



TRANSKEI

birth of a state

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THE TRANSKEI WITHIN THE AFRICAN FRAMEWORK AND ITS CONSEQUENCES FOR THE WEST

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1. PRELIMINARY REMARKS

More than most White South Africans will realise, the Transkei's status in the other parts of the world will be determined by its position in the African framework. In other words: to be recognised by the Western powers as an independent state the Transkei will have to win diplomatic recognition in Africa first. The issue of whether the members of the European Community, and other Western countries, will recognise the Transkei as a sovereign nation or not could well be a good example of how the Organisation of African Unity and its members can influence the foreign policies of some of the most powerful nations in the world. And this is true despite all Black Africa's shortcomings in the economic, in the military and other fields.

As is well-known, the OAU in the first 14 years of its existence, ignoring almost completely its economic and social aims, concerned itself almost exclusively with the problems of Southern Africa.¹ How much the conflicts in and around southern Africa do concern all active members of the OAU and the organisation itself can be seen from two important decisions taken by the OAU Council of Ministers: in a resolution on the preparations for the UN environment conference in Stockholm (CM)Res. 281/XIX) there is a demand for this conference to condemn "the crimes committed against humanity and the human environment in Africa by colonialist and racist practices." And a resolution passed on the preparations of the Law of the Sea Conference in Caracas (CM)St. II/XXI) states that unlike all other states "territories still under colonial and racist domination" have no right to the extension of their territorial waters and recognition of a coastal shelf for their exclusive economic exploitation."

The highest significance must be attached to the role the OAU still plays in the diplomatic and political sphere of the conflicts over Rhodesia, South West Africa/Namibia and the Republic of South Africa. For, it is the OAU in the main, and the UN in its wake, that have contributed towards that political climate, which, to name just one example, has promoted the World Council of Churches to support the southern African "liberation movements" with uncontrolled infusions of financial aid. That role of the OAU of course is taken into account by the Western nations which naturally follow a policy of national interests.

It is to be doubted whether South Africa, in propagating the policy of Separate Development, realises that to support this policy could easily harm European interests. The South African government does not see that the OAU, despite all its shortcomings, and Black Africa plays an important role within the framework of overseas policies towards South Africa. There seem to be several reasons for this attitude, two of which I

would like to mention: A lot of influential people, not only in West Germany, argue that as a consequence of Germany relations with South Africa, Russia and its allies, and the People's Republic of China can more easily acquire zones of influence in Black Africa. The West they charge at the moment is playing their game by co-operating with the Republic and the products of its domestic policy, the homelands. These people warn that West Germany should do everything possible to avoid a repetition of the mistakes made in its dealings with imperialist Portugal, with which West Germany co-operated closely. And as a consequence of that policy German relations with the new Republics of Guinea-Bissau, Moçambique and Angola are very poor. And there is another point that seems to be perceived by very few White Africans: one of West Germany's main aims in today's world must be to improve its relations with the countries of the Third World, especially in Black Africa, and it spends billions of Mark on our aid schemes every year. One of the main motives behind this policy of development aid is German fear of the North-South-conflict. And perhaps this conflict is not in reality a North-South-conflict but a West-South-conflict. Germany has good reason to be afraid that this conflict might one day turn into a hot war. The quality of West Germany's relations with many countries of the Third World especially in Black Africa is threatened by its relations with South Africa—and many people fear a further deterioration if West Germany gave diplomatic recognition to the Homelands. This is especially true of West Germany as the ideological rivalry with East Germany is still a serious problem for Bonn. East German publications will always try to weaken our position in Black Africa by giving details about what they call “the West German-South African partnership in crime”.

So I must repeat that only if the Transkei can manage to gain a regular place in the African framework will it be diplomatically recognised by the Western world. But if it fails to do so in Africa in all probability it will fail in the West, too.

2. THE TRANSKEI WITHIN THE SOUTHERN AFRICAN FRAMEWORK

We will have to differentiate between four spheres: Umtata's relations with the Republic, its relations with Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland, its relations with the remaining states of the subcontinent, and finally its relations with the other Homelands.

At least in the early days of independence everything but a close relationship in the political and economic field between Umtata and Pretoria would come as a big surprise. Like, for instance, the former French colonies in West and Equatorial Africa in the early sixties, the Transkei for some time will be forced to maintain close political, economic, monetary and maybe even military links with what will then be the former colonial power. The fact that hundreds of thousands of Transkeians for economic reasons are going to be forced to continue to work in the Republic will further strengthen these ties. Other than in the case of the former British and French colonies, the process of emancipation from the metropolitan power will be complicated by the fact, that, to say the least, a country like West Germany will hesitate for a long time before it decides to support the economic development of the Transkei through financial contributions and the sending of experts. This is to be explained by the fact that the Transkei is seen as a product of Apartheid, a political order that is often sharply condemned. And, as far as I can see, the same applies to other potential donors. It goes without saying that in this way we force Umtata even deeper into the arms of Pretoria. So of course the Transkei for a long time will be in the following dilemma: most parts of the outside world will have no dealings with it, as it is seen as a product of Apartheid, as it depends on South Africa—and that very same attitude will force the government in Umtata to strengthen its relationship with the only country that accepts it as a sovereign state, that is the Republic of South Africa, even further.

In order to prove that it is just as independent as other Black African nations, the Transkei would have to keep its distance from Pretoria. And maybe that is exactly what Umtata dare not do, unless it wants to lose what might possibly be its only political partner.

It would be surprising if the government in Pretoria failed to see this dilemma. So one might expect the South African government to adopt a relatively tolerant attitude. But as the Transkei itself is seen as a product of Apartheid, it can hardly be expected to denounce Pretoria's policy of Separate Development as Botswana and Lesotho do, not to mention for instance Zambia and Tanzania. But there the Transkei may follow the line adopted by the Ivory Coast.

There is some hope that despite all the rigidity on the part of the South African government, chances of mediating between Black, Brown and White South Africans still exist. However, unlike many Western and African countries the Ivory Coast is working hard for that objective. It should be mentioned that few White South Africans understood the proposal President Félix Houphouët-Boigny made in May 1973 before the 10th OAU summit meeting in Addis Ababa. He again made a plea to Black Africa to establish a dialogue

with what he so accurately called “les minorités de mépris” in Southern Africa. It seems to be true that the White Africans are “minorités de mépris”, meaning minorities who disdain the Black majorities. If Umtata takes the same critical approach as the Ivory Coast in its dialogue with Pretoria it might contribute to two important developments: a) to the liberalising of the South African domestic scene and b) to the building of its own position in the international field. Whether Umtata will succeed of course is not yet known. The experience of Botswana, Lesotho, and Swaziland is by no means encouraging. To give just two examples, their citizens living in the Republic are still subject to the system of petty Apartheid, they are still discriminated against in the field of labour relations.

But maybe after the collapse of the Portuguese Empire and its consequences, after the most recent developments in South West Africa and Rhodesia, even the majority of White South Africans might realise that with the present version of Apartheid, they are just heading for collective suicide. Here in my opinion Umtata could play a vital role, vital for the whole of the Republic, vital for the whole region. Because in the long run the only alternative to internal détente is decades of war, is the physical destruction of the whole of Southern Africa.

One thing is certain: in the years to come the Transkei cannot win international recognition if it plays the role of Pretoria’s close ally. It remains to be seen what the Transkei here has to offer to the African and non-African world.

From what some of their representatives said in public, there seems to be no chance that even the three former British protectorates, Lesotho, Swaziland and Botswana, will recognise the Transkei as an independent state. The People’s Republics of Moçambique and Angola and a Black government in Salisbury of course will hesitate even more to take such a step. As is well known even the protectorates after independence did not exchange ambassadors with Pretoria, and for the same reason—namely their opposition to Apartheid—they will refuse to send diplomatic representatives to Umtata. On the other hand, the lack of these political relations, to my knowledge, has never hindered an intensive dialogue between Pretoria on one side and the capitals of the three former protectorates on the other. All four countries belong to the Southern African Customs Union; Lesotho and Swaziland still use the South African Rand, and there are very many other aspects of everyday economic co-operation. Taking economic realities into account, South Africa’s three partner states will have to accept the Transkei as the fifth member of the Customs Union. So the Transkei will win at least their de facto recognition.

Finally, it should be stated that the Transkei’s position within this regional alliance, in my opinion, will be the better, the more it uses its influence in Pretoria to make the Customs and the Monetary Union a true alliance of equal partners.

Another aspect of the Transkei’s position on the international scene will be its relations with those Homelands that are still integral parts of the Republic. A close contact with—to quote the most important example only—the Chief Executive Councillor of KwaZulu, Chief Gatsha Buthelezi, could contribute to the Transkei’s gaining the respect of nations like Zambia, and as a consequence, of western European states. The more, at least behind the scenes, the Transkei’s government supports for instance the other Homeland leaders’ demands for more land, the more respect its leaders will win in Western Europe, and the more difficult it will be for the OAU, especially the Dar-es-Salaam based “Liberation Committee” of the OAU and so-called Liberation movements to call them stooges.

Thus, the Transkei, in my opinion, can play an important role in establishing a dialogue within South Africa that will finally lead to settlement of all those overt conflicts between Black, brown and white Africans. At least in the beginning, nobody will share that burden, but the more courageous the policy of the Transkei will be, the more it will be possible that others will support its policy.

3. THE TRANSKEI’S INDEPENDENCE AND THE ATTITUDE OF THE OAU AND THE UN

a) The Independent Transkei and the OAU

As was said in the preliminary remarks of this speech, the position of the OAU towards the Transkei’s decision to take its independence from Pretoria will be of crucial importance for the Transkei’s relations with the Western World. To give an example: Only after its recognition by the OAU, the Transkei will be able to become a signatory to the Lomé Convention, agreed upon by the enlarged European Community and some 35 African states. One might go as far as to say that the Transkei’s recognition by the OAU, or at least a very high number of its member states, is a sine qua non for its co-operation with the Western world.

As is well known, some of the founding members of the OAU thought this organisation to be the beginning of what they called the reunification of the continent.³ So it is understandable that the OAU-Charta in Art. II stipulates very ambitious aims. Art. II reads:

1. The Organisation shall have the following purposes:
 - (a) to promote the unity and solidarity of the African States;
 - (b) to co-ordinate and intensify their co-operation and efforts to achieve a better life for the peoples of Africa;
 - (c) to defend their sovereignty, their territorial integrity and independence;
 - (d) to eradicate all forms of colonialism from Africa; and
 - (e) to promote international co-operation, having due regard to the Charter of the United Nations and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

2. To these ends, the Member States shall co-ordinate and harmonise their general policies, especially in the following fields:
 - (a) political and diplomatic co-operation;
 - (b) economic co-operation, including transport and communications;
 - (c) educational and cultural co-operation;
 - (d) health, sanitation, and nutritional co-operation;
 - (e) scientific and technical co-operation; and
 - (f) co-operation for defence and security.

As was mentioned before, the OAU's achievements of the last 14 years are very modest. It is correct to state that since its existence the OAU has lived on the conflicts in Southern Africa. The opposition towards Portuguese imperialism, Rhodesia's UDI and South Africa's racial policies has more or less been the only common denominator of its now 47 member states. The OAU's condemnation of Apartheid, of the creation of Bantustans has always been wholehearted. As early as 1963 the OAU in one of its first five basic resolutions asked to put an end to the "criminal policy of Apartheid." The OAU's point has always been that the policy of Separate Development, the creation of Homelands, etc. is the white man's work. It argues that the Black South Africans have never been asked whether they are in favour of Pretoria's policy or whether they would prefer, to mention just one alternative, to live in a multiracial society.

It was particularly the Afrikaans-language press which in 1974/75, during the days of so-called détente, repeatedly mentioned the possibility that South Africa might be allowed to join the OAU; such a step would have entailed the OAU's acceptance of Pretoria's domestic policies. There is nothing to indicate that there were ever any reasons for such considerations. That was another instance of white South Africa's ideological delusion. Even during the days of "détente", the OAU has never interrupted or modified its resistance against the minority governments in Southern Africa and especially their racial policies. This resistance could not have been manifested more clearly than it was during the OAU conferences in Kampala at the end of July 1975. Thus, resolution 422 (XXV) of the OAU Council of Ministers states in a language which could scarcely have been harsher that the "abominable and retrogressive Apartheid regime" in South Africa should be completely isolated and combated with all means. Of course, the credibility of the OAU and its member states is not exactly enhanced by the fact that many of the countries supporting this and the very many comparable resolutions demonstrate even more disregard for the human and civil rights they continually acclaim as do the governments they are opposing. Here South Africa has clearly lost the war of propaganda!

As far as the Homelands are concerned, the OAU said in Resolution 428 in Kampala that these "so-called states" are designed "to serve as labour and buffer zones as well as Trojan horses in the United Nations." This resolution continues saying "that the envisaged plot to present the Transkei and other Bantustans ... for recognition as independent and economically viable, is an urgent challenge to the OAU's and Non-Aligned Countries sacred principle of preserving the national unity and territorial integrity of South Africa." Finally, this resolution condemns all western economic contacts with Homeland governments. From this it must be concluded that the OAU will turn down any Homeland's applications for membership in the Panafrican organisation.

West Germany does not accept the OAU's statement that the Republic's government is "a product of colonial conquest now operating as a full-fledged fascist power bent on perpetuating the ruthless domination of the indigenous people" (Resolution 428, XXV). We cannot accept the opinion of the Pan Africanist Congress of Azania that South Africa (Anzania) is not an independent state but "a semi-colonial country owned by the imperialist consortium of her investors and trading partners." We cannot accept this

opinion even if, and this can happen in the near future, the OAU agrees with PAC on the issue of the legal status of South Africa. But of course the vehement OAU opposition towards the policy of Separate Development, the granting of independence to the Homelands included, will influence our attitude towards the Transkei's and other Homelands asking for diplomatic recognition by the western world.

I think it even improbable that some of the moderate Black African States to the North of the Zambesi as for instance Kenya, Malawi, Senegal and the Ivory Coast, will exchange ambassadors with Umtata. These governments too have never accepted Pretoria's racial policies. For too long South African officials thought they could correct the "misunderstandings" of their actual racial policy. The officials in Abidjan as well as in Malawi for reasons of international policies etc., just cannot accept the present version of Apartheid. So automatically they will refuse to give diplomatic recognition to Umtata—and as often mentioned before that will be decisive for the West German standpoint.

b) The Independent Transkei and the United Nations

It goes without saying that, as the Transkei will not immediately win the OAU's recognition, the reply to its possible application for membership in the UN will also be negative over the short run.

As far as the conflicts in and around southern Africa are concerned, the UN and its special agencies, in the eyes of the OAU, take on the significance not only of a discussion forum but of an active participant in the fight to overthrow the white minority governments. The members of the OAU have, with the aid of many other states of the Third World and the communist countries, which out of opportunism are eager to crash in, been able to an extraordinary degree to make the General Assembly and certain UN special bodies live up to this line. One indication to the effect that this thesis is not incorrect might lie in the fact that the previous "Special Committee on Apartheid" of the UN General Assembly was renamed the "Special Committee against Apartheid" in resolution 3324 D (XXIX) of the UN General Assembly. It could not surprise anyone that in Resolution Nr 3411 the 30th General Assembly with 99 votes in favour with eight (Western) abstentions condemned the establishment of Bantustans, reaffirmed its opinion that they were designed to destroy the territorial integrity of the country and called upon all Governments and organisations not to deal with any institutions or authorities of the Bantustans. It is not difficult to predict that because of the OAU's firm viewpoint, the UN General Assembly will not change its attitude here: that is to say that mainly because of OAU opposition the Transkei will remain outside the UN.

It is a fact that the West is without a concept for South Africa's very unique problems. It is a further fact that with our non-policy we are wasting the very last opportunities to actively work towards a compromise which would take into account the legitimate interests of all the four major groups of the South African population. Our non-policy which often gives the impression of supporting the extreme demands of the OAU seems even more ominous than completely passivity because it contributes to the creation of an atmosphere which will one day make it possible to agree upon a compromise. Here the western powers are to be blamed again and again, but South Africa is to some extent to be blamed, too. If the voices of all the moderate Black leaders are not heard soon in South Africa then a catastrophe will be inevitable in what today is still the Republic of South Africa.

4. THE NECESSITY OF A WESTERN SOUTH AFRICA POLICY

Of course it is very much in our interest to assure the continued existence of all the Republic's four major population groups in South Africa. And there is still hope that a genuine compromise will be accepted and even supported by many Black African leaders to the north of the Zambezi and even the OAU. The West shares Zambia's and other African nations' fear that otherwise an apocalyptic situation might develop in South Africa and the other parts of the subcontinent.

As is well known one of the most important characteristics of today's South Africa is still the contradiction between the racially integrated economy of the country and the political postulate of territorial separation of the various population groups into different states. The Progressive Reform Party, a party that has found many sympathies outside the Republic, is trying to resolve this contradiction by means of its programme which calls for transforming South Africa into a multi-racial federal state. Even if one ignores the fact that this party today is hardly more than a *quantité négligeable* in the South Africa of the mid-70's, there is still the question as to whether their programme is not too intellectually and idealistically oriented. For it is based upon the assumption, and quite unjustifiably so, that the Black African portion of the population of South Africa also wants to live under a Western style democratic capitalistic system. Here the fact is over—looked that the development in Black Africa since 1957, as well as that of the Black segment of South

Africa's population, quite clearly shows that Black Africans have very consciously divorced themselves from Western notions with respect to the structure of the state in order to develop their own notions in the economic and political sectors. The Western world, in its attempts to help to defuse South Africa's conflicts, will have to take into consideration that the White, the Coloured and the Indian South Africans on the one hand and the Black Africans on the other hand simply lack the common cultural, social, economic and political denominator without which even a federal state is absolutely incapable of functioning.

The Western world must recognise that it cannot be content with seemingly supporting the OAU position which calls for replacing the existing South African political order by a system based upon the notion of "one-man-one-vote". Because nothing is gained by such stands. Pretoria quite justifiably sees in them a call for surrender to the three South African minorities. And the OAU clearly recognises its ambivalence.

From the abovementioned one will have to conclude that—as Erich Leistner so convincingly argues in his paper—despite all the economic obstacles, a compromise will only be found in a fair partition of the Republic's territory, in the creation of a larger state or states of the Black South Africans and a correspondingly smaller state for the White, Coloured and Indian South Africans. It should not be a secret that also a growing number of outside observers look upon such a partition as the lesser evil, the best among many possible solutions.⁴ Here two facts should be crystal clear: a partition can only be realised if the West is prepared to accept the Whites', the Coloureds' and the Indians' Republic of South Africa as a member of NATO. And furthermore all the states that will develop on what today is still the Republic of South Africa's territory, will need billions and billions of Rand in Western aid. Together we must strive towards what today many people, for good reasons, will think to be impossible. We all must realise that the alternative, for the West as well as for the Republic of South Africa and all its nations, is too ghastly to contemplate.

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