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South African-United States  
relations at the turn of a  
new century:  
Retrospectively  
looking forward

Francis A. Kornegay

Bradlow Fellow, South African Institute of International  
Affairs

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## GLOSSARY

AAI	African-American Institute
ACCORD	African Centre for the Constructive Resolution of Disputes
ACOA	American Committee on Africa
ACRI	African Crisis Response Initiative
ACSS	African Centre for Strategic Studies
AFL-CIO	American Federation of Labour-Congress of Industrial Organizations
AGOA	African Growth and Opportunity Act
AHI	Afrikaans Handelsinstituut
AHSA	African Heritage Studies Association
AISA	African Institute of South Africa
AMCHAM Africa	American Chamber of Commerce in Southern Africa
ANC	African National Congress
APIC	African Policy Information Centre
ARI	African Renaissance Institute
ASA	African Studies Association
BDC	Business Development Committee
BNC	Binational Commission
BNISAAR Relations	Binational Institute of South African-American Relations
BOSS	Bureau of State Security
CAAA	Comprehensive Anti-Apartheid Act
CBC	Congressional Black Caucus
CBM	Consultation Business Movement
CFA	Constituency for Africa
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
COINTELPRO	Federal Bureau of Investigation Counter-intelligence Programme
COMESA	Common Market of Eastern and Southern Africa
CSIS	Centre for Strategic and International Studies
CSSDCA	Conference on Security, Stability, Development and Cooperation
DFA	Department of Foreign Affairs
DTI	Department of Trade and Industry
EU	European Union
FABCOS Organizations	Federation of Business and Consumer Organizations
FLS	Front Line States
GEAR	Growth, Employment and Redistribution
ICCR Responsibility	Inter-faith Centre for Corporate Responsibility
IDASA Africa	Institute for Democratic Alternative in South Africa
IFP	Inkatha Freedom Party
IIE	Institute for International Education
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IPA	International Peace Academy

IRRC	Investor Responsibility Research Centre
ISA	Investment South Africa
ISSC	Inter-State Security Commission
MDP	Institute for Multi-Party Democracy
NAFCOC Commerce	National African Federated Chambers of Commerce
NAM	Non-Aligned Movement
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NBI	National Business Initiative
NED	National Endowment for Democracy
NFTC	National Foreign Trade Council
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NNPT	Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty
ODA	Official Development Assistance
OSAAC	Organization of South Africans in America and Canada
PVO	Private Voluntary Organization
RCD	Rally for Congolese Democracy
RDP	Reconstruction and Development Programme
RFPS	Requests for Proposals
SAACC	South African-American Chamber of Commerce
SACAR Renaissance	South African Chapter of the African Renaissance
SACC	South African Council of Churches
SACOB	South African Chamber of Business
SACP	South African Communist Party
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SAEDF	Southern African Enterprise Development Fund
SAEP	South African Education Programme
SAFPUM	South African Foundation for Public Administration Management
TDP	Transition to Democracy Project
TELP	Tertiary Education Linkages Project
TIC	Trade and Investment Committee
UAW	United Auto Works
UCC	United Church of Christ
UDF	United Democratic Front
UNITA	Union for the Total Independence of Angola
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USBDC	United States-South Africa Business Development Community
USSABC	United States-South Africa Business Council
USSALEP	United States-South Africa Leadership Exchange Programme
WOA	Washington Office in Africa
WTFAA	Washington Task Force on African Affairs

*writing in 1997, Moeletsi Mbeki commented on the state of post-apartheid relations between South Africa=s ruling African National Congress (ANC) government and the United States. He observed that the longstanding ANC association with eastern and western Europe puts it at an enormous disadvantage in its present dealings with the United States, that quite simply, the ANC does not know enough how US foreign policy is formulated and what the imperatives of United States global politics are.<sup>1</sup> This observation reflects what has been a learning curve for Pretoria in the United States-South African relationship. The other side of the coin is that the United States may not always fully appreciate the international relations imperatives of a post-apartheid South Africa. This is especially so, given what has been a tendency to interpret South Africa=s transition superficially as a triumph of liberalism in a post-Cold War, Fukuyamian world that has transcended ideology. To be sure, on the surface, relations between America and South Africa would have to be described as essentially good. There are no major issues reflecting fundamental tensions and conflict between Washington and Pretoria. But ambivalence and contradictions, there are a-plenty.*

## **1. INTRODUCTION: UNITED STATES-SOUTH AFRICAN RELATIONS PRIOR TO THE >MIRACLE=**

To a large extent the bilateral amity is no doubt due to the >miracle= nature of South Africa=s dramatic transition. It was characterized by the defusing of an accelerating race war with ideological overtones; one that held the potential to polarize the politics of race in the United States itself. Instead, South Africa=s negotiated transition produced, at least initially, a >rainbow nation= of racial reconciliation. These positive dynamics mirrored the vision of many an American who wished for amity between black and white in the United States. This vision was personified in the magnanimity of a long-suffering Nelson Mandela. In Mandela=s triumphal release and its aftermath, which resulted in the relatively peaceful electoral defeat of apartheid, black forgiveness (in the spirit of Martin Luther King) had triumphed over black retribution.

This fuelled the liberal imagination of an identity of interests between a United States that had won a non-violent victory in its cold war with Moscow and a South Africa that had peacefully

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<sup>1</sup> Moeletsi Mbeki, AANC does not understand US, @ *The Star*, March 31, 1997.

transformed itself into a non-communist, nonracial democracy. From a United States perspective informed by white America's global priorities, hardly could South Africa's racial confrontation have culminated in a more hopeful outcome. It is within this shared triumphal glow of a new post-apartheid, post-Cold war era that a new chapter was opened in United States-South African relations. This new moment was captured in the establishment of the South African-American Bi-National Commission co-chaired by Deputy President Thabo Mbeki and Vice-President Al Gore.

Five years on, facing the turn of a new century, South African-United States relations are reaching a crossroads with the looming election of a new administration in Washington. This paper, therefore, will be devoted to a critical examination of the developing bilateral relationship from the eve of South Africa's transition to the emergence of what is termed South African-American Binationalism.<sup>2</sup> This term is intended to depict the closeness of the post-apartheid bilateral relationship. It is followed by a consideration of issues of convergence and divergence in South African and United States national interests as reflected in their respective foreign policies, not simply toward one another but toward the rest of Africa and the world at large. But here at the outset, some critical distinctions are in order regarding the different vantage-points from which South Africa and the United States are coming as their relationship progresses.

### ***Asymmetries in the Bilateral Relationship***

There is an essential asymmetry in the relationship. It is one grounded in the differential status the two countries occupy in the international system. The United States occupies a niche all its own. It is the lone global super-power (or >hyper-power= as some French critics of the United States would have it) in what Samuel Huntington describes as a Uni-multipolar world.<sup>2</sup> South Africa, on the other hand occupies the niche of a sub-regional superpower and continental economic giant in the most marginal region of the international system. In global terms, it enjoys the status of a >middle-range= power with an economy estimated to be no bigger than Belgium's. Because of Washington's global interests as defined by a foreign policy establishment that prioritizes Atlantic ties to Western Europe and Pacific ties to East Asia, the bilateral relationship with South Africa, while important is not deemed strategically critical.

South Africa, therefore, is one among several regionally-situated >pivotal states= except that in South Africa's case, it is a

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<sup>2</sup> S. P. Huntington, *The Lonely Superpower*, @ *Foreign Affairs*, March/April 1999, p.35.

>pivotal state= on a marginal continent (or half-a-continent in terms of the United States Department of State=s definition of Africa as constituting the sub-Saharan half-region). Within a broader African policy context, South Africa is joined by Nigeria as the continent=s two most important regional powers. They serve as America=s primary geopolitical and economic reference points on the continent. The other giant, Egypt, is seen more within the context of United States Mideast policy and an American definition of Africa that separates North Africa from the rest of the continent. Added to this picture is the American big business perception. Here South Africa is perceived as an >emerging market= which, as a category, American transnationals have come to view with more discrimination since the Asian and Russian meltdowns of 1998. Placing South Africa in such an American *realpolitik* perspective underlines the fact that by 2000 the post-Mandela >rainbow nation= was no longer the >flavour-of-the-month.=

To be sure, such a perspective may turn out to be a decidedly short-sighted vision. The African continent is projected to approach demographic >superpower= status by mid-century. According to the United Nations Population Fund, Africans will comprise 20% of the world=s population. Such an Africa could constitute an increasingly compelling global security concern and/or a major market opportunity depending on future political and economic developments; a context in which South Africa would have to figure as a major actor. Another, grimmer possibility, in the absence of a major revolution in human resources development linked to an expansion of the global information society into Africa, is that the continent becomes one giant consumer colony amid Sino-Indian and general East African-Pacific ascendancy. However the African future unfolds, the reality for now is one in which Washington is not compelled to be preoccupied with its bilateral relationship with Pretoria to the same extent that Pretoria would tend to be preoccupied with Washington.

Pretoria is compelled to view its bilateral relationship with the United States from a different perspective. South Africa=s fate is inextricably linked to that of the African continent whether South Africans like it or not (about which there is more than a little ambivalence). Its geo-strategic position at the bottom of the continent places it at the very centre of a southern hemispheric >Gondwanan= axis; one that links Africa, Asia and Latin America via transoceanic trade routes ranging from the South Atlantic to the Indian Ocean.<sup>3</sup> Hence the logic of the informal, five nation >G-

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<sup>3</sup> F. A. Kornegay, 'Gondwanaland Revisited: Toward a South African Strategic Concept?' in forthcoming 2000/2001 issue of the *South African Yearbook of International Affairs*, SAIIA, Jans Smuts House, University of the Witwatersrand. >Gondwanaland= refers to the old southern supercontinent that joined Africa, South America, Madagascar, India (though not so southern) and Australia and which is still referred to when speaking of the southern continents as the >Gondwanan= system. An



South= grouping linking South Africa with Nigeria, Egypt, India and Brazil as a countervailing force for spearheading a transformed international trading system that will better benefit the developing world in a rules-based multilateral economic order.

This dimension builds on the ANC=s prior foreign relations history and culture of third world solidarity linkages grounded in the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) of which it is the incumbent chair. Post-political transition, however, South Africa, as a semi-developed country, has felt compelled to balance this legacy in an effort to secure its trade and economic links with the North. This explains the imperative of its preferential trade and development agreement with the European Union (EU) and its preoccupation with accelerating foreign direct investment from the United States.

From a geostrategic standpoint South African policy must balance North and South, though its natural alignment is in the South as the pivot of a Gondwanan tricontinental axis. At the same time, South Africa is considered a natural bridge between North and South. Thus the importance Pretoria attaches to the United States connection in a post-Cold war world dominated by a hegemonic global capitalism. This makes for an environment radically different from the ruling ANC=s liberation struggle alignment with the former Soviet bloc and radical Afro-Asian-Latin American states and allied third world struggles.

### ***The ANC=s Western support and post-war racial politics of United States-South African Relations***

In the West the ANC=s pro-Soviet/third world linkages were complemented by alliances with social democratic Scandinavia and liberal-left constituencies in Britain and the United States. Because of its ideological non-racialism that reflected the ascendancy of class over race among Marxist and western liberal tendencies and sentiments, the ANC=s linkages in the West were largely white-dominated. However, there was the upsurge in African-American anti-apartheid mobilization during the 1970s and 80s that introduced some balance to this picture. This change can probably be attributed to the tireless networking of the late Johnstone (Johnny) Makatini during his stint as the ANC=s United Nations representation.

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environmental=geographical term applied to geopolitics.

Prior to Makatini, the Pan-Africanist Congress's United Nations representative, the late David Sibeko, by the sheer force of a charismatic personality that was as large as his ample girth, more than held sway in a Black America. This reflected a reality in which race took precedence over class in the ideological struggles of the left-activist wing of the civil rights and Black Power movements (which paralleled the rise of the Black Consciousness Movement in South Africa). Otherwise, prior to this period, relations between South Africa and the United States had largely been shaped by the legacy of the bonding of the Anglo-American special relationship in the crucible of the Allied campaign against Hitler. This legacy incorporated the Wilsonian-influenced liberal internationalism of South African Prime Minister Jan Christian Smuts. A man of major contradictions, Smuts's philosophical spearheading of holism, is beginning to be seen by some of his admirers as a bridge between this older internationalist tradition that he is associated with and personified, and the contemporary post-apartheid ascendancy of an African Renaissance vision.<sup>4</sup>

With the post-war onset of Soviet-American confrontation ushering in the United States policy of global containment of communism, the influence of Smuts's legacy in United States-South African relations survived his ouster by the Afrikaner Nationalist Party in 1948. The English-speaking white business community took up this legacy which became institutionalized in the post-war founding of the South African Institute of International Affairs (SAIIA). Further, although Smuts liberalism had been defeated by Afrikaner nationalism, the latter found common cause with the United States in fighting what was perceived as an international communist menace. This cause, in turn, dovetailed neatly with the rapid evolution of Afrikanerdom's racial policy. Anti-communism, Afrikaner nationalism and anti-black racism fused at a time when the ANC, as the leading voice of black South African resistance to racial domination, was being pushed into an ever closer alignment with the Communist Party of South Africa and its successor, the SACP (South African Communist Party).

This trend within South Africa did not really pose much of a dilemma for Washington until much later. This was when it had to factor into its global Cold War strategy the rise of African nationalism against European colonialism on the one hand, and mounting domestic pressures for dramatic civil rights reforms for African-Americans on the other. Here there are some interesting parallels that bear mentioning as a means of placing in perspective some of the contemporary undercurrents in South African-American relations that transcend the bilateral relationship. The international communist crusade was a shared interest of Afrikaner nationalism and American Cold War

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<sup>4</sup> Penny Grimbeek, "Smuts's holism part of African Renaissance," @ *The Star* 12 Sept. 2000, p. 13.

liberalism, including the most backward elements in American politics who shared something else in common with nationalist Afrikanerdom in South Africa: white supremacy.

For this reason, the civil rights activism of the American 50s and 60s came under heavy surveillance as a potential ally of communism. A similar fate befell the South African Defiance Campaign in the run-up to Pretoria's banning of the ANC and the Pan-Africanist Congress in the early 60s. By that point the ANC had cemented its alliance with the SACP and was on its way to forging political links of solidarity with third world nationalist, socialist and anti-imperialist forces world-wide. In the United States things took a different turn. Although the civil rights movement attracted growing support across the progressive spectrum of American politics, there were limits. The Cold war liberal consensus dictated a trade-off in which black civil rights would be advanced at the expense of a latter day black internationalism that had been represented by the likes of W E B Du Bois and Marcus Garvey.

All internationalism became suspect. Mainline African-American organizations shied away from foreign policy issues and internationalist commitments until this posture came under challenge from more militant organizations later in the 60s. By then, however, the damage had been done. Although there ensued a resurgence in black internationalist interests, the intellectual continuity with the different DuBoisian and Garveyian streams of pan-Africanism had been broken in terms of their influencing an updated independent foreign policy perspective on Africa.

The assassinations of an increasingly Third world/pan-African internationalist Malcolm X in 1965 and in 1968 Martin Luther King who had come out strongly against the Vietnam war, essentially beheaded the American black movement of mature leadership alternatives to more established and accommodating leaders. Meanwhile during this period domestic black politics came under the scrutiny and disruption of the Federal Bureau of Investigation's Counter-Intelligence Program (COINTELPRO). At an international level the dictates of the Cold War encouraged cooperation between western intelligence agencies, including the United States Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) and South African intelligence (a legacy of cooperation during the world war II coordination of the Office of Strategic Services).

At the level of racial politics, American and South African ruling elites alike tended to see black challenges to their prevailing racial status-quos as part of a communist conspiracy. which explains cooperation between the CIA and the former South African Bureau of State Security (BOSS) in monitoring the underground activities of the liberation movements. However, former South African President Nelson Mandela, in his autobiography, has discounted CIA involvement in his capture leading to his 27 years of incarceration. (At the same time, as the interests of the Afrikaner nationalist regime and those of Washington increasingly diverged, BOSS developed its own anti-American propaganda aimed at discrediting the Pan-Africanist Congress and the Black

Consciousness Movement as American/CIA-backed challenges.) Otherwise, the Cold War-inspired ideological politics of United States-South African relations tended to take precedence over the inconvenient racial implications of that relationship. This went unchallenged until a reassertion in African-American activism on Africa, coinciding with the growing international visibility of Southern African liberation struggles against white minority-rule and settler colonialism discredited an overt Cold War alliance between southern Africa=s whites and the United States

### ***Policy trends and contradictions***

The controversies over the so-called >Tar Baby= policy option on Southern Africa articulated by National Security Strategy Memorandum (NSSM) 39 proposing a >tilt= to southern Africa=s white regimes during the Richard Nixon and Gerald Ford administrations followed by the Aconstructive engagement@ son of >Tar Baby= policy of the Reagan administration crafted by Reagan=s Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs, Chester Crocker, reflect the intersection of racial and ideological polarization associated with past Republican party policies. The contradiction between anti-communist tendencies toward forging tacit alignments with white regimes in southern Africa while conceding the political and moral high ground to the Soviet camp in its backing of the liberation movements replicated itself in political polarization between American Democratic and Republican parties.

This contradiction reached a watershed when the Congressional Black Caucus (CBC)-led legislative campaign overrode Aconstructive engagement@ with the passage of the Comprehensive Anti-Apartheid Act (CAAA) of 1986 enacting economic sanctions against South Africa. The CAAA victory marked the coming to a head of a critical mass of bipartisan support for sanctions in the United States Congress. This was reflected in critical alliances involving the likes of Republican Senators Richard Lugar (Indiana) and Nancy Kassebaum (Kansas) and Democrats like Edward Kennedy (Massachusetts).

In the House, Republican members like Amo Houghton of New York were crucial as well as Jim Leach of Iowa. As impressive as this bipartisan mobilization was, it was not sustained across the board on Southern Africa policy. However, the CAAA victory was offset by the repeal of the Clark Amendment. Carrying the name of former Senator Dick Clark of Iowa who had headed up the Senate Subcommittee on Africa, this amendment had prohibited United States military aid to UNITA rebels in Angola. UNITA at the time was allied with and receiving massive support from South Africa as part of the latter=s broader destabilization campaign.

### ***America=s anti-Apartheid movement comes of age***

The CAAA passage marked the emergence of a broad bipartisan consensus on South Africa at a time when a broader bipartisan consensus on American foreign policy had generally evaporated in the aftermath of the Vietnam war. The CAAA also marked the

maturation of the American anti-apartheid campaign as a broad-based interracial social movement. As such it was a natural successor to the civil rights/black power and anti-Vietnam War movements, elements of which became absorbed into the anti-apartheid movement. In the United States it constituted the front line of the ANC=s international >united front= against the Afrikaner regime in Pretoria. With increasing black American participation and influence, this movement became the centrepiece of an emerging Africa lobby, led by TransAfrica which was founded in the congressional office of the first (and only) African-American to head up the House Sub-committee on Africa, the late Charles C Diggs, Jr. But TransAfrica was more the culmination of a multifaceted process that led up to its founding in 1978 than the seminal vanguard force.

Among the left-liberal activist, trade union and church organizations, the New York-based American Committee on Africa (ACOA) and the Washington Office on Africa (WOA) in the nation=s capitol were the pace setters. These organizations had a lot to do with the knitting together of a national grassroots pro-sanctions constituency prior to TransAfrica=s founding. ACOA (currently the Africa Fund/ACOA), founded by the Rev George Houser, enjoyed unique insider credibility with southern African liberation movements and their leaderships while spearheading the sanctions campaign against South Africa. This took place through the tireless nation-wide networking of individuals like Prexy Nesbitt and current South African Ambassador to the United Nations, Dumisani Kumalo.

Through ACOA and its allied church constituency, Kumalo, Nesbitt and others networked with black elected officials and local/state assembly black caucuses (in the Northeast like in New York and New Jersey, these were combined black and Puerto Rican caucuses) to make sanctions an issue at municipal and state levels. Local churches and denominational constituencies were important allies like the United Church of Christ (UCC) as well as trade unions and affiliations of the American Federation of Labor-Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO) or its auto industry counterpart, the Detroit, Michigan-based United Auto Workers (UAW).

What in effect was unfolding was a social movement that intersected with the local political agendas of individuals who had political aspirations in municipal and state government. They may have known nothing about Africa or southern Africa but the civil rights resonance of the Apartheid issue was all that was needed to motivate many a passage of laws and ordinances affecting investments, contracts and pension funds that put pressure on corporations with South African investments. However, the national centre of activities was the nation=s capitol, Washington, D.C.

At the beginning of the 1970s, Diggs and his first chief of staff of the Africa Subcommittee, Attorney Goler T Butcher became the driving force behind the Washington-based African affairs and anti-apartheid constituency. They were back-stopped by a network that included organizations like the American Friends Service

Committee, the Lawyers= Committee for Civil Rights Under Law and the African Bibliographic Centre, including its agit-prop media tool, the Habari telephonic news and information service (which complemented the Africa News initiative based in Durham, North Carolina). Prior to TransAfrica=s founding, the Bibliographic Centre had established a community-based arm called the Washington Task Force on African Affairs (WTFAA) which brought together concerned individuals, Africa specialists and local representatives of organizations like ACOA (prior to the establishment of WOA). By the late 70s, this essentially black-led activist constituency, aligned with the Black Caucus (founded by Diggs) and the House Africa Subcommittee, had assumed the vanguard of anti-apartheid protest.

However, the bulk of the research, analysis and policy studies and proposals on United States-South and southern African relations resided with an elite network of liberal institutions within the foundation, think tank and academic African area studies communities. This network, in turn, interacted with bureaus within the United States Department of State and the Defence Department (like the National Defence University) and, in turn, was linked into the corporate community. African-American influence was marginal in this setting. This would likely not have been the case had there developed synergy between TransAfrica and the African Bibliographic Centre. The Centre was a small independent black-led information and documentation centre on Africa. It had earned an international reputation and track-record as one of the foremost African affairs data-bases (with its origins as the library in the Africa House of the early African-American Institute when the Institute was headquartered in Washington, D.C. as the Institute of African-American Relations). Such a partnership would have redressed the lack of continuity between African-American generations in the Africa field and bolstered an intellectual base for policy clout. The fact that this did not occur reflected serious divisions within the black constituency for Africa that are yet to be satisfactorily resolved.

Here it should also be added that although African-American marginality in the policy arena is at least partially attributable to the lack of historical continuity in American black politics between the period of DuBois and Garvey and the militant pan-Africanist revival of the late >60s (due to the conformity imposed by the Cold War), there was another reason. This had to do with the manner in which the leaders of this pan-Africanist revival outmanoeuvred themselves onto the sidelines of the eastern foreign policy apparatus by playing into the hands of a white African area studies establishment bent on driving a wedge between African and African-American studies. But that is another story that has yet to be comprehensively told. What is important is how this development, combining with other factors, influenced the racial composition and political character of the Southern African affairs policy community.

### ***The anti-Apartheid middle ground***

This elite community became integral in the shaping of a middle ground constituency committed to remaining engaged in South Africa as a means of promoting peaceful, non-violent change. Though it would, broadly speaking, fall within the parameters of the American anti-apartheid campaign as a social movement, its preoccupation was to engage United States government and corporate policy and strategies from >the inside.= This constituency took shape around a code of conduct for those American transnationals that remained in South Africa. Articulated by the Rev Leon Sullivan as the Sullivan Principles, this initiative offered an avenue for corporate America to relate to the prospect of influencing peaceful change in South Africa through such bodies as the National Foreign Trade Council (NFTC) as the Sullivan Signatories.

Beside corporates like the Ford Motor Company and banking institutions like Chase Manhattan and Citibank, this constituency extended into a veritable interlocking directorate of organizations. These included the likes of the binational United States-South Africa Leadership Exchange Programme (USSALEP); the African-American Institute (AAI); the Investor Responsibility Research Centre (IRRC); the South African Education Programme (SAEP) of the Institute for International Education (IIE) and the Centre for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) B formerly attached to Georgetown University B where Chester Crocker headed up the African studies programme prior to becoming Reagan=s Assistant Secretary of State for Africa.

Some of these organizations had their counterparts among the more activist pro-sanctions groups in New York. For example, the IRRC investor/corporate responsibility programme was to some extent paralleled by the Inter-faith Centre for Corporate Responsibility (ICCR) at 475 Riverside Drive, Inter-faith Centre a.k.a. >the God Box.= In Washington, to some extent, the House and Senate Subcommittees on Africa had evolved as a bridge between this activist constituency and the more elitist policy community linked into the political party networks on and off Capitol Hill.

After the demise of Charles Diggs in 1980, this process gained momentum under the successive chairmanships of Steve Solarz of New York and Howard Wolpe of Michigan of the House Africa Subcommittee. Here key players on the House side were current United States Ambassador to Kenya, Johnny Carson (who had been seconded from the State Department) and Steve Weissman as successive Chiefs of Staff of the Africa Subcommittee. On the Senate side their counterpart was Pauline Baker, working under the successive chairmanships of Iowa Senator Dick Clark and former Senator George McGovern.

Eventually this networking was augmented (and in some instances complicated) by the emergence of the National Democratic Institute on International Affairs and its counterpart, the International Republican Institute as satellites of the National Endowment for Democracy. Within this Washington environment of the eighties, the south and Southern Africa policy discourse, including the showcasing of a wide spectrum of black and white leaders from the

subcontinent, was mediated through such initiatives as Pauline Baker=s southern African breakfast programme at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace and by former Iowa Senator Clark=s congressional-focussed Aspen Institute Southern African Policy Dialogue program established by former United States Director of USSALEP, Steve McDonald.

Meanwhile McDonald=s South African counterpart heading up USSALEP, Michael R. Sinclair, would eventually end up in the United States where, between his work with the Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation and the Council on Foundations, headed up by recent United States Ambassador to South Africa, Rev James Jospeh, he would organize the establishment of the Southern African Grantmakers= Affinity Group. Over the years, the Affinity Group has served as the central oversight umbrella for American donors in South Africa and the sub-region, tracking private sector involvement, official United States assistance as well as the involvement of the independent American non-profit sector in a wide range of programmes and initiatives. (In 1997 Affinity Group members, the Ford Foundation, the Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation, the W K Kellogg Foundation and the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation funded a multi-volume survey: *AVol. I B Transforming Southern Africa: An Overview of American Support for Southern African Development.- AVol. II B Official United States Involvement in Southern Africa.- AVol. III B Private Sector Involvement in Southern Africa.- Vol. IV B United States Independent Sector Involvement in Southern Africa.*.)

## **2. ON THE EVE OF SOUTH AFRICAN-AMERICAN BI-NATIONALISM: POLICY AND CONSTITUENCY**

The foregoing has been little more than an interpretive thumb-nail sketch, from an American perspective, of the United States-South and southern African scene summarized within an historical context spanning a period of roughly three decades. Apart from policy critiques of NSSM 39, Aconstructive engagement@ or the sanctions era, this is a chapter in United States-South African relations that requires a book on its own in order for students of the bilateral relationship to fully understand how and why the contemporary relationship between the two countries at governmental, non-governmental and people-to-people levels has evolved to its current point.

There is a perception, for example, that post-apartheid, much of the momentum in the civil society relationship between the two countries has reached a low ebb. To some extent this has been the case with regard to some of the most activist elements of the anti-apartheid wing of the South African affairs constituency in the United States and their South African counterparts who came out of the mass democratic and black consciousness movements. To a large extent this probably reflects the crisis in identity and purpose that has beset civil society in both countries as the building of the first genuine government-to-government



relationship between South Africa and the United States has taken precedence over the non-governmental linkages that featured during the apartheid era. But there has also been a measure of continuity accompanying the change in relationships triggered by South Africa=s transition that has continued to engage elements of these constituencies.

***Transitional continuities, dis-connections and activist marginalization***

South Africa has produced two post-apartheid Ambassadors to the United States in Franklin Sonn and his successor, Sheila Sisulu who are members of the South African council of USSALEP (which Sonn chaired along with J Wayne Fredericks, who for years headed up the Ford Motor Company=s operations in Africa). Ambassador Sisulu became a member of the South African council of USSALEP after having been an exchangee. After almost single-handedly putting in place state and local sanctions against South Africa under the auspices of ACOA, Dumisani Kumalo, returned to South Africa to head up the United States desk at the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) during the most active phase of the United States-South Africa Bi-National Commission (BNC) before heading back to New York as South Africa=s Ambassador to the UN. From the United States side, former head of the southern Africa programme of the Lawyers= Committee for Civil Rights Under Law, Millard Arnold became the first Minister Counsellor heading up the United States Commercial Section in South Africa while former President of the Council on Foundations, the Rev James Joseph became the first post-apartheid United States Ambassador to South Africa appointed under the Clinton Administration.

However, beyond the roles played by key individuals, certain structures in civil society and the private sector could be viewed as forerunners of the post-1994 period defined by the establishment of the BNC. What is crucial here is that on the American side of the ledger the strategic actors between the 1990 unbanning of the liberation movements in South Africa and the >Uhuru= election of April 1994 emerged out of that middle-ground constituency of the South African affairs community that was distinguished by a commitment to remaining engaged within South Africa; in bridge-building between different socio-racial and political groups within the country and in exile while promoting developmental exchanges between the United States and South Africa as well as promoting corporate responsibility within the framework of the CAAA among United States transnationals that remained in South Africa.

The binational character of USSALEP and the leading role that would be played by the NFTC and its Sullivan Signatories in giving momentum to the establishment of the BNC during the late Ron Brown=s tenure as Secretary of Commerce are indicative. Although USSALEP, as an elite interracial network of South Africans and Americans, was totally disengaged from the anti-apartheid activism of the pro-sanctions constituency in the United States while implementing a range of leadership development and exchange programmes, it played a critical facilitative role in moving

forward the implementation of a bipartisan policy commitment of supporting South Africa's political transition when it undertook to administer Transition to Democracy funds to the ANC and the Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP).

Both the Bush administration and Democratic and Republican party leaders in Congress had been galvanized by ANC Deputy President Nelson Mandela, during his tour of the United States, to commit United States funds to support the process of negotiations and an electoral transition to democracy. Although Mandela's main concern was raising funds for the ANC, the political challenge facing the Bush Administration and the United States Congress was to support Mandela in such a way that overcame deep liberal-conservative divisions within Congress. This meant bridging virtually unbridgeable divisions between a Republican controlled Senate where the Senate Foreign Relations Committee was chaired by arch conservative Jesse Helms of North Carolina and the Black Caucus whose premier actor on South African issues was House Majority Whip, Rev William H. Gray III of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

Congressman Gray, it should be remembered, was the author of the Gray Amendment stipulating a 10% set-aside for minority contractors in all United States Agency International Development (USAID) programmes that became part of a larger controversy over alleged preferential treatment of American-Americans and black South Africans in USAID's South Africa funding. In the meantime, while Gray and the Caucus wanted all funds that would come from a special appropriation to go to the ANC and/or their allies within the mass democratic movement, conservative Republicans saw otherwise. They were convinced of the ANC's communist pedigree and insisted that a portion of funds appropriated would have to go to the IFP at a time when bloody battles between ANC and IFP supporters were beginning to heat up in the Reef townships and in Natal.

Congress passed a special emergency appropriation that became known as the Transition to Democracy Act of 1990. The hard part was arriving at a politically acceptable arrangement on how these funds would be disbursed and administered. The initial disbursing and implementing role that was to have gone to the National Endowment for Democracy (NED) headed up by Carl Gershman. But his neoconservative credentials were anathema to members of the Black Caucus who were also wary of a major role being carved out for the party institutes, NDI and IRI, which were seen as yet more exclusive think tank preserves for white experts.

House Majority Whip Bill Gray was militantly opposed to NED's involvement, especially if that meant participation by NDI and IRI. Gray's preference was that the funds not go through an American intermediary but through a credible South African entity. Here the South African Council of Churches (SACC), headed up at the time by the Rev Frank Chikane, was Gray and the Black Caucus's intermediary of choice. This is a role that the SACC was reluctant to play. They had never received official development assistance from the United States. Further, they were suspicious of the practical and political implications of being a conduit for such

funds. The United States, under Republican administrations, was perceived as a supporter of apartheid and anticommunist movements elsewhere in southern Africa, principally Jonas Savimbi's UNITA in Angola.

What ensued throughout the first half of 1991 was an endless round of meetings at State Department, the USAID and on Capitol Hill to try and break what had become a stalemate that was increasingly threatening to force Congress to de-obligate the Transition to Democracy Project (TDP) funds, thus ending what was intended to be a magnanimous gesture of support for South Africa's transition as a tribute to Mandela. Unable to get the SACC to become their intermediary, NED had reissued a proposal for disbursing and administering TDP funds involving NDI and IRI. This made for a very stormy meeting between an explosive Congressman Gray and NED President Carl Gershman that, at the time, held serious implications for the Endowment.

Meanwhile, USSALEP had already offered itself as a possible conduit for TDP funds and because of its binational character as both a South African as well as an American organization, it ended up being the solution that broke the stalemate. It was the logical alternative to the SACC. Moreover, USSALEP's profile as a politically neutral actor within South Africa as well as in the United States placed it in the logical position of being best placed to negotiate funding transfers to both the ANC and the IFP. NED, in the meantime, ended up with a million United States dollars for disbursing to a diverse range of civil society organizations. But for USSALEP the TDP was a watershed, as this marked the beginning of the eclipse by USSALEP's South African office over its counterpart in Washington.

Although USSALEP did not have activist anti-apartheid credentials, it reflected a major strength within this particular sector of the American South African affairs community that was lacking among the more politically pure pro-sanctions activists. This was the existence of a bi-national network of high level establishment ties on the one hand with programmatic commitments that reached to community level in South Africa, and that were easily adaptable from the apartheid to the post-apartheid era.

One of the fatal flaws of the black activist wing of the anti-apartheid constituency was its fundamentalist adherence to pro-sanctions orthodoxy to an extent that isolating South Africa extended to ruling out virtually all contact with the internal resistance to apartheid, although this began belatedly breaking down with the rise of the United Democratic Front (UDF) in the early 80's. (Factoring in the internal anti-apartheid resistance as well as the liberation movements in exile emerged as a divisive bone of contention at the 1972 African-American National Conference on Africa at Howard University which was the precursor to the eventual founding of TransAfrica in 1978. This conference accompanied the first African Liberation Day observance but was a setback to Diggs's initial attempt to organize a national Africa lobby. This was as a result of controversy over several Black Caucus members' 1970 support for American jet fighter planes being

sold to Israel engineered by the late Bayard Rustin, head of the A Philip Randolph Institute. This controversy played into the hands of pan-African ultranationalists and Marxists who wanted the Africa lobby to come under the wing of the National Black Political Assembly.)

Otherwise, except for well-funded African affairs organizations like AAI, Africare and non-Africa specialist institutes like the black-run Joint Centre for Political and Economic Studies and NDI and IRI, the activist wing of the South African affairs community in the United States did not have comparable means to make such a transition; one that, among other things, would have required substantial funding commitments from foundation and private donors that ultimately were not forthcoming. This was in spite of a major conference involving the ANC and the Inter-Faith Center in New York in 1992 that brought together anti-apartheid activists organizations and individuals from around the United States (including members of Congress) to begin making the transition to the post-liberation support phase of the struggle that was to unfold up to and beyond the elections of 1994.

Donor tendencies at the time, corporate and non-profit alike, were to support corporate responsibility initiatives within South Africa, education and training exchanges, internships and scholarships and various activities related to the peaceful transformation of South African society within the framework of the Sullivan Principles and the CAAA. Funding the United States anti-apartheid community=s transition to post-liberation struggle solidarity engagements with legalized liberation movements, now operating above ground in South Africa, was not in the cards.

Here the balance of engagement at the level of civil society engagement between the United States and South Africa shifted markedly toward the corporate sector and more established interests in a way that was to influence the later development of the BNC. A harbinger of things to come may have been the seminal 1991 Notre Dame conference where the leaders of the ANC, PAC and the IFP were brought together with leaders of the American corporate community to commence a dialogue on the transition and future investment policies. This conference was organized by current USSALEP chairman, Oliver Williams (who recently published *Economic Imperatives and Ethical Values in Global Business: The South Africa Experience and International Codes Today*).

### ***The anti-Apartheid constituency outmanoeuvred***

This trend was also foreshadowed in 1993 when elements of the anti-apartheid constituency began to confront the need for a shifting of gears from a sanctions to a pro-investment posture; a transition that was coordinated with the ANC. With the Organization of South Africans in America and Canada (OSAAC) acting as a catalyst, an initiative was mounted in the law offices of the late distinguished judge Leon Higgenbotham and Ted Sorenson to establish a South African-American Chamber of Commerce (SAACC). The short-lived SAACC initiative was intended to build linkages between a racially fractured South African business community,

with a particular focus on black organizations like the National African Federated Chambers of Commerce (NAFCOC) and the Federation of Business and Consumer Organizations (FABCOS), and United States business, especially the African-American business community. It was ruthlessly pre-empted and overwhelmed in short order by the NFTC.

The NFTC's Sullivan Signatory group was transformed in short order into a United States-South Africa Business Council (USSABC). It was the precursor to the United States Department of Commerce-sponsored United States-South Africa Business Development Committee (USBDC) which became one of the late Secretary of Commerce Ron Brown's key instruments in Commerce's approach to South Africa's transition. The USBDC, in turn, foreshadowed the formation of the BNC and was one of its first constituent committees. In organizing the BNC's outreach to the South African and American business communities, the initiative fell to none other than the NFTC/USSABC.

In hindsight, the anti-apartheid constituency's bid to play in this league was probably doomed by the lack of a united black South African business community to plug into. Further, corporates did not need a South African-American Chamber of Commerce alongside the already existing American Chamber of Commerce in Southern Africa (AMCHAM). More importantly, they had already committed their substantial resources to the NFTC's Sullivan Signatory corporate responsibility process; one that was easily transformed into a business council with ready-made linkages in South Africa. These included the likes of Amcham, Nafcoc, Fabcos, the South African Chamber of Business (SACOB), the Afrikaans Handelsinstitut (AHI) and progressive business lobbies like the influential Consultative Business Movement (CBM) and allied organizations like the Urban Foundation (which would later merge with the CBM to form the Center for Development Enterprise which CBM would be succeeded by the National Business Initiative). Rounding out this emerging United States-South Africa business lobby was the entry onto the scene of the United States Corporate Council on Africa at which Thabo Mbeki, as Deputy President, was to unveil his African Renaissance vision in 1998.

The realignment of United States-South African business relationships and the fading momentum of the anti-apartheid activist constituency in the United States was spurred on by two developments: the ANC's announcement that all sanctions against South Africa should be lifted in anticipation of a conclusion to the Kempton Park negotiations; and the move to elections in 1994 to install a transitional government of national unity and constituent assembly. The positioning of American big business via the NFTC to up-tempo and/or re-enter the South African market on the one hand, and the crisis of identity facing the anti-apartheid movement on the other, were indicative of the new bilateral relationship forming between the United States and a new South Africa that would be heavily weighted toward economic, trade and investment issues.

## *South Africa: The liberation movement=s euphoric crisis of identity*

If the American anti-apartheid movement was facing an identity crisis, it was not alone. The ANC was undergoing its own identity crisis. South African critics on the left of Pretoria=s current economic policies and priorities have reflected on the 1990-94 interregnum and the early post-1994 election aftermath as a watershed in the ANC=s identity as a liberation movement. What is depicted is a transition from a pro-Soviet liberation movement wedded to a socialist restructuring of South Africa=s >racial capitalist= economy to a post-struggle liberation movement regime that has committed itself to the neo-liberal >Washington Consensus;= in the words of Patrick Bond, of the University of the Witwatersrand=s Business School, an ANC government that Atalks left and governs right.@<sup>5</sup>

If the end of apartheid sounded the death knell on an anti-apartheid activism that has been unable to reinvent itself in fashioning new relationships with South African government and civil society, the ending of the Cold War on American terms and the related disintegration of the Soviet Union posed equally daunting challenges of reinvention for the ANC. Here, it might be said that the ANC and the new South Africa=s reconstruction and development became hostage to the >soft= power of American global dominance characterized as the pervasive influence of free market globalization. If, for the sake of argument, neo-liberalism has captured the ANC, the critical question becomes one of whether or not an ANC-led post-apartheid South Africa could have avoided this fate. Is a course correction that poses less cognitive-dissonance within the ANC and its alliance possible within the context of United States-South African >bi-nationalism=? And what challenges do these tensions and contradictions within a South Africa led by the ANC and between South Africa and the United States pose for the bilateral relationship within the larger African and global contexts?

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<sup>5</sup> P. Bond, *Elite Transition: From Apartheid to Neoliberalism in South Africa*, Pluto Press, 2000, p. 192.

As American business was gearing back up to engage a post-apartheid South Africa, the ANC=s navigating of its changing relationship with the United States government, private sector and civil society was unfolding within a context of political trauma that the ANC was experiencing in its relationship with Moscow. Ousted SACP critic, Dale McKinley, in describing what he terms the ANC=s Ainternational politics of accommodation,@ argues that Athe ANC was all too ready to enlist the anti-apartheid support of the international community in its broad national democratic revolution without a corresponding analysis, reflected in practice, of the specific strategic agenda of certain international actors,@ being content instead to adopt the tactic of talking to its different constituencies with different voices.@<sup>6</sup> However, he does credit the ANC with not being Aunaware that the actions of certain western governments were designed to push for an accommodationist solution to apartheid.@<sup>7</sup> The ANC, however, was not alone in confronting such a predicament although its situation was perhaps more acute than that of other African and Third world actors.

The Gorbachev era ushered in a new fluidity of shifting terrain for African, Asian and Latin American revolutionary nationalist movements and governments amid accelerating Soviet-American accommodation. Superpower accommodation largely dictated what McKinley calls the ANC=s Ainternational politics of accommodation.@ And accommo-dation at the Washington-Moscow level pretty much involved in throwing out the script that all state and non-state actors had shared over the past three to four decades, especially as it was clear that Moscow was beating hasty retreats from the verities of Marxian orthodoxy and relationships that had governed the Soviet elite since World War II. Movements like the ANC were suddenly without leverage, the leverage that East-West superpower competition had provided.

As Vladimir Shubin makes clear in his account of Moscow=s relations with the ANC, the Perestroika changes were the source of more than a little tension between the ANC and Moscow as the latter began restructuring its relations with its former clients. For the ANC, this was probably compounded by what Shubin describes as an illusion that began gaining currency during the last years of Gorbachev=s rule among AMoscow academic and political circles, that all major world problems could be solved by an agreement between Moscow and Washington.@<sup>8</sup> This included proposals to guarantee jointly a political settlement in South Africa, including rights for whites. It was as if Gore Vidal=s Aklutzes of North@ notion of a Soviet-American condominium was actually being taken seriously in the Kremlin.

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<sup>6</sup> D.T. McKinley, *The ANC and the Liberation Struggle*, Pluto Press, 1997, p.56.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 57.

<sup>8</sup> V. Shubin, *ANC: A View From Moscow*, Mayibuye Books-UWC, 1999, p. 371.

The USSR=s alliance with an ANC in transition, which was far from clinching a negotiated settlement with Pretoria, did not prevent Moscow from jumping the gun to begin striking its own accommodation with South African capital as attested by the ADurr and De Beers@ controversies.<sup>9</sup> Soviet bloc relations had deteriorated to a point of >every man for himself= in cutting deals with global capitalism as the Soviet Union disintegrated into the Commonwealth of Independent States, with Russia finding itself in the same semi-developed/developing >emerging market= boat as the new South Africa that was in the process of being born.

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<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 373-377. Entire chapter devoted to ADurr and De Beers.@



The ANC and its alliance partners and the South African left generally have yet to recover from these revolutionary changes in the international balance of forces that suddenly had them playing from a different deck of cards dealt by the >casino economy= of neo-liberal globalization; not that this lets the ANC and its economic gurus off the hook in terms of the critiques of Mckinley, Bond et al.<sup>10</sup> But this background does pose serious questions about where Mckinley=s proposed Acorresponding analysis, reflected in practice, of the specific strategic agenda of certain international actors@ would have led or could still lead. In short, in terms of its relations with the West, as the Cold War was winding down, did the ANC realistically have any choice but to pursue an Ainternational politics of accommodation@ with the main consideration being not whether to accom-modate as much as on what to accommodate and the terms of accommodation?

An unsentimental reading of what was produced at Kempton Park would suggest a problematic >win-win= outcome for black South Africa=s aspirant bourgeoisie and white South African capital. It reflected the radically changed post-Cold War international balance of forces impinging on the local environment: at the global level, a victory for South African white capital as the local outpost of a triumphant international capitalism; at the local level, a qualified victory for the national liberation movement spearheaded by the ANC. Yet the ANC found itself constrained by the global leverage of South African capital in alliance with international capital, thereby placing limits on transformation of the local South African political economy.

From a comparative perspective of American and South African racial political economy, the predicaments of their respective black/national liberation struggles are instructive. The militant black movement in the United States became a spent force through a combination of its own internal weaknesses interacting with the repressive and co-optive forces of the state and economy. The relatively non-ideological and pragmatic black middle class, devoid of its own independent public policy perspective (defining the terms of national as opposed to purely racial integration), was easily seduced into a politically conformist arrangement; one of co-optive domination within the prevailing two-party system.

In South Africa the black wing of the national bourgeoisie, through the agency of an ANC that was becoming neither socialist nor capitalist, achieved local political ascendancy in the wake of a capitalist victory in the Cold War. This made it vulnerable to the co-optive dominance of the forces of a global capitalism carrying with it the racial overtones of an international stratification of power; one reflecting Euro-American and East

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<sup>10</sup> To Dale Mckinley=s *The ANC and the Liberation Struggle* and Patrick Bond=s *Elite Transition*, one can add Hein Marais= *South Africa, Limits to Change: The Political Economy of Transformation*, Zed/UCT Press, 1998.

Asian-Pacific supremacy. This latter prospect informs the essential ambivalence in the post-apartheid South African-American relationship and the divergent strategic interests of South Africa and the United States flowing from such tensions.

At the local level of the unfolding South African drama, navigating the terms of accommodation is, in essence, what Hein Marais' Apolitical economy of transformation' spearheaded by Patrick Bond's Aelite transition' is all about as interpreted in their seminal critiques of the evolution of ANC economic policy. This evolution started with the ANC's initial Agrowth through redistribution' focus which was intended to galvanize its different constituencies. It has travelled to the point of the current Growth, Employment and Redistribution (GEAR) policy which has had the opposite effect of straining the cohesion of the ruling Tripartite Alliance. Along the way and several interactions and interventions later involving the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the world Bank and local corporate influences (like Sacob, Nedcor/Old Mutual, Sanlam and the Mount Fleur Scenarios), this process would witness the marginalizing of the MERG's *Making Democracy Work: A Framework for Macro-Economic Policy in South Africa* to the rise and decline of the Reconstruction and Development Program (RDP) before its absorption into Gear.<sup>11</sup>

The Gear emphasis has accented the generating of South Africa's renewal through an aggressive trade and investment strategy. This emphasis has prioritized foreign investor-friendly policies amid a self-imposed structural adjustment aimed at securing the country's free market fundamentals. This has been described by Idasa researchers Sean Jacobs and Nyameko Mgoqi as an extension of the political settlement to the economic sphere as the ruling elites in the ANC had achieved a compromise with business elites (both local and global) on the management of the economic transition.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> This is a very brief summary of policy and political trends associated with the evolution of ANC economic policy outlined by Marais in *South Africa, Limits to Change*, Chapter 5.

<sup>12</sup> Awhy the issue of race is moving to the centre of political debate,@ *The Star*, Sept. 29, 2000. Ainequalities seem ever more obvious as the gilt wears off the >Rainbow Nation= idealism.@ Perhaps one of the best concise analyses putting into perspective the recent past and contemporary South African politics of race following the political transition of April 1994.

### *The dilemmas of the economic transition*

The crucial question is one of whether there is sufficient latitude within the parameters of this compromise with local and international capital to credibly address the socio-economic needs of the black majority; a dilemma that has not gone unnoticed by American officials. The United States, after all, is a party to this compromise. One time aide to former Kansas Senator, Nancy Kassebaum and USAID/Pretoria official, Steve Brent, observed in a 1996 *Foreign Affairs* article that while a private sector growth is the only long-term solution for South Africa's economic straits. To generate the political capital necessary to pursue long-term growth, the government will have to combine economic liberalization with effective interventions to help the black majority. Effective interventions striking at the very heart of a growing policy debate within the Tripartite Alliance about what should constitute the agenda of a developmental state.<sup>13</sup>

This debate has taken on added urgency over the past year in light of the political turmoil in Zimbabwe stemming from the unresolved land issue which has resonated in South Africa. Here Brent's *Foreign Affairs* article was prescient. As in the case of Zimbabwe the new government in Pretoria was not, at least initially, facing a revolution of rising expectations as an intensive studies of black opinion since the election show a surprising patience and realism.<sup>14</sup> The risk foreseen by Brent was in the medium to long-term as fourteen years after its change, Zimbabwe is seeing a black backlash against white domination of the economy, fuelled by economic stagnation, lack of jobs, and lack of black ownership.<sup>15</sup> What was seen as significant was that this backlash has occurred even though the Zimbabwean government succeeded in raising social welfare, particularly in education, and increasing black employment in the public sector.<sup>16</sup> The lesson drawn was that Zimbabwe's experience shows the limits of statism as a method to uplift a disadvantaged majority.<sup>17</sup>

To the limits of statism could be added the limits of black patience in a racial and socio-economically polarized society in the absence of a coherent, focused, coordinated and mobilized anti-poverty offensive. This has been a major weakness in ANC strategy which, to some extent, stems from the trap it had to impose on itself in the form of an internally fragmented government of national unity. The transitional GNU put a premium on ministerial and departmental sovereignty at the expense of

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<sup>13</sup> B. Stephen Brent, *A Tough Road to Prosperity*, @ *Foreign Affairs*, March/April 1996, p.114.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 116.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 117.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 117.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, p.117.

strong central executive management and policy planning; a circumstance which is yet to be reversed.

However, at the time of writing, the recent appointment by President Mbeki of Prof Wiseman Nkuhlu as his senior adviser and the release of the Cyril Ramaphosa report on Black Economic Empowerment signalled the possibility that some major course corrections could be in the offing. But this is getting ahead of the story in terms of what South African critics on the left reflect on as having been a retreat by the ANC from what, at least implicitly, was a socialist corollary to the >national democratic revolution= under internal and external pressures to embark on a post-apartheid path to wholesale economic liberalization.

The Clinton administration entered the fray with a policy toward Africa that eclipsed the usual forward role of State Department=s Africa Bureau with the global commercial offensive of late Commerce Secretary Ron Brown. Given the force of Brown=s campaign and his focus on Africa, South and southern Africa in particular, Washington can be said to have exerted a major influence on how the ANC government pursued its domestic and international politics of accommodation. At least in so far as Pretoria=s relations with the United States were concerned. In the process, the fact that the low-key career foreign service officer, George Moose became the first African-American to head up the State=s Africa Bureau amounted to an anticlimax next to the dynamism of wheeler-dealer Brown who was the first African-American to head up Commerce (and was a product of the moderate Aequal opportunity@ wing of the American civil rights movement, coming up through the ranks of the National Urban League before joining the staff of Senator Edward Kennedy and subsequently going into his own lucrative and controversial law practice involving the representation of a wide range of foreign clients). Brown would take the lead in breathing life into the Clinton move to enshrine the new United States-South African relationship within the structure of a Binational Commission through his United States-South Africa Business Development Committee (BDC).

### 3. SOUTH AFRICAN-AMERICAN BINATIONALISM: THE MBEKI-GORE PERIOD

At a symbolic level at least the launching of BNC, under the co-chairmanship of United States Vice-President Al Gore and South African Deputy President Thabo Mbeki appeared to signal both countries' mutual commitment to building a special bilateral relationship. For Washington the BNC was a key component in a policy that would see the normalization of United States-South African relations from one of politically charged controversy linked to navigating around the racial system of apartheid to one focused on consolidating democracy and cultivating new investment opportunities for American business.

Save for the peacekeeping debacle in Somalia, and its delayed reactionary impact on Clinton's Africa policy, South Africa's transition promised to make Africa policy more manageable politically. It removed the number one explosive issue in United States-African relations that carried reverberations domestically in terms of American race relations. Of course, the down side for the African affairs community was that Africa policy which had always been at the bottom of United States foreign policy priorities would recede even further onto the back burner. This would especially be the case given President Clinton's proverbial aversion to foreign policy. However, this was offset by the Afro-optimistic glow that the South African 'miracle' under the magnanimous and charismatic leadership of Nelson Mandela was casting on Africa, especially on the Southern African Development Community (SADC).

Not just South Africa, but the entire Southern African sub-region was suddenly becoming the 'flavour of the month' as Africa's one bright spot as a bastion of democratic stability on an otherwise deeply troubled continent. Thus, South Africa's transition provided the opportunity for shifting Africa policy more toward a focus on promoting trade and investment relations in the continent as a whole (with particular focus on South and southern Africa) within the context of a global strategy of expanding opportunities for American business.

#### *Binational beginnings: Getting down to Business as usual*

The NFTC/USSABC under Dan O'Flaherty gave momentum to Brown's strategy as it pertained to the United States-South African BNC. On the United States side, this structure served as the secretariat of the BDC, chaired by O'Flaherty, a Rhodes Scholar Oxfordite like President Clinton. On the South African side, there was no counterpart structure to assume a comparable role, a state of affairs that reflected the disarray of a racially polarized and politically fragmented business community. This situation, from the very outset, contributed to a perception of South Africans responding in a reactive as opposed to a proactive mode in its BNC relationship with their American counterparts.

The initial meeting to structure the BDC took place in Washington in September 1994 (at the time of the inaugural meeting of the BNC of which it was a part). South Africans went into this meeting divided as to how the BDC should be structured. The delegation, which did their caucusing in the office of former South African Ambassador Harry Schwarz of the South African Democratic party (DP), reflected a motley mix of the South African business community: big and small, black and white (including blacks representing major United States transnationals) women as well as men. Nevertheless, there was an initial enthusiasm about the BDC's potential to pick up from where the Sullivan Signatories had left off. The focus could now shift to aggressive investment promotion in the United States starting with those firms that had disinvested, coupled with taking United States-South African corporate responsibility to a new level within the policy framework of the RDP.

During the Sullivan Signatory period, the remaining American corporates had played a major role in supporting Nafcoc, sponsoring the Black Management Forum (which was housed in the offices of Mobil Oil, which reportedly also paid the salary of its first executive director). Other corporates sponsored particular capacity-building initiatives at institutions like the Baragwanath Hospital in Soweto and at the medical HDI, Medunsa. The Sullivan Signatories provided roughly 22% of the start-up funding for the Urban Foundation, mobilized support for black universities through the establishment of bi-national university foundations and gave funding impetus to such initiatives as Nthato Motlana's Get Ahead Foundation, the precursor to his black economic empowerment momentum post-1994.

It was reasoned that if all of this activity and capacity, already mobilized, could be transferred into the BNC/BDC, a major bridgehead would be established from which the United States and South African business communities could mount joint initiatives on behalf of the RDP. Coupled with the contacts that many of the black South African BDC members had in the United States Congress with the Black Caucus and its white associate members in the House and Senate, a ground-swell of post-apartheid support for South Africa's development could be generated. The apparent sticking point was the issue of a South African BDC permanent secretariat as a counterpart to the NFTC/USSABC-dominated secretariat. DTI apparently did not want to fund it. Neither did they want to authorize fundraising in the private sector to get it established. This in turn would raise the question about who in the private sector was going to run such a vehicle. Sacob was keen to take it on but this raised obvious political problems associated with the race relations of South African business and government's preference for black if not ANC leadership and control.

Government did not trust its indigenous big business community. If they were allowed to fund it, >he who pays the piper calls the tune= was a threat to whoever would be setting the agenda on the South African side of the binational relationship. In fact, the United States experience was instructive in the way the NFTC muscled the anti-apartheid constituency out of the post-sanctions picture. The African-American business community, mean-while, felt

alienated from the big business-dominated agenda, including non-NFTC business lobbies on Africa like the Corporate Council. For several years Black Caucus veteran Charles Rangel of Harlem (N.Y.) had tried to motivate the start-up of an alternative structure to the NFTC/USSABC and the Corporate Council on Africa, though these efforts have never come to fruition.

For Washington this was all child=s play. In the American tyranny of the white majority (albeit a shrinking one), the political leadership of the two-party system (which Al Gore=s cousin, Gore Vidal calls a one-party state of the >Property Party= with Democrat and Republican wings) are well integrated into the white corporate private sector from which they receive their funds, although the Democrats do have their trade union allies in the AFL-CIO. In post-apartheid South Africa, white corporate dominance is contested and these tensions were bound to spill over into the politics of the South African side of the BNC. Whatever the merits of these struggles, the initial enthusiasm, according to some observers, has dissipated with a cooling off at the bi-national business and investment levels, including black-to-black business ties. It has only been when BNC meetings take place that the BDC is activated.

For the time being the South African BDC secretariat resides with Investment South Africa (ISA), initially a non-profit agency owned by DTI which has now been absorbed into the Department as part of its transformation (ahead of the eventual implementation of the Presidential Review Commission on the Public Service recommending a merger of DTI=s trade component with Foreign Affairs into a Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade B assuming this recommendation is still relevant). ISA (now Trade & Investment SA) forms part of a nexus with Amcham and the Ron Brown Centre (the United States Commercial Office in Illovo), the latter serving as a Aone-stop facility@ where all information on United States-South African trade and investment can be accessed.

From the South African side of this arrangement, government has decided to maintain a tight reign on the South African private sector=s influence in the BNC, presumably until transformation gains enough momentum to assure sufficient black business influence to offset the dominance of white capital. Here, the current politics of integration between Sacob and Nafcoc spearheaded by Sacob=s Chairman Humphrey Khoza and its CEO, Kevin Wakeford, are to be closely watched. Otherwise, the South African business community is far from being able to speak with one voice to its American counterparts or to assume a leadership role in organizing a private sector voice within SADC (which becomes more urgent with the SADC Free Trade Protocol going into effect).

In any case the BDC was eventually transformed into the BNC=s Trade and Investment Committee (TIC). As the BDC, the focus was four-fold: removing obstacles to two-way trade and investment; improving conditions for commercial activity in both countries; implementing promotional programmes to assist their respective business communities to enter the other=s markets; and articulate

additional steps which may or ought to be taken to facilitate and encourage the growth and development of commercial relations. There are two additional components in this mix. There is the Southern African Enterprise Development Fund (SAEDF) financed through USAID. SAEDF was established in 1995 after a long series of consultations and hearings in the United States Congress about an appropriate African counterpart to vehicle like the Polish-American and Hungarian-American Enterprise Funds. They were established with the United States Defence Department as opposed to USAID funding. Finally rounding out everything, is the bilateral Trade & Investment Framework Agreement signed into effect on February 18, 1999 at the end of the last meeting of the BNC in Cape Town. It addresses trade issues and, where necessary, removes obstacles to free trade between the two countries. Under this Agreement there is a Council on Trade and Investment chaired by the United States Trade Representative and DTI.

In Washington the Department of Commerce's Investment and Trade Administration's Office of Africa is the TIC point of contact with Commerce coordinating a TIC interagency working group representing 13 United States government agencies in the trade and investment area for identifying issues to be addressed and deliverables to be announced at TIC meetings. The following United States agencies make up the United States side of the TIC: the Departments of Commerce, State, Labour, Energy and Treasury; the United States Trade Representative; the Trade and Development Agency (TDA); the Overseas Private Investment Corporation (OPIC); USAID; USIA; EXIM Bank; the National Security Council (NSC) and the White House. This group as the United States Department of Commerce Interagency Task Force on South Africa, has existed since before the electoral transition of April 1994. It started meeting periodically since the fall of 1993 and has been largely responsible for crafting the commercial component of the United States relationship with post-apartheid South Africa.<sup>18</sup>

Commerce's interagency process foreshadowed the BNC's differentiation, in consultation with South African counterparts, into six additional committees on: Agriculture; Conservation, Environment and Water; Human Resources Development and Education; Science and Technology; Sustainable Energy; and Defence. The Defence committee was added to the BNC at the tail end of the Armscor controversy which initially threatened to destabilize the entire relationship. Being held legally liable for the old regime's violations of an arms embargo that the ANC itself was at the forefront of promoting was a bitter pill of unappreciated irony for the new South Africa to swallow. But the costs were double-edged and an early example of how the checks and balances of United States legalism can veto even the political preferences of United States policy. For, in this instance, the overriding legal imperatives worked to keep the United States out of the bidding on the South African arms megapackage that many of its NATO partners compete in.

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<sup>18</sup> This and much else in terms of details on the BNC and its history is available from the Internet, specifically: <http://usinfo.state.gov/regional/bnc/usafrica.html>.



In the end, the Armscor imbroglio turned out to be more of a hiccup than a major obstacle to the emerging bi-national relationship as the constituent committees have gone on to rack up a number of sectoral agreements and to facilitate South African participation in a number of United States government programs (which enumerated on the BNC website). BNC sectoral-based functionalism together with the trade and investment nexus involving the Ron Brown Center, Amcham and the Southern African Enterprise Development Fund served to complement and round out the other major component of the United States presence in South Africa: the USAID mission which was established to implement the black developmental dimensions to the CAAA and which, in essence, was a democratization as opposed to a developmental agent.

### ***USAID, the contradictions of nonracialism and >Peanuts=***

While the BNC relationship has is still a relatively recent dimension in United States-South African ties, the guts of the bilateral relationship has been in the USAID program. USAID/South Africa has inspired no small amount of controversy during its tenure. Its initial *raison d=etre* was to work within the framework of the CAAA which placed it automatically in a hostile relationship with the apartheid regime. Prior to April 1994 the aid program worked entirely through non-governmental organizations (NGOs), focusing on human rights, community leadership development, education and, closer to the election, voter education and electoral support. There existed a modest programme in housing, private sector development and health.

Signalling the onset of a transition into competitive race relations, the USAID mission came increasingly under scrutiny regarding its funding of black South African and black American organizations. This emerged in the form of a manufactured controversy initiated by disgruntled white USAID mission employees who charged the mission with reverse racism@ for favouring black over white South African organizations and African-American organizations and institutions on the United States. White South African or white-led NGOs had always been in a privileged position as a result of apartheid which favoured whites at the expense of blacks who were premeditatedly and criminally underdeveloped. Integral to redressing the legacies of apartheid is the obvious need to focus on building up black leadership skills and organizational capacities rather than remain with a situation in which blacks must be dependent on the liberal goodwill of white (and to a lesser extent, Indian and coloured) professional, intellectual and managerial expertise in the perpetuation of a paternalistic culture of race relations.

As to African-American organizations and institutions, these had always been on the margins of African area studies and international education and developmental programming. Yet, because of black America=s pan-African heritage linked to the rise of African nationalism and liberation movements on the continent (alongside its own experiences and struggles with racism in the

United States), there was a long overdue and legitimate need for this connection to be made and, indeed, to become a centrepiece of American policy and programming in the support for South Africa=s democratic transition. To be sure, this is a process that in some instances was sadly mishandled in ways that played into the hands of certain anti-black affirmative action/empowerment propagandists. There were times when the politics of private voluntary organization (PVO) fundraising interacting with the politics of USAID contracting within the Washington environment resulted in some unfortunate programmatic mismatches that were not to the credit of programming African-American involvement in South Africa=s transition.

But the thrust of USAID policy in favouring black South Africans and African-Americans was a moral and political imperative to the credit of former USAID/South Africa mission director Leslie >Cap=Dean and his deputy at the time Bill Ford, backed up by the head of Africa/AID in Washington, former Ambassador John Hicks. At the time, the manufactured controversy, as it unfolded in the mainstream and establishment press in the United States and South Africa, was overwhelmingly one-sided. This was a reflection of the race-based power differentials in the American and South African newspaper industries projected through the pundits and correspondents who are the purveyors of the wisdom of the day. The reverse racism@ charges were widely disseminated by the less than objective commentary and reportage of Simon Barber of *Business Day* and picked up by liberal journalists of American newspapers like former *Washington Post* South African correspondent Paul Taylor who should have known better.

What was particularly damaging about this episode was that it unfolded at a time when affirmative action in the United States had long been under withering assault in the media and in neo-conservative to extreme right political circles in and outside government. This assault formed part of the conservative reaction that wrested control of Congress from the Democrats in 1995 and which animated the foreign affairs obstructionism of Senate Foreign Relations Committee Chairman Jesse Helms of North Carolina, a relic of the old southern oligarchy that used to control both houses of Congress in the run-up to the civil rights revolution of the 1960s. USAID/South Africa was placed on the defensive where its officials had to justify what should have required no justification; their implementation of the USAID programme before congressional committees.<sup>19</sup> Not that USAID=s programme in South Africa has been above criticism.

Although USAID has, by the very nature of its original mandate in South Africa, been a strong supporter of civil society, the transition of its funding to government whereby NGOs were, in some

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<sup>19</sup> Testimonies before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee took place on December 14, 1995 involving USAID officials, J. Brian Atwood, the Administrator as well as >Cap=Dean, USAID/S. Africa Mission Director.

cases, forced to go through departments that were very much caught up in the difficult task of getting their different acts together exacerbated the challenges of sustainability confronting NGOs. At the same time, local NGOs have, at times, had to compete with well-funded non-governmental American institutions and PVOs in situations that have generated no small amount of tension and bad feeling. To this can be added USAID's convoluted strategic objectives re-engineering interacting with a competitive bidding system that benefits contractors that have the capacity to churn out proposals in response to Requests for Proposals (RFPs).

These processes in turn are driven by the emergence of a State Department/USAID >global programmes= perspective that has advantaged generalist contracting organizations to the disadvantage of area specialist NGOs and institutions. On top of this are episodes that are studies all on their own of programme design and implementation imbrolios like the Tertiary Education Linkages Project (TELP), which again was caught up in some of the Areverse racism@ controversies that >Cap= Dean, Bill Ford and John Hicks had to fend off. Beyond that the Telp episode also involved a complex of interacting politics.

These involved USAID and its South African tertiary education clients among the black universities and technikons in terms of project design and an obscure process of choosing an appropriate American contractor in which expertise and track-record in African education did not appear decisive. On the other hand, USAID has had some relative successes. These have occurred in funding the start-ups of such governance NGOs as the Institute for Multi-Party Democracy (MPD), initially headed up by former Inkatha official Oscar Dhlomo and the South African Foundation for Public Administration and Management (SAFPUM). This also includes its backing for the African Center for the Constructive Resolution of Disputes (ACCORD). One could go further in discussing USAID/South Africa's mixed reviews but that goes beyond the scope and space of this assessment.

However the USAID experience is evaluated, the issue of South Africa as a recipient of development assistance is one that generates ambivalent feelings. In delivering an address before Amcham in February 1995, then United States Ambassador to South Africa, Princeton Lyman, felt moved to digress into a defence of the USAID programme after President Mandela's famous >peanuts= remark about the extent of American aid to his country. Compared with assistance to post-Soviet Russia, Lyman noted that A per capita economic aid to South Africa is nearly twice as much Yas to Russia Y Specifically, the three year commitment of economic aid which the United States made to Russia (again, not counting normal commercial credits), with its population of 150 million, was \$1.232 billion, while the United States commitment to South Africa was \$600 million for a population of 40 million.@<sup>20</sup> This was in

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<sup>20</sup> Princeton N. Lyman, Ambassador of the United States of America. United States-South African Economic Relations (or: Peanuts Are An American Success Story). Address to

reference to President Clinton's announcement of a three year aid commitment that would mark the beginning of the phasing out of the South Africa USAID program.

To a large extent, as the political transition has progressed in South Africa, the perception of the role of official development assistance (ODA) was, in Lyman's view, to compensate for the country's relative isolation throughout the sanctions years which deprived it of the latest developments in every field, from housing finance, to organizational development, to low-cost construction techniques, to fund-raising for higher education.<sup>21</sup> Hence, the linkages focus of USAID programmes like Telp and the SEGA-MESP programme for building economic policy and decision-making capacities.

Meanwhile the phasing out of aid would, in the expectation of many South Africans, be matched by a corresponding rise in foreign direct investment (FDI) levels. After all, as Lyman was at pains to stress, the driving force in South Africa's economy must be the private sector, a sentiment that dovetails with a strong South African sentiment against aid dependency.<sup>22</sup> For one thing, there is a sense that the west has aggressively manipulated its relationships between government and indigenous NGOs in a manner that has pitted the two against one another at the expense of civil society.

In a 1997 column, Moeletsi Mbeki and Gavin Andersson felt that there was a great deal that the new South African Government could have done in 1994 to shield itself against the manipulation of aid by western powers to leverage their influence over its future policies.<sup>23</sup> Among other things aid could have demanded that the new aid packages from the west be designed jointly with the local NGOs to ensure that the viability of local NGOs was not compromised by redirection of funds.<sup>24</sup> Otherwise, there is a wariness about ODA as an instrument of domination. As the late US Commerce Secretary Ron Brown put it, aid to South Africa is part of the US export strategy.<sup>25</sup>

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the AGM, American Chamber of Commerce, February 23, 1995. pp. 3-4.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, p.4.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, p.7.

<sup>23</sup> M. Mbeki & G. Andersson, Aid is a double-edged sword, *The Star*, Feb. 17, 1997.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, Feb. 17, 1997.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, Feb. 17, 1997.

Moreover, as Mbeki pointed out in a separate article focusing on the European Union and the Lomé relationship, Awhile the ANC sees South Africa as a poor country in need of help, the EU sees it as a competitor<sup>26</sup> which, as the South African government and private sector are already finding out, is the case with the United States and its industrial lobbies and special interests as well B including, in some cases, the ANC=s old United States trade union allies. The tug of war between the South African Health Ministry and United States pharmaceutical companies over the issue of the parallel importing of more affordable generic drugs has been instructive, as are the instances of United States industry antidumping protectionism against South African products such as steel. By the same token, Washington is wary of how the EU-South Africa Preferential Trade and Development Agreement will affect its market access which, at least in part, motivated the Clinton Administration=s backing of the bipartisan congressional initiative that finally produced the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA).

### ***A transition does not live by aid alone***

This hard-nosed competitive aspect of binationalism is the other side of the bilateral coin of instruments the Clinton administration began putting in place in 1993, and referred to by Lyman in his address to Amcham (i.e. Eximbank, the Trade and Development Agency=s setting aside of more than \$1 million per year to finance feasibility studies and other support services to American business, OPIC and its equity funds totalling \$150 million for new investments and joint ventures and the granting of the AGeneralized System of Preferences@ for South Africa). They were as much for the benefit of American business and commercial expansion as for the good of South Africa. Which is why Lyman implored that Athe relationship between our two countries should not be measured by aid levels aloneYRather we need to deepen the relationship in every arena@ which is where the BNC comes in.<sup>27</sup>

However, some would question whether, indeed, a deepening of the relationship from a purely bilateral government-to-government level to a genuinely binational one is occurring. For one thing, it is largely government-to-government driven and focused at an elite level of sectoral special interests as opposed to extending more expansively into a multidimensional people-to-people level; one that encourages broad-based constituency-building for a United States-South African relationship that recaptures and builds on the anti-apartheid era.

Prior to its becoming dormant during the period of change over from the Mandela to the Mbeki presidency and from the Clinton administration to either a Gore or Bush administration, the BNC did not reflect within its structure a capacity to deal jointly

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<sup>26</sup> M. Mbeki, ASA poor and in need of foreign assistance? Hardly!@ *The Star*, Feb. 12, 1997.

<sup>27</sup> Lyman, *op. cit.* P.10.

with such issues as the African Renaissance, which impinges both on United States and South African Africa policies, or such contentious but critical issues as globalization and the restructuring of the global order via such international institutions as the UN Security Council, the World Bank, the IMF and the WTO. At the same time the BNC=s existence has virtually pre-empted alternative non-governmental binational dialogue initiatives that could complement the BNC.

Meanwhile United States foreign direct investment in South Africa have not gained the momentum that South Africans had anticipated which is as much an issue now as when Lyman touched on it in his Amcham address five years ago. While pointing out at the time that in less than three years, the number of American companies doing business in South Africa has risen from 184 to approximately 500 today,@ he noted that there remained many serious unanswered questions by American business, for example, when exchange controls will be relaxed or removed, the extent of restructuring of the securities market, the Government=s competition policy, its framework for foreign investment, its new tax policy, its plans for restructuring the parastatal sector, and *its ability to balance expectations with tight fiscal and budgetary controls.*@ (italics added)<sup>28</sup>

This latter point revisits Steve Brent=s observation that the government will have to combine economic liberalization with effective interventions to help the black majority,@ a conundrum that bedevils Pretoria=s energetic investment promotion initiatives. There is some sense of frustration among some within the ambit of DTI that South Africans may be more preoccupied with development than in taking advantage of such opportunities as the recently enacted AGOA; the act being seen as a possible platform for more cooperation in the textile and agricultural sectors. On the one hand, there is impatience with what is still seen as a United States private sector >wait-and-see= attitude regarding South Africa=s investor friendly track record. This belies an eagerness to influence a redirection of American foreign investment (including corporate relocations) to South and southern Africa with particular focus on the smaller middle-range American companies.

On the other hand, there is a sense that South Africa, with its developmental problems, may not be ready to attract United States investment on the basis of the global trend toward a >new economy= based on knowledge and information production, processing and dissemination and intercontinental production systems. These trends in turn are accompanied by a propensity for transnational capital to penetrate national markets on a basis of mergers and acquisitions with no clear developmental benefit. The tendency is for investment to favour capital intensive as opposed to labour intensive strategies and development, one of the major down sides

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<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 8.

of neoliberal globalization in the developing world. Further, because of the Asian and Russian crises of two years ago, investors are seen as having become more sophisticated about risk and to have become risk adverse. This adds to the >wait-and-see= South Africa is experiencing from United States companies and a feeling in some quarters of a frustrating sense of misalignment between American private sector expectations of South Africa and South African expectations from the United States in terms of accelerated FDI.

#### **4. SOUTH AFRICAN-AMERICAN BINATIONALISM II: CONFLICTS OF INTERESTS?**

To what extent does this sense of Amisalignment@ carry over into the bilateral politics of South African and American foreign and security policy? Here one can hasten to add that there are no contentious foreign policy quarrels and disagreements between Pretoria and Washington although, no doubt, there is a substantial area where relations are on an >agree to disagree= footing. The ANC has carried with it into government a liberation movement network of anti-imperialist Third world allies and commitments based on the support it received from these quarters which it shows no signs of shedding. Nor should it. In many instances these are allies, like Cuba, Libya and Iran, that are and have been implacable foes of Washington and subject to United States sanctions.

In spite of the ending of the Cold War that shaped these ANC alignments of solidarity B rooted in Bandungian non-alignment B the North-South divide that always intersected with the old East-West struggle has not changed. (Indeed, during the current age of globalization they have become more salient although the >Global South= is by no means a monolith.) Moreover, some of these erstwhile cold war enemies of Washington like Moscow and Beijing are no longer enemies although an adversarial dimension to their relations with the United States remains.

In the case of the likes of Cuba, Libya and Iran, their relations with the United States are either undergoing transition toward some semblance of normalization or pressures are being exerted on Washington for normalization. Hence there is no reason why these alignments of the ANC should change because of a felt need to curry favour with Washington (as some among the South African opposition would counsel). This is especially so, given Pretoria=s interest in forging a strong >Global South= bloc to leverage the restructuring of the international system along lines more compatible with the interests of Africa and the developing world.

#### ***Navigating a foreign policy identity***

On the other hand, Pretoria has had to develop a sensitivity on how to navigate its >Global South= relations in ways that don=t unnecessarily place it on a collision course with Washington as

almost happened in the Syrian arms sales imbroglio of 1997, which strikes at the complex balancing act that has confronted South African foreign policy since 1994. This has, at times, created confusion as to Pretoria's foreign policy identity. This has particularly been the case with key powers in the NAM like India, which, in terms of its campaign against >nuclear apartheid= was critical of the ANC going along with the De Klerk regime's scrapping of South Africa's nuclear capability and its appearance to be doing the west's bidding on the issue of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NNPT).

As an African power on a continent that has tended to be marginalized in the current global dispensation, South African post-apartheid national interest compels an alignment within the international system that prioritizes Africa and the South (as articulated during Jackie Selebi's brief tenure as the Director-General of Foreign Affairs). Hence, the >G South= grouping Pretoria has forged with Nigeria, Egypt, India and Brazil which could serve as the point of departure for further elaboration into a >G 8= of the South, including China. It also explains the high priority that Mbeki gives to South Africa's tripartite diplomacy involving Nigeria and Algeria.

On the other hand, as many in the ANC are well aware, national interests also compel an outreach and accommodation with the >Global North= of Europe and North America based on the pragmatic dictates of growing the South and southern African economy through increasing foreign investment flows. Further, these dictates reflect the Eurocentric biases and power of a white business community in which many see themselves as an appendage of the >Global North= which they are increasingly eager to join in a rush to de-list their companies from the Johannesburg Stock Exchange (JSE).<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> C. Qunta, ACapital flight,@ *Business Day* Sept. 22, 2000, p. 13. Advocates government policy on offshore listings while S. African big business needs to consider restitution. Article is counterpoint to editorial on Finance Minister Manuel's rejection of Gold Fields merger (AManuel's wrong turn@).



These are undercurrents which Pretoria constantly has to weigh in determining whether or not it is in the national interest to lend approval for some of its corporate giants to list abroad and/or to make transnational mergers as in the controversial decision by the Department of Finance to block the Gold Fields merger with Franco-Nevada of Canada. Here, within the context of the compromise over the economic transition that Jacobs and Mgoqi allude to, local big business (in tacit alliance with western capital) has South Africa in a virtual blackmail situation. It is a predicament in which Pretoria is vulnerable to capital (white) flight while at the same time trying to bend over more than backwards to attract international capital to spur economic growth and generate jobs. Hence, a decision like the Gold Field=s rejection carries risks as a *Business Day* report clearly spelled out in no uncertain terms: Analysts in SA and abroad said Ygovernment=s intervention to block the deal would have a serious, negative effect on the way investors viewed SA gold companies and SA in general. (Italics added)<sup>30</sup> It continued: In particular, North American corporate and institutional investors were likely to become very wary of investing in SA mining.<sup>31</sup>

This bifurcated identity between black political power joined in uncomfortable matrimony with white economic power (in what one might call neocolonialism of a >special type=) is furthermore a source of South Africa=s tensions with the rest of Africa. This is especially the case within the southern and eastern African axis of SADC and Comesa (the Common Market of Eastern and Southern Africa) where many perceive South Africa to be a staging ground for the joint penetration of South African and northern capital into their markets at the expense of indigenous business interests; a perception, right or wrong, that is not helped by the black economic empowerment setbacks within South Africa that otherwise could form a basis for forging equitable pan-African business partnerships and joint ventures.

This dimension is increasingly salient given the many sided economic vested interests that underpin the unresolved conflicts within the SADC/Comesa axis extending from Angola to the Horn of Africa. If anything, one of the perverse consequences of South Africa=s transition on the rest of this vast intracontinental expanse has been the unleashing of an unprecedented scramble for enrichment by rival national bourgeoisies with or without extra-African >comprador= connections; all combining to add fuel to the raging fires of confrontation and destruction. It is on this fraught terrain where South African and American foreign policies are defining their relationships with one another and with a diverse range of African actors. Some exhibit more or less pro-United States leanings. Others are of uncertain alignment. All harbour feelings of ambivalence toward Pretoria. It=s almost as if

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<sup>30</sup> Amanuel ends \$3.7bn gold mine merger, @ *Business Day* Sept. 22, 2000 (front page).

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, Sept. 22, 2000, p.1.

a less oppressive white-ruled South Africa would be preferable to the current black incumbents!

For South Africa the going has not been easy. Pretoria's perpetually unenviable trick is to balance its engagement with the United States and with its African partners in such a manner as to avoid or minimize African perceptions of its coming across as Washington's surrogate on the continent. And here it has not always appeared as if Washington was sufficiently sensitive to Pretoria's predicament. Between 1994 and 1998 this predicament was exacerbated by the illegitimacy of the Abacha military regime in Nigeria. This left South Africa exposed as the only major sub-Saharan power with a credible government with which Washington could do business. Yet the ANC government's understandable reluctance and ambivalence about South Africa being thrust into a leadership role on the continent has become proverbial.

*The new South Africa and America's search for Africa's >New Bloc=*

Here there appears to be an ingrained cultural weakness among American foreign affairs policy wonks within and outside government. This expresses itself in the tendency to single out and anoint individual state actors (not unlike picking and choosing individual black, Hispanic and other minority group leaders for politically cooptive purposes) B whether they choose to be singled out or anointed or not B to fulfill a particular function in United States/Western global strategy. Hence such notions as Aregional influentials@ (Brzezinski) and Apivotal states@ (Chace, Hill, Kennedy).

South Africa's peculiar constraints, however, will not for the foreseeable future allow its political leaders the leeway to commit the country to a partnership role with the United States that is not mediated by its subregional role and commitments. Nigeria's political leaders, by comparison, have infinitely more latitude in this regard. This is because Nigeria's African identity as a sub-Saharan power has never been in doubt whatever else Nigeria's shortcomings are. Even still, Washington's strategy in Africa would be on a sounder footing if its partnership strategy accented the role of inter-African institutions and sub-regional blocs as opposed to individual state actors.

There is no way, for example, that South Africa could ever buy into a unilaterally designed and conceived security initiative such as the African Crisis Response Initiative (ACRI) apart from a collective decision by the OAU and SADC to endorse such a United States programme. By the same token, South Africa is not likely to accede to a Washington preference for it to become the headquarters of its other defence initiative, the African Centre for Strategic Studies (ACSS). Here, in fact, a follow-up to the AAI Arole of the military in democratization in Africa@ programme which had its last session in Maputo in June 15-18 1996, would have offered a more appropriate format for attracting SADC participation in an ACSS-type programme (which was, at least

partially, inspired by the AAI programme prior to the Institute's programmatic deconstruction and institutional contraction).<sup>32</sup>

For Pretoria, the defence committee it shares with Washington is sufficient in light of its access to and participation in other bilateral defence and security engagements (which includes the following: an agreement on Cooperation on Military Environmental Matters; a General Security of Military Information Agreement; joint development of a peace keeping simulation capability at the South African Joint Staff College through the United States Enhanced International Peacekeeping Capabilities programme; participation in the United States International Military Education and Training programme; and the establishment within the BNC of a Military Relations Working Group, a Programmes Working Group, an Acquisitions and Technology Working Group, and an Environmental Security Working Group). The fact that South Africa has entered into a BNC relationship with the United States is a statement in itself attesting to Pretoria's acknowledgement of the role that Washington sees it fulfilling within the broader context of its Africa policy.

Washington has been well advised, therefore, to balance its binational relationship with South Africa with a bi/multilateral link to SADC via the United States-SADC Forum, formally launched in Botswana on 14-15 April 1999. But here again, although the Forum was created to enhance relations between the United States and the members of SADC by dealing with political, economic, social and transnational issues that affect both the United States and the members of SADC, it has opened itself up to one night stand charges from critics like Simon Barber for its skirting the subregional conflicts and instabilities that plague SADC.

These are, of course, the continuing wars in Angola and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). Such a focusing of the Forum would presume a United States willingness to sit down with SADC as a collective and review progress toward the resolution of these conflicts, while factoring in the expectations and proposals of SADC leaders. Otherwise, the United States-SADC Forum may point in the right direction of how Washington should engage Pretoria's leadership potential without exposing it to the jealousies and

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<sup>32</sup> The role of the military in democratization in Africa program was the initiative of former AAI Executive Vice-President, Steve McDonald, currently head of the Goals for Americans Foundation. In conjunction with the South African office, a Southern African-American Peace and Security Dialogue Forum was proposed as a joint program with the Center for Defence Studies at The University of Zimbabwe.

suspicious of its neighbors. (*It might also serve as a useful model for organizing and managing United States-African relations with other continental subregions and subregional blocs like the Economic Community for West African States, the East African Community and the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development in East and Northeast Africa and perhaps a revived Great Lakes/Central African grouping.*)

### ***The rise and fall of Clinton's Entebbe co-prosperity sphere***

The potential contained in the Forum is to be contrasted with the much less successful variant of the Apivotal states@/Aregional influentials@ approach reflected in the failed AEntebbe Peace and Prosperity@ initiative in the Great Lakes. This was the centerpiece of President Clinton's tour of Africa in March-April 1998, including his historic state visit to South Africa. However, by the time the second war for the Congo had broken out five months later, it could be argued that Washington's Entebbe gambit had greatly complicated South Africa's relations within SADC. In the process SADC was destabilized politically, becoming divided virtually down the middle in a manner that undermined South Africa's leadership role; a situation that Pretoria has only been able to retrieve with the most painstaking diplomacy in the DRC and Burundi. The verdict is still out on this process.

The fly in the ointment may have been a Clinton itinerary that excluded a state visit to Zimbabwe to consult with President Robert Mugabe, Chairman of the SADC Organ on Politics, Defence and Security. Perhaps Washington was so star-struck by the prospect of being hosted by South African President Mandela that >Madiba Magic= blinded their normally acute sense of politico-diplomatic calculation. Or maybe this was intentional. Whatever the case, this oversight may have also been facilitated by an analysis of inter-African political dynamics in eastern and southern Africa that favoured an ascendant grouping that began receiving considerable and generally favourable coverage in western print media. Dubbed by Dan Connell and Frank Smyth as AAfrica's New Bloc,@ at its core, the grouping comprised Uganda, Rwanda, Ethiopia and Eritrea with Angola and South Africa seen as playing smaller roles.<sup>33</sup> These countries were seen as enjoying the Asympathies of Tanzania, Zambia, Zimbabwe and Burundi,@ and having ousted Mobutu, Athe bloc now seeks to topple the Islamist regime in Sudan and influence Chad, the Central African Republic and Somalia.@ <sup>34</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> D. Connell and F. Smyth, AAfrica's New Bloc,@ Foreign Affairs, March/April 1998, pp. 80-94. This article appeared prior to or at about the time of Clinton's March-April Africa tour.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 82. Later in the article, Connell and Smyth observed that Athe Clinton administration has embraced the blocs and its allies@ and that Asince 1995, United States army special forces have been training Kagame's

what emerges out of this picture is a new network of the anointed, heavily influenced by personalities; a confederation of pivotal states including a South Africa that, within this framework, was essentially isolated out of its southern African context. The salient feature of this environment being one in which Zimbabwe, as the sub-regional elder of the old Front-Line States (FLS) and whose President, chairing the FLS successor SADC Organ, had been relegated by Washington to a second string position among the supporting casts. This was bound to exacerbate already existing tensions between Pretoria and Harare. Thus were the fault lines in place for a reshuffling of the anti-Mobutu alliance when a second round of war broke out in the DRC, this time with former titular leader, Laurent Kabila being added to the cast of characters to be discarded by Anew bloc leaders Yoweri Museveni of Uganda and Paul Kagame of Rwanda.

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troops in Rwanda.

Following on the heels of President Clinton's visit to South Africa was his stop in Uganda to confer with Museveni. This was coupled with Museveni hosting the AEntebbe Summit for Peace and Prosperity@ which ended with the issuing of a communique on 25 March 1998. It was signed by Clinton and most if not all of the leaders of the East/Central African Great Lakes and Northeast African states: Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania, Rwanda, DRC.<sup>35</sup> This United States-backed >peace and prosperity sphere= began to unravel almost immediately. Disintegration started with the confrontation between Ethiopia and Eritrea before extending to the Rwanda-Ugandan invasion of the DRC in August after Kabila began embarking on a purge of Rwandan/Tutsi officials deployed in his political, military and security apparatus. The Kabila purge had unfolded against a backdrop of rising disaffection with him in the United States, alleged signs that the Clinton Administration might not mind his being replaced.

Whether or not Pretoria considered itself to be a part of this unravelling Anew bloc@ as depicted by Connell and Smyth at the time, they did appear to invest hope in the viability of the Entebbe >peace and prosperity sphere.= It would have enabled South Africa to relate to Washington in tandem with what appeared to be a credible grouping of states, thereby helping it avoid the rap of being Uncle Sam's surrogate. (And here it must be kept in mind that Abacha was still riding high in the saddle in Abuja after making himself indispensable by restoring democracy in Sierra Leone via Ecomog.)

In hindsight, however, this was a brittle alignment. It reflected the forging of a militarized confederacy of what might be called Aliberal autocracies@ shaped in the crucible of post-colonial struggles against African despotisms.<sup>36</sup> Their common denominator with one another and with Washington was their dedication to the military overthrow of the Islamist regime in Sudan. Here, Susan Rice, the first female Assistant Secretary of State for Africa (and the second black after Moose) apparently held a hard line position against those like the Under Secretary of State Thomas Pickering who reportedly favoured a political dialogue with

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<sup>35</sup> *Communique Issued at the end of Entebbe Summit for Peace and Prosperity, 25 March 1998, Entebbe, Uganda.*

<sup>36</sup> See: ADefending Democracy: Why Democrats Trump Autocrats,@ by John Shattuck and J. Brian Attwood in the same issue of *Foreign Affairs* (March/April 1998) where they take issue with editor Fareed Zakaria's proposal that Ainstead of coddling illiberal democrats, the United States should endorse >liberal autocracies= in less developed nationsY@p. 167.

Khartoum. In any case the upshot was an >unholy= alliance between the State Department Africa Bureau=s militarization of United States-Africa policy in Northeast Africa and the militarization of the politics of that subregion extending to the Great Lakes and to Angola.

Into this vortex of militarism entered Mugabe. As chair of the SADC Organ he was presented with a golden opportunity to insert himself back into an arena in which he had been wittingly or unwittingly shoved onto the sidelines by Washington=s Africa diplomacy with Pretoria=s witting or unwitting complicity.<sup>37</sup> After all, by now the DRC was a member of SADC and entitled to its protection. The Rwandan-Ugandan invasion of DRC was therefore sufficient justification from Mugabe=s perspective, for SADC to come to Kabila=s defence under the auspices of the SADC Organ, consensus or not.

This reinforcement of the trend toward the militarization of the Great Lakes within the framework of SADC was further reinforced by the collapse of the Lusaka Accord on Angola accompanied by Luanda's campaign for SADC=s military backing against UNITA. The result was the mutual defence pact between Zimbabwe, Namibia, Angola and the Congo with South Africa opting for negotiated political solutions to both the Angola and Congo conflicts. This made Pretoria come across, in effect, as the odd man out and appear to be in tacit alliance with the rump of the United States-backed Entebbe bloc, Uganda and Rwanda. Yet, on the issue of Angola, the Clinton Administration has done nothing to discourage the MPLA regime=s hard line against renewed negotiations with UNITA.

This position taken by Washington effectively weakened Mbeki=s position in favour of renewed negotiations amid the emergence of an Angolan peace movement in Luanda that makes renewed negotiations even more compelling from a moral if not *realpolitik* perspective. Thus, until recently, Pretoria has held to a moral and political high ground on Angola and the Congo that risked its politico-diplomatic isolation. That is, were it not for more recent developments that have shown up serious strains in the Kabila coalition, and which may favour of a South African strategy of repairing the unity of SADC.

### ***SADC unity, the DRC and repairing the Pretoria-Harare axis***

This would be based on Mbeki=s much maligned >quiet diplomacy= in response to the crisis in Zimbabwe; a crisis exacerbated, in the first instance, by Mugabe=s intervention to prop up Kabila. And it is his ruling party=s near defeat in the June parliamentary elections by the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) that has

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<sup>37</sup> Zimbabwe=s omission from Clinton=s 1998 itinerary is all the more curious since Secretary of State Madeleine Albright, according to Connell and Smyth visited the Anew bloc@ states in December 1997, including Zimbabwe.

eroded Mugabe=s patience with Kabila=s delaying tactics frustrating implementation of the Lusaka Agreement on the Congo peace process. So it may be that events are ultimately working out to Pretoria=s advantage. But one of the lessons to draw from the second war for the Congo is that the effectiveness of SADC as a sub-regional vehicle for responding to such crises depends on its unity which, in turn, hinges on the quality of the Pretoria-Harare connection. And this is a reality that must be respected by Washington.

South Africa and Zimbabwe constitute the two most powerful states and largest economies in southern Africa. Hence, SADC=s control over the sub-region=s destiny rests on a strong working relationship between Harare and Pretoria which, in turn, determines the extent to which external powers such as the United States and France would be able to unilaterally influence events in east, central and southern Africa. Whatever the outcome of Zimbabwe=s internal politics, it would appear to be in Pretoria=s national interest, and that of SADC and the sub-region as a whole that it moves toward a BNC relationship with Harare as a matter of priority. In the meantime a more cohesive SADC may be the necessary precondition to revisiting the task of conflict resolution in the Great Lakes and Angola.

The question is, how does one transform a political economy of conflict into a political economy of accommodation? This is where the United States and the West must play a decisive role. But the parameters of an inter-African peace settlement must come from the different African parties. Coming out of the special summit on the DRC following in the wake of the SADC summit in Namibia, Kabila appeared more than ever isolated, while South Africa for the first time appeared to be emerging out of its *cul-de-sac*. However, implementation of the Lusaka peace agreement on the DRC appears no nearer to implementation, as Kabila has continued holding out on the deployment of UN peacekeepers and the crucial Inter-Congolese Dialogue. How might this log-jam be broken?

Perhaps one piece of the puzzle is an incentive to Kabila and his increasingly strained backers, Zimbabwe, Namibia and Angola. In exchange for concessions from Kabila to let the internal dialogue among Congolese go forward along with the deployment of peacekeepers, Kabila would head up an interim government for a period of five years. This would be a term limit after which a fresh government headed up by a new leader elected out of the conclusion of the internal Congolese dialogue. If this interregnum headed up by Kabila could be made an interim government of national unity, including the rebel movements, so much the better. But the core of the interim regime would be a Kabila government. The outcome of the dialogue would form the basis for amending or rewriting the constitution of the DRC and setting in train the electoral transition, perhaps starting from the ground-up with local elections. The Joint Military Commission (JMC), including Zimbabwe, Namibia, Angola, South Africa, Uganda and Rwanda, could serve the oversight role of >contact group= *vis-à-vis* the interim government and the dialogue.



But such a framework begs the question of guaranteeing compliance from Uganda and Rwanda which is where the influence of South Africa and the United States becomes crucial. Uganda, for example, has applied for membership into SADC at a time when relations have been warming between Rwanda and Kenya. As a viable economy, there is a strong case for Uganda=s SADC membership, particularly from the larger vantage-point of building an African Economic Community (AEC). However, membership could be made conditional on a withdrawal of all Ugandan troops from the DRC. Rwanda would end up isolated unless Kagame and Museveni were able to agree to a joint withdrawal. Perhaps Rwanda along with Burundi could be offered membership in an expanded East African Community. More compelling for guaranteeing Rwanda=s as well as Uganda=s compliance in a modified Lusaka peace agreement would be the transformation of the JMC into a resuscitated Inter-State Security Commission (ISSC) for the Great Lakes which came into existence under Mobutu. Such a move would help bolster implementation of the Burundi peace settlement as well, which needs a wider sub-regional security framework to ensure its viability.

An additional dimension that could be factored into this mix is the revival of the Great Lakes Economic Community. This would, in turn, introduce a new set of inter-African dynamics associated with the re-launch earlier this year of the Conference on Security, Stability, Development and Cooperation for Africa (CSSDCA) in Abuja, Nigeria. Applied to the Great Lakes, CSSDCA could serve the JMC as a process for elaborating its own transformation into the ISSC as well as the revival of the economic community.

This could involve a monitoring and evaluation role for an SADC network of public policy think tanks involved in governance, peace and security issues within the framework of CSSDCA security and stability calabashes. In turn, the electoral processes could be overseen by the SADC Parliamentary Forum. This aspect in turn could lead to the eventual establishment of a Great Lakes parliamentary forum that would plug the Great Lakes peace process into the embryonic inter-African politics of African Union within the context of building a continental economic community from the integration of sub-regional economic blocs. Another dimension that may also need to be explored is a role for the Franco-African summit in light of the Goma faction of the Rally for Congolese Democracy (RCD) raising the need for French-speaking African involvement in the peace process.<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>38</sup> It was reported in *The Star* (28/09/00): AThe main rebel

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movement in the Democratic Republic of Congo yesterday said it wanted French-speaking African countries to be involved in talks aimed at ending the country's two-year civil war. Also see: F. Kornegay, Why SA must help to untangle Africa and Why the Great Lakes crisis raises the stakes in southern Africa, both in *The Sunday Independent*, respectively: Oct. 11, 1998 and November 3, 1996. Both propose a role for the Franco-African summit along with SADC and the East African Community in resolving Great Lakes conflicts.

For all the potential that such a peace process might hold, its success would be limited without major movements being made to resolve the war in Angola. Arguably the revenues that Angolan oil and Angolan and Congolese diamonds have generated to fuel weapons and military equipment acquisitions could become part of the funding formula for underwriting a comprehensive inter-African peace process (that should include the Sudan as well). In its outlines the foregoing possibilities flow from the logic of Pretoria=s peace diplomacy. The element of uncertainty in all of this is the extent to which South African initiatives, embedded as they would be in consultations within SADC, will be backed up by Washington. And this is a question that leads into trying to decipher the kind of United States-Africa policy that may flow from the Presidential electoral outcome in November.

### *The post-Clinton Africa terrain and the BNC*

Certainly there is little likelihood of any movement on a Great Lakes/Angola-centred inter-African peace process until a new administration has settled in in Washington. For ultimately, Washington may be required to exert decisive pressure on Uganda and especially Rwanda to guarantee their military disengagement from the DRC. Equally important from the standpoint of the bilateral relationship between South Africa and the United States is what the electoral outcome would mean for the future of the BNC. The outcome of elections for the Senate and the House of Representatives are equally important for determining how much leeway a Gore or Bush administration would have in executing foreign policy. Generally, Democratic presidents and Democrats in Congress have been considered more favorably disposed toward Africa than conservative Republicans in Congress and the White House.

From the standpoint of a Gore victory, the most important congressional electoral outcome would be for the Democrats to retake control of the Senate. This would mean an end of the tenure of North Carolina Senator Jesse Helms as Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and his foreign affairs obstructionism. Among other things, this could mean the paying up of United States dues to the UN with all that would mean in terms of bolstering peacekeeping in Africa. Otherwise, continued Republican control of both congressional houses, the Senate especially, will mean a continuation of the *status quo*. Then, much would depend on how much of a priority Africa will be on a Gore foreign policy agenda.

The rapport that Gore and Mbeki developed throughout their co-chairing of the BNC should mean getting down to business in resuming the binational relationship without much delay. But thus far, beyond Gore=s focus on combating the HIV/AIDS pandemic in Africa, there has been little indication of what the thrust of Gore=s policies would be. At the beginning of the year Vice-President Gore and his presumed Secretary of State, current UN Ambassador Richard Holbrooke, launched a high profile campaign against the pandemic that can only feed suspicions about a

simplistic and gimmicky focus on Africa that will evade the real challenges.

An HIV/AIDS-focused Africa policy would only feed Mbeki's justified suspicions about a western penchant to divert attention and resources from Africa's manifold development challenges of which HIV/AIDS is but an integral part only to conflate the pandemic as the overriding priority for Western attention. Part of the media's hammering of Mbeki on the HIV/AIDS issue is calculated to miss the point of the bigger picture and what is at stake. Apart from the pressing conflict resolution challenges that need tackling in Angola, the DRC, Sudan and Sierra Leone (and perhaps Cote d'Ivoire), high on Mbeki's list of priorities will be mobilizing western commitments behind his Marshall Plan for Africa, a priority shared by Nigerian and Algerian Presidents Obasanjo, Bouteflika and other African leaders. Such a plan appears to be emerging as the centrepiece of Mbeki's African Renaissance vision. This is the bigger picture. Should Gore win the Presidency in November it would remain to be seen if Mbeki, through his prior BNC relationship with Gore, would be able to influence the fashioning of a United States policy toward Africa that would be compatible with his vision.

It also remains to be seen, should Gore become President, whether his approach to the manning of his Africa policy apparatus will be driven by the same domestic political considerations that have driven Clinton's appointments. The last years of the Bush Administration and the Clinton years saw the emergence of a new breed of policy maker toward Africa B black and white alike B who have not been grounded in the southern African affairs constituency of the past. They are professional policy wonks, picked for reasons not relating to a background in Africa or South and southern Africa.

In the eyes of some, United States policy has suffered accordingly. Diversity in the narrowest sense of political correctness as opposed to diversity wedded to a substantive background of expertise and commitment on Africa is what the Clinton years will be remembered for. For starters, appointing current Kenyan Ambassador Johnny Carson as Assistant Secretary of State for Africa might signal a refreshing departure. Carson is the best for that post under either a Gore or Bush administration.

As for Gore's challenger, Texas Governor George W Bush, expectations are even lower, though there may be some silver linings. For one thing, a second coming of Bush might make for a more manageable foreign policy between the white House and Congress should the latter, the Senate in particular, remain under Republican control. A Democratic Congress on the other hand would not be nearly as obstructive to a Bush foreign policy and, in fact, might find opportunities to undertake initiatives that a moderate Bush administration might buy into. Still, there are no indications from those Bush has around him in his foreign policy

team of any serious interest in Africa, likely African-American female National Security Adviser, Condelezza Rice notwithstanding.

Retired Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Colin Powell might be something else altogether different. He is everyone's Secretary of State in a Bush administration. A man of almost Mandela-like stature within the American context, Powell could be expected to probably be a useful South African ally in an Administration that might otherwise be more influenced by oil producers like Nigeria and Angola. Another consideration going in Powell's favour as far as Africa is concerned is his son-of-weinberger military doctrine which is adverse to the deployment of United States troops in conflict situation unless there is a commitment to an overwhelming deployment of forces for quick entry and exit *a la* the Persian Gulf. In which case, a Secretary of State Colin Powell might want to see a stronger United States commitment to the UN than would normally be expected from a Republican administration. He might also favour a strong commitment to African peacekeeping capacity-building. In the Assistant Secretary for Africa post, although Carson would be the best bipartisan choice, the National Summit on Africa leadership group is likely to offer the summit's director, former Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Africa, Leonard H. Robinson, Jr. a protégé of Africare chief, C. Payne Lucas.

Whoever is elected in November, the prudent course as far as United States-South Africa policy is concerned, would be a bipartisan commitment to retaining the BNC and building on the binational relationship to further strengthen relations between the two countries. To do otherwise, especially if Texas Governor Bush becomes the new incumbent, would be to retain an element of racial and partisan polarization in Africa policy that, in fact, has been in decline and needs to be overcome once and for all.

## 5. CONCLUSION:

### WHITHER THE BNC B TOWARD A BINATIONAL AFRICAN RENAISSANCE?

On the other hand the BNC relationship is certainly in need of review. This process might take the form of Pretoria and Washington setting up a binational *ad hoc* review commission to assess the BNC and arrive at recommendations on how it might be strengthened. There is more than a little room for building on its current technicist focus with the aim of generating more constituency-building outreach and momentum into the binational relationship. Here there is no reason why the focus, especially from the South African side, should not be on adding an African Renaissance dimension to the BNC. The development of an African Renaissance agenda for the BNC might entail adding on an additional four committees dealing with the African Renaissance, Global issues, Black Economic Empowerment and HIV/AIDS. What follows is a brief description on composition and terms of reference:

\$ An African Renaissance Committee: which would be comprised of

the South African Chapter of the African Renaissance (SACAR) in which its Continental and International Affairs Commission would serve as the committee's secretariat on the South African side, which might also include the co-opting of the African Renaissance Institute (ARI) in Botswana along with South African organizations such as the Africa Institute of South Africa (AISA); the African Renaissance and International Cooperation Fund within the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA), the Ministry of Arts and Culture and the Cultural Reclamation Forum. There should also be a role for such artists as Jonas Gwangwa, Hugh Masakela, Miriam Makeba and Leti Mbula to name just a few of the more prominent. On the United States side, the committee would comprise such organizations as the currently integrating Africa Fund/ACOA/Africa Policy International Centre (APIC) which has the policy credibility and track record from the anti-apartheid period to serve as the United States secretariat. It should include key African expatriate academics and intellectuals like Ali Mazrui and Francis Deng who should be the actual chair or co-chair the committee. Others would include the International Peace Academy (IPA), TransAfrica, Africare, AAI, the Constituency for Africa (CFA), the National Summit on Africa and/or its successor organization, the African Studies Association (ASA), the African Heritage Studies Association (AHTSA), certain African studies centres like that at Howard University and selected creative artists, entertainers and athletes to be mobilized into the Arthur Ashe Committee of Artists and Athletes for an African Renaissance (as successor to Artists and Athletes Against Apartheid founded by Ashe). Terms of reference for this committee would be to mobilize a constituency of support for African Union along with the development of joint programmatic and fundraising initiatives, including the generation of national chapters of the African Renaissance throughout the rest of the African diaspora in the Americas.

\$ A Committee on Global Issues: It would address selected African and global issues like Mbeki's Marshall Plan for Africa, WTO, UN Security Council, world Bank and IMF restructuring. It would bring together DFA, DTI and Defence with such American counterparts as the Departments of State and Defence, the NSC and selected non-governmental actors from South Africa like the Institute for Global Dialogue, the South African Institute of International Affairs, ACCORD, the Centre for Conflict Resolution and the Institute for Security Studies along with American counterparts like the Centre for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), the Institute for Policy Studies, the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, the Goals for Americans Foundation, the Council on Foreign Relations, the American Enterprise Institute and the Cato Institute. On some issues there may be some overlap with the binational African Renaissance Committee which may make it advisable for the two to occasionally meet jointly as well as separately.

\$ Black Economic Empowerment Committee: The Trade and Investment Committee within the BNC does not allow for the type of networking and joint planning between Black South African and

African-American business persons as is warranted given the high priority afforded to black economic empowerment on South Africa's transformation agenda. Hence the need for such a BNC committee. As well as prominent black business personalities and companies from the United States being represented, it would feature organizations like the African-American Chamber of Commerce as well as South African counterparts like Nafcoc, Fabcos, the National Empowerment Fund and the National Black Economic Empowerment Commission chaired by Cyril Ramaphosa who could be the chair of this committee from the South African side with veteran member of the Black Caucus and member of the House Ways and Means Committee, Charles Rangel (N.Y.) chairing the United States side.

§ HIV/AIDS Committee: Building on President Mbeki's international advisory committee between >conventionals= and >dissidents= on the issue of HIV/AIDS, there should be a BNC committee devoted to an ongoing inquiry into the pandemic as it affects South and southern Africa, a review and exchange of ideas on ongoing research and findings on the disease and strategies for combating it. At least from the American side, an excellent chair would be former Congressman and member of the Black Caucus, Ronald V Dellums, Chairman of the Presidential Advisory Council on HIV/AIDS and one whose perspective locates the pandemic while placing it in the broader context of poverty and underdevelopment.<sup>39</sup>

### ***Toward a Binational Institute on South African-American relations***

The four committees outlined above could go a long way toward reconnecting United States-South African relations with its anti-apartheid roots while extending the binational dynamics of this relationship into a broader constituency of interests in both countries. They would provide momentum for deepening the relationship. But this process could benefit further from the institutionalizing of South African-American binationalism as a living and open ended process. In short, the binational relationship needs and deserves its own think tank.

Here, with the encouragement of both governments, the private sectors of both countries should fund the establishment of a non-partisan Binational Institute of South African-American Relations (BNISAAR). Its desirability, feasibility and terms of reference could be part of the overall review of the BNC. But its general purpose would be to provide policy research and analysis services to the BNC and its committees as well as to the broader binational constituencies of interests in both countries. Further, it could serve as the BNC point of reference in coordinating BNC activities

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<sup>39</sup> Susan Anderson, AUS voice for massive Aids funding, @ *The Star* Sept. 18, 2000. Interview includes Dellums' discussion relating the need for debt forgiveness to campaign against HIV/AIDS in Africa. Dellums' discussion relating the need for debt forgiveness to campaign against HIV/AIDS in Africa.

with different committee secretariats.

Structured properly, with sensitivity and in the spirit of what was a noble binational commitment to South Africa's liberation, such an institute could serve as a living monument to the past, present and future of a shared experience between two of the world's leading experiments in coming to terms with the imperatives of racial conflict and accommodation in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.



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