

" DOMESTIC UNDERPINNINGS OF PRESIDENT
CARTER'S AFRICA POLICY"

REMARKS BY SENATOR PAUL E. TSONGAS (D.-MASS.) AT THE
HOWARD UNIVERSITY CONFERENCE, "BLACKS, PRESIDENTIAL
POLITICS AND PUBLIC POLICY,"

I HAVE BEEN ASKED TO ADDRESS THE QUESTION OF THE
DOMESTIC UNDERPINNINGS OF PRESIDENT CARTER'S FOREIGN POLICY
TOWARD AFRICA. I AM PLEASED TO HAVE THIS OPPORTUNITY TO
PRESENT MY VIEWS ON THIS CRUCIAL ASPECT OF U.S. FOREIGN
POLICY FORMULATION.

I THINK IT IS FAIR TO SAY THAT TRADITIONALLY FOREIGN
POLICY HAS BEEN THE EXCLUSIVE WORK OF THE EXECUTIVE. CONGRESS
AND THE ELECTORATE ONLY OCCASSIONALLY INTERFERED WITH THIS
EXECUTIVE PRESERVE. THAT PICTURE HAS CHANGED DRAMATICALLY
IN RECENT YEARS. POPULAR CONCERN AND INTEREST IN FOREIGN
AFFAIRS, WHILE NOT AS INTENSE AS DURING THE COLD WAR, HAS
REMAINED HIGH. CONGRESS, FOR ITS PART, HAS CHIPPED AWAY AT
EXECUTIVE PEROGATIVES. THE RESULT IS A MORE CONTENTIOUS
ATMOSPHERE IN FOREIGN POLICY FORMULATION AND A HEIGHTENED
AWARENESS OF PUBLIC OPINION ON KEY ISSUES. PRESIDENT
CARTER'S AFRICA INITIATIVES ARE NO EXCEPTION TO THESE
DEVELOPMENTS. HE HAS RESPONDED TO POPULAR OPINIONS AND
HAS STRUGGLED TO GAIN CONGRESSIONAL SUPPORT.

TO EXPLORE THESE ISSUES, IT WILL BE HELPFUL TO SURVEY THE DIMENSIONS OF PUBLIC OPINION IN RECENT YEARS. ISOLATIONISM IS NOT AS POPULAR AS IT ONCE WAS. TODAY, FIFTY-ONE PERCENT OF THE GENERAL PUBLIC REJECTS THE IDEA OF ISOLATIONISM WHEREAS IN 1974, DURING THE VIETNAM WAR, FIFTY-FOUR PERCENT OF AMERICANS SUPPORTED WITHDRAWAL FROM FOREIGN INVOLVEMENT. PUBLIC OPINION NOW FAVORS A FOREIGN POLICY WHICH APPARENTLY HAS UNDERGONE A SUBSTANTIAL "DEMILITARIZATION". NO LONGER ARE AMERICANS WILLING TO SEND U.S. TROOPS TO FIGHT OTHER COUNTRIES' WARS. INDIRECT PARTICIPATION IS FAVORED, AND IT IS FELT THAT EVEN THIS SHOULD BE USED WITH CAUTION.

PRESIDENT CARTER'S EMPHASIS ON HUMAN RIGHTS REFLECTS THE POPULAR PREFERENCE FOR AN ACTIVE, BUT NOT INTERVENTIONIST FOREIGN POLICY.

UNTIL RECENTLY, AFRICA WAS OF MINOR CONCERN TO MOST AMERICANS. OUR VITAL AREAS OF INTEREST WERE CONCENTRATED IN WESTERN EUROPE AND SOUTHEAST ASIA, AND THE PUBLIC GAVE LITTLE THOUGHT TO THE AFFAIRS OF AFRICA. THOSE WHO HAD FORMED AN OPINION SAW AFRICA AS A SEVERELY UNDERDEVELOPED CONTINENT WITH OVERT RACIAL TENSIONS IN THE SOUTH.

OUR FOREIGN POLICY TOWARD AFRICA RESPONDED TO THIS ATTITUDE OF INDIFFERENCE. UNLIKE EUROPE IN THE 1940'S AND 50'S, EAST ASIA IN THE 1950'S, OR SOUTHEAST ASIA IN THE 1960'S AND EARLY 70'S, AFRICAN POLICY WAS NEVER THE SUBJECT OF A COMPREHENSIVE NATIONAL DEBATE. OUR POLICY CONCERN WITH AFRICA WAS MINIMAL ALTHOUGH THERE WAS A BRIEF SURGE OF INTEREST IN THE EARLY SIXTIES AFTER MOST OF BLACK AFRICA GAINED INDEPENDENCE.

TODAY, THE GENERAL PUBLIC STILL DOES NOT CONSIDER AFRICA TO BE ONE OF OUR TOP THREE VITAL CONCERNS, BUT INTEREST HAS INCREASED SUBSTANTIALLY. BECAUSE AFRICA HAS STEADILY BECOME MORE IMPORTANT IN STRATEGIC AND ECONOMIC TERMS, AMERICANS HAVE BEEN FORCED TO TAKE NOTICE OF THIS CONTINENT. RECENT SOVIET-CUBAN EXPLOITS HAVE HEIGHTENED INTEREST FURTHER. U.S. TRADE AND INVESTMENTS IN AFRICA HAVE INCREASED WITH BLACK AFRICA. IN PARTICULAR, OUR OIL IMPORTS FROM SUCH COUNTRIES AS ANGOLA AND NIGERIA HAVE CAST AFRICA IN A MORE PROMINENT LIGHT FOR AMERICANS.

THIS CHANGE IN ATTITUDE TOWARD AFRICA CAN ALSO BE SEEN IN THE NEW DIRECTION OF AMERICAN FOREIGN POLICY. SINCE 1974, THE FOCUS HAS SHIFTED FROM A PREOCCUPATION WITH THE ROLE OF THE U.S. IN SOUTHEAST ASIA TO A GROWING CONCERN ABOUT THE INCREASING MILITARY POWER AND POLITICAL INFLUENCE OF THE SOVIET UNION IN THE THIRD WORLD. AFRICA

IS ONE SUCH AREA OF SOVIET ACTIVITY. BOTH POPULAR CONCERN AND POLICY EMPHASIS HAS FOLLOWED THE SOVIETS TO AFRICA. THE TRIP WIRE OF THIS NEW CONCERN WAS THE ANGOLAN CIVIL WAR WHICH ENDED WITH THE DEFEAT OF THE FNLA, SUPPORTED COVERTLY BY THE U.S., AND VICTORY FOR THE MPLA, SUPPORTED OPENLY AND DECISIVELY BY THE SOVIETS AND THE CUBANS.

THIS NEW INTEREST WAS EVIDENT DURING THE FIRST TWO YEARS OF THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION, WHEN MANY U.S. OFFICIALS VISITED VARIOUS AFRICAN COUNTRIES. IN MARCH, 1979, JIMMY CARTER HIMSELF VISITED NIGERIA, BECOMING THE FIRST U.S. PRESIDENT TO VISIT BLACK AFRICA WHILE IN OFFICE. HE ALSO WENT ONE STEP FURTHER TO GIVE AFRICA POLICY A HIGH PRIORITY IN HIS ADMINISTRATION. HE ASSIGNED SPECIAL RESPONSIBILITY FOR RELATIONS WITH AFRICA TO VICE PRESIDENT MONDALE AND TO FORMER U.N. AMBASSADOR ANDREW YOUNG. A CARTER POLICY EMERGED. IT WAS NOT NECESSARILY BRAND NEW, BUT AT LEAST IT HAD A NEW EMPHASIS:

1) THE KEY TO SUCCESS IN BLACK AFRICA IS TO ESTABLISH THE U.S. AS A FRIEND OF AFRICAN NATIONALISM.

2) STRONGER PRESSURE MUST BE BROUGHT TO BEAR AGAINST WHITE-MINORITY RULE IN SOUTH AFRICA.

3) TO ACCOMPLISH THE ABOVE THE U.S. MUST DE-EMPHASIZE EAST-WEST CONFRONTATION IN AFRICA.

THE CENTRAL PROBLEM FOR U.S. FOREIGN POLICY IN AFRICA IS APARTHEID IN SOUTH AFRICA. SOUTH AFRICA PRESENTS THE MOST DIFFICULT AND DANGEROUS SET OF LONG-TERM PROBLEMS FOR AMERICAN POLICY. IT WILL BE PRODUCTIVE TO FOCUS THE REST OF OUR DISCUSSION ON THIS CRITICAL ISSUE.

SOUTH AFRICA'S SYSTEM OF APARTHEID AROUSES STRONG FEELINGS IN THE AMERICAN ELECTORATE. EIGHTY-SIX PERCENT OF THE AMERICAN PUBLIC BELIEVE THAT SOUTH AFRICA'S APARTHEID SYSTEM IS WRONG. FIFTY-SIX PERCENT SAY THAT WHITES IN SOUTH AFRICA ARE NOT JUSTIFIED IN USING FORCE TO PRESERVE THEIR POSITION. THE DOMINANT AMERICAN IMAGE OF SOUTH AFRICA IS ONE OF A COUNTRY FILLED WITH RACIAL TENSIONS. THE MAJORITY OF AMERICANS FEEL THAT THE U.S. SHOULD DO SOMETHING TO CHANGE SOUTH AFRICA'S RACIAL POLICIES.

BUT THE U.S. IS IN A DILEMMA. OUR TRADE AND INVESTMENT LINKS WITH SOUTH AFRICA ARE SIGNIFICANT AND GROWING. WHILE WE VALUE OUR ECONOMIC RELATIONSHIP WITH SOUTH AFRICA, A PROFOUND DISLIKE OF ITS APARTHEID SYSTEM AND A STRONG BELIEF THAT SOMETHING SHOULD BE DONE ABOUT IT IS CLEARLY EVIDENT IN PUBLIC OPINION. JUST EXACTLY WHAT TYPE OF ACTION THE U.S. SHOULD TAKE IS STILL A MATTER OF DEBATE.

FEAR OF SOUTH AFRICA SEVERING ALL ECONOMIC TIES WITH THE U.S. HAS CAUSED MOST AMERICANS TO REJECT SEVERE MEASURES.

FIFTY-ONE PERCENT OF THE GENERAL PUBLIC ARE OPPOSED TO FORCING U.S. BUSINESSES TO CLOSE DOWN IN SOUTH AFRICA, AND SEVENTY-THREE PERCENT ARE OPPOSED TO ENCOURAGING BLACKS TO ENGAGE IN GUERRILLA WARFARE AGAINST THE WHITE REGIME.

ON THE OTHER HAND, AN EQUAL PERCENTAGE OF AMERICANS, A FULL 73%, OPPOSE A "DO NOTHING" POLICY. THERE IS A CLEAR MANDATE FOR SOME SORT OF EFFECTIVE ACTION SHORT OF DIRECT AMERICAN INTERVENTION IN SOUTH AFRICAN AFFAIRS.

THE KIND OF ACTION WHICH MOST AMERICANS WILL ACCEPT IS MODERATE IN CHARACTER. FIFTY-ONE PERCENT SUPPORT MODERATE AMERICAN INITIATIVES TO PRESSURE THE SOUTH AFRICAN GOVERNMENT INTO CHANGING ITS RACIAL POLICIES. THE USE OF TRADE RESTRICTIONS OR NON-MILITARY INVOLVEMENT ARE THE MOST POPULAR INITIATIVES. RESTRICTING BUSINESS INVESTMENTS AND SUPPORTING PEACEFUL BLACK ORGANIZATIONS WERE TWO OTHER, BUT LESS POPULAR ALTERNATIVES.

THE POLICIES OF THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION APPEAR TO PARALLEL PUBLIC OPINION. PRESIDENT CARTER'S APPROACH IS BASED ON PARTIAL RATHER THAN COMPREHENSIVE PRESSURE. ALTHOUGH THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION HAS TALKED ABOUT A ONE-MAN, ONE-VOTE SOLUTION, ACTUAL STEPS TAKEN ARE NARROW IN SCOPE. FOR EXAMPLE, IN NOVEMBER, 1977, CARTER OBTAINED A U.S. VOTE IN FAVOR OF A MANDATORY U.N. ARMS EMBARGO AGAINST

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SOUTH AFRICA. LAST YEAR THE PRESIDENT SIGNED INTO LAW A MEASURE RESTRICTING EXPORT-IMPORT BANK LOANS TO SOUTH AFRICA. I HELPED DRAFT THAT LEGISLATION.

ON THE CONGRESSIONAL LEVEL THE CARTER APPROACH HAS NOT GAINED WIDE SUPPORT. LATELY, THERE HAS BEEN A SWING TO THE RIGHT IN CONGRESS, PARTICULARLY IN THE SENATE, AND THIS HAS DISCOURAGED BOTH CARTER AND OTHERS FROM ANTI-APARTHEID LEGISLATIVE INITIATIVES.

AWARE OF THIS UNFAVORABLE SHIFT, CARTER HAS TONED DOWN HIS HUMAN RIGHTS RHETORIC AND HAS TURNED HIS ATTENTION TO THE SALT II AGREEMENT. PRESIDENT CARTER MAY HAVE CALCULATED THAT HIS POLITICAL CAPITAL IS BEST RESERVED FOR THE TOUGH SALT II RATIFICATION FIGHT.

WE CAN CONCLUDE FROM PUBLIC OPINION AND CARTER'S RESPONSE TO IT THAT THE ACTION TAKEN AGAINST THE SOUTH AFRICAN GOVERNMENT IS SUPPORTED MORE IN PRINCIPLE THAN IN PRACTICE. ONLY FORTY PERCENT OF THE PUBLIC THINK THAT THE U.S. "SHOULD TAKE A MORE ACTIVE ROLE IN OPPOSING THE POLICY OF APARTHEID IN SOUTH AFRICA."

THOSE WHO SEEK MORE EFFECTIVE ACTION ON THE SOUTH AFRICAN APARTHEID ISSUE MUST REALIZE THAT LARGE NUMBERS OF AMERICANS WILL HAVE TO SPEAK OUT STRONGLY FOR A MORE ACTIVE POLICY. THERE IS A LARGE UNTAPPED POTENTIAL OF PUBLIC SUPPORT. FULLY ONE-THIRD OF THE PUBLIC SURVEYED IN THE OPINION POLLS DOES NOT VOICE AN OPINION. THIS IS

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PROBABLY DUE TO THE FACT THAT THEY DON'T YET HAVE ENOUGH KNOWLEDGE OF AFRICAN AFFAIRS TO FORM AN OPINION ABOUT OUR SOUTH AFRICAN POLICY.

THE REAL CHALLENGE OF THE FUTURE IS TO MAKE THIS COUNTRY MORE AWARE AND INFORMED OF CONDITIONS IN SOUTH AFRICA. ONCE THE PUBLIC HAS A MORE ACCURATE UNDERSTANDING OF SOUTH AFRICAN REALITIES, THERE WILL BE MORE POPULAR IMPACT ON THE POLICY-MAKING PROCESS. THE POTENTIAL IS THERE, AND I AM CONCERNED TO HELP DEVELOP PUBLIC AWARENESS AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE ISSUE.

THE FIRST STIRRINGS OF THAT AWARENESS HAVE BEEN SEEN AT COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES IN THE PAST TWO OR THREE YEARS. INDEPENDENT AND SPONTANEOUS, STUDENTS AND FACULTY AT MANY DIFFERENT CAMPUSES HAVE FORMED LOCAL ANTI-APARTHEID GROUPS WITH THE GOAL OF ACHIEVING UNIVERSITY DIVESTITURE OF STOCKS IN COMPANIES DOING BUSINESS IN SOUTH AFRICA.

I FULLY SUPPORT THE PRINCIPLE OF UNIVERSITY DIVESTITURE, AND I HAVE PROPOSED THAT ALL COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES JOIN TOGETHER AND COORDINATE THEIR DIVESTITURE OF SOUTH AFRICAN BASED STOCKS. THE ANTI-APARTHEID MOVEMENT WILL BE MORE EFFECTIVE IF IT SPEAKS IN A SINGLE VOICE. THIS COULD BE ACCOMPLISHED THROUGH A NATIONAL FIVE YEAR PROGRAM OF DIVESTITURE DURING WHICH UNIVERSITIES WOULD SELL 20% OF THEIR SOUTH AFRICA BASED PORTFOLIOS EACH YEAR. THE PROCESS

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WOULD CONTINUE UNTIL THE SOUTH AFRICAN GOVERNMENT ABANDONS THE GOAL OF APARTHEID AND TAKES STEPS TOWARD THE FULL INCORPORATION OF ALL SOUTH AFRICANS WITHIN A SINGLE SOUTH AFRICAN STATE. CONTRARY TO WHAT SOME ADVOCATES CLAIM, THE ECONOMIC IMPACT OF DIVESTITURE IS MINOR. UNDER A PHASED PROGRAM SUCH AS I HAVE PROPOSED, NEITHER THE COMPANIES, UNIVERSITIES, OR SOUTH AFRICA WOULD SUFFER ANY SIGNIFICANT ECONOMIC HARM FROM DIVESTITURE.

THE IMPACT OF DIVESTITURE, PARTICULARLY A NATIONALLY COORDINATED PROGRAM, IS POLITICAL. EACH YEAR COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES WOULD ANNOUNCE WHICH STOCKS THEY HAVE DECIDED TO SELL AND WHY. DISCUSSION OF SOUTH AFRICA AND ITS ABHORENT RACIAL LAWS WOULD BE WIDENED AND STIMULATE A LARGER NATIONAL DEBATE OVER U.S. POLICIES.

THE IMPACT ON SOUTH AFRICA OF SUCH A PROGRAM WOULD BE SIGNIFICANT. SOUTH AFRICA HAS DEMONSTRATED IN DRAMATIC FASHION ITS OBSESSION WITH AMERICAN POPULAR OPINION. THE DEPARTMENT OF INFORMATION SCANDAL IN SOUTH AFRICA HAS REVEALED JUST HOW FAR SOUTH AFRICA IS WILLING TO GO IN ORDER TO SHAPE AMERICAN ATTITUDES - BUYING NEWSPAPERS AND RADIO STATIONS FOR EXAMPLE. THERE HAVE BEEN ALLEGATIONS OF CONTRIBUTIONS TO AMERICAN POLITICANS. THE LATEST EPISODE IN THIS BATTLE FOR AMERICAN HEARTS AND MINDS IS THE TATE-COETZEE FIGHT IN SOUTH AFRICA. TELEVISED AROUND THE WORLD FROM A STADIUM

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WHICH HAS BRIEFLY INTEGRATED FOR THE EVENT, THE TATE-COETZEE FIGHT WAS A TRIUMPH FOR SOUTH AFRICAN PROPAGANDA. FOR THE PRESENT, SOUTH AFRICA'S STRATEGY IS HEAVILY ORIENTED TOWARD PUBLIC RELATIONS. THE GOAL IS TO CAMOFLAGE APARTHEID AND BLUNT, IF NOT REVERSE, INTERNATIONAL CRITICISM. UNIVERSITY DIVESTITURE IS AN EFFECTIVE REPLY TO THIS CYNICAL PUBLIC RELATIONS CAMPAIGN.

I DEPLORE THIS SOUTH AFRICAN STRATEGY. I CONSIDER SOUTH AFRICA'S RACIAL POLICIES TO BE A MAJOR THREAT TO THE PEACE AND SECURITY OF SOUTHERN AFRICA, AND BY EXTENSION, A THREAT TO OUR NATIONAL INTEREST. THERE CAN BE NO STANDING BACK WHILE THE LEADERS IN PRETORIA DESIGN THEIR INTRANSIGENT PLAN OF SELF DESTRUCTION. WE MUST APPLY PRESSURE ON SOUTH AFRICA TO CHANGE. WE MUST COUNTER THE INACCURATE BUT EFFECTIVE SOUTH AFRICAN PROGAGANDA CAMPAIGN. AT STAKE IS THE PROSPECT OF A RACIAL CONFLICT OF UNIMAGINED PROPORTIONS.

BLACK AMERICANS HAVE A MAJOR ROLE TO PLAY, NOT JUST ON UNIVERSITY CAMPUSES, BUT AS A POLITICAL FORCE IN AFRICAN AFFAIRS. IN NATIONAL SURVEYS, BLACKS EMERGE AS THE GROUP MOST SENSITIVE TO THE ISSUE OF SOUTH AFRICA AND WHO FAVOR MORE STRINGENT MEASURES TO ABOLISH SOUTH AFRICA'S APARTHEID SYSTEM. THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PRESIDENT CARTER AND ANDREW YOUNG IS EVIDENCE OF THIS POTENT POLITICAL COMBINATION.

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AGAIN, THE POTENTIAL IS THERE. SUCH GROUPS AS TRANSAFRICA, HEADED BY THE VERY ABLE RANDALL ROBINSON, ARE A BRILLIANT MEASURE OF THINGS TO COME.

I LOOK FORWARD TO THE TIME WHEN MY POSITIONS ON AFRICAN ISSUES WILL RECEIVE RESOUNDING SUPPORT FROM SENATORS WITH SIGNIFICANT BLACK CONSTITUENCIES, FROM SENATORS SENSITIVE TO A POWERFUL ANTI-APARTHEID MOVEMENT, FROM SENATORS WHO, AS IN THE PAST, HAVE ALWAYS FAVORED RACIAL JUSTICE AND AN ENLIGHTENED FOREIGN POLICY.

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