March 1980, the coverage by NPR on South Africa increased further.

The conclusion to be drawn from this assessment of the coverage provided by the American media is that correspondents, through their respective newspapers, provided a very negative view of the apartheid state. Their views demonstrated their intense hostility to apartheid and their impatience for the time when all South Africans could enjoy the process of one-man-one-vote. However it is vital to note that while the media establishment remained highly critical of the intolerable racial problems in South Africa, it remained resolute in its rejection of violence as a means to achieving majority rule in South Africa. For Ungar, on the question of whether Americans could get an accurate analysis of the South African dilemma, one thing was certain-it was “far easier to learn about South African from the American media than to learn about any other country or issues in sub-Saharan Africa”.<sup>101</sup>

While I may have overstated my argument that the ANC played no significant role in this period, the evidence presented supports no other scenario. Any attempt to understand the liberation struggle during this period must take into account the limitations and difficulties of the movement, which have been alluded to throughout the discussion. If anything the African National Congress appeared to remain on the periphery of events.

The ANC’s dilemma stemmed from its links with people on the margin of American politics, such as young radicals and black Power advocates, represented by Angela Davis, H. Rap Brown, the Chairman of the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee and

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<sup>101</sup> Ungar, “South Africa in the American Media”, p.43.

Huey Newton's Black Panther Party, which espoused Marxism-Leninism and supported armed struggle. In discussions between Huey Newton, the Supreme Commander of the Black Panther Party and the ANC, the former made many offers of assistance to the ANC, the most striking of which was an offer "to shed blood on your soil in the name of freedom, in the interest of your people and against the imperialist enemy".<sup>102</sup> No doubt the ANC did gain support from them. But it must be stressed that such organizations had no influence on the making of US foreign policy. Moreover keeping such strange company did nothing to bring the ANC to the forefront of American politics.

But the Soweto uprising created a greater awareness in the US of the South African dilemma. As alluded to earlier on, it was the work of groups such as the Churches, American committee on Africa and NAACP that assisted in this process. By the early 1980's the ANC was presented with new opportunities to influence American foreign policy. By developing links with TransAfrica and the African American Institute, the ANC began to gradually move to the mainstream of American politics and society. In June 1981, TransAfrica and the Southern African Support Project sponsored a joint ANC/SWAPO delegation to the US to attend the conference entitled "Building forces against United States Support for South Africa", held at Howard University in Washington<sup>103</sup>. The delegation was led by Tambo and Moses Goroeb of SWAPO. This visit put the ANC in touch with black leaders such as Congressman William Grey, Sylvia Hill, Co-Chair of the Southern African Support Project, Coretta Scott King, Marion Barry, the Mayor of Washington and playwright James Baldwin.

At a press conference set up by the conference organizers, Tambo was made to respond to press charges of the ANC being a "terrorist organization" which "is an extension of international terrorism and communism". Tambo complained bitterly about these allegations comparing this experience to "being in the dock of an American Court".<sup>104</sup> But the conference acted as an effective platform for the ANC to lobby civil society in the USA in support of its cause. The conference concluded with a declaration calling for

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<sup>102</sup> *Sechaba*, Vol. 4, No. 10, October 1970.

<sup>103</sup> *ANC Archives*, 'Oliver Tambo Papers', Report on US Visit, Box. 34.

<sup>104</sup> *Ibid.*

an aggressive drive to educate Americans about Southern Africa and stating that “we as a people have an immediate, direct hands on impact capability”.<sup>105</sup>

This sponsored visit presented the ANC with many more opportunities to continue with lobbying activities. While in Washington, Tambo met with House representatives and with representatives of the Senate Sub-Committees on Africa. A meeting was also held at the editorial offices of the Washington Post with the editors who included Percy Qoboza, the former editor of the *World and Post*. From Washington the delegation traveled to Atlanta where they held a press conference, met with the Mayor of Atlanta and left after a business lunch with Andrew Young.<sup>106</sup>

Through the efforts of Frank Ferrari of the African-American Institute, the ANC succeeded in gaining some friends in the business sector. In the same month of June, Tambo held his first meeting in New York with representatives of American companies such General Motors and Ford. Discussions were also held with Melvin Hill, the President of Gulf Oil International.<sup>107</sup>

In the fall of 1981, another ANC delegation led by Alfred Nzo, traveled to New York city to attend the ICSA sponsored conference held at the Riverside Church. The aim of this meeting was to express solidarity with the liberation struggle in southern Africa. This conference which was convened by a broad based preparatory committee was chaired by attorney Lennox Hinds while Congressman Ron Dellums assumed the position of President.<sup>108</sup> This conference heard statements, studied documents on USA links with apartheid and subsequently drew up an extensive programme of action. Statements made by key speakers at the conference were illustrative of the changing mood that characterized the African-American sector. For Shirley Chisholm of the US Congress, the options were clear, “Our government has to make a choice between profits and human beings. It has to be armed struggle” to bring about change.<sup>109</sup> Such drastic and

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<sup>105</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>106</sup> *Sechaba*, ‘ANC and SWAPO Delegation in USA’, August 1981, p. 23.

<sup>107</sup> Anthony Sampson, *Black and Gold: Tycoons, Revolutionaries and Apartheid* (London, Hodder and Stoughton, 1987), p. 165.

<sup>108</sup> *ANC Archives*, ‘NEC Reports’, Box. 9; See also *Sechaba*, ‘US Solidarity’, January 1982, p. 16.

<sup>109</sup> *Ibid.*

significant perceptions which led to a call for an action programme from participants, resulted in the birth of the historic New York declaration which urged :

...the people of the United States to join the people of the world in demanding that the struggle be carried to a new level-the comprehensive and mandatory economic, military, diplomatic and cultural sanctions of South Africa, including an effective oil embargo...it is our government that keeps apartheid alive, feeds it, oils it and arms it....we can end our government's pact with racism, which if not obliterated, will destroy us all. This conference takes up this fight and joins the people of the world.<sup>110</sup>

In spite of these developments, certain quarters of American society still portrayed the ANC as an outcast organization. Nicholas Ashford, the diplomatic correspondent for *The Times*, could still report that "Britain and the US are the only two western countries which continue to give the ANC the cold shoulder".<sup>111</sup> But in spite of the existence of such perceptions, although the African National Congress remained on the fringe of American politics, it was presented with many opportunities to enhance its status and to enhance its support base in the USA after the Soweto uprising. During a press conference at the conclusion of the Kabwe conference in June 1985(to be discussed in the next chapter), the ANC claimed that the process of isolating South Africa was rapidly gaining pace. But as early as 1980, this situation was already in place. In fact, it would be difficult to deny the validity of this claim in the early 80's. In fact ever since 1960, the South African government had become more and more isolated and the ANC had developed diplomatic missions in more countries and at more international bodies than the South Africa Government itself- as a result-many countries began to consider the ANC virtually as a government.

After 1976, as a result of the Soweto uprising, state action such as the death in custody of Steve Biko and the banning of many organizations and the changing perception in the US of the South African dilemma, South Africa continued to steadily lose ground internationally while the ANC began to gain a victory in securing this lost ground.. In the

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<sup>110</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>111</sup> *The Times*, 9 September 1985, 'Why we Should Talk to Tambo'.

early 1980's the battle for American turf began to swing in the ANC's favour. The opportunities presented now meant that the ANC was closer to gaining complete control of the international battlefield and the South African state was in no position to challenge it.

Soweto made it possible for the ANC to rapidly realize its goal , spelt out at Morogoro, to bring about the isolation of Pretoria . And this, for me was "a turning point" at which a major turn was made. I would conclude with the view that it was not the armed struggle that ensured ultimate victory for the ANC. It was the success of winning the war on the international battleground.