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MAKING THE WORLD SAFE FOR DEMOCRACY PART II: THE US RESPONSE AND THE VIEW ON AFRICA

Despite criticism of US President George Bush for failing to concretise his vision of a new world order, a general framework is in place to guide US policy-makers into the 21st century. [See Freedom Bulletin Vol. 6, No. 4, 1992]. New challenges emerging to pose a threat to the fragile post-cold war era, are already activating US policy responses on a number of levels, in order, to ensure that the global democratisation process is not impeded. As a result, US influence in Africa is set to increase, and will pose fresh challenges to South Africa's domestic and foreign policy orientation under a new post-apartheid government.

1. THE ECONOMIC DIMENSION: MAINTAINING US ECONOMIC POWER

Facing mounting economic challenges from Japan and the European Community, US policy makers are looking at new strategies to ensure that country's competitive edge in world markets. Policy makers have expressed concern at new findings which indicate that in the areas of productivity, technological innovation, investment levels, and research and development, the US is lagging behind its European and Japanese competitors. The solution, according to prominent political scientist Samuel P Huntington from Harvard University, is for the next president to create a new "competitive state", that will foster economic renewal within the country. Huntington advocates the setting up of an Economic Strategy Council, similar to the National Security Council, to develop a comprehensive strategy, of which free trade will be a key cornerstone. The new right within the Republican Party is also emphasising the need for further deregulation of the US economy and the removal of those protectionist trade barriers that currently cushion inefficient local industry from global competition.

Furthermore, in order to level the international economic playing field, some proponents of free trade are arguing that heavy trade penalties should be applied to countries whose exports consist of goods made by slave labour (such as the Peoples Republic of China); state subsidised goods; or on private sector goods that benefit from special export incentives made available by the state.

One important dimension of the United States' heightened concern for free trade and successful economic reform in closed societies, is that of Mexico where an unstable economy was, until recently, the primary cause of thousands of Mexicans entering the US labour market. This sensitive issue has prompted President Bush to include Mexico into the North American Free Trade Association and thereby assist in bringing Mexico into a free market framework. This will help create jobs in Mexico and stabilise the flood of Mexicans into the US.

US foreign aid policy is also coming under closer scrutiny. Increasingly, future foreign aid will be predicated on recipient countries implementing trade liberalisation, deregulation, lower taxes and democratic reforms to encourage the development of economic and political freedom. Africa, especially, will be affected by this new approach.

1.1 Shifting the Global Focus

Edward Perkins, the outgoing Director General of the US Foreign Service, has warned that with economic competitiveness being the key to the nation's future, the era of putting foreign service officers in "neat little boxes" is over. Officials are going to have to have a multi-disciplinary approach on foreign policy issues.

This shifting focus, from containing communism to maintaining US economic competitiveness, has resulted in US national security needs increasingly including an economic dimension, unlike cold war years when national security focused almost exclusively on superpower rivalry in the politico-military realm. In the light of this shift, the US State Department is already making necessary adjustments. The Foreign Service Institute, for example, which trains US diplomats, is expanding the number and scope of its economics courses. The Institute has made trade promotion training a top priority and has replaced a course on the old Soviet system with one on Japan. By the end of the decade, another 60 economic officers are to be added to the 900 currently in the foreign service.

2. THE US MILITARY: HOW BIG THE "PEACE DIVIDEND"?

The collapse of the Warsaw Pact, the down-sizing of the former Soviet military establishment, and successful agreements to dismantle nuclear delivery systems in central Europe, have led to premature euphoria that the US can look forward to large defence spending cuts. The Bush administration, US Department of Defence, and conservative Republicans generally, however, have cautioned on the dismantlement of the US military in these uncertain times.

In dealing with belligerent regional powers, US military doctrine is moving away from both the old strategic framework of "mutually assured destruction" which underpinned US containment policy, as well as from "graduated response", which proved so disastrous in the Vietnam War. Instead, US strategy is shifting to fight "little wars" that entail a high-level of military preparedness so that maximum force can be mobilised to inflict losses at low cost against a targeted enemy. The recent Gulf war is indicative of this unfolding US military strategy to use maximum firepower to secure swift defeat of the enemy. Over half-a-million US troops, backed by thousands of armoured vehicles, hundreds of combat aircraft and a dazzling array of "smart weapons" were used to inflict a heavy defeat on Iraq.

The focus on free trade and access to world markets will ensure that the US navy enjoys sufficient power projection to interdict and neutralise any move by hostile powers to interrupt sea routes - especially "choke points" like the Panama Canal. Any withdrawal of US global military commitments, such as from the Middle East or South East Asia, may simply allow hostile regional powers to fill the power vacuum. US defence planners believe that while investments in strategic nuclear systems can be scaled back, continued high levels of expenditure on conventional forces, "smart

weapons" and anti-missile defence systems is crucial to ensure a flexible response to the activities of hostile regional powers.

Future US defence policy will be based on the assumption that poor preparation invites attack and costly defence. Preparedness, on the other hand, results in conflicts being ended early with favourable results and limited casualties.

3. CHANGING US INTELLIGENCE AND COUNTER-INTELLIGENCE REQUIREMENTS

From the late 1940s to the late 1980s, US intelligence requirements were almost exclusively focused on monitoring military developments in the Soviet Union and tracking its global military operations worldwide. US counter-intelligence requirements included tracking and countering the activities of the KGB's "active measures" (management of perceptions) campaigns, including the activities of numerous East-Bloc front organisations working to destabilise governments crucial to US national security interests. Today, however, both the CIA and FBI are re-evaluating their goals in the post-cold war era.

3.1 The CIA

Speaking at an International Freedom Foundation-sponsored seminar on Capitol Hill in October 1991, Theodore Shackley, former CIA Associate Director of Operations identified five new areas which he believes the US should be focusing its collection gathering capabilities. These include: a) "economic intelligence" concerning fiscal, monetary and energy matters; b) proliferation of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons; c) the collection of data to assist other democratic governments in areas vital to US strategic interests; d) terrorism and narcotics trafficking; and e) significant new technologies or scientific breakthroughs that could have military or economic importance.

3.1.1 Economic Intelligence

While the US intelligence community is divided on whether the CIA should indulge in industrial espionage like many of their foreign counterparts, there is near unanimity that the new threat facing US intelligence is not communist agents per se, but rather foreign intelligence operatives spying on US technology. The most brazen friendly nation involved in these activities has been French Intelligence (DGSE). They have been known to bug the seats of French airlines, ransack the hotel rooms of US businessmen for sensitive documents, and infiltrate European branch offices of US corporations such as IBM and Texas Instruments. Despite the removal of the Soviet Communist Party from power, intelligence operations conducted against the US from the intelligence agencies of the former Soviet Union, especially Russian Military Intelligence (GRU), have not decreased, but have simply shifted focus from active measures to industrial espionage.

The US is clearly taking this new threat seriously. CIA Director, Robert Gates, has already promised to assist US companies targetted for penetration by foreign agents, while the US Congress is also funnelling additional funds to the CIA to bolster its economic counter intelligence capabilities.

3.1.2 The Proliferation of Missile Technology

Tracking the proliferation of sensitive military technology to unstable developing countries, is also receiving increasing priority by the US. The creation of a position to monitor the proliferation of military technology at the US State Department, effectively highlights this concern.

The centrepiece of US concern in this area, however, is the little known Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR) established by seven western governments in 1987 to halt the spread of ballistic missile technology. Today, 17 countries are now signatories to the MTCR Accord. Key countries, however, still remain non-signatories including India, North Korea, Syria, Iraq, South Africa, Brazil and Egypt. Though the MTCR has been successful in slowing down missile development programmes in Brazil, Argentina and India, missile programmes remain intact in a number of other countries. The US is also concerned at the spread of missile technology by now unemployed former Soviet scientists offering their considerable skills for sale to developing countries.

The sophisticated photo-intelligence (PHOTOINT); electronic intelligence (ELINT) and signal intelligence (SIGINT) capabilities of the CIA and National Security Agency, are being increasingly used to monitor the acquisition and development of ballistic missile systems world-wide. Greater emphasis is also being given to human intelligence (HUMINT) following the failure of the western intelligence community to monitor Iraq's nuclear weapons programme.

3.2 The FBI

From the late 1940s until the 1980s, the FBI's counter-intelligence programme complemented US containment strategy. The Bureau's traditional programme was focused on the Soviet Union, the communist world, and the activities of their intelligence services inside the US. As a result of the decline in the threat posed by the Soviet Union, however, the FBI drew up new Foreign Counter Intelligence (FCI) guidelines in 1990 called the National Security Threat List (NSTL).

According to Pat Watson, Deputy Assistant Director of the Intelligence Division of the FBI, the NSTL combines two elements: "first it includes national security issues that the FBI has concluded need to be addressed, no matter where the threat comes from or what country is involved. Secondly, it includes those countries that pose a continuing and serious intelligence threat to American security interests". (The FBI maintains a classified list of these countries).

Keeping track of economic espionage in the US has become a priority for the FBI. This includes foreign intelligence activities directed at US critical technologies as identified by President Bush's National Critical Technologies Panel, as well as the collection of US industrial proprietary economic information and technology. Another important area of work is tracking the activities of foreign intelligence agents inside the US, who are involved in the proliferation of missile technology and weapons of mass destruction.

These changing intelligence requirements are in keeping with the Bush Administrations's new found priorities of maintaining the country's economic edge and closely monitoring authoritarian regimes that may disrupt the process of global democratisation.

4. THE VIEW ON AFRICA

Africa has not been immune to the winds of democratic change that are sweeping the world. In 1989, there existed only five democracies in Africa. By 1991, the figure had doubled to ten. Today, some 35 countries which are undertaking some form of economic structural adjustment programme have declared their willingness to establish multi-party democracies. Not co-incidentally, the shift to democracy in Africa co-incided with the collapse of the Soviet Union which, until 1989, had expended considerable resources in propping up numerous one-party dictatorships.

With the Soviet Union out of the way, the US has moved swiftly to consolidate its influence in Africa along newly constituted policy guidelines. Encapsulating both economic and security issues, these guidelines reflect the evolving approach by the Bush administration in the post cold war era.

4.1 US Economic Policy toward Africa

The importance attached to encouraging the spread of democracy and free market economies world-wide by the Republican Party generally, is likely to elevate the importance of Africa along economic/political, rather than geo-strategic, considerations in overall US foreign policy objectives. Already, the US is reassessing its relations with essentially authoritarian regimes such as Zaire and Kenya, and engaging rather with countries that are moving closer to multi-party democracy.

While direct US economic aid to Africa has declined from \$400 million in 1985 to only \$30,3 million in 1991, the US is increasingly focusing its efforts in assisting those countries moving toward market-oriented economies and democratic structures. This approach is being complemented by IMF lending and World Bank structural adjustment agreements, which are being linked to economic reforms, and human rights issues. One clear example has been the decision by the World Bank to withhold \$74 million loan to Malawi for its recent human rights abuses.

Writing in the US publication *Topic*, Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs, Herman Cohen, defines clearly the purpose of economic structural programmes as "... the realization that individual economic actors - people and their organisations - know or will learn quickly how to pursue their own interests". To conclude, US economic policy in the developing world, is becoming increasingly concerned more about the interests of the individual than about the narrow sectarian interests of central planners.

4.2 US Military Policy towards Africa

The major focus of US military activity in Africa during much of the 1980s was the military assistance channelled to Unita in its war against the MPLA in Angola. Since the signing of the Brazzaville Accords in December 1988, direct US military assistance to Africa has declined from \$150 million in 1985 to \$29 million in 1991. Despite this steep decline in direct US military assistance, US military influence is increasing on a political level, where the growing number of US special forces, numbering some 500, are being used to demilitarise African governments and depoliticise their armed forces.

This new approach was best summarised by Leonard H Robinson, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs, during Congressional hearings before the US Senate sub-committee on African affairs in May 1992. In his testimony on US military assistance to Africa, Robinson stressed that, "our security assistance programmes are being retooled to help Africans remove their military forces from the sidelines of democracy ... and to assist Africa's nascent democracies in weaning their military establishments away from the all-too-active role they have so often played in thwarting African democracy." This approach represents one of the most concrete statements on the Bush administration's evolving policy of ensuring that new-born democracies in the developing world do not revert back to dictatorship.

One country the US is watching closely is South Africa, where the possible emergence of a socialist authoritarian regime may upset the entire democratisation process that is currently taking place in the sub-continent.

5. SOUTH AFRICA: RETURN TO PARIAS STATUS?

While communism may have been officially declared dead in the former Eastern bloc, it continues to predominate in a number of other countries, as well as living on in a multitude of communist parties scattered throughout the world. South Africa is no exception where the continued prepon-

derance of SACP officials in senior ANC executive and administrative positions, casts a question mark over South Africa's future foreign policy orientation should the ANC win political power.

5.1 An Emerging Unholy Alliance

What concerns some US Republican Party policy-makers is that any future ANC-SACP government would be hostile to US global geo-strategic and economic interests. South African foreign policy, it is feared, would shift rapidly to support other anti-western countries, including Libya, Cuba and Iraq, as well as terrorist organisations such as the PLO and IRA.

SACP General Secretary, Chris Hani, in an interview with the US Communist Party mouthpiece, *Peoples Weekly World* in January 1992, outlined the concerns that socialist forces world-wide need to address. These include a) how to counter the increased growth of the US as the world's only superpower; and b) ensure that the US does not "stoke areas of tension and conflict" throughout the world. In the same interview, Hani hinted at the role he would like to see the SACP play in reviving the international socialist network. Already a number of communist parties have been mobilised to pressure the US to lift sanctions against Cuba.

Cuba analysts in the US are monitoring closely Castro's expanding "active measures" operations. In response to US pressure on Latin American countries last year not to aid Cuba until Castro ended his Communist Party's monopoly on political power, Cuba activated an array of "assets" to counter the US sanctions blockade.

According to the US intelligence publication, *Early Warning*, Cuba is doing its best to strengthen diplomatic ties with the Peoples Republic of China, North Korea and Vietnam. Cuba also relies on an extensive, if disparate, overseas network of supporters in its efforts to break out of its economic and diplomatic isolation. These include Trotskyite groupings; communist parties such as the US Communist Party, SACP and British Communist Party; pro-Castroite groups such as the Socialist Workers Party (US) and British-Cuba Resource Centre; as well as a number of US lobby groups including the Cuba International Project and the "Peace for Cuba International Appeal".

The "Hands off Cuba" campaign initiated by the US Communist Party in 1991, is high on the "foreign policy" agenda of the SACP. Nelson Mandela's vague promises to financially reward Castro should the ANC achieve power worries many US analysts that the South African economy will be milked to shore up Castro's tottering regime. Some defence analysts have also put forward the scenario that with thousands of Cuban troops sitting idle in Cuban camps, South Africa, under an ANC government, would be an ideal venue for Cuban military detachments, in order to solidify "fraternal relations". Furthermore, the ANC's defence of Saddam Hussein during the Gulf war and their more recent attacks on US attempts to bring to justice Libyan secret service agents responsible for blowing up the Pan Am Lockerbie flight cast a question mark on just where South Africa will fit in the new world order. Certainly, an ANC government in South Africa will dramatically tilt the balance of power between democratic and socialist forces in the sub-continent.

5.2 The US Response

Given the possibility of an ANC government in South Africa, the US is moving cautiously to deal with the prospect of the country joining a pariah league of nations spearheaded by North Korea, Libya, Cuba and Iraq. South Africa's military capabilities are receiving special attention.

5.2.1 Dismantling South Africa's Arms Industry

The end of the Angolan war and the decline in South African expenditure on defence in real terms

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since 1990 forced Armscor to seek export markets in order to avert a massive scaling back of the country's arms industry. For many years, the US has closely monitored South Africa's arms industry including the development of missile technology and a nuclear weapon's capability.

During the Gulf war, South Africa found itself on the wrong side of US national security interests when large numbers of South Africa's G-5 155mm artillery cannon were sold to Iraq in the mid to late 1980s - only to later pose a potentially major threat to US forces facing Iraq. Though never effectively used because of the poor proficiency of Iraqi soldiers, the arms deal nevertheless highlighted US concerns of what impact future South African arms sales could have on US geo-strategic and economic interests. According to the *South African Newsletter*, the US has recently been putting heavy pressure on South Africa to scrap its R5 billion missile development programme. There are three reasons for this:

- a) With a shrinking world arms market, the US is sensitive to other competitors outbidding US defence contracts to foreign countries. International arms experts acknowledge that South African military hardware is more suited to the military needs of smaller countries than those produced by large military powers like the US;
- b) should South Africa become a hostile power, the US would hope that a weakened South African military capability will make it easier to deliver a decisive military blow against a recalcitrant regime. This view is not entirely unfounded in view of US military activities in Botswana and the possible use of a \$350 million airforce base under construction near Molepolole in Botswana. This huge air base, far in excess of Botswana's defence needs, would be an ideal forward base for the rapid deployment of US forces were conditions to deteriorate in the sub-continent; and
- c) perhaps the most important reason, is that South Africa may become a major violator of the MTCR should an ANC government wish to provide missile, and possibly nuclear, warhead technology to erstwhile allies like Cuba, Iraq and Libya, all of which have an abiding hatred for the US.

According to media reports, the US was recently responsible for the cancellation of a R1,7 billion South African arms deal with Saudi Arabia. Reliable US sources also maintain that the CIA fingered an arms deal between South Africa and the Peoples Republic of China (PRC) in late 1991, in which the PRC offered to buy South African coal if it included the purchase of highly sophisticated military electronics equipment. The deal fell through after the US warned the PRC that it would be stripped of its Most Favoured Nation status. It is believed that the US is also currently thwarting recent South African forays into the African arms market.

It is hoped that increasing the pressure on Armscor's arms exports will accelerate the demise of South Africa's weapons making capability, resulting in a future South African government inheriting a paper tiger.

5.2.2 The New Economic Order

On an economic level, US foreign aid will not be forthcoming to any future South African government which abuses human rights and implements failed socialist policies. This will also be the policy of both the IMF and World Bank - institutions heavily influenced by the US. An ANC government in which ANC-SACP economists have long been highly critical of the World Bank's restructuring programmes linked to financial loans made to countries trapped in a socialist quagmire, may not necessarily guarantee South Africa access to loans from these financial institutions.

An IMF study on South Africa, released in January 1992, warned that given the high level of poverty which exists in the country, redistribution policies, alone, will not be sufficient to alleviate this problem. Instead, policies designed to place the economy on a higher growth rate are clearly required. Economic policies of state intervention in the economy - including nationalisation, prohibitive tax rates, and the emasculation of private sector savings in South Africa's insurance industry - will not be the requisite passport to guarantee inflows of foreign loans and investment.

A ten point plan to restore investor confidence, drawn up by Babacar N'Diaye, President of the African Development Bank, after his visit to South Africa earlier this year, rejected nationalisation as an option. N'Diaye warned that the most efficient way to manage the economy was via the free market. In simple terms a socialist economic platform in South Africa will see the US shut down vitally needed international loans for the economy.

While the US has been encouraging a process of global democratisation and a movement towards free trade world-wide, inconsistencies still continue in the application of these new policy trends. Elements of the US administration still continue to revert back to an old style national interest perspective which at times conflicts with a new world order paradigm based on free markets and multi-party democracies.

5.3 South Africa's Choice: Catalyst or Obstacle?

South Africa has a golden opportunity to play a vital role in fuelling the spread of democracy and free markets in the rapidly changing sub-continent. It would indeed be ironic, however, that, having turned its back on apartheid, South Africa's current reacceptance into the international community is but a brief interlude, before reverting back to another authoritarian regime condemning the country to renewed isolation in the emerging new world order.

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