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Short-Term Prospects for South Africa

Submitted by the
DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE
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The Central Intelligence Agency and the intelligence organizations of the Departments of State, Defense, and NSA.

Concurring:

Director of Intelligence and Research, Department of State
Director, Defense Intelligence Agency
Director of the National Security Agency

Abstaining:

The Atomic Energy Commission Representative to the USIB and the Assistant Director, Federal Bureau of Investigation, the subject being outside of their jurisdiction.

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SHORT-TERM PROSPECTS FOR SOUTH AFRICA

CONCLUSIONS

A. The Nationalist government is firmly entrenched in power, despite some internal differences on specific applications of *apartheid* policies. The white opposition is divided. Virtually all the white population supports white supremacy. The nonwhite majority has virtually no political rights and is disorganized. The police are well armed and highly efficient and will ruthlessly suppress any outbreaks of violence. We do not believe that internal developments alone will cause a significant change in basic domestic policies for the next year or two and probably for considerably longer. (Paras. 1, 5-10)

B. Calls for more severe international action, particularly economic sanctions, may come in response to the bloody suppression of rioting, as a result of various discussions in the UN, or in the event of a South African refusal to comply with UN demands arising from the final ruling of the International Court of Justice (ICJ) on South West Africa. (Paras. 17-20)

C. We consider it unlikely that any outside pressures brought to bear on South Africa would cause the government to alter its basic domestic policies.¹ They might only harden the Nationalists in their determination to go their own way. However, there is some flexibility and possibility of accommodation with respect to South West Africa. South Africans regard the US attitude toward international pressures as important and almost certainly believe that the US and UK would be likely to take a strong position in respect to a final ICJ decision on South West Africa. (Paras. 12-16)

¹The Director of Intelligence and Research, Department of State, believes that there is an even chance that a militarily enforced blockade against South Africa would produce a realignment of forces within the white community and a shift away from present *apartheid* policies.

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DISCUSSION

I. THE PRESENT SITUATION

1. South Africa's Nationalist government today is probably more firmly established in power and more firmly committed to a rigorous application of the doctrine of *apartheid* than at any time since it took office in 1948. The opposition is badly divided; the United Party (UP) draws most of its support from the English-speaking element² and obtained some 30-35 percent of the vote in the 1961 parliamentary elections. It has continued to criticize the government's *apartheid* policies, primarily on the ground that they are high-handed and brutal and ultimately destructive to the economy and the nation, rather than because of any objection to the basic goal of preserving white supremacy. The UP also suffers from the general political apathy of the English-speaking European population. The Progressive Party, which is more liberal in its political philosophy and favors political representation for all elements of the population, received about 10 percent of the vote but has only one member in parliament. The political opposition received together about 45 percent of the vote but has only about a third of the members in parliament.

2. Another factor increasing the strength and confidence of the government has been the renewed vigor of the economy and the progress toward the government's goal of self-sufficiency. The concern over possible racial strife and the fear of a recession felt in 1960-1961 have since given way to a new boom which promises to continue for at least another year. During 1963 records were set in virtually every economic sector including gold production and domestic and foreign investment. White immigration exceeded white emigration by 16,000 in 1963, although the supply of skilled labor, under current restrictions on jobs available to Africans, continues to lag behind demand.

3. In recent years, South Africa has encountered increased international opposition to its racial policies, notably on the part of the Black African countries, but it has defiantly shrugged off verbal criticism and has escaped any serious threats to its material well-being. South African economic relations with Black Africa have never been of much consequence. While virtually all other African countries and some Asian and Communist states have boycotted trade with South Africa pursuant to the resolutions of the UN and Organization for African Unity (OAU), the economic results have been slight. The OAU call for secondary boycotts against companies doing business with South

²About 45 percent of the white population is English-speaking; about 55 percent speaks Afrikaans.

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Africa has resulted in little action although the matter continues to be discussed in African circles.

4. South Africa's withdrawal from the Commonwealth in 1961 has not resulted in any noticeable diminution of economic ties with the UK and other major Western trading partners. While this move increased South Africa's international isolation, by the same token it helped bring home to the English-speaking elements of South Africa's white population the extent to which their destinies are bound up with those of their Afrikaner fellow-citizens.

5. There are differences of view within Prime Minister Verwoerd's National Party over the regime's policy of creating self-governing African states (sometimes referred to as Bantustans), and some criticism of the way the government has handled the matter of South West Africa. In addition, a small but growing number of intellectuals and Dutch Reformed Church ministers question the long accepted dogma that segregation and white supremacy are divinely ordained. However, the government has the strong support of the overwhelming majority of Afrikaners in resisting international or internal pressures for a change in racial policies. The UP has criticized the Nationalists on these and other points but has failed to attract to itself any significantly increased support.

6. Internal security has been improved substantially and no immediate threat to the government is likely. The national police force numbers 28,000, about half of whom (including all commissioned officers) are white. It is a highly mobile, well-trained, and efficient body which could suppress even major disturbances by itself and is backed up by South Africa's well-equipped defense forces.³

7. The fears of widespread racial conflict posed by the Sharpeville riots of March 1960 and succeeding outbreaks have, at least for the present, largely subsided. This is in part because of continuing apathy and disunity among large segments of the nonwhite population, but even more because of the ruthless efficiency with which the security forces have discouraged and disrupted any attempt at organized opposition among Africans. The substantial Colored (i.e., mulatto) and Asian minorities are bewildered and divided, and increasingly isolated from the white community and from the African masses, whom they

³South African armed forces include:

- (a) Army: 15,400 (8,600 trainees serving nine months compulsory military training; 6,200 in administrative and training duties; and 600 in two Permanent Force tactical units). There is also a reserve of some 70,000 men who have finished their training and can be called to active duty on a few hours notice.
- (b) Navy: 3,180 (all Permanent Force personnel manning two destroyers, two destroyer escorts, and various shore installations).
- (c) Air Force: 4,200 (all Permanent Force personnel; 465 aircraft).

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regard as their social inferiors. The black African majority is fragmented and politically ineffectual, with many too preoccupied with day-to-day personal and economic problems to attempt any political role and too cowed by official repression to do so.

8. Political activists among the Africans have remained split between two competing organizations: the old established African National Congress (ANC), which favors a multiracial society, and the newer Pan Africanist Congress (PAC), which advocates a more militant program of black nationalism. Outlawed in 1960, both parties have been forced to go underground and have increasingly turned to violence. However, their ability to operate even on this level has been crippled by a series of well-planned police raids and arrests in 1963-1964. A large number of their leaders are in jail and most of the others have either fled the country or been immobilized by continuing close police surveillance and knowledge that their ranks are penetrated by police informers. Although exile groups have been actively seeking arms and funds in Dar es Salaam and other African capitals, we have no evidence that they have re-established a significant subversive capability within the country.

9. Similar setbacks have been experienced by the small, multiracial South African Communist Party, which has operated underground since its formal proscription as an overt party in 1950.

The Communists as well as many of their collaborators have been hard hit by police action.

In the High Commission Territories of Basutoland and Swaziland they have been the prime movers in forming local Communist groups.

II. PROSPECTS FOR INTERNAL CHANGE

10. We do not believe that internal developments alone will cause a significant change in basic domestic policies for the next year or two and probably for considerably longer. It will take time and painstaking effort for nonwhite opposition elements to re-establish any significant capability for asserting themselves. White South Africans, almost without exception, remain determined to maintain and defend their comfortable way of life. There is an internal conflict between the Republic's racial policies, which close many categories of employment to nonwhites, and the mounting need for skilled labor. While this problem may eventually become serious, it is highly improbable that domestic economic causes will bring any change in racial policies in the short run. South Africa's economy continues to prosper, and

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though the situation poses some inflationary threats the government appears capable of taking care of them. The capable and confident Nationalist government is highly unlikely to lose power at least up through the expiration of the present parliamentary term in 1966 and probably for considerably longer.

11. Sporadic outbreaks, disorders, and acts of violence will almost certainly take place. Some will be organized, some will be spontaneous. Many may well be bloody. However, we believe that the government will not hesitate to take all measures within its power to suppress such disorders, and will be able to do so.

12. We consider it unlikely that any outside pressures brought to bear on South Africa would cause the government to alter its basic domestic policies.⁴ The standoff between South Africa and a largely disapproving outside world is likely to continue with South Africa becoming increasingly isolated. Indeed, insofar as these pressures are brought to bear on internal Republic policies, they may well only serve to stiffen the backs of the leaders and make them even more determined to carry out their policies of white supremacy. South African actions with respect to South West Africa are probably a little more flexible. The government recognizes that there is a legitimate international interest in the area by reason of the League of Nations mandate under which South Africa originally was charged with administration of the territory; this recognition is manifest by the South African appearance before the International Court of Justice in the South West Africa case. Thus, while we believe that South Africa would wish to apply all the Republic's racial policies in South West Africa, the scope and pace of its actions are tempered by the internal and international pressures against doing so.

13. Any proposal to impose economic sanctions on South Africa would be very difficult to carry out. It is at least problematical whether the countries having the most extensive economic relations with South Africa, e.g., the UK, would try to impose them. South African trade and investments are of considerable economic importance to some of its trading partners. The flow of South African gold is a significant element in the international monetary setup of the Free World. Petroleum is about the only major import whose denial would cause significant economic dislocation. In view of the multiplicity of countries which do or could export oil and the relative ease of transshipment, it would be extremely difficult to stop the flow of oil to South Africa. While the loss of its markets and regular sources of supply would be a

⁴The Director of Intelligence and Research, Department of State, believes that there is an even chance that a militarily enforced blockade against South Africa would produce a realignment of forces within the white community and a shift away from present *apartheid* policies.

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severe blow to South Africa, it has progressed a considerable way on its road to self-sufficiency and in most respects could maintain an austere existence in isolation. It would be extremely difficult, however, to convince other African states that the US could not force South Africa to make basic changes. While leaders might recognize the facts, they would not feel able, politically, to so admit openly.

14. Experience with the arms embargo illustrates some of the difficulties. The Security Council urged an arms embargo in 1963, shortly after the US had declared it would stop all shipments of arms to South Africa. The UK has declared an embargo applicable only to "those arms which could be used to further the policy of *apartheid*," and in the past few months the French have done likewise. However, South Africa still has little difficulty in obtaining adequate supplies of arms of all sorts. For example, arrangements have recently been made to produce small arms under license from various Western European firms.

15. The South African Government is reluctant, however, to alienate the US or the UK. Both the government and the white opposition tend to view the attitude of the US as one of the most important factors influencing international action. They almost certainly believe that both the US and UK would be likely to take a strong position in a matter involving South West Africa, especially in support of an International Court of Justice judgment. Hence the South Africans are inclined to delay or temper their actions in South West Africa to the extent they deem necessary to avoid a showdown. This attitude influenced the government's recent decision to postpone the application of strict *apartheid* measures recommended in the Report of the Odendaal Commission.⁵ However, they are likely to be stubborn in defense of what they consider a matter of principle on any issue involving the domestic policy of the Republic.

16. The South African Government almost certainly regards its willingness to permit US missile and space vehicle tracking facilities and US use of other installations on its territory—as well as the presence of over \$600 million US private investment in South Africa—as a source of considerable leverage upon the US. Furthermore, the government argues both domestically and abroad that the furnishing of facilities to the US and other Western countries is tangible evidence of South Africa's contribution to the "preservation of Western civilization."

⁵The Odendaal Commission was appointed by the South African Government to make recommendations regarding policy in South West Africa. Its Report urges an extensive development program together with imposition of new *apartheid* policies comparable to those recently instituted in the Republic. On 29 April, Verwoerd tabled a White Paper in Parliament stating that the government accepts the Report "in broad principle" but will postpone carrying out the recommendations on racial policy pending a decision of the ICJ on the case before it.

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Therefore, the South African Government will be reluctant to lose this leverage by demanding withdrawal of the tracking stations, and the introduction of limited sanctions by the US would not necessarily provoke such retaliatory action by South Africa.

III. CONTINGENCIES

17. There are several contingencies which can be envisaged in which there would be considerable pressure on the US to take some action against South Africa. The first case is that of a bloody repression of an outbreak of protest by South African blacks. As has been said, we believe that the South African Government would take swift and ruthless action to quell the outbreak.

18. Another set of contingencies arises out of likely discussions in the UN Security Council or General Assembly of three separate but converging demands for action against South African *apartheid*, any one of which would probably involve a demand for US action.

(a) A Committee of Experts on *Apartheid* appointed by UN Secretary General U Thant as a result of Scandinavian initiative has proposed a "national convention" of all races in South Africa to chart the future course of South African society. The Committee's report recommends that the UN issue what is virtually an ultimatum to South Africa. This proposal stands no chance of being favorably received by any white party in South Africa, even the Progressives.

(b) An International Conference on Sanctions, organized by a white South African exile, financed by various African governments, and attended by delegates, mostly unofficial, from some 26 countries, was recently held in London. It produced a number of scholarly papers, most of them claiming that sanctions, if stringently applied by the US and UK, would force South Africa into compliance. A recommendation was forwarded to the UN requesting consideration of such action.

(c) There is a rising wave of protest abroad against the possible imposition of death sentences or long prison terms on the defendants (Communist Party and ANC leaders) in the "Rivonia" trial now being held in Pretoria. Though the accused who have taken the stand to date have admitted engaging in sabotage and planning further violence to bring down the government, they claim that *apartheid* has left them no alternative. Harsh sentences would lead to a series of protests from foreign governments, and would poison the atmosphere of UN deliberation on South Africa.

19. A more serious contingency may arise out of the situation in South West Africa. The ICJ is expected to rule in 1965 on charges filed by Ethiopia and Liberia in 1960 that South Africa is violating its

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responsibilities under the mandate. Should the Verwoerd government fail to comply with the UN actions arising from the final ICJ ruling, the Security Council would probably be seized with the problem.

20. In any of these cases, there would be a number of proposals for action against South Africa, ranging from condemnatory resolutions to armed intervention. The pressure for strong sanctions would be greatest in the event of South Africa's refusal to conform to a clear judgment in the ICJ case. The threat of expulsion from the UN would probably carry relatively little weight in South Africa. There are already discussions, probably officially inspired, in the South African press on the desirability of resigning from the UN. South Africa has already resigned from a number of international organizations (e.g., ILO, ECA, UNESCO) when its delegations have been refused the right to participate in meetings and other activities. The imposition of economic sanctions by the US alone, or even in company with other countries whose trade with South Africa is important would not, we believe, cause South Africa to change its internal racial policies, much as such sanctions might be regretted by the South Africans. We believe this would be true, even in the remote case of a militarily enforced blockade.* Diplomatic pressures, economic sanctions or the threat of them might induce South Africa to make some temporizing or conciliatory move with respect to South West Africa.

* The Director of Intelligence and Research, Department of State, believes that there is an even chance that a militarily enforced blockade against South Africa would produce a realignment of forces within the white community and a shift away from present *apartheid* policies.

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