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**American Segregationist Ideology and White Southern
Africa, 1948-1975**

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DPhil American History, Literature and Social Studies

University of Sussex

September 2011

I hereby declare that this thesis has not been and will not be submitted in whole or in part to another University for the award of any other degree.

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DPhil American History, Literature and Social Studies

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SUMMARY

This thesis examines the relationship between segregationist organisations, publications and individuals in the United States and their pro-apartheid counterparts in southern Africa. It uncovers a sustained and extensive foreign policy of segregationists that has hitherto been overlooked and a relationship between the countries that goes beyond existing analyses of Cold War cooperation or comparative studies of the countries' racial systems.

When the civil rights movement began, steadfast segregationists in the American South looked further afield for support, inspiration and ideological affirmation of their belief in white supremacy. They found this in South Africa and its apartheid policies as well as in other right-wing organisations and individuals outside the American South. Through the archives of segregationist organisations, civil rights organisations, anti-communist groups, individuals, governmental records and newspapers, this thesis charts the journey southern segregationists took from the creation of massive resistance in 1954 – a movement focused on regional problems – to a dramatically less isolationist standpoint one decade later. By 1965, white southern Africa had really captured the imagination of segregationists, alliances had been forged and when massive resistance failed, segregationists did not retreat from their international agenda.

Although South Africa was a focal point of segregationists' attention during massive resistance, they also became committed to white rule in Rhodesia after 1965. This thesis examines the groups across America that supported the isolated bastions of white supremacy in southern Africa and demonstrates that the Cold War alliance between U.S. and southern African governments inadvertently helped to maintain and conceal the racism that drove segregationists to form fruitful links in southern Africa. The tangible and ideological links segregationists made abroad internationalised a concept of white supremacy in which race trumped nationality. This global white supremacy has endured and reveals that segregationists were not insignificant reactionaries with a short lived movement but people who affected race relations in the long term.

For my parents, Catherine and Leslie Hyman

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

It would not have been possible to write this thesis without the help and support of those around me. I extend my sincere gratitude to my supervisors at the University of Sussex. It has been a privilege to learn from Clive Webb and Saul Dubow and I am indebted to them both for their contributions to this thesis. I would like to thank Clive for the time and effort he has put into my development as a historian over the years. In autumn 2002, Clive taught a course on American history in the twentieth century. I was a second year undergraduate in that class and Clive inspired in me a passion for the subject. His mentoring and encouragement ever since has been invaluable. I would also like to thank Saul for his support and assistance throughout this project and for introducing me to research and lines of enquiry that I might not otherwise have come across.

I am also grateful to the faculty of the American Studies department at Sussex for supporting my ambitions and offering such helpful advice and encouragement along the way. There are also a number of friends who have given me intellectual and emotional support throughout this project: Nadja Janssen, Roger Johnson, Kate Nowicki, Basmah Fahim and Kate Mason. I would like to thank Adam Hyman, who is a wonderful brother, and Ben Postlethwaite, who has been at my side for most of this project and given me love and encouragement throughout. Finally, my deepest gratitude goes to my parents, Catherine and Leslie Hyman, for their unquestioning love and support. Without them, none of this would have been possible.

Introduction

In April 1978, conservative political columnist Holmes Alexander reported the passing of the segregationist old guard. ‘With its unfailing sense of drama’, he wrote, ‘history contrived that Mississippi Sen. Jim Eastland, 73, announced the termination of his three-decade national service at approximately the time Rhodesian Prime Minister Ian Smith conceded the end of white minority rule in his country’. For Alexander, this was more than just coincidental timing; the symbolism of these two men bowing out just days apart represented a momentous change. ‘When an Eastland retires and an Ian Smith sits down in an executive council with Africans’, he wrote somewhat remorsefully, ‘you know this is a different world than the one most of us were born into’.¹

The course of race relations in the United States and southern Africa did appear to be shifting with key players in the perpetuation of racial inequality finally beginning to relent and retire. Mississippi Senator James O. Eastland, a relic of segregation and massive resistance, announced that he would not seek re-election to the United States Senate. Since his election in 1941, Eastland had been a staunch conservative on all issues, especially race, and gained notoriety during the 1950s and 1960s for blocking and delaying civil rights reform. Mississippi had been the citadel of white supremacy in the American South and Eastland’s commitment to segregation remained long after the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Right Act of 1965 had put the final nail in Jim Crow’s coffin. Less than ten years later, however, the re-enfranchisement of African Americans ensured that Eastland

¹ Holmes Alexander, ‘The Masters Of A Divine Plan’, *News and Courier* (Charleston, South Carolina), 9 April 1978, 14-A.

was all but certain to lose a re-election campaign. Eastland's retirement coincided with the beginning of a transition to black majority rule in Rhodesia, a settlement reached in no small part due to pressure from the United States and South Africa for Rhodesia's Prime Minister, Ian Smith, to capitulate. Smith had ruled Rhodesia, with the support of Americans like Eastland, since his white minority government unilaterally declared its independence from Britain in 1965. Rather than concede to black rule, Smith stubbornly governed an illegal state for fifteen years.

Just five months later, in September 1978, the National Party elected Pieter Willem Botha to be its leader and prime minister of South Africa. He took over the apartheid state with a language of reform and challenged white South Africans to 'adapt or die'.² Botha had taken office at a difficult time. His predecessor, John Vorster, had been forced to resign after a scandal in which government funds were used for propaganda purposes overseas; the southern white bloc that had buffered South Africa had disintegrated, leaving the country more politically isolated than ever; and for the first time the United Nations had adopted a mandatory arms embargo against South Africa.³ Like his predecessors, Botha was a fierce opponent of black rule, but he also recognised that reform was needed – not because he doubted the philosophy of apartheid, but because he saw political reform as the only way to ensure the 'security and survival' of whites.⁴

² Deon Geldenhuys, *The Diplomacy of Isolation: South African Foreign Policy Making* (Johannesburg: Macmillan South Africa, 1984), 36.

³ The independence of Angola and Mozambique in 1975 and negotiations in Rhodesia brought black rule to the southern region of Africa, which had previously been characterised by white minority and colonial rule. United Nations Resolution 418 (4 November 1977) revoked the 1963 voluntary arms embargo and replaced it with a mandatory one.

⁴ James Barber and John Barratt, *South Africa's Foreign Policy: The Search for Status and Security, 1945-1988* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 248. See also Robert M. Price, 'Apartheid and White Supremacy: the Meaning of Government-Led Reform in the South African Context', in Robert M. Price and

Botha's reform would be mixed with severe repression and it would take until 1994 for South Africa to make the transition to black majority rule. However, Alexander was right; it was a markedly different world. Out of the horrors of World War II, oppressed minorities and majorities across the globe had begun to demand freedom and equality. By 1978 the vast majority of Africa had been decolonised and in the American South the civil rights movement had defeated legally-sanctioned segregation. However, while Eastland and Smith conceded that they could not maintain white supremacy, a number of Americans thought otherwise. It is these people, whose commitment to white supremacy did not wane, that will be examined in this thesis.

In the post-World War II period, a remarkably symbiotic relationship developed between the United States, South Africa and Rhodesia. Individuals, organisations and governments of these three countries collaborated in important ways, most notably as Cold War allies and ideological partners. This thesis examines how segregationists in the United States looked for and found affirmation of their belief in white supremacy across the Atlantic Ocean, in South Africa and Rhodesia. Existing scholarship has either overlooked the importance of segregationist foreign policy or dismissed it as a limited and unsophisticated short-term attempt to bolster their domestic agenda. This study offers a new interpretation of the international scope of segregationists both inside and outside the American South and uncovers a sustained, extensive and comprehensive foreign policy that not only strengthened the massive resistance movement in the short-term but also contributed to a

lasting, global white supremacy that is still evident today. From the beginning of massive resistance, white opponents of racial reform positioned their struggle within a broader national and international context. By revealing tangible links between American segregationists and their southern African counterparts this thesis reveals a foreign policy that went beyond ideology to forge partnerships of white supremacy in a post-war world which had, in theory at least, rejected racism.

In examining segregationist foreign policy, it should be noted that the ideology that drove those committed to the maintenance of white supremacy was fluid, selective and sometimes inconsistent. Segregationist strategy for addressing international issues was not, for example, as stringently set as the Cold War policy that largely dictated the actions and alliances of the United States government in the latter half of the twentieth century. Rather, this thesis utilises the term ‘foreign policy’ as a means of expressing an increasing unity of thought among American segregationists with regard to their growing commitment to white supremacy elsewhere in the world. This foreign policy was initially reactive, as the formulation of policies so often are. Southern segregationists, on the defensive as the civil rights movement gained momentum, rushed to show that their racially stratified society was not a global anomaly. However, this research reveals that segregationists rapidly formulated a proactive, dedicated and informed international outlook, which included a commitment to white rule in Africa and opposition to black independence there. This foreign policy quickly became an important and influential part of segregationist ideology. With this shift in focus, from domestic issues of regional states’ rights to international affairs, came the lasting segregationist foreign policy which is examined in this thesis.

American support for white rule in Africa was not a southern phenomenon and ‘massive resister’, ‘segregationist’ and ‘white supremacist’ were by no means bywords for ‘southerner’. On the contrary, this research has discovered organisational and political support for segregation and white southern Africa across the United States. By taking segregationists out of the confines of the American South, this thesis considers their actions within the context of the Cold War and the African American civil rights movement. It explores the diplomatic connections between the United States, South Africa and Rhodesia and reveals how this anti-communist alliance, which became so vital to the U.S. government, affected both segregationist and integrationist efforts to shape race relations in the U.S. and abroad. Rather than dismissing opponents of racial reform as unsophisticated, insular reactionaries, who cobbled together a short-lived unsuccessful movement against civil rights, this thesis demonstrates that when the battle against integration was lost in the American South, segregationists did not fade away. They continued to fight for white supremacy and did not desert the increasingly isolated bastions of white rule in southern Africa. Rather, they redoubled their efforts and years after Jim Crow was defeated, supporters of white supremacy remained committed to an international cause.

* * * * *

For quite some time scholarship on black resistance in general and the civil rights movement in particular assumed a primary position within the field of American race relations. It was seen, quite rightly, as an important area of study that put the civil rights movement into historical context and deservedly told the stories of those who fought for racial change. With the exception of a handful of noteworthy studies published in the 1960s

and 1970s, until relatively recently there was little scholarly interest in those who opposed racial equality.⁵ In 2000, Charles Eagles addressed this historiographical problem, writing that historians had created an ‘asymmetry’ in the scholarly field by neglecting their ‘professional obligation to understand...the segregationist opposition’.⁶ Fortunately, significant steps have since been taken to remedy this unbalance and there is a great deal of excellent scholarship which has informed this thesis. Massive resistance scholarship followed the path of civil rights research; both began by examining the histories of leaders, organisations and infamous showdowns before assessing the importance of grassroots activists and localised struggles. All of these are necessary, but the civil rights movement cannot be understood without full, critical appreciation of its white opposition. More recently, scholars have attempted to understand more fully grassroots segregationists and evaluate their actions, thereby adding greatly to a fuller understanding of the massive resistance movement and of massive resisters themselves.⁷

Numerous historians have pointed to the *Brown vs. Board of Education* Supreme Court ruling of May 1954, which deemed segregated public schooling unconstitutional, as the

⁵ Four scholars acknowledged the historical importance of segregationists and published studies that have remained seminal texts for students and scholars of massive resistance. These important studies were, however, largely limited to organisational histories and accounts of dramatic confrontations and leading political figures. See, James W. Silver, *Mississippi: The Closed Society* (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1964); Numan V. Bartley, *The Rise of Massive Resistance: Race and Politics in the South During the 1950s* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1969); Neil R. McMillen, *The Citizens' Council: Organised Resistance to the Second Reconstruction, 1954-1964* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1971); and Francis M. Wilhoit, *The Politics of Massive Resistance* (New York: George Braziller, Inc., 1973).

⁶ Charles W. Eagles, ‘Toward New Histories of the Civil Rights Era’, *Journal of Southern History* 66, no. 4 (Nov., 2000): 816, 842.

⁷ See, for instance, Pete Daniel, *Lost Revolutions: The South in the 1950s* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000); David L. Chappell, *A Stone of Hope: Prophetic Religion and the Death of Jim Crow* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004); Clive Webb (ed.), *Massive Resistance: Southern Opposition to the Second Reconstruction* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005); George Lewis, *Massive Resistance: The White Response to the Civil Rights Movement* (London: Hodder Arnold, 2006); Clive Webb, *Rabble Rousers: The American Far Right in the Civil Rights Era* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2010).

decisive catalyst in the emergence of massive resistance. Michael J. Klarman's 'backlash thesis' argued that *Brown* 'temporarily destroyed southern racial moderation' and Clive Webb has argued that it became such a pivotal focal point for segregationists because education was the most emotionally-charged aspect of southern social life.⁸ *Brown* brought into much sharper focus the political and social extremism that was embodied in the massive resistance movement. There is not, however, a consensus among historians as to *Brown*'s role as catalyst. Francis Wilhoit argued that while massive resistance grew 'organically out of the South's violent past', white resistance to *Brown* 'turned into something close to a political counterrevolution' with the introduction of the Southern Manifesto in March 1956.⁹ This document condemned the Supreme Court's decision as an abuse of power and pledged 'to use all lawful means' to reverse the judgment. Its (largely successful) aim was to ensure that all white southerners united behind the segregationist cause.¹⁰ George Lewis, however, has argued that the white resistance movement was too expansive and was carried out by both politicians and those at the grassroots of community and cannot, therefore, be solely attributed to *Brown* or any other single event.¹¹ A central issue of contention, then, has been whether high-profile events, such as *Brown* and the Southern Manifesto, sparked massive resistance, or whether early localised grassroots opposition to racial change marked the beginning of the movement. This thesis contends

⁸ Michael J. Klarman, 'How *Brown* Changed Race Relations: The Backlash Thesis', *Journal of American History* 81 (June, 1994): 82; Clive Webb, 'A Continuity of Conservatism: The Limitations of *Brown v. Board of Education*', *Journal of Southern History* 70, no. 2 (May, 2004): 328.

⁹ Wilhoit, *The Politics of Massive Resistance*, 52.

¹⁰ Tony Badger, 'Southerners Who Refused to Sign the Southern Manifesto', *Historical Journal* 42, no. 2 (June, 1999): 517. Badger noted that the Manifesto largely succeeded in creating unity because moderate southern politicians felt that they had no alternative but to sign. Three southern senators did not sign: Lyndon Johnson (Texas), Estes Kefauver (Tennessee) and Albert Gore, Sr. (Tennessee). Badger explained that the drafters of the Manifesto did not ask Johnson or Kefauver to sign the document as they did not want to jeopardise Johnson's position as Senate majority leader or his presidential ambitions and simply did not bother asking Kefauver because he was battling for the Democratic presidential nomination and had already publicly stated that *Brown* was the law of the land.

¹¹ Lewis, *Massive Resistance*, 4.

that *Brown* did create the climate in which massive resistance flourished. However, more central to this study is the argument that *Brown* also ignited segregationists' venture into foreign affairs, which is an area of study that has been overlooked. Therefore, it not only helps to contextualise the foreign ambitions of segregationists but also extends the analysis of the impact of the *Brown* decision on white southerners.

Scholars agree that the Citizens' Council was the pre-eminent segregationist organisation of the post-World War II South. Formed in Mississippi following the *Brown* decision, this organisation quickly spread across the region. Although the Citizens' Council's publications will be examined in detail in this thesis, it is relevant to note that the organisation's first newspaper dedicated two separate columns to South Africa. One linked together the efforts of segregationists in the American South and South Africa and another featured a letter of support from an internationally-minded right-wing South African, S. E. D. Brown.¹² This first publication by the Citizens' Council was the start of constant reference to, and support of, white minority rule in Africa and Brown and the Citizens' Council maintained a mutually beneficial relationship during and after the period of massive resistance. Scholarship on the foreign policy of segregationists is still very thin. Alfred Hero's mammoth study, *The Southerner and World Affairs* (1965) is a fascinating synthesis of southern opinion, gauged primarily from interviews conducted between 1959 and 1962. He concluded that the South in general actually became more isolationist between the mid-1930s and early 1960s. While Hero found that white supremacists were more likely to favour white rule in Africa, he also stated that they became significantly

¹² *Citizens' Council* 1:1 (Oct., 1955): 2-4.

more provincial as a result of desegregation efforts.¹³ This was, however, an analysis of opinion, not action.

Thomas Noer's article, 'Segregationists and the World: The Foreign Policy of White Resistance' (2003) more directly addressed segregationists' interest in international affairs. He considered the effect of African decolonisation on massive resistance and showed that southern segregationists increasingly regarded their struggle alongside the white supremacist regimes of southern Africa. However, Noer concluded that segregationists' foreign policy was 'never elaborate or comprehensive' and that they made a practical decision to use Cold War anti-communism to garner support for their struggle to maintain segregation. Noer argued that because segregationists failed to preserve Jim Crow they ultimately failed.¹⁴ To be sure, massive resistance failed. However, Noer did not examine the tangible and ideological links that southern segregationists shared with their southern African counterparts. Furthermore, he primarily considered the short period of the early-to-mid-1960s, suggesting, wrongly in this author's opinion, that segregationists only attempted to make direct connections between foreign and domestic affairs when their own battle against integration became 'more desperate'.¹⁵ Additionally, Noer suggested that segregationists disingenuously claim a link to the strand of international white supremacy one sees today. However, his study went little beyond the mid-1960s claiming that 'When legal segregation ended, there was little incentive to continue to focus on foreign policy'.¹⁶

¹³ Alfred O. Hero, *The Southerner and World Affairs* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1965), 188-189, 422.

¹⁴ Thomas Noer, 'Segregationists and the World: The Foreign Policy of White Resistance', in Brenda Gayle Plummer (ed.), *Window on Freedom: Race, Civil Rights, and Foreign Affairs, 1945-1988* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003), 141, 157.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 142.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 158.

Conversely, this research reveals that the same segregationists who actively promoted an international agenda from the beginning of massive resistance continued to do so long after it ended.

In the preface to the 1994 reprint of *The Citizens' Council*, Neil McMillen did briefly mention the organisation's interest in South Africa and Rhodesia. Like Noer, he thought that segregationists only really looked to southern Africa after massive resistance failed.¹⁷ In neither this edition nor the original 1971 version did McMillen investigate the extent of the Council's interest in white southern Africa during and after massive resistance. The Citizens' Council certainly showed ever-increasing interest in South Africa and Rhodesia when the battle to preserve Jim Crow became more precarious. However, it is wrong to conclude that its interest in white southern Africa only emerged after massive resistance failed. For the amount of scholarly attention that the Citizens' Council has now received, there has remained a remarkable lack of interest in their southern Africa agenda, which was, this thesis argues, evident from 1955 onwards.

It was not only the Citizens' Council that supported white Africa. By 1960 the ultra-right wing John Birch Society was regularly editorialising on southern Africa and together, the two organisations created quite a substantial pro-apartheid lobby. Furthermore, after 1965, organisations inside and outside the American South emerged to support Rhodesia. This grassroots support for Rhodesia, evident in the wellspring of organisations that emerged after Ian Smith's Unilateral Declaration of Independence, has received even less academic

¹⁷ Neil McMillen, 'Preface to the 1994 Edition' in *The Citizens' Council: Organized Resistance to the Second Reconstruction, 1954-1964* (Urbana, Illinois: Illini Books edition, 1994), xiii.

attention. Gerald Horne's *From the Barrel of a Gun: The United States and the War against Zimbabwe* (2001) is a valuable study that reveals support for white Rhodesia amongst southern segregationists, mercenaries and the U.S. government. However, Horne omits the considerable support for Rhodesia from the single-issue focus groups which feature in this study. This is all the more strange because Horne made the point of writing that the survival of the illegal Rhodesian government was 'due in no small part to the "friends of Rhodesia" who were to be found worldwide but particularly in the United States'.¹⁸ These groups, which are examined in this thesis, certainly are significant; they not only forged personal relationships with Rhodesians and served as a propaganda machine for Smith in the United States, but their links with congressmen reveal an important relationship between politicians, the government and grassroots support for Rhodesia.

Other studies of the U.S. and Rhodesia have largely been diplomatic histories, exploring U.S. foreign policy towards the illegal country within a Cold War context. Raymond Arsenault's 'White on Chrome: Southern Congressmen and Rhodesia, 1962-1971' (1972) provides an informative contemporary assessment of the pro-Rhodesia lobby in Congress.¹⁹ Interestingly, some of the congressmen Arsenault detailed had direct links to the pro-Rhodesian groups explored in this thesis, which was a considerable benefit to the existence

¹⁸ Gerald Horne, *From the Barrel of a Gun: The United States and the War against Zimbabwe, 1965-1980* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2001), 142. Another article by Ward Churchill also addressed the use of American mercenaries in southern Africa. He perceptively concluded that the U.S. government largely ignored the fact because the use of mercenaries was not antithetical to the U.S. government's economic and strategic aims. See Ward Churchill, 'U.S. Mercenaries in Southern Africa: The Recruiting Network of U.S. Policy', *Africa Today* 27, no. 2, (2nd Qtr., 1980). See also Andrew DeRoche, *Black, White, and Chrome: The United States and Zimbabwe, 1953-1988* (Trenton, New Jersey: Africa World Press, 2001) which offers a more positive assessment of U.S. foreign policy towards Rhodesia than Horne, in particular, President Jimmy Carter's assistance in bringing about the transition to black majority rule there.

¹⁹ Raymond Arsenault, 'White on Chrome: Southern Congressmen and Rhodesia, 1962-1971', *Issue: A Journal of Opinion* 2, no. 4 (Winter 1972): 46-57.

and expansion of grassroots Rhodesian support. Since Arsenault's article, there have been many influential studies which have brilliantly woven together the intersecting nature of the Cold War, white supremacy, African American civil rights and U.S. foreign policy.²⁰ Thomas Borstelmann, Horne and Noer exemplify a growing consensus among historians of U.S. Cold War foreign policy that anti-communism had the effect of damaging independence movements, slowing down decolonisation and propping up white minority regimes. Borstelmann noted that the Cold War was directly related to the surge and dissolution of white supremacy, pointing to the fact that the Cold War years and the South African apartheid years overlapped in such a way as to allow Afrikaner nationalists to effectively use anti-communism to preserve the U.S. government's support for their minority rule.²¹ Horne and Noer similarly argued that Cold War priorities often meant that the U.S. government turned a blind eye to white intransigence domestically as well as in white Africa. Horne concluded that while white supremacy was substantially eroded during the Cold War, rather than being extinguished altogether, it was bolstered by 'an aggressive anticommunism that had the advantage of being – at least formally – nonracial'.²² Such studies again have principally been diplomatic histories, which superbly explain the impact

²⁰ Some of the most significant works in this field include a number of contributions by Thomas Borstelmann, including *The Cold War and the Color Line: American Race Relations in the Global Arena* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2001), *Apartheid's Reluctant Uncle: The United States and Southern Africa in the Early Cold War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993) and 'Jim Crow's Coming Out: Race Relations and American Foreign Policy in the Truman Years', *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 29, no. 3 (Sep., 1999): 549-569. Studies that have assessed the negative impact of the Cold War on the African American freedom struggle include Mary Dudziak, *Cold War Civil Rights: Race and the Image of American Democracy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000); Carol Elaine Anderson, *Eyes off the Prize: The United Nations and the African American Struggle for Human Rights, 1944-1955* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003); Penny M. von Eschen, *Race against Empire: Black Americans and Anticolonialism, 1937-1957* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1997); Thomas Noer, *Cold War and Black Liberation: the United States and White Rule in Africa, 1948-1968* (Columbia, Missouri: University of Missouri Press, 1985); and Gerald Horne, 'Race From Power: U.S. Foreign Policy and the General Crisis of White Supremacy', in Pummer, *Window on Freedom*.

²¹ Borstelmann, *The Cold War and the Color Line*, ix.

²² Horne, 'Race From Power', 54.

that Cold War U.S. policy had on the maintenance of white supremacy in southern Africa but do not complete the story by linking government strategy to the international policies of American segregationists.

Research into how segregationists used Cold War anti-communism to damage the reputation of the civil rights movement has greatly contributed to our understanding of massive resistance. Jeff Woods argued that ‘segregation and anti-Communism acted as the mutually reinforcing components of an extreme southern nationalism’, something that Woods saw as a regional desire to protect the ‘southern way of life’ from external threat.²³ Just as Borstelmann noted the beneficial overlap in the Cold War and apartheid years for South Africa, George Lewis observed that the Cold War and southern resistance also ‘began to precipitate concurrently in the late 1940s’. As such, Lewis explained that it was not surprising that Cold War concerns significantly impacted on massive resistance – not just for southern politicians but for grassroots segregationists too.²⁴ Such studies have contributed to the ongoing effort of historians to examine segregationists’ social and political ideologies rather than looking only at their racism. This thesis seeks to expand upon these studies by showing that segregationists’ anti-communism enabled them to make fruitful associations with the American right-wing as well as with whites in southern Africa. Indeed, by following the story of massive resisters beyond the mid-1960s, one can see that their continued commitment to white supremacy and anti-communism worked not only to damage civil rights but also to support white Africa.

²³ Jeff Woods, *Black Struggle, Red Scare: Segregation and Anti-Communism in the South, 1948-1968* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2004), 2.

²⁴ George Lewis, ‘White South, Red Nation: Massive Resistance and the Cold War’, in Webb (ed.), *Massive Resistance*, 117-118. See also George Lewis, *The White South and the Red Menace: Segregationists, Anticommunism, and Massive Resistance, 1945-1965* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2004).

Research into segregation, anti-communism and foreign affairs also helps to balance the historical narrative, which has tended to concentrate more on the black struggle in the Cold War. Mary Dudziak and Carol Anderson have both persuasively argued that the Cold War greatly impacted on civil rights. Dudziak concluded that it helped civil rights reform by pressurising Washington's policymakers to take action as a means of avoiding potentially harmful criticism.²⁵ Anderson, by contrast, explained that the concept of human rights, which was highly significant to the burgeoning civil rights movement, became synonymous in the Cold War context with communism. As a result, groups like the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) who were keen to preserve a broad base of support, were forced to retreat from the important struggle for human rights.²⁶ This thesis aims to contribute to this debate by exemplifying, first, that anti-communism continued to limit some efforts of civil rights activists to frame their struggle within a context of international human rights in southern Africa; and, secondly, that in spite of these Cold War pressures, the NAACP managed to keep South Africa and issues of anti-colonialism in mainstream American discourse.

Dudziak argued that in the early Cold War years (1946 to the mid-1960s) subsequent U.S. presidents and their advisors became so concerned about negative Soviet propaganda and international anti-American sentiment caused by race discrimination that civil rights reform 'came to be seen as crucial to U.S. foreign relations'.²⁷ Dudziak asserted that civil rights

²⁵ Dudziak, *Cold War Civil Rights*; and Mary Dudziak, 'Desegregation as a Cold War Imperative', *Stanford Law Review* 44, no. 1 (Nov., 1988): 61-120.

²⁶ Anderson, *Eye's off the Prize*, 5-6.

²⁷ Dudziak, *Cold War Civil Rights*, 6.

activists utilised their government's sensitivity over race to press for reform while also conceding that red-baiting of the early Cold War years severely narrowed the parameters of 'acceptable protest'.²⁸ Although she acknowledged that governmental commitment to racial reform was consistent with the overriding goal of combating communism, her story is somewhat triumphalist, suggesting that subsequent U.S. administrations prioritised civil rights reform as a crucial component of Cold War policymaking, thus speeding up the process of social change in the United States. Dudziak's argument that international pressure and Soviet propaganda convinced Washington's elite to push for civil rights is, in part, true and her research is highly significant in bringing together the history of civil rights and international relations. However, it only tells half of the story. By linking together negative international reportage that occurred in the wake of particularly dramatic civil rights showdowns, concern among the U.S. State Department over such critiques and subsequent civil rights action taken by the federal government, Dudziak failed to recognise the extent to which segregationists also had foreign support or the hypocritical nature of subsequent U.S. governments. If improving the image of American race relations was central to the United States' Cold War agenda, this agenda did not include any significant commitment to racial equality elsewhere.

Indeed, this thesis contends that Washington's preoccupation with the Cold War, and the diplomatic alliances necessary to achieve its goals, allowed segregationists far greater scope for garnering internal and external support than civil rights activists, who were hampered by pervasive anti-communism. Successive U.S. administrations, which professed a commitment to domestic equality but consistently prioritised Cold War alliances with white

²⁸ Ibid., 43, 11.

minority regimes in southern Africa, will be examined in detail in Chapter One. It reveals that Dudziak failed to recognise the two-faced nature of the American government and how, crucially, this enabled segregationists to successfully use the Cold War context to internationalise their own movement for white supremacy while simultaneously making dangerous accusations of communism against those fighting for civil rights. Although the U.S. government was, on occasion, forced into facilitating domestic civil rights reform, more often than not U.S. Cold War policy reflected a consistent lack of commitment to racial equality at home and abroad. As such, segregationist efforts to create tangible transatlantic linkages proved to be more profitable.

Despite the barrier that anti-communist rhetoric created, African Americans and black South Africans did manage to forge some links and the concept of a global struggle against white supremacy was highly significant for the civil rights movement. There is a long tradition of writing on the transatlantic connection between blacks in the U.S. and South Africa which examines black nationalist ideology, religion, music and Pan-Africanism. Scholars have examined such links, as well as the ideological connection between whites, in the substantial field of comparative research on the two countries which now exists.²⁹ Since George Fredrickson's seminal study, *White Supremacy: A Comparative Study in American and South African History*, was published in 1981, a growing body of work has

²⁹ Some of the most significant comparative works on the United States and South Africa are John W. Cell, *The Highest Stage of White Supremacy: The Origins of Segregation in South Africa and the American South* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1982); George M. Fredrickson, *White Supremacy: A Comparative Study in American and South African History* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1981) and *Black Liberation: A Comparative History of Black Ideologies in the United States and South Africa* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995); James T. Campbell, *Songs of Zion: The African Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States and South Africa* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998); Stanley B. Greenberg, *Race and State in Capitalist Development: Comparative Perspectives* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1980); and Anthony W. Marx, *Making Race and Nation: A Comparison of South Africa, the United States and Brazil* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998).

demonstrated the scholarly interest in this field – not least evidenced by the creation of *Safundi: The Journal of South African and American Comparative Studies* in 1999. Fifteen years after *White Supremacy*, Fredrickson's *Black Liberation: A Comparative History of Black Ideologies in the United States and South Africa* (1995) demonstrated 'ideological parallelism' between African Americans and black South Africans and also traced some of the interaction between the two. The fact that Fredrickson's study of white supremacy came first goes against the general tradition of scholarship on race relations discussed previously. Fredrickson thought that the demographic differences between the races in the two countries 'left little basis for detailed comparison' of the black struggle against white supremacy.³⁰ Fortunately he reviewed that assumption and, taken together, these works remain the most significant comparative studies of the racial systems and ideologies of both countries.

Another noteworthy study is John Cell's *The Highest Stage of White Supremacy: The Origins of Segregation in South Africa and the American South* (1982). Cell's work, largely based on secondary literature, argued that segregation was essentially new, something created during the period 1890-1920. Fredrickson, by contrast, concluded that segregation and white supremacy in the two countries had evolved out of historical experiences such as the colonial period, slavery and the organisation of the state. Furthermore, Cell found far more similarities between the U.S. and South Africa than did Fredrickson, who contrasts more than he compares. With many disagreements, there is one area of consensus, not just between Cell and Fredrickson but among other scholars who have worked on white supremacy as an ideology or practice: Horne summed it up as 'the belief in the right of

³⁰ Fredrickson, *Black Liberation*, 5.

those of European heritage to dominate all others'.³¹ If Cell was a comparer and Fredrickson a contraster, then this thesis is largely a study of collaboration, contributing to these historians' research by assessing how segregationists in the U.S. found ideological affiliation and concrete alliances in southern Africa.

Although this is not a comparative study, scholarship on South African apartheid, like research on U.S. segregation, has provided a wealth of information from which to draw comparisons, which undoubtedly led to the people of these segregated societies coming together in a meeting of minds in the mid-twentieth century. A strong, white segregationist movement emerged in the United States at roughly the same time that the Afrikaner Nationalist regime began to find stability as the South African ruling party. Scholars including Deborah Posel, Saul Dubow and Alan Jeeves have explained that the election was won by a narrow margin of seats, not votes, forcing the National Party to toe a cautious line of 'practical' apartheid during its first term in office (1948-1953) rather than implementing ideologically-driven total segregation.³² Despite feeling vulnerable electorally, by the mid 1950s the National Party had laid the cornerstones of apartheid policy. The Mixed Marriages Act (1949) and Immorality Act (1950) prohibited interracial marriage and sexual relations between the races; the Population Registration Act (1950) ensured every person in South Africa was classified by their race on a national register; the Group Areas Act (1950) defined racial zones and how people moved between them; the Suppression of Communism

³¹ Horne, 'Race from Power', 45.

³² Deborah Posel, *The Making of Apartheid, 1948-1961: Conflict and Compromise* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991), 49-51, 73. In *South Africa's 1940s: Worlds of Possibilities* (Cape Town: Double Storey Books, 2005) editors Saul Dubow and Alan Jeeves present a collection of essays showing that the implementation of apartheid at the close of the 1940s was by no means the only – or even the most likely – outcome of a decade in which several 'new' South Africas were imagined by African nationalists, Afrikaner nationalists and liberal/social-democratic advocates.

Act (1950) banned the Communist Party in South Africa but was also used against anyone challenging apartheid or the government; the Urban Areas Act (1952) specified who was allowed to live and work in towns; the Reservation of Separate Amenities Act (1953) designated separate – and *unequal* – public facilities for each race; and the Separate Representation of Voters Act (1956) severely reduced the Cape Coloureds' vote.³³ For an uncertain first term in office, the Nationalists had built a comprehensive framework for segregation. As such, massive resistance and apartheid were contemporaneously growing in strength. Internally, the National Party was relatively secure but externally, South Africa faced a very different situation.

In 1977, John de St. Jorre wrote that South Africa 'is the classic case of a country whose foreign relations are determined largely by its domestic political and social structure'. The National Party's unwavering commitment to apartheid had 'buckled a strait jacket around Pretoria's foreign policy makers'.³⁴ Scholars of South African foreign policy during apartheid have agreed that it was dominated by, as James Barber and John Barratt have written, a 'search for status and security' with the overriding aim of maintaining white control.³⁵ Robert Scott Jaster similarly described South Africa's foreign policy as 'a futile and often misdirected' search for security which included a continual search for allies, particularly those in the Western world, who could keep South Africa under the 'Western nuclear umbrella'.³⁶ The United States became highly significant in this respect, especially in terms of military connections and trade. The relationship, however, was fraught with the

³³ Beinart, *Twentieth-Century South Africa*, 147-158.

³⁴ John de St. Jorre, 'South Africa: Up Against the World', *Foreign Policy*, no. 28 (Autumn, 1977): 53.

³⁵ Barber and Barratt, *South Africa's Foreign Policy*.

³⁶ Robert Scott Jaster, *The Defence of White Power: South African Foreign Policy under Pressure* (Basingstoke: Macmillan Press, 1988), xiv.

difficulty of marrying morality with political and economic imperatives. Fortunately for the National Party, the U.S., and other Western powers, protected South Africa ‘from the full mandate of international law and morality’ which the United Nations sought to impose.³⁷ As this thesis demonstrates, the National Party was able to rely on its Cold War alliance with the United States to keep it in the Western fold and buffer it against pressure in the U.N. As in the American field, the literature on South African foreign affairs has privileged government institutions rather than those at the grassroots of society. While the foreign policy of the U.S. government was overwhelmingly dictated by the Cold War, South Africa’s foreign policy was shackled by the task of preserving the white state. Rather than formulating foreign policies to suit changing circumstances internationally, both Pretoria and Washington sought to fit their foreign policies into pre-determined plans.

South African historiography has largely focused inwards on the political workings of the state rather than trying to understand the origins and ideology of apartheid.³⁸ There are significant studies, though, which have addressed the ideology of Afrikaners and, in this field, one can find many comparable experiences between segregationists and Afrikaners. One of the most striking differences, however, is that massive resistance was primarily a grassroots movement in the U.S., albeit with some regional political support, while apartheid was government policy in South Africa. However, both vehicles of white

³⁷ Winston Nagan, ‘The US and South Africa: The limits of “Peaceful Change”’, in René Lemarchand, *American Foreign Policy in Southern Africa: The Stakes and the Stance* (Washington, D.C.: University Press of America, 1981), 266.

³⁸ Beginning in the early 1970s, historians of South Africa began assessing black resistance and white minority rule. Beinart and Dubow have explained that as political tension between blacks and whites intensified, competing explanations of segregation and apartheid appeared. At the same time, the decolonisation of Africa prompted scholarship on black resistance as a means of contextualising the changes sweeping across the continent. See ‘Introduction’ in William Beinart and Saul Dubow (eds.), *Segregation and Apartheid in Twentieth-Century South Africa* (London: Routledge, 1995), 3.

supremacy reached something of an apex between the late 1950s and early 1960s.³⁹ Indeed, one can better understand the rise of white supremacy in the U.S. and South Africa and the relationship between the two countries by viewing white resistance and apartheid as different routes taken to solve the same problem. Rather than fundamentally different and separate, each system of segregation found its correlation in the other. Massive resistance in the U.S. was ‘massive assertion’ in South Africa.

Numerous scholars have pointed to the centrality of ideology in explaining both the rise and successes of white supremacy. Scholars of segregation and apartheid may have disagreed over the key principles and industrial aims of white dominance, but one area of consensus is that the apartheid regime, like its grassroots counterpart in the American South, was devoted to the ideology of white supremacy.⁴⁰ Southerners and Afrikaners were both white European settlers, originally part of the British empire; both felt they were an embattled people; both societies had been slave based, imbuing whites with a sense of racial superiority; both were Christian anti-communist societies; both had governments which were ineffective or unwilling to promote racial change; and both faced a black struggle for equality at a similar time – U.S. southerners faced this challenge within their region while white South Africans faced it across most of their continent. Many of these traits similarly link segregationists and Rhodesians and this thesis shows that southern segregationists

³⁹ Although apartheid would also continue to strengthen after massive resistance failed, the National Party gained electoral security during this period, Prime Minister Hendrik Verwoerd implemented “grand apartheid” and Afrikaner nationalists achieved their goal of South Africa becoming a republic.

⁴⁰ See Posel, *The Making of Apartheid*, 9-12 for a comprehensive discussion of the liberal-revisionist debate within apartheid scholarship. Briefly, the liberal position explained apartheid in terms of political and ideological factors and stressed the incompatibility of apartheid with capitalist interests. The revisionist position, however, stressed the compatibility of apartheid and capitalism, seeing apartheid primarily as a means of guaranteeing cheap black African labour. Both saw white unity as achievable by ensuring that, economically, there would be no need to ally with black Africans.

recognised historical and contemporaneous parallels between themselves and white southern Africans and keenly utilised the similarities to defend their position. The term 'white South African' has been purposefully employed since segregationists often did not differentiate between Afrikaner and English; rather, they supported the white people of the country as a whole. Afrikaner nationalism remained strong and so there was far more cooperation between American segregationists and English- rather than Afrikaner-South Africans (another difficulty in establishing an Afrikaner-American coalition was the language barrier). Nevertheless, the dedication of American segregationists to 'the white race' ensured their continued support for South Africa.

The ideology of white supremacy in the U.S. and South Africa included the experience of adhering to a mythical and sacred history. Segregationists and historians have recognised the importance of historical memory and the significance of mythologising southern history. In 1960, segregationist journalist William D. Workman, Jr. wrote that the 'Southerner is proud of the past' and had 'a deeper sense of history than...Americans generally'.⁴¹ Historians including James Silver, James Cobb and Pete Daniel have since researched the significance of southern history. Silver concluded that Mississippians were obsessed with their past, 'but this does not ensure the accuracy of their historical picture'.⁴² Although Mississippi was arguably the worst state in terms of opposition to African American civil rights in the mid-twentieth century, it can be used to exemplify the rest of the South in many respects. Silver placed Mississippi in its broader historical context by noting that parallels between the threat to slavery in the 1850s and the threat to segregation

⁴¹ William D. Workman, Jr., *The Case for the South* (New York: Devin-Adair Company, 1960), 10.

⁴² Silver, *Mississippi: The Closed Society*, x.

in the 1950s ‘remind us that Mississippi has been on the defensive against inexorable change for more than a century’.⁴³ This helps to explain why the Citizens’ Council was founded in Mississippi and also why it continued to fight for racial supremacy long after segregation was dismantled.

Cobb observed that white southerners were insular and defensive because the South had been marginalised from mainstream society since the American Revolution.⁴⁴ Even before the Civil War (1861-1865) white southerners were defensive to the point of ‘[t]urning inward upon themselves’ and withdrawing into an idyllic ‘dream world’.⁴⁵ This in turn allowed a romanticised vision of the South to emerge. Daniel concurred, stating: ‘White southerners often looked backward for inspiration – to what they regarded as their glory days.’⁴⁶ The examination of segregationists in this research, however, represents a break from that past. When confronted with racial reform, segregationists did not turn inwards and nor did they look backwards; rather, they systematically worked to present the perceived infringement on their rights as a national problem and looked for affirmation of their position in southern Africa.

Afrikaners shared this experience of a sacred history and scholars have shown that it became bound up in Afrikaner nationalism. Leonard Thompson wrote that before the last quarter of the nineteenth century, ‘there was no Afrikaner national spirit’. It was not until the British reversed their policy of non-intervention north of the Orange River that an

⁴³ Ibid., 6.

⁴⁴ James C. Cobb, *Away Down South: A History of Southern Identity* (New York: Oxford University Press, Inc., 2005), 4-5.

⁴⁵ Ibid., 33.

⁴⁶ Daniel, *Lost Revolutions*, 26.

‘Afrikaner national consciousness’ began to grow.⁴⁷ The invasion of northern troops in the American Civil War and the threat of a British attack in South Africa thus caused American southerners and Afrikaners to develop a regional and national consciousness around the same time. Just as white southerners mythologised the Civil War, William Minter observed that Afrikaner ideologists exalted their battles with both Africans and the British into political mythology.⁴⁸ T. Dunbar Moodie defined the Afrikaner sacred history as a civil religion, which ‘unites Afrikaners in their sense of unique identity and destiny, inspiring the faithful, converting the skeptical, and ever reminding them of their sacred separation from English and black African’.⁴⁹

This reference to the separation from English as well as black Africans may appear to pose a problem for American segregationists looking for allies in the mid-twentieth century. However, despite differences between Afrikaner- and English-South Africans, scholars have agreed that apartheid was designed to promote white unity in place of potential class divisions. Hermann Giliomee observed that Prime Minister General J. B. M. Hertzog (1920-1921 and 1924-1939) attempted to define Afrikanerdom as a group consisting of both English- and Afrikaans-speaking whites.⁵⁰ Furthermore, he argued that if there was any dominant Afrikaner ideology ‘it was one that stressed the values of *volkseenheid* (folk unity), which transcended class or regional...differences’.⁵¹ Beinart and Dubow noted that

⁴⁷ Leonard M. Thompson, ‘Afrikaner Nationalist Historiography and the Policy of Apartheid’, *Journal of African History*, Vol. 3, No. 1 (1962), 126.

⁴⁸ William Minter, *King Solomon’s Mines Revisited: Western Interests and the Burdened History of South Africa* (New York: Basic Books, 1986), 94.

⁴⁹ T. Dunbar Moodie, *The Rise of Afrikanerdom: Power, Apartheid, and the Afrikaner Civil Religion* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1975), 21.

⁵⁰ Hermann Giliomee, ‘The Growth of Afrikaner Identity’, in Beinart and Dubow, *Segregation and Apartheid in Twentieth-Century South Africa*, 196.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 200.

even before the National Party came to power, segregation in South Africa had been designed to ‘defuse potential class conflict and maintain overall white hegemony’.⁵² The same is largely true for the United States where massive resisters often sought to unify whites across class lines.

Scholars have, however, debated whether white unity was achieved. While lower class whites in the American South faced challenges that wealthier whites did not, Kenneth Vickery suggested that the demographics of South Africa made ‘the permanent elevation of the white lower class possible’. Political domination ensured that a ‘vast army of non-white workers’ accepted employment at such a low wage so as to guarantee that whites were paid far more than they were worth. In the American South, however, ‘there were too few blacks to exploit and too many whites to support’.⁵³ By contrast, Shula Marks and Stanley Trapido argued that even into the 1950s ‘Afrikaner class consciousness stood as a formidable obstacle to the simple capture of the Afrikaner working class by the apostles of nationalism’.⁵⁴ The National Party also recognised the need for unity between Afrikaner and English South Africans. In 1955, Prime Minister Johannes Strijdom announced, ‘Our task in South Africa is to maintain the identity of the white man: in that task we will die fighting’.⁵⁵ His successor, Hendrik Verwoerd, promoted white unity (over ethnic divisions) more forcefully. In 1960, he urged the (white) electorate to vote in favour of South Africa becoming a republic to avoid continuing ‘as a state in which the English- and Afrikaans-

⁵² Beinart and Dubow, ‘Introduction’, in *ibid.*, 10.

⁵³ Kenneth P. Vickery, “‘Herrenvolk’ Democracy and Egalitarianism in South Africa and the U.S. South”, *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 16, no. 3 (June, 1974): 328.

⁵⁴ Shula Marks and Stanley Trapido, ‘The Politics of Race, Class and Nationalism’, in Shula Marks and Stanley Trapido (eds.), *The Politics of Race, Class and Nationalism in Twentieth Century South Africa* (New York: Longman, Inc., 1987), 16-17.

⁵⁵ Barber and Barratt, *South Africa’s Foreign Policy*, 2.

speaking sections cannot unite'.⁵⁶ By 1966, he urged not only white unity within South Africa, but internationally too: 'May the white man, may the white nations of the world, including Britain, never lose their hold, intellectually and otherwise.' Moodie assessed that Verwoerd was abandoning the ethnic argument that had formed such a central part of Afrikanerdom, and moving toward support of white unity regardless of differences in history and culture. He concluded that when Verwoerd became prime minister – a time when massive resistance was reaching its pinnacle – the focus stopped being on the 'Afrikaner' and started being on 'the white race' as a whole.⁵⁷ This helps in part to explain why massive resisters viewed white South Africans as one group. Although there were significant differences between whites in South Africa, a more homogenised image was projected by the government. Furthermore, this was the image largely portrayed by the U.S. media and certainly the image segregationists had of South Africans.

While much impressive research has been completed on apartheid and massive resistance individually, there still has not been research into links between right-wing activists and the collaboration and affiliation that existed between the two groups of white supremacists. The scholarly interest in transatlantic dialogues between African Americans and black Africans has not yet been matched by an equal analysis of proponents of white supremacy. Unfortunately this project is unable to comprehensively fill that particular gap in the literature; that process will not be complete until the research I have undertaken on American segregationists and right-wing activists is balanced with an equal assessment of

⁵⁶ Letter from Hendrik Verwoerd, 'Dear Friend', 21 September 1960. South African Apartheid Collection, Sterling Library, Yale University, Series 1: South African Government, 1961-1991, Box 1, Folder 1: Bureau for Information, 1961-1987.

⁵⁷ Moodie, *The Rise of Afrikanerdom*, 277, 284.

southern African white supremacists. As a scholar of American history, this thesis necessarily explores these issues of ideological and tangible collaboration from the American angle. Regrettably, constraints have made a research trip to southern Africa unattainable for this project. Nevertheless, this thesis certainly addresses the southern African partners that Americans found and reveals important and unknown information about how white southern Africans viewed American race relations, their own domestic situation and the international white supremacist struggle more broadly. Furthermore, an examination into the links between segregationists in the U.S. and southern Africa has also revealed contact and a sense of racial unity among individuals and organisations in England, Scotland, France, and Australia amongst others. I am convinced, therefore, that a wealth of information is waiting to be uncovered, which can further enrich our historical understanding of the white resistance movement.

Despite the growing literature which seeks to connect these two societies, the links between the right-wing has not been discussed by South Africanists or Americanists. By drawing on a wide range of sources, this thesis uncovers that personal and inter-organisational relationships facilitated correspondence, ideological debate, the sharing of literature and devoted propaganda efforts. The publications of the Citizens' Council are familiar to some scholars but the continued internationalist aspect of them has thus far been overlooked. From its articles and letters to the editor, one can begin to trace the organisational links between the Council and similar groups in South Africa, ties that became closer as the years passed. In particular the *South African Observer* is utilised to demonstrate the equivalent interest in forging international partnerships among white South Africans. This hitherto unexamined publication reveals an astonishing flow of segregationist and right-wing

literature between the United States and South Africa. Filled with articles from American sources, it was not only published for white South Africans but then also shipped back across the Atlantic for American subscribers. The *South African Observer* borrowed very heavily from *American Opinion*, the official John Birch Society Publication, and this too is examined revealing the similarities between the two publications and the ultra anti-communist support for southern Africa. Furthermore the archive collections of pro-Rhodesia lobbies outside the American South reveal that a dedicated defence of white rule was by no means confined to the South. The examination of these single issue focus groups also uncovers a close working relationship with conservatives in Congress as well as those working in the Rhodesian government's information services. Thus, it contributes to existing scholarly interest in U.S.-South African relations and further extends the analysis to Rhodesia, a source of segregationist fervour. Moreover, it seeks to advance conceptually and factually our knowledge of American segregationists, massive resisters and white supremacists, who for too long were overlooked.

* * * * *

This thesis is largely structured chronologically. Chapter one examines the Cold War alliance between the United States and South African governments from 1948 to 1965. It argues that the United States' need to sustain a Cold War alliance with South Africa consistently blunted moral condemnation of apartheid. By utilising State Department, CIA and South African National Party records as well as diplomatic correspondence and contemporary editorials, the chapter reveals a remarkable continuity in U.S. foreign policy that inadvertently propped up the apartheid regime and aided segregationist support for

South Africa during the years of massive resistance. Chapter two addresses the attitude of African Americans to South Africa during the same time period. In particular, the records of the NAACP are used not only to demonstrate the way in which they ensured the maintenance of an anti-apartheid agenda, but also to assess the relationship at a more practical level between the NAACP and its South African counterparts. It argues that in terms of keeping apartheid in the public domain, the NAACP was more successful than some scholars may have thought. It also finds though, that tangible and working links between the NAACP and black liberation groups in South Africa did not materialise to any significant extent. Although this thesis is largely a study of white supremacists in the United States and southern Africa, the inclusion of these first two chapters are necessary in order to understand fully the context in which American segregationists formulated and maintained their internationally-minded ideologies and policies. Just as scholars have undertaken to improve our understanding of U.S. race relations in the twentieth century by balancing a wealth of research on the civil rights movement with necessary studies of segregation and massive resistance, this thesis could not hope to reveal the importance and extent of segregationist foreign policy without understanding the political framework within which segregationists acted or the opposition they faced.

The third chapter analyses the beginning of segregationists' foray into international affairs from 1955-1965. It examines the Citizens' Council's publication, the *South African Observer* and a North Carolinian 'racial scientist', Wesley Critz George, to construct a picture of how organisations, publications and individuals found affiliates and platforms for their ideas in South Africa. It uncovers that the Citizens' Council had a far greater internationalist outlook than previously thought and thus seeks to correct the assumption

that segregationists' interest in foreign matters was fleeting. Chapter four examines the international white relationships that continued after massive resistance and considers how and why the Citizens' Council and the anti-communist John Birch Society maintained their commitment to white supremacy in South Africa and Rhodesia after segregation in the American South had been defeated. Finally, Chapter five investigates the unprecedented American support for Rhodesia after the country's 1965 Unilateral Declaration of Independence. By examining the archives of single-issue focus groups, such as the American Friends of Rhodesia and the American-Southern Africa Council, this chapter casts new light on the level of pro-Rhodesia support in the U.S. as well as the extent of cooperation between pro-Smith groups and conservative politicians in Washington, D.C. It situates the pro-Rhodesian lobby within the framework of the U.S. government's policies toward Rhodesia and also reveals remarkable support for white Rhodesia by politicians who had been key actors in massive resistance as well as by a new, younger breed of conservative that began to dominate the U.S. Congress.

Chapter One

A Hot Alliance in a Cold War: America's foreign policy towards South Africa, 1948-1965

Our relations with South Africa are friendly...because South Africans in general like Americans and feel a kinship with them.

— Policy statement of the U.S. Department of State,
1 November 1948.

On 1 November 1948, the American Department of State issued a policy statement outlining relations between the United States and the Union of South Africa. This classified memorandum came one day before President Harry S. Truman's shock re-election victory and six months after the National Party began its near half-century domination of South Africa and its people.⁵⁸ The Department of State laid out three fundamental objectives for American relations with South Africa. First, Washington policymakers sought to maintain and develop the 'friendly relations' which currently existed between the two countries; secondly, they wished to encourage 'South African bonds of sympathy' with other Western powers and its continued participation in the United Nations; and finally, America would promote South Africa's economic development alongside the growth of its foreign trade.⁵⁹ Broadly speaking, this statement became a blueprint for U.S. foreign policy towards South Africa over the subsequent decades. Certainly, Washington's policy would evolve and

⁵⁸ Democrat Harry Truman, the incumbent U.S. president, defeated Republican Thomas Dewey in the election of 2 November 1948. The National Party won the South African general election on 26 May 1948, and ruled South Africa until 1994.

⁵⁹ *Policy Statement by the Department of State on the Union of South Africa*, 1 November 1948, in United States Department of State, *Foreign Relations of the United States* (hereafter cited as *FRUS*), 1948, Vol. V, Part 1 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1948), 524, available at the website of the University of Wisconsin Digital Collections, <http://digital.library.wisc.edu/1711.dl/FRUS> (hereafter cited as UWDC).

adapt, but within the context of the social, political and militaristic necessities of the Cold War era.

While scholars have debated the foreign policies of the U.S. and South Africa, contested the influence of one on the other, questioned U.S. commitment to ending white minority rule and disputed the centrality of economic or militaristic issues, there is consensus that the Cold War remained the pivotal factor in U.S. relations with South Africa. It is not my intention to provide a comprehensive diplomatic history of U.S.-South African relations here; this has been done thoroughly by a number of scholars. Rather, this chapter seeks to contextualise the actions of American segregationists which follow by highlighting policies of successive U.S. administrations, from Harry Truman to Lyndon Johnson, which, by virtue of their Cold War agenda, helped to sustain apartheid South Africa. By focusing on some key moments in U.S.-South African relations, it demonstrates that Washington's commitment to Cold War imperatives consistently took precedence over matters of human rights. Subsequent administrations commented as little as possible on the matter of apartheid publicly and worked carefully behind the scenes to maintain mutually beneficial relations with the apartheid state and to shield South Africa from international pressure and criticism.

Although Truman launched a Cold War alliance with South Africa, Washington's relationship with Pretoria was relatively new. Official U.S. foreign policy records reveal that before autumn 1948, South Africa scarcely made it onto the American radar. From the end of World War II in 1945, matters relating to South Africa appeared rarely, not in the volumes that documented Africa, but under the umbrella of the British Commonwealth.

Reference to South Africa in the fledgling United Nations is similarly slight, with the focus being on the future of South-West Africa (modern-day Namibia which South Africa refused to accept as a U.N. trusteeship) and the treatment of South Africa's Indian population.⁶⁰ Certainly, South Africa was a Commonwealth member and remained so until withdrawing in 1961. However, after 1948 South African affairs were documented in volumes pertaining to Africa, an example of the continent's growing significance to Washington's Cold War world.⁶¹ Nevertheless, South Africa's importance to Truman's administration was limited to its Cold War usefulness, which included its uranium resources, its commitment to anti-communism and its assistance in the Korean War. Beyond this, the country had been relegated 'to the category of a "colonial situation" that would eventually be sorted out by resort to black rule'.⁶² The assumption that racial change was inevitable, although it would proceed on an incremental basis, is but one example revealing that Truman's foreign policy elites lacked detailed knowledge about South Africa.

Before widespread decolonisation, South Africa's policies were not particularly conspicuous on a continent largely ruled by European powers or white settler minorities. At the end of the 1940s there were only four independent states in Africa: Egypt, Ethiopia,

⁶⁰ See, for example, *FRUS, 1945: The British Commonwealth, the Far East*, Vol. VI, 291, for one reference to South Africa in the entire volume which regarded post-war economic settlements and mutual aid; *FRUS 1946: The British Commonwealth, Western and Central Europe*, Vol. V, 121-127 available at UWDC for documents pertaining to South West Africa and South Africa's Indian minority. The U.S. did not particularly object to South Africa annexing South West Africa, but insisted that they would support a U.N. decision on the matter. However, U.S. Acting Secretary of State Will Clayton requested that South Africa be reminded that even if South West Africa became a U.N. trusteeship, South Africa would still 'obtain all practical advantages of assimilation'.

⁶¹ Between 1948 and 1954, documents relating to South Africa were included in volumes entitled *The Near East, South Asia and Africa*. Only after 1955 did the Office of the Historian dedicate volumes to Africa.

⁶² Richard E. Bissell, *South Africa and the United States: The Erosion of an Influence Relationship* (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1982), 8. For discussions of South Africa being treated as a colonial problem and the U.S. government relying heavily on European and white settler authorities see, for instance, Borstelmann, *The Cold War and the Color Line*, 71 and Nagan, 'The U.S. and South Africa', 226.

Liberia and South Africa; and by the end of Truman's term in 1953, this number had risen only by one (Libya in 1951). Even after most of the continent gained independence, South Africa was still buffered by a white minority bloc that would not break up until 1975. Thus, Africa was a continent of minority rule and South Africa was not the anomaly that it would become.

Nevertheless, the post-World War II era had produced new concepts of self-determination and human rights for all people and the decolonisation of Africa was bound to be a part of this. Contemporaneously, the U.S. was beginning its battle against the Soviet Union and Truman wanted the world to know 'what the position of the United States was in the face of the new totalitarian challenge'. In March 1947, the president addressed Congress with a clear formulation of U.S. foreign policy. The U.S. must 'support free peoples who are resisting attempted subjugation by armed minorities or by outside pressures' and 'assist free peoples to work out their destinies in their own way'.⁶³ The Truman Doctrine, as it became known, eliminated any thought that the United States might return to its pre-war isolationism. Truman believed this was a turning point in American foreign policy, declaring that 'wherever aggression, direct or indirect, threatened the peace, the security of the United States was involved'.⁶⁴ It is a truism to say that not all matters of 'aggression' concerned the U.S. and people were free to find their own destiny as long as it was not communism. Indeed, in the case of South Africa, the aggressive and totalitarian nature of the National Party was conveniently overlooked in favour of more pressing Cold War priorities.

⁶³ Harry S. Truman, *Memoirs by Harry S. Truman: Years of Trial and Hope, 1946-1952* (New York: Signet Books, 1965), 128-129.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 129.

South Africa's new prime minister, Daniel F. Malan, recognised the need to remain in the Western alliance and was keen to demonstrate his country's commitments. In the run up to the 1948 election, the National Party explained its Cold War foreign policy: 'Although we do not regard war as unavoidable, we will not, in the event of war, remain neutral...Our sympathies and active support, when required...will definitely be on the side of the anti-Communist countries'.⁶⁵ Such an expression of anti-communist alliance would have convinced American policymakers, if they were paying attention, that South Africa was a willing and valuable partner. Neither Malan nor the international community had expected the National Party to win power in 1948. Malan exclaimed that the outcome had been 'a miracle'. 'No one expected this to happen', he added, 'It exceeded our most optimistic expectations'.⁶⁶ Malan took on the additional role of Minister of External Affairs and set out looking for alliances, marking the beginning of South Africa's long 'search for status and security'.⁶⁷

Six months after Malan's victory, Truman received a memorandum from his Under Secretary of State, Robert A. Lovett. The National Party government had proposed to raise its diplomatic profile in Washington, D.C. from legation to embassy status and invited the U.S. to do the same with regard to its deputation in Pretoria. '[C]onsidering the friendly relations existing between the United States and the Union of South Africa', Lovett wrote, 'I believe it would be appropriate'. Truman took Lovett's advice and approved the

⁶⁵ *National News* ('Official Election Newspaper of the National Party'), 19 May 1948, 2, copy in the South Africa Historical Collection (hereafter cited as SAHC), Sterling Memorial Library, Yale University, Accession 2004-M-051, MS 1556, Box 1, Folder 10.

⁶⁶ Malan quoted in Newell M. Stultz, *Afrikaner Politics in South Africa, 1934-1948* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1974), 144.

⁶⁷ Barber and Barratt, *South Africa's Foreign Policy*.

diplomatic upgrade.⁶⁸ The president's willingness to forge a closer relationship with the National Party appeared to contrast with his domestic civil rights agenda. In February 1948, Truman had asked Congress for a limited civil rights programme which included making lynching a federal crime, restricting employment discrimination, outlawing segregation in interstate business and abolishing the poll tax.⁶⁹ The result was the Dixiecrat revolt, a walk-out by thirty-five southern Democrats at the party's convention in Philadelphia in July.⁷⁰ Truman had ignored warnings that his civil rights agenda would cost him the presidency and, just days after the Dixiecrat revolt, further angered southern, segregationist Democrats by issuing an executive order to desegregate the military.⁷¹ Nevertheless, Truman was re-elected in November and segregationists adopted a defensive and defiant position that they would occupy for years to come.

The diplomatic upgrade and the increase in foreign policy concerning South Africa represented a break from the past, but they were part and parcel of the onset of the Cold War. Similarly, Truman's civil rights efforts, although reflective of his personal belief, also had a Cold War angle. In arguing that desegregation would become a 'cold war imperative', Mary Dudziak observed that domestic race relations were considered to be a

⁶⁸ 'Memorandum by the Acting Secretary of State to President Truman', 23 November 1948, in *FRUS*, 1948, Vol. V, Part 1, 532.

⁶⁹ Harvard Sitkoff, 'Harry Truman and the Election of 1948: The Coming of Age of Civil Rights in American Politics', *Journal of Southern History* 37, no. 4 (Nov., 1971): 600. Truman had established the President's Committee on Civil Rights in 1946, and it was their report, *To Secure These Rights*, that prompted Truman to ask Congress for civil rights legislation.

⁷⁰ Led by segregationist South Carolina Governor Strom Thurmond, the walk-out led to the creation of the States' Rights Democratic Party, better known as the Dixiecrats. In the November 1948 election, the Dixiecrats challenged, unsuccessfully, for the White House with Thurmond as their presidential candidate. For an analysis of the Dixiecrats see Kari A. Frederickson, *The Dixiecrat Revolt and the End of the Solid South, 1932-1968* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2001). For a biography of Thurmond, see Jack Bass and Marilyn W. Thompson, *Strom: The Complicated Personal and Political Life of Strom Thurmond* (New York: Public Affairs, 2005).

⁷¹ Truman, *Memoirs by Harry S. Truman*, 210-214. Executive Order 9981, 26 July 1948 established the President's Committee on Equality of Treatment and Opportunity in the Armed Services.

‘serious foreign policy problem’ by State Department officials.⁷² However, if domestic racial reform was crucial to Washington’s Cold War agenda, the end of oppressive white rule in South Africa was not. This disparity in domestic and foreign policy with regard to the expediency of racial reform characterised subsequent U.S. administrations and exemplifies the consistency of Cold War priorities.

In January 1949 a Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) report for the president and executive departments of the government outlined precisely how South Africa would fit into Washington’s foreign policy objectives. Its international commitment was ‘unquestionably towards the West’ and was regarded as ‘the only African state of consequence’. As such it had the potential to promote stability or ‘upset the precarious social balance of the continent’. Strategically, South Africa’s Cape route provided a way-station en route to the East and, in terms of natural resources, the country produced twelve out of twenty-three strategic minerals considered to be ‘so critical that stock-piling is deemed essential’.⁷³ South Africa’s strategic resources, particularly manganese, chrome and uranium, became crucial to American Cold War armaments manufacturing.⁷⁴ Fortunately, the CIA did not envisage problems in acquiring these materials ‘because of the Union’s complete lack of any international alternative to alignment with the US and the UK’.⁷⁵ Despite a lack of alternatives, Malan purposefully aligned his country with the West for economic, political

⁷² Dudziak, ‘Desegregation as a Cold War Imperative’: 66. Michael Klarman noted that *To Secure These Rights*, the report by the Committee on Civil Rights, used the threat of communism as one of its three arguments for racial reform, with the others being moral and economic: Klarman, *From Jim Crow to Civil Rights*, 184.

⁷³ Central Intelligence Agency (hereafter cited as CIA) ‘The Political Situation in the Union of South Africa’, 31 January 1949, 3, available at the Central Intelligence Agency Freedom of Information Act Electronic Reading Room, <http://www.foia.cia.gov> (hereafter cited as FOIA).

⁷⁴ Borstelmann, *The Cold War and the Color Line*, 73.

⁷⁵ CIA, ‘The Political Situation in the Union of South Africa’, 13.

and ideological reasons and, as such, made his way onto the American foreign policy agenda by ensuring that the United States would regard South Africa as a bastion against communism and a highly valuable ally.

In August 1949, U.S. Undersecretary of State, James Webb, met South Africa's Minister of Defence, Francois Erasmus, and Ambassador to the U.S., Harry Andrews in Washington. Erasmus quickly brought up South Africa's 'substantial uranium resources' before stating that his country 'wished to be in a position to make a useful contribution in the event of war'. Erasmus was seeking military equipment that his government was not able to pay for but Webb replied that the U.S. government was unable to offer deferred payments. Erasmus said that he understood and only wished to 'bring to the attention of the United States the strategic significance of South Africa', something that he now felt the U.S. appreciated. Andrews, however, shrewdly commented that 'the uranium resources to which Mr. Erasmus had alluded...provided a *quid pro quo* for the military assistance which South Africa was seeking'.⁷⁶ The National Party astutely positioned its country as the Cold Warrior of Africa and knew that its natural resources and commitment to anti-communism gave the apartheid government some leverage with the Western alliance. By November, an agreement had been reached between the Combined Development Agency (an American-British atomic energy collaboration) and the South African Atomic Energy Board to negotiate arrangements for the purchase of uranium.⁷⁷ Thomas Noer wrote that Washington read South Africa's decision to sell uranium as its 'loyalty to the Cold War'.⁷⁸

⁷⁶ *Memorandum of Conversation, by the Undersecretary of State, 17 August 1949, FRUS, 1949, Vol. VI, 1806-1807, available at UWDC.*

⁷⁷ Editorial note, *FRUS, 1950: The Near East, South Asia, and Africa, Vol. V, 1842, available at UWDC.*

⁷⁸ Noer, *Cold War and Black Liberation*, 28.

Just six months later, South Africa had the opportunity to prove its anti-communist credentials. In June 1950 the Korean War began and the United Nations Security Council passed a resolution recommending that member states assist South Korea militarily. The United States was the most heavily involved but South Africa also contributed men and materials to the war effort.⁷⁹ Although the CIA reported rather disparagingly that Malan's government supplied one fighter squadron 'but without equipment', William Stueck concluded that 'The UN intervention in Korea gave the Malan regime an opportunity, through concrete support for collective action against Communist "aggression," to bolster its standing both at Lake Success and in Washington.'⁸⁰ Domestically, the National Party had also tightened its grip on South Africa with the July 1950 Suppression of Communism Act. While this legislation declared the Communist Party and its ideology illegal, it was also designed to suppress any activity deemed to be in opposition to the National Party. It broadly defined communism as any scheme 'which aims at bringing about any political, industrial, social or economic changes within the Union by the promotion of disturbance or disorder', or 'which aims at the encouragement of feelings of hostility between the European and non-European races of the Union'.⁸¹ Political censorship of actual and alleged communists was also widespread in the U.S. with the anti-communist investigations of the House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC) and Senator Joseph McCarthy's witch hunts. Given that the basis of U.S.-South African relations was a mutual hatred of

⁷⁹ Y. G-M. Lulat, *United States Relations with South Africa: A Critical Overview from the Colonial Period to the Present* (New York: Peter Lang Publishing, 2008), 145.

⁸⁰ CIA, 'South African Politics and US Security', 7; William Stueck, *The Korean War: An International History* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995), 74. Lake Success was the temporary home of the U.N. from 1946 until 1952.

⁸¹ Suppression of Communism Act no. 44 of 1950, in Elizabeth S. Landis, 'South African Apartheid Legislation II: Extension, Enforcement and Perpetuation', *Yale Law Journal* 71, no. 3 (Jan., 1962): 471n254.

communism, it is unlikely that American officials would have regarded the banning of the Communist Party as distasteful; organised anti-communism in both the U.S. and South Africa was used to root out communists and debilitate people or organisations deemed to be subversive. Both domestically and internationally, then, apartheid South Africa was proving its commitment to anti-communism. Crucially, South Africa's participation in Korea gave Truman some breathing space from domestic and U.N. critics that opposed the United States' continued relationship with South Africa.⁸²

The formation of the United Nations in 1945 created the forum in which South Africa would face the most opposition during the National Party's reign. The U.S. delegation routinely shielded itself behind the United Nations charter which forbade intervention 'in matters which are essentially within the domestic jurisdiction of any state'.⁸³ However, the U.N. Declaration of Human Rights, adopted in December 1948, stated that countries' domestic affairs could and should be subject to outside evaluation. Thus alarm bells rang for South African whites (whose government abstained) and segregationist Americans (whose president signed).⁸⁴ Apartheid would cause increasing problems for U.S. policymakers. The United States had recognised almost immediately that Malan's government was 'unusually sensitive and obstinate' when directly criticised over its domestic policies.⁸⁵ Shortly after taking office, Malan made his position on the U.N. abundantly clear in a national address: 'We unreservedly recognise our membership in the

⁸² Lulat, *United States Relations with South Africa*, 145. See also Noer, *Cold War and Black Liberation*, 28 for the conclusion that the U.S. government refrained from any public criticism of Malan or apartheid during the Korean War.

⁸³ United Nations Charter, Article 2(7), available at <http://www.un.org/en/documents/charter/chapter1.shtml>.

⁸⁴ See Johannes Morsink, *The Universal Declaration of Human Rights: Origins, Drafting and Intent* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1999), 26-28 for a discussion of South Africa's abstention from the vote.

⁸⁵ CIA, 'The Political Situation in the Union of South Africa', 13.

international community of Nations’, he stated, and asserted that his party did not ‘subscribe to a policy of isolationism’. However, he warned that South Africa had accepted U.N. membership ‘on the unequivocal understanding that there was to be neither external interference in our domestic affairs nor any tampering with our autonomous rights’.⁸⁶ Malan’s public address was undoubtedly meant for the international as well as the domestic audience and U.S. foreign policy officials noted the stark differences between Malan and his predecessor, Jan Smuts. While Smuts had been ‘sensitive to world opinion and anxious to conciliate it’, Malan ‘had made a point of publicly defending the Union against “interference”’.⁸⁷ Malan and his successors were sensitive to external criticism insofar as it riled them, but condemnation would not push the National Party toward change. Rather, the more South Africa was criticised, the more defensive and inflexible the ruling party became.

Soon after the National Party took power, Washington officials recognised that it would be politically expedient to distance Jim Crow from apartheid even though the extent of the differences between the two systems of segregation was not fully appreciated.⁸⁸ The CIA reflected the general position of the U.S. government and its United Nations delegations in January 1949: ‘The Afrikaans word [apartheid] means approximately “segregation,” but all

⁸⁶ D. F. Malan, ‘Message to the People’ (radio broadcast), 4 June 1948, in *Foreign Policy of the Union of South Africa: Statements by Dr. the Honourable D. F. Malan, Prime Minister and Minister of External Affairs*, (Pretoria: Government Printer for the State Information Office, n.d.), 5. SAHC, MS 1556, Box 7, Folder 101: The Union of South Africa (Nationalist Party), 1941-1948.

⁸⁷ CIA, ‘The Political Situation in the Union of South Africa’, 13.

⁸⁸ From the U.S. government to local and national newspapers, “apartheid” was translated as “segregation” for many years. See, for example, ‘Malan Hails Segregation’, *New York Times*, 12 March 1949, 6; ‘Opposition Sees Strijdom Victory’, *New York Times*, 13 April 1958, 21; and ‘In South Africa, Hints of Change’, *New York Times*, 6 September 1969, 1. Similarly, early CIA and State Department reports read as beginners guides to South Africa and apartheid and regularly rehashed elementary information regarding South Africa’s ethnic groups and political parties.

important political groups advocate an extent of racial segregation greater than that obtaining anywhere in the US.’⁸⁹ A few months previously, the State Department had also confronted the likelihood of American race relations being compared to apartheid South Africa:

It is our policy to avoid being drawn directly into discussion of South Africa’s racial problems. Nevertheless, whenever our own racial problems are prominently publicized in South Africa, the Legation should rebut, through USIE channels or otherwise, the distortions and exaggerations which are often featured in foreign comment on this subject.⁹⁰

The CIA and State Department’s argument was not based on the immorality of segregation but the extent of segregation. The prospect that Jim Crow was receiving negative comment in South Africa – or worse, being used to legitimise the Nationalists’ own agenda – clearly troubled Truman’s administration. Further, the claim that U.S. race relations were exaggerated abroad, or by U.N. delegations, found a parallel in South Africa where the National Party also maintained that its domestic policies were inflamed and misunderstood by the international community. However, the central concern was not for South Africa’s oppressed black majority but that apartheid was ‘a ready-made invitation for propaganda from the Communist bloc’, which would be directed not only at South Africa but also at countries (including the United States) associated with it.⁹¹ The CIA report warned that the Soviet bloc had already ‘been assiduous in exploiting for propaganda purposes’ the racial discrimination in South Africa. Other non-Soviet nations also strongly opposed apartheid

⁸⁹ CIA, ‘The Political Situation in the Union of South Africa’, 7.

⁹⁰ *Policy Statement of the Department of State, FRUS 1948*, Vol. 5, Part 1, 526. The United States Information and Educational Exchange Program (USIE) was used to present other countries with a better understanding of the United States. In reality, it served as a propaganda machine, particularly to combat anti-American propaganda during the Cold War. See Henry James, Jr., ‘The Role of the Information Library in the United States International Information Program’, *Library Quarterly* 23, no. 2 (Apr., 1953): 75-114.

⁹¹ CIA, ‘South African Politics and US Security’, 17 November 1950, 8, available at FOIA.

and the author cautioned that ‘Some of this unfavorable light...is likely to be reflected on the US because of its close alignment with South Africa in various other respects.’⁹²

When other countries and the United Nations sought firmer action against and condemnation of South African apartheid, the U.S. (often along with Britain) was persistently the least vocal on the subject. South Africa, American diplomats argued, might have had a moral obligation to change its ways but it was not legally required to do so. The American tradition of small government and states’ rights domestically and, until World War II, a preference for isolation internationally, meant that the federal government and American citizens often felt uncomfortable with U.S. involvement in the affairs of other sovereign states. Towards the end of 1950, though, the difficulty that the Cold War alliance with South Africa posed for the United States had developed:

The US has repeatedly committed itself to a policy of encouraging the progressive development of non-self-governing peoples toward eventual self-government; and US ability to exercise leadership among the Asian and Latin American members of the UN depends in part on their belief in the sincerity of this commitment. At the same time, the US cannot entirely disavow a country so firmly within the Western camp as South Africa is.⁹³

Despite professing a belief in equality and freedom, it was clear to internal and external observers that the white South systematically abused the constitutional rights of African Americans. However, unlike the National Party, the U.S. government did not officially condone segregation. The standard rhetoric in Washington was that the federal system of government restricted its jurisdiction, meaning that states could enforce their own racial

⁹² Ibid., 10.

⁹³ CIA, ‘South African Politics and US Security’, 8-9.

systems. This justification would lose credence after the *Brown v. Board of Education* Supreme Court decision shone a light on American racial tension. However, international unease about South Africa's new ruling party and America's commitment to that country as an important Cold War ally meant that the U.S. government, and especially its delegation to the United Nations, had to navigate a fine line between avoiding direct criticism of South Africa and placating an increasing world opinion that apartheid South Africa was an aberration. For now, however, the contradiction between U.S. verbal commitment to majority rule and its friendly actions towards South Africa was manageable; the African American civil rights movement had not yet begun in earnest; it was still years before the mass decolonisation of Africa; Truman's civil rights reforms had momentarily conciliated those demanding change; and the war in Korea cushioned Truman's inaction over apartheid.

When Dwight D. Eisenhower became president of the United States in January 1953, he inherited the South African problem. Like Truman, he utilised the Korean War alliance until that conflict ended in July 1953 and, afterwards, largely continued on the course set out by his predecessor's administration. However, Eisenhower had to tally foreign policy with domestic changes, which included a burgeoning civil rights movement and the beginning of African decolonisation. Furthermore, unlike Truman, Eisenhower was not a proponent of court-ordered integration. In South Africa, 1953 had also been an election year and the National Party had further consolidated its position. From the beginning of the decade, the National Party had been charting an 'aggressively nationalistic' foreign policy, reported the CIA, and, on the domestic front, Malan was 'bent on transforming the Union

into an authoritarian Afrikaner state'.⁹⁴ In 1953, the Nationalists implemented the Bantu Education Act, 'legislation denying African people in South Africa an education that would enable them to become more than hewers of wood and drawers of water'.⁹⁵ The following year, in May 1954, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled segregated school unconstitutional, thus sparking the African American civil rights movement and thereby exemplifying that the U.S. and South Africa were on very different paths in terms of race relations.

Eisenhower was obliged to uphold the law but at the same time he opposed court-ordered desegregation and repeatedly refused to endorse the *Brown v. Board of Education* decision.⁹⁶ If the U.S. government had previously worried about how American race relations were depicted abroad, Eisenhower now faced a great challenge in the propaganda war with Russia. His own segregationist philosophy did not help the situation. David Chappell noted that Eisenhower's grandchildren were sent to attend a private all-white school miles away from their army base home after the base's school was desegregated in accordance with the *Brown* decision. Actions like this, Chappell observed, gave segregationists one of the 'most irresistible' of their arguments: their 'insistence on the hypocrisy of the policymakers who imposed integration upon them'.⁹⁷

This hypocrisy permeated domestic and foreign policy during Eisenhower's presidency (1953-1961) and, as such, the U.S. delegation also faced much tougher criticism in the United Nations. The question of apartheid was first added to the U.N. General Assembly's

⁹⁴ CIA, 'South African Politics and US Security', 1, 6.

⁹⁵ Quote by a South African human rights lawyer, in Penelope Andrews, 'Perspectives on *Brown*: The South African Experience', *Safundi* 6, no. 3 (July, 2005): 2.

⁹⁶ Dudziak, *Cold War Civil Rights*, 110.

⁹⁷ David L. Chappell, 'The Divided Minds of Southern Segregationists', *Georgia Historical Quarterly* 82, no. 1 (Spring 1998): 49.

agenda in 1952. Eisenhower, like Truman, persistently made efforts to protect South Africa within that arena. Shortly after the *Brown* decision, in November 1954, Johannes Strijdom became South Africa's new prime minister following Malan's retirement. He was 'an abrasive and archaic articulator of *baasskap*' rather than 'separate development'.⁹⁸ Literally translated as 'boss-ship', *baasskap* embodied a dedication to white racial power and domination without as much concern for ideology. Strijdom was aptly described as a 'superfanatical white supremacist' by *Life* magazine and controversially packed the courts with Nationalists in 1955 in order to remove 'Coloureds' from the Cape's common voter role the following year.⁹⁹ He made his position perfectly clear when he announced: 'Our task in South Africa is to maintain the identity of the white man; in that task we will die fighting'.¹⁰⁰ His intransigence ensured that South Africa's inflexibility in the United Nations would continue. By extension, U.S. policy at the General Assembly became increasingly difficult.

In December 1954, the American ambassador to the U.N., James J. Wadsworth, upset both domestic civil rights organisations and other delegations at the Ninth General Assembly meeting when he announced the unwillingness of the American delegation to support the continued existence of the U.N. committee investigating the racial situation of South Africa. 'We have always entertained serious doubts as to the usefulness of the

⁹⁸ Martin Legassick, 'Legislation, Ideology and Economy in Post-1948 South Africa', *Journal of Southern African Studies* 1, no. 1 (1974): 25.

⁹⁹ 'A Hard Man Takes Over In South Africa', *Life*, 20 December 1954, 21; Ronald Hyam and Peter Henshaw, *The Lion and the Springbok: Britain and South Africa since the Boer War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 219.

¹⁰⁰ Strijdom quote of 1955, in Barber and Barratt, *South Africa's Foreign Policy*, 2. Deon Geldenhuys noted that Strijdom left the smallest imprint on South African foreign policy; he was only in office for four years and lacked experience in foreign affairs, meaning that he delegated foreign roles to Eric Louw, South African foreign minister.

[commission]’, Wadsworth stated. ‘On the other hand’, he continued, ‘the United States Government, as every member of this organization knows, opposes every form of racial discrimination’.¹⁰¹ The American South was still segregated, and while *Brown* had been important symbolically, the Supreme Court had put no implementation decree in place; thus segregated schooling was unconstitutional but bringing about integration was another matter entirely. It was, therefore, not clear at all that Eisenhower’s administration opposed ‘every form of racial discrimination’. Such statements, of inaction tempered with moral opposition, were commonplace in U.S. dealings with the South African question at the U.N. Many U.S. policymakers had beliefs similar to other white Americans, particularly in the South.¹⁰² A mix of prejudice and priority, then, ensured that Eisenhower’s government worked hard to protect South Africa.

The following year, in preparation for the Tenth General Assembly meeting of the U.N., John Foster Dulles, Eisenhower’s Secretary of State, informed the American delegation that they were to continue opposing the committee: ‘As in previous years the United States will not play a leading role in the consideration of this question’. Rather, the U.S. delegation were to argue that ‘singling out South Africa for criticism and censure neither improves the situation in South Africa nor contributes to the success of the United Nations[’] efforts to

¹⁰¹ United States Mission to the United Nations press release number 2017: Statement by Ambassador James Wadsworth to the Ad Hoc Political Committee, 8 December 1954, National Association for the Advancement of Colored People Papers, Library of Congress, Part 2: General Office File, 1940-1956, Box 2:A7, Folder 2: Africa, South Africa, General, 1954-1955 (hereafter cited as NAACP Papers).

¹⁰² Thomas Borstelmann argued that American foreign policy elites had segregationist backgrounds and felt a political, cultural, and racial affiliation with their Western allies, which, along with a strong white Southern bloc in Congress affected U.S. policy towards South Africa. See, Borstelmann, ‘Jim Crow’s Coming Out’, 565 and Borstelmann, *The Cold War and the Color Line*, 71.

promote respect for human rights'.¹⁰³ At the U.N. meeting, the committee investigating South Africa reported that, firstly, apartheid created 'hardships and tensions' and, secondly, that apartheid was still in force but additional policies were being implemented at a slower pace. After three years in operation, the commission recommended more frequent contact between the races and the use of U.N. 'technical experts who might be able to give useful advice' on the race question.¹⁰⁴ From the outset, the U.S. delegation had queried the usefulness of the commission and, as important as anti-apartheid discourse was, the conclusions and recommendations of the commission were rather lacklustre. Furthermore, by 1955 the cornerstones of apartheid policy (as outlined in the introduction) had already been laid and if legislation had slowed it was because non-whites were already separated and subjugated by innumerable apartheid laws already implemented. With both 'grand' and 'petty' apartheid laws being so rigorously enforced, it seems illogical that the U.N. commission thought more contact between the races was possible. U.S. inaction at the United Nations would have a significant effect on both white and black Americans, with the former rallying against U.N. 'interference' and the latter pushing for harsher sanctions against South Africa.

The ineffectiveness of the U.N.'s apartheid investigations during the 1950s made it relatively uncomplicated for the United States delegation to abstain from discussing apartheid in any detail and shield South Africa from criticism. Instead, the U.S. argued that the racial dilemma 'should be dealt with as a broad social problem and not merely a

¹⁰³ Department of State, 'Instruction from the Department of State to Certain Diplomatic Missions', 11 August 1955, *FRUS*, 1955-1957, Vol. XI, document 8, available at the U.S. Department of State Office of the Historian website, <http://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments> (hereafter cited as Office of the Historian).

¹⁰⁴ 'Minutes of the Tenth Meeting of the Delegation to the United Nations General Assembly, New York, 25 October 1955, 9:30am', *FRUS*, 1955-1957, Vol. XVIII, document 301, Office of the Historian.

question involving South Africa alone'.¹⁰⁵ The U.S. delegation sought a happy medium between South Africa and the Asian and African delegations who argued that the U.N. was fully capable of dealing with the matter.¹⁰⁶ The continuity of policy in Washington was matched by continuity in Pretoria; although apartheid was flexible insofar as individual prime ministers had differing visions for its advancement, successive administrations were committed to white supremacy and the United Nations' mandate severely limited its practical usefulness. Though it lacked power of enforcement, the commission decided to continue investigating apartheid for another year, which led to the South African delegation walking out of the U.N. General Assembly on 9 November 1955. The apartheid question did not make it onto the agenda for the Eleventh General Assembly meeting of 1956 after the issue failed to receive the necessary two-thirds vote (the United States voted against).¹⁰⁷ However, if the South African delegation thought this was a victory, it was to be short lived; by the following U.N. session apartheid was back on the agenda to stay.

Although Cold War priorities remained central to U.S. foreign policy, Eisenhower had additional matters to consider. The U.S. also had significant financial interests (apart from mineral extraction) in South Africa and a number of American citizens lived there. Fred A. Hadsel, Deputy Director of the Office of Southern African Affairs, explained these factors in a letter to Henry A. Byroade to help prepare him for his new post as U.S. Ambassador to South Africa:

¹⁰⁵ Ibid.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid.

¹⁰⁷ Fred L. Hadsel to Henry A. Byroade, 3 August 1956, *FRUS*, 1955-1957, Vol. XVIII, document 306, Office of the Historian.

From a practical political point of view, our relations with South Africa are very friendly and harmonious. South Africa...looks increasingly to the United States, instead of Britain...There is more American capital invested in South Africa today than in any other African territory – over \$300,000,000. 116 American companies are represented there, and there are several thousand Americans resident throughout the Union. South Africans of all races are so friendly and hospitable by nature that Americans find life in the Union usually congenial.¹⁰⁸

The U.S. government, then, also had to consider the investment that American businessmen and companies had in South Africa – and, by extension, apartheid. Hadsel informed Byroade that its general policy towards South Africa ‘has consistently been to persuade the Government and the White electorate to moderate its policy of *baasskup* [sic] or White supremacy’, although this had to be done ‘subtly because of the extreme hypersensitivity of South Africans to outside influence or “interference”’.¹⁰⁹ In fact, American officials did this so subtly that it was barely noticeable; Eisenhower, like Truman, went to great lengths to avoid direct criticism of South Africa and to try and moderate other nations’ disapproval. Nevertheless, Hadsel suspected that ‘there may be a better opportunity [for prompting change] now than before because of the Whites’ re-examination of their traditional attitudes – and of their consciences’.¹¹⁰ Such a weak analysis of the National Party and its supporters was consistent with the inadequate information U.S. policymakers had on matters related to South Africa which were not vital to America’s Cold War strategy. Indeed, as far as the U.S. Cold War agenda went, there had been no change.

After months of research, in April 1957 the Counsellor of the U.S. Embassy in Pretoria, William P. Maddox, wrote to the Department of State regarding the ‘South African Race

¹⁰⁸ Ibid.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid.

¹¹⁰ Ibid.

Problem'. In nearly a decade, nothing had changed. With uncertainty over the Suez Canal, South Africa's ports were more vital than ever; the U.S. had an important stake in South Africa's natural minerals, particularly uranium, and wished to ensure that the flow of these materials were not interrupted; and if racial violence was to break out it could reach beyond South African borders, be utilised by the communists and constitute 'a cardinal threat to American security'.¹¹¹ This report differed little from those prepared in 1948. The only difference was that, despite the report's title, the 'race problem' was not actually addressed; at least in 1948 governmental reports had attempted to show a little disdain for apartheid by actively distancing it from Jim Crow.

A few months later, Maddox met with Willem C. Naudé, a senior official in the South African Department of External Affairs, to discuss U.S.-South African relations. Their discussion exemplified the double-dealing of American officials in the international arena. While telling U.N. Assemblies for the previous decade that the U.S. was committed to racial equality everywhere, Maddox's conversation with Naudé revealed something rather different. Maddox suggested altering the direction of apartheid, perhaps granting some concessions to 'educated [black] leaders' as a means of conciliating some critics; but Maddox also made it clear that 'no one expected full equality or complete abolition of segregation'.¹¹² Naudé was taken aback and questioned where America's allegiance lay. 'Alright, let us forget about moral questions', Maddox conceded. 'As Americans, we realize the importance of western civilization, and of White leadership and control,

¹¹¹ William P. Maddox, 'Despatch From the Embassy in South Africa to the Department of State', 11 April 1957, *FRUS*, 1955-1957, Vol. XVIII, document 313, Office of the Historian.

¹¹² Memorandum from Maddox to Byroade, 19 July 1975, *FRUS*, 1955-1957, Vo. 18, document 319, Office of the Historian.

remaining in South Africa,' he said. 'We sympathize with you in your problems and we want to remain friends'.¹¹³ However, U.S. policymakers had become increasingly aware of the problems their continued 'friendship' with white South Africa caused, especially at the United Nations.

That November, at the Twelfth General Assembly in 1957, Henry Cabot Lodge, American Representative to the U.N., reported that the U.S. position of constantly abstaining on votes regarding apartheid was becoming untenable. He commented that the policy of nonparticipation was made before the *Brown* decision and before Eisenhower had been forced to send the National Guard to integrate the Little Rock high school. In light of these events, and considering that the U.S. delegation had, for years, said it supported racial equality, Lodge concluded that the delegation felt it was necessary to revise U.S. policy.¹¹⁴ The Little Rock school integration crisis of September 1957 had forced Eisenhower's hand with regard to enforcing the *Brown* decision. When Arkansas Governor, Orval Faubus, ordered his state's National Guard to prevent nine black children from entering Central High School, Eisenhower, reluctantly, federalised the National Guard to ensure that the students could safely enter the school. Southern segregationists were incensed by what they saw as an abuse of federal power and an illegal imposition on states' rights. The violent scenes, however, were seen across the world. Despite Lodge's telegram and his clear view that the U.S. was losing the respect of other delegations at the United Nations, U.S. policy did not change. The American delegation abstained from a vote on 26 November which resulted in a resolution (much the same as previous resolutions) that appealed to the

¹¹³ Ibid.

¹¹⁴ Henry Cabot Lodge, 'Telegram From the Mission at the United Nations to the Department of State', 20 November 1957, FRUS, 1955-1957, Vol. 18, document 321, Office of the Historian.

National Party 'to revise its apartheid policy in light of the principles of the U.N. Charter and critical world opinion'.¹¹⁵ Eisenhower's policy towards apartheid South Africa largely mirrored his domestic policies on race, where he preferred inaction.

South Africa was keen to utilise racial unrest in other countries to defend its own position in the United Nations. Foreign Minister Eric Louw told the 1959 U.N. Assembly that the image of apartheid abroad was 'completely distorted and false'. Rather, Louw said that apartheid was 'a policy of peaceful coexistence'. He also stated that other countries represented at the U.N. had racial problems, but unlike them, South Africa had never witnessed 'organized attacks by whites on nonwhites...a record of which we are justly proud'.¹¹⁶ Although Louw did not name names, he could easily have been referring to any number of clashes in the American South between African Americans seeking to secure their constitutional rights and white segregationists who were unwilling to lose their white supremacist society without a fight.¹¹⁷ Louw's tactic of drawing attention to the questionable domestic situations of those that criticised South Africa was commonplace. Louw was fiercely combative in the United Nations and his 'tactlessness...touchiness and unpredictability' frequently damaged South Africa's foreign relations. However, he judiciously drew attention to the principle that those attacking apartheid South Africa should not be guilty of the same wrongdoing.¹¹⁸ Shortly afterwards, Louw's delegation

¹¹⁵ Ibid., n5.

¹¹⁶ Kathleen Teltsch, 'Segregation Line Defended at U.N.', *New York Times*, 29 September 1959, 6.

¹¹⁷ Apart from the Little Rock Crisis, the American South had witnessed the brutal murder of fourteen-year-old Emmett Till, an African American murdered by white men in Mississippi who were later acquitted by an all-white jury. Further, in 1956 white violence and intimidation surrounded a number of school integration attempts, some requiring the dispatch of the National Guard.

¹¹⁸ Geldenhuys, *The Diplomacy of Isolation*, 26.

withdrew from the U.N. Special Political Committee when the apartheid debate began.¹¹⁹ The original aims of U.S. foreign policymakers had included keeping South Africa in the United Nations. South Africa's isolation would have hindered Washington's Cold War agenda and the constant protection the U.S. delegation sought to provide South Africa reflected the importance of that country.

Hadsel's aforementioned prediction that white South Africans might have been tempering their racial policies was proved wrong. In 1958, Hendrik Verwoerd had become South Africa's prime minister. The man who became known as the 'architect of apartheid' was not only committed to white supremacy but also to making South Africa a republic and creating a more powerful Afrikaner nationalism. In 1959, as the South African delegation withdrew from the U.N., Verwoerd committed the National Party to 'self-government' for the various African homelands and thus announced that black African representation in parliament would be abolished.¹²⁰ His definition of apartheid suggested an awareness of international thought and a strange attempt to fit racist philosophies into the contemporary discussions of self-determination: 'Every People in the world, of whatever race or color, just like every individual, has an inherent right to live and to develop [and] is entitled to the right of self-preservation', Verwoerd said. He announced that his party believed that the 'personal and national ideals of every individual and of every ethnic group can best be developed within its own national community'. This, Verwoerd stated, was the

¹¹⁹ 'South Africans Leave', *New York Times*, 31 October 1959. The South African delegation walked out on 30 October 1959.

¹²⁰ Hermann Giliomee, 'The Nationalist Party and the Afrikaner Broederbond', in Price and Rosberg, *The Apartheid Regime*, 20.

‘philosophic basis of the policy of apartheid’.¹²¹ By the time Verwoerd committed to forcibly removing vast numbers of blacks to inadequate ‘homelands’, the first of many African colonies had become independent. In March 1957, Ghana gained independence from Britain and in October 1958 France granted sovereignty to Guinea. These new nations in West Africa were immediately recognised by President Eisenhower and quickly became member states of the United Nations. Within this arena, the South African delegation continued to face increasing pressure over its racial policies. Soon decolonisation would sweep across Africa and the U.S. delegation would be forced to follow Lodge’s advice and act far more decisively in the United Nations if it wanted to maintain international respect.

Events in 1960 did force a reassessment of American foreign policy toward South Africa and Africa as a whole. It became known as the ‘Year of Africa’, a phrase coined by the British government, after seventeen former European colonies there – most of which had been British and French territories – gained independence. A whole host of new foreign policies needed to be enacted since the U.S. government would no longer be dealing with colonial powers that had controlled such vast regions of Africa. The Year of Africa also witnessed the start of what historians of American race relations have called the second reconstruction, when non-violent direct action became a major part of the African American civil rights movement. It additionally marked the beginning of the most violent period of massive resistance in the American South and thus brought increasing international condemnation on the U.S. Similarly, in South Africa, the Sharpeville massacre, of 21 March, prompted the most widespread condemnation on South Africa since

¹²¹ Robert M. Price, ‘Apartheid and White Supremacy: The Meaning of Government-Led Reform in the South African Context’, in *ibid.*, 301.

the National Party took power. South African police opened fire on peaceful protestors, killing 69 and injuring over 180. The National Party responded forcefully, declaring a state of emergency and arresting over 18,000 people.¹²² Although subsequent chapters will address the massacre more fully and reveal that not all Americans regarded it as the atrocity that it was, international condemnation came swiftly.

For the first time, official, public censure also came from the U.S. government. The statement, however, was not sanctioned by Eisenhower and he was furious that the Director of the Office and News at the State Department, Lincoln White, had taken it upon himself to condemn events in South Africa. White's statement, while relatively mild, was a significant departure from the United States' previous policy of saying nothing:

The United States deplores violence in all its forms and hopes that the African people of South Africa will be able to obtain redress for legitimate grievances by peaceful means. While the United States, as a matter of practice, does not ordinarily comment on the internal affairs of governments with which it enjoys normal relations, it cannot help but regret the tragic loss of life resulting from the measures taken against the demonstrators in South Africa.¹²³

It was not mild enough for Eisenhower; he claimed it was a 'breach of courtesy between nations' and said that if it was up to him he would 'find another post for the bureau chief involved'. The only solution, in the president's view, was to apologise personally (in secret) to the South African ambassador.¹²⁴ Even after Sharpeville, Eisenhower's short-term desire to counter Soviet expansion outweighed matters of human rights. Similarly, the

¹²² Philip Frankel, *An Ordinary Atrocity: Sharpeville and Its Massacre* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001). The widely-accepted figures of the dead and wounded, given by the South African police force, are probably significantly lower than the actual number of casualties. See 150-156 and appendices 2A, 2B and 2C.

¹²³ Editorial note, *FRUS*, 1958-1960, Vol. XIV, document 244, Office of the Historian.

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*

president's lack of revulsion over the massacre was paralleled in southern segregationist support for the South African police. A few days after the unauthorised statement, America's new ambassador to South Africa, Philip K. Crowe, wrote to U.S. Secretary of State, Christian Herter, to explain the repercussions. White's statement had created jubilation amongst black Africans who now believed that the United States supported their freedom struggle. However, the National Party and most Afrikaners 'bitterly resented' the statement and felt that the U.S. government had 'sold out Whites in order to curry favor with Blacks'. Crowe thought that while U.S. relations with South Africa were not permanently damaged, the National Party 'will certainly be extremely cool for [a] long time to come'.¹²⁵ The South African government would have been surprised because the statement on Sharpeville was so out of sync with Eisenhower's policy towards South Africa. Of course, this was because it had nothing to do with the president or his senior aides. Nevertheless, in the aftermath of the Sharpeville atrocity it is unlikely that the United States government could have avoided the matter altogether. Some kind of gesture would have been necessary and even the mildest statement would have irritated the National Party.

Following the U.S. statement, relations between Washington and Pretoria needed mending. One week after the Sharpeville massacre, Eisenhower met with British Prime Minister Harold Macmillan at Camp David, Maryland. There, the two leaders tried to work out how to avoid serious condemnation of South Africa at the upcoming U.N. Security Council meeting, which had been called at the request of African and Asian delegations. Macmillan and Eisenhower decided that, together, they might be able to influence the adoption of an

¹²⁵ Philip Crowe to Christian Herter, 25 March 1960, *FRUS*, 1958-1960, Vol. XIV, document 345, Office of the Historian.

‘innocuous resolution’. Macmillan thought that if a resolution appeared ‘too violent, perhaps we could muster the necessary 7 votes to beat it’.¹²⁶ Just weeks before the Sharpeville shootings, Macmillan had visited South Africa, where he delivered his now-famous ‘Winds of Change’ speech. In it he warned that colonial powers were withdrawing from Africa and that white South Africans would not be able to expect support if they stood against black nationalism.¹²⁷ Nevertheless, Macmillan, along with Eisenhower, was still trying to bolster the apartheid regime as a means of keeping it in the Western fold.

On 1 April 1960, the U.N. Security Council, having addressed apartheid for the first time, did pass Resolution 134, which deplored ‘the killings of unarmed and peaceful demonstrators’ as well as the policy of apartheid itself. The resolution recognised that the situation in South Africa had led to ‘international friction’ and may also ‘endanger international peace’ and called upon the National Party to bring about racial harmony and equality.¹²⁸ After the draft resolution had been written, Secretary of State Herter informed Eisenhower that he thought it was ‘surprisingly mild’. Certainly the resolution differed little from the yearly resolutions the U.N. General Assembly had passed to no avail. Eisenhower, by contrast, thought the resolution was ‘mighty tough’ and suggested changes to moderate it further. Once more, America’s U.N. representative, Lodge, explained that the

¹²⁶ Memorandum of Conversation between Eisenhower and Macmillan, 28 March 1960, *FRUS* 1958-1960, Vol. XIV, document 346, Office of the Historian.

¹²⁷ Barber and Barratt, *South Africa’s Foreign Policy*, 8.

¹²⁸ U.N. Security Council Resolution 134, 1 April 1960, available at <http://daccess-dds-ny.un.org/doc/RESOLUTION/GEN/NR0157/23/IMG/NR015723.pdf?OpenElement>.

U.S. delegation was in a most difficult position. This time Eisenhower conceded and the United States voted to accept Resolution 134; Britain, however, abstained from the vote.¹²⁹

Kenneth Mokoena, project director for the National Security Archive's declassified documents regarding South African policy, noted that from 1960 onwards, the U.S. developed a 'two-pronged policy toward South Africa'. American officials 'publicly opposed apartheid on moral and political grounds' but at the same time 'maintained cordial relations on all strategic and economic concerns'.¹³⁰ Previously, it had been possible to continue friendly relations and, in the main, completely bypass issues over apartheid, but Sharpeville made this impossible. Furthermore, the decolonisation of the African continent added significantly to the United States' Cold War problems. Although publicly promoting self-determination and majority rule, the sudden creation of new nations in Africa meant the U.S. government would want them to be friendly, useful perhaps, but above all, anti-communist. The example of the Congo Crisis (1960-1965) demonstrates that America's Cold War policies towards South Africa were applicable to other African states.

When the Congo gained independence from Belgium on 30 June 1960, Patrice Lumumba became the democratically elected prime minister. However, on 11 July, Moïse Tshombe led a revolution and announced the secession of the mineral-rich Katanga region of the Congo. When Tshombe requested assistance to secure Katanga's secession, Belgian troops arrived, despite signing a treaty of friendship with the Congo. Subsequently, Lumumba

¹²⁹ Memorandum of telephone conversation between Herter and Goodpaster and memorandum to Herter and Eisenhower, 31 March 1960, *FRUS*, 1958-1960, Vol. XIV, document 348: editorial note, Office of the Historian.

¹³⁰ Kenneth Mokoena, *South Africa and the United States: The Declassified History* (New York: The New Press, 1993), 47.

requested U.N. assistance and when neither the U.N. nor neighbouring states provided the necessary assistance, Lumumba resorted to asking the Soviet Union for military help. U.S. policymakers regarded Lumumba as a 'Soviet asset' and Congo as 'a Cuba in the making' and the CIA, stationed in the capital, Léopoldville, began considering how he could be assassinated. In the end, Washington got the results it desired without directly bloodying American hands. Towards the end of 1960, Lumumba was captured and on 17 January 1961, he was flown to Elisabethville, where Katanga and Belgian forces executed him.¹³¹ The fear of communist infiltration in Africa and the U.S. reaction to Lumumba reflects that Washington's policymakers still had a Eurocentric view of Africa that prioritised mineral wealth over human freedoms. Furthermore, for whites in South Africa and segregationists in the American South, the Congo Crisis was used as a concrete reason why black majority rule in Africa had to be avoided at all costs.

Just three days after Lumumba's assassination, Eisenhower left the White House and John F. Kennedy took office. With turmoil in the Congo and many newly independent nations, Kennedy was forced to reflect upon previous U.S. policy towards Africa in general and decide whether to follow his predecessor's lead or make a break from the past. Any decision would affect U.S. relations with South Africa. Noer showed that during this time, the State Department, Executive Branch and U.S. military were deeply split between 'Europeanists' and 'Africanists'. Europeanists argued for the primacy of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, the relative insignificance of Africa and that a rapid end to white rule would produce weak and unstable black governments that might be susceptible to

¹³¹ This elementary overview of the much more complex events in the Congo is informed by David Seddon and Leo Zeilig, *The Congo: Plunder and Resistance* (London: Zed Books, 2007), 87-100.

communism. Africanists, meanwhile, argued that continued white supremacy would force black Africans towards communism as their only means of liberation and thus argued for an 'Africa first' policy to gain the favour of newly emerging black African nations.¹³² The argument did not revolve around the morality of decolonisation and white rule. Rather, Europeanists and Africanists promoted different approaches towards the same goal of preventing communism making inroads in Africa. At the very best, America's Cold War aspirations might help to promote African independence, not in its own right, but for the mutual benefit of the Cold War alliance; at worst, it would bolster continued white supremacy. During Kennedy's campaign, he had referred to Africa 479 times in speeches, arguing that the U.S. was losing ground to communists there and had not addressed the needs of black Africans.¹³³ As such, there was an expectation that he would re-examine U.S. policy towards Africa. However, Cold War imperatives continued to dictate Kennedy's foreign policy and he perceived anti-colonialism as a useful Cold War weapon.¹³⁴

On 31 May 1961, South Africa became a republic and withdrew from the British Commonwealth. With that in mind, McGeorge Bundy, Special Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs, informed Secretary of State Dean Rusk that he thought it would be necessary to encourage 'American private capital to seek investment outlets in South Africa'. Further, he thought they should promote 'the purchase of gold and other raw materials that provide a major source of economic support for the South African

¹³² Noer, *Cold War and Black Liberation*, 1-2.

¹³³ James H. Meriwether, *Proudly we can be Africans: Black Americans and Africa, 1935-1961* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2001), 168.

¹³⁴ A. M. Thomas, *The American Predicament: Apartheid and United States Foreign Policy* (Aldershot, U.K.: Ashgate Publishing, 1997), 39.

economy'.¹³⁵ Boosting the economy while subtly suggesting change became commonplace during Kennedy's presidency. Shortly after McBundy's suggestion, the American Ambassador to South Africa, Joseph C. Satterthwaite, met Prime Minister Verwoerd. Satterthwaite said that the U.S. wished to remain friendly with South Africa, a country regarded as an 'old friend and ally', but unless the Nationalists could develop some flexibility in their racial policy 'this would be very difficult'.¹³⁶ Nevertheless, by mid-1961 arrangements had been made to extend for two years the contract that allowed a U.S. missile tracking station in South Africa.¹³⁷ Before the negotiation was complete, the U.S. Representative to the U.N., Adlai Stevenson, had cautioned Rusk against such an agreement. 'At a time when the feeling about apartheid and the policy of the Union of South Africa is rising everywhere, including pressure for sanctions in the U.N.', Stevenson wrote, 'I would think that the necessity must be very compelling to risk the repercussions from a transaction of this kind if and when it becomes known, as it must inevitably.'¹³⁸ Stevenson, aware of strong feeling against South Africa in the United Nations, thus had a different job to fulfil than Rusk, who wanted to ensure Cold War objectives were being fulfilled. Washington essentially played two roles at the same time; trying to appear in agreement with world opinion on the one hand, and militarily and economically working alongside South Africa.

Within the State Department, Rusk clearly represented the Europeanist faction, while G. Mennen Williams, Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs, was an Africanist. The

¹³⁵ McGeorge Bundy to Dean Rusk, 22 March 1961, *FRUS*, 1961-1963: Africa, Vol. XXI, document 377, Office of the Historian.

¹³⁶ Joseph Satterthwaite to Department of State, 25 May 1961, in *ibid.*, document 379.

¹³⁷ Chester B. Bowles (Undersecretary of State) to Roswell L. Gilpatric (Deputy Secretary of Defense), 30 June 1961, in *ibid.*, document, 383.

¹³⁸ Adlai Stevenson to Dean Rusk, 2 June 1961, in *ibid.*, document 380.

two men clearly demonstrate the ways in which Washington's foreign policy towards South Africa was difficult to formulate and harder to agree on when Cold War priorities were given such pre-eminence. On 12 June 1963, Williams sent Rusk a secret memorandum:

I believe we are face to face with a new and decisive phase in the apartheid issue...we must take a more vigorous stand against apartheid. In African opinion we can no longer rest our case on a condemnation of apartheid.¹³⁹

Williams charged that the U.S. 'must be ready to back our condemnation with some form of meaningful action'. He recommended moving from a partial to a full arms embargo against South Africa. It was, in Williams' opinion, 'the only way we can convince both world and domestic opinion that we mean business in our disapproval of apartheid' while still managing to avoid the complete economic, diplomatic and arms sanctions advocated by the U.N. General Assembly.¹⁴⁰ Williams' message was sent on the same day that NAACP field secretary, Medgar Evers, was assassinated in Mississippi and one day after Alabama Governor George Wallace's infamous stand in the schoolhouse door and Kennedy's nationwide civil rights speech. In it, Kennedy said that the U.S. was confronted with a moral issue and that he would go to Congress and ask for legislation to ensure racial equality.¹⁴¹ During 1963, the world's eyes were as much on the American South as they were on South Africa. Arguably, the international community in fact knew far more about America's racial problems since the government did not censor information and ban foreign journalists as the National Party had.

¹³⁹ Williams to Rusk, 12 June 1963, in Mokoena, *South Africa and the United States*, 54.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid.

¹⁴¹ Kennedy's 'Report to the American People on Civil Rights', 11 June 1963, is available at the John F. Kennedy Presidential Library and Museum, <http://www.jfklibrary.org/>.

Dean Rusk did not equate apartheid with the moral problem that Kennedy said had afflicted the United States and he advocated a softer approach towards South Africa. Rusk argued that while he accepted the ‘general notion that the United States should use its influence steadily and persistently in the direction of the principles inscribed in the United Nations Charter’, if America were to enact sanctions ‘consistently and conscientiously’, its relations with ‘perhaps half of the existing community of states’ would be interrupted.¹⁴² The lack of consistency with which foreign policy was enacted was a contentious point among disagreeing foreign policy makers as well as segregationist Americans who opposed anti-apartheid action and also the National Party government who often complained that they were unfairly targeted. ‘I believe it is worth reminding ourselves that there are other states where obnoxious practices of one sort or another exist’, Rusk wrote, and listed twenty-two nations to demonstrate his point. While admitting that apartheid did present ‘a case of unusual difficulty’, Rusk argued that he still would not judge it as worse than ‘violations of human rights within the communist bloc’ or certain authoritarian countries with which the U.S. had ‘correct and sometimes even friendly relations’.¹⁴³ Using this Cold War rhetoric, Rusk displayed the kind of mentality foreign policymakers used to justify cordial relations with South Africa – or, indeed, any country necessary to the Cold War agenda. Generally paralleling the arguments the National Party put forward against outside interference in South Africa’s domestic sphere, Rusk suggested that his colleagues should

draw a sharp distinction between our deep concern with respect to racial discrimination in the United States and the way in which we crusade on that very issue outside the United States. The United States is our responsibility; our failures are our failures; we live under a constitutional system in which we can do

¹⁴² Rusk to Williams et al., 15 June 1963, in Mokoena, *South Africa and the United States*, 56.

¹⁴³ Ibid, 57.

something about it. But no one has elected us to undertake such responsibilities in other countries. The President has reminded us that we are not interested in a Pax Americana.¹⁴⁴

By framing potential interference in South Africa's racial affairs in almost imperialistic terms, Rusk effectively removed the United States from any moral duty it might have there. To be sure, apartheid South Africa was not the only racially prejudiced country in the world at that time, and within the region of southern Africa it was still surrounded by white minority rule in Southern Rhodesia and Portuguese colonial rule in Angola and Mozambique. South Africa was, however, different by virtue of the fact that it was an independent state that was dogmatically enforcing racist policies at a time when most of the post-World War II Western world had, at least officially, rejected racism. Rather than imposing a full arms embargo, as Williams had suggested, Rusk's Cold War priorities advocated assisting South Africa to play 'the kind of role which they have already played in two World Wars and which now is a part of a total confrontation affecting the life and death of our own nation'.¹⁴⁵

Williams' response was frank: 'The time of good intentions is over and only concrete action will do.' While Rusk prioritised friendly relations with South Africa, Williams saw future relations with black African states as profoundly important and stated that they would judge all countries as 'friendly or unfriendly on the basis of their positive acts of opposition to apartheid'. Crucially, Williams was not advocating any real major departure from existing policy. A full arms ban would, Williams argued, 'merely be a difference in degree and not principle'. It would, however, show African states America's 'good faith'

¹⁴⁴ Ibid.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid.

and shield the U.S. from potential repercussion that might result from inaction.¹⁴⁶ For Williams, the risk of jeopardising missile tracking and naval facilities in South Africa was small in comparison to what the U.S. could lose if a larger portion of the international community turned against America over its unwillingness to act against South Africa. Williams' concerns, like Rusk's, largely centred on the Cold War. He argued that the potential pitfalls of refusing a full arms embargo could include jeopardising support in the U.N. and surrendering military installations, scientific facilities, communications facilities and landing rights in a number of other African states. Finally, he argued that the U.S. could lose influence in developing a 'moderate non-communist family of African nations' that might otherwise turn to Soviet aid instead. The only non-Cold War argument used was that a failure to respond forcefully to apartheid could incite racial tension in America, and even that could be construed as a fear of communist propaganda.¹⁴⁷ If these potential losses were not enough to convince Rusk that action was necessary, Williams also emphasised the moral issue and gave Rusk a warning: 'If we refused an arms embargo, and another Sharpeville massacre occurred, we would stand condemned in the eyes of most of the world.'¹⁴⁸

In her analysis of how important racial reform was for the U.S. Cold War agenda, Mary Dudziak used Dean Rusk as an example of the State Department's commitment to combating Soviet propaganda by pressing for anti-segregation legislation.¹⁴⁹ However, the aforementioned correspondence between Rusk and Williams exemplifies the continuing

¹⁴⁶ Williams to Rusk, 12 July 1963, in *ibid.*, 59-60.

¹⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 60.

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁹ Dudziak, *Cold War Civil Rights*, 167, 175, 222.

hypocritical nature of the U.S. government where foreign racism was concerned. If Rusk saw domestic racism as damaging to the United States' Cold War agenda, he certainly did not regard South African racism in the same way. Rather, the continuation of a friendly relationship with apartheid South Africa, a Cold War ally, was perceived as far more important than advocating racial equality there. While Williams was arguably troubled by the moral issue of apartheid, Cold War priorities were important to both men. In the foreign policy-making circles of Washington, 'Europeanist' and 'Africanist' did not mean either advocating continued colonial rule or total support for African independence. Rather, the two camps exemplified different ways by which to achieve Cold War aims. Williams feared that independent black nations would be *either* America's allies *or* Russia's comrades; there is an assumption that decolonised countries did not care for, or know much about, ideology. This shows continuity in policymakers' lack of detailed information on matters which did not concern their Cold War agenda.

On 2 August 1963, Ambassador to the U.N. Stevenson announced to the Security Council that America would unilaterally halt the sale of all military goods to South Africa by the end of the year. Williams, it seemed, had won. However, there were clauses, the most important being that the embargo did not affect existing contracts on goods used for defence against external aggression.¹⁵⁰ A few months earlier, Kennedy had approved the sale of three submarines to South Africa and thus Foreign Minister Louw was quick to discover whether the sale would still be honoured. On 10 September 1963, Louw had made a statement in South Africa, saying that the U.S. and Britain could not count on continued South African assistance against communism and that their use of South African naval

¹⁵⁰ Mokoena, *South Africa and the United States*, 15.

facilities might be dissolved in the light of statements made at the U.N.¹⁵¹ Louw's threat had the desired effect. Kennedy decided that the sale would go ahead, but 'It should be made clear to the South Africans that any informal discussions held during the balance of this year are to be strictly confidential and involve no implied commitment to sell'.¹⁵²

The National Party, during this period, had significantly consolidated its position after the initial uproar in the wake of the Sharpeville massacre. When Kennedy was assassinated in November 1963, and Lyndon B. Johnson became president, the State Department was keen for the international community to see that Johnson would also take a moral stand against apartheid. Kennedy had approved extending the U.S. voluntary arms embargo to include a list of items used for arms manufacture. In preparation for a November 1963 U.N. Security Council meeting, William H. Brubeck of the National Security Council informed McGeorge Bundy that this extension was to be put forward as a policy of Johnson's. Brubeck wrote that African delegations were uncertain as to Johnson's position on civil rights and apartheid and he clearly thought it was expedient for Johnson to appear friendly to the numerous African nations.¹⁵³ Importantly, though, voluntary embargos were used as a means of staving off mandatory sanctions; the U.S. was no longer in a position to abstain easily, let alone veto. Changes in U.S. policy after 1960 had been symbolic and strategic, but certainly not effective in ending apartheid. Quite simply, the end of white rule in South Africa was not a strategic necessity of Washington's Cold War agenda.

¹⁵¹ Rusk and Robert McNamara to President Kennedy, 16 September 1963, in *ibid.*, 65.

¹⁵² Bundy to Rusk, 23 September 1963, *FRUS*, 1961-1963: Africa, Vol. XXI, document 415, Office of the Historian.

¹⁵³ William Brubeck to Bundy, 26 November 1963, in *ibid.*, document 424.

As a result, by mid-1964 a CIA National Intelligence Estimate concluded that the National Party were firmly entrenched in power, virtually all whites in South Africa supported white supremacy, any outbreak of black protest would be ruthlessly suppressed by a 'well armed and highly efficient' police force, and that internal developments alone would not cause any significant changes to the political or social situation.¹⁵⁴ The CIA put the increasing strength of the Nationalists down to the 'renewed vigour of the economy' (assisted, perhaps, by American investment) and the progress towards their goal of self-sufficiency. The report suggested that South Africa had shrugged off international criticism, was largely unaffected by trade boycotts by African, Asian and communist states, and that South Africa's decision to become a republic and withdraw from the Commonwealth had not resulted in any noticeable demise of economic ties with Britain or any other major Western trading partner.¹⁵⁵

However, as South Africa grew stronger it also grew more isolated. Deon Geldenhuys observed that an indication of the 'extent to which South Africa had become estranged from its traditional Western allies was when Britain, the United States and other Western countries declared their adherence to the voluntary arms embargo against South Africa' in August 1963.¹⁵⁶ Nevertheless, South Africa did not suffer too greatly and they still benefited from advantageous economic ties with Western powers. The day after Adlai Stevenson's announcement in the U.N., a pro-National Party newspaper, *Die Transvaler*, wrote that American actions had been designed 'to win favour of African states' and also 'to assure that normal trade with South Africa continues'. The article continued to say that

¹⁵⁴ CIA National Intelligence Estimate, 'Short-Term Prospects for South Africa', 20 May 1964, 1, FOIA.

¹⁵⁵ Ibid.

¹⁵⁶ Geldenhuys, *The Diplomacy of Isolation*, 11.

since South Africa had little arms trade with America anyway, the rejection by the U.S. of the more serious economic sanctions was far more important.¹⁵⁷ A couple of days later the same newspaper reported an article placating potential fears among the South African public who may have thought they were losing America as an ally: ‘South Africa can this weekend be calm, in knowledge that when debate on South Africa’s race policy is resumed next week in the Security Council, its Western allies will stand by it.’¹⁵⁸

The South African newspaper was not wrong. Johnson would become embroiled in the Vietnam War from 1964 onwards and within the Cold War climate, Washington wished to retain good relations with South Africa. In April 1964, a National Security Action Memorandum outlined U.S. policy towards South Africa. Existing policy regarding military sales would continue; the U.S. government would suspend ‘for the time being...applications for loans or investment guarantees with respect to South Africa’ but would not warn private investors not to invest in South Africa; aeronautics, space and defence departments should (covertly) make plans in the event that the U.S. had to leave South African facilities; and the Department of State would consider what sanctions might be enacted if South Africa did not accept the upcoming International Court of Justice decision regarding South-West Africa.¹⁵⁹ When the United Nations terminated South Africa’s mandate to govern South-West Africa, the National Party would not accept the decision, just as they did not adhere to yearly resolutions passed by the General Assembly since 1952. Under Johnson, the Civil Rights Act (1964) and Voting Rights Act (1965) were

¹⁵⁷ Cable from U.S. Embassy in South Africa to Department of State, 3 August 1963.

¹⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 5 August 1963.

¹⁵⁹ National Security Action Memorandum No. 296, 24 April 1964, *FRUS*, 1964-1968, Vol. XXIV: Africa, document 586, Office of the Historian.

passed and Washington's policymakers did not have to worry about distancing Jim Crow from apartheid anymore. Similarly, they were no longer in the position that they had been in only a few years previously, where a U.N. investigation of South Africa could equally have led to a U.N. investigation in Mississippi. Remarkably, it would take until 1986 for the United States Congress – overriding President Ronald Reagan's veto – to enact the Comprehensive Anti-Apartheid Act. Only then would the U.S. government disassociate from South Africa politically, economically and militarily as well as morally.¹⁶⁰ From Truman onwards, American presidents professed to oppose apartheid, and, indeed, discrimination everywhere. However, subsequent administrations had a one-dimensional view of South Africa as a bastion against communism on a precariously-balanced continent. For decades, this outweighed other considerations and the lack of personal belief in equality amongst many policymakers only compounded U.S. inaction on apartheid. While the U.S. government had seen a Cold Warrior in the National Party, both black and white Americans saw in South Africa a country in the grip of unrelenting white supremacy.

¹⁶⁰ The Comprehensive Anti-Apartheid Act prohibited new corporate investment in South Africa, American bank deposits from South African governmental agencies, the importation of South African products, including coal, steel and uranium, and ended the landing rights of South African airlines in the U.S. and of American airlines in South Africa. This legislation, and popular sentiment, led to massive disinvestment in South Africa and American companies leaving. See Donald R. Culverson, 'The Politics of the Anti-Apartheid Movement in the United States, 1969-1986', *Political Science Quarterly*, Vol. 111, No. 1 (Spring, 1996), 146.

Chapter Two

Transnational Civil Rights: The NAACP, South Africa and the International Fight for Racial Equality, 1948-1965

We condemn the brutal oppression of non-European peoples in the Union of South Africa...for its vicious, discriminatory practices in violation of the principles of the United Nations.

— Resolution adopted by the 39th Annual Convention of the NAACP, 29 June 1948.

In 1985, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People published a pamphlet entitled *South Africa: NAACP Historical Involvement, 1911-1985*. It was surely intended to demonstrate how committed the pre-eminent African American civil rights organisation of the twentieth-century had been to the oppressed black majority of South Africa. According to the publication, the NAACP had been ‘actively involved in international affairs’ since 1911; it had financed the Second Universal Races Conference that took place in Paris in 1919; ‘Africa in the world Democracy’ had been the theme for the organisation’s annual conference that same year; an NAACP delegation attended the Fourth Pan-African Congress of 1927 in New York; and Roy Wilkins (executive secretary and director of the organisation from 1955-1977) participated in the drafting of the United Nations Charter in 1945.¹⁶¹ Furthermore, the NAACP had carried out fact-finding missions to South Africa, established a Task Force for Africa to examine the continent as a whole, called for numerous boycotts of South African goods as well as the prohibition of U.S. investment and loans to that country and, during the early 1980s, intensified its call for

¹⁶¹ *South Africa: NAACP Historical Involvement, 1911-1985* (Baltimore: NAACP, 1985), 1, National Association for the Advancement of Colored People Records, 1842-1999, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Part VIII: Administrative File, 1967-1999, Box VIII:54, Folder 13: Board of Directors, Committees, South African Task Force, 1987 (hereafter cited as NAACP Records). Roy Wilkins led the NAACP from 1955 to 1977, first as executive secretary, taking over when his predecessor, Walter White, died and then as executive director from 1964 onwards.

demonstrations against apartheid. ‘No human rights issue’, readers were told, ‘has drawn more sustained denunciation from the NAACP than the South African government’s system of subjugation’.¹⁶²

As part of a sustained public and political anti-apartheid movement that developed in the United States during the second half of the twentieth century, the NAACP’s efforts to challenge white supremacy in South Africa had neared its greatest achievement so far when this pamphlet was published. On 2 October 1986, the United States Congress overruled President Ronald Reagan’s veto and the Comprehensive Anti-Apartheid Act (CAAA) became law. In part, the Act called for an end to apartheid, the release of Nelson Mandela and other political prisoners, the repeal of the state of emergency imposed by the National Party and negotiations to create a non-racial, democratic government in South Africa. It prohibited air travel and nuclear trade between the two countries; U.S. banks and the U.S. government were banned from taking deposits from and purchasing goods from any South African government agency; the importation of various South African products, including uranium, was barred; new investment in South African firms, except those owned by black South Africans, was proscribed; tax agreements between the two countries were terminated; and the sale to South Africa of U.S. petroleum products and goods on the U.S. Munitions List was prohibited.¹⁶³ After decades of moral condemnation but little action, the U.S. government utilised its greatest weapon, economic sanctions.¹⁶⁴ It would still take another four years for Mandela’s release and another four after that for South Africa to complete

¹⁶² Ibid., 1-5. This pamphlet was reprinted as a feature in *The Crisis* (the official publication of the NAACP) in November, 1986, Vol. 93, No. 9: 35-39.

¹⁶³ Kevin Danaher, ‘The US Struggle over Sanctions against South Africa’, in Mark Orkin (ed.), *Sanctions against Apartheid* (Claremont, South Africa: David Philip Publishers, 1989), 137.

¹⁶⁴ Steven Metz, ‘The Anti-Apartheid Movement and the Populist Instinct in American Politics’, *Political Science Quarterly* 101, no. 3 (1986): 379.

the transition from white supremacy to majority rule; however, after nearly four decades of American protest, the U.S. government had legislated against apartheid for the first time and the National Party's days were finally numbered.

Scholars have examined the African American anti-apartheid movement, the ideological links between black Americans and black South Africans, the impact of the Congressional Black Caucus on South African policy, the broader internationalist agenda of civil rights organisations and the ways in which Cold War anti-communism damaged the African American global human rights struggle.¹⁶⁵ However, what appears to be missing, and what I hope to provide here, is an investigation into the NAACP's efforts on behalf of black people in South Africa. While other organisations suffered as a result of Cold War anti-communism, executive secretary Walter White judiciously manoeuvred the NAACP into a position where it could still function as a powerful mouthpiece against apartheid throughout the particularly perilous early Cold War years. Francis Nesbitt's study of the African American anti-apartheid struggle recognised how groups averted the Cold War challenge and linked activists of the 1940s to those in the 1990s, but did not focus specifically on the NAACP and its ability to promote and sustain discourse on South Africa. The NAACP's efforts have been eclipsed to a degree by other organisations, such as the American Committee on Africa, or individuals who became supporters of black South Africa in the mid-1950s such as Martin Luther King. James Meriwether, for example, suggested that

¹⁶⁵ See, for example, von Eschen, *Race against Empire* Anderson, *Eyes off the Prize* who both demonstrate how the onset of Cold War anti-communism restricted the aspirations of internationalist black activists; Francis Njubi Nesbitt, *Race for Sanctions: African Americans against Apartheid, 1946-1944* (Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press, 2004) provides a different argument that does not see anti-communism as such a crippling factor and links black activists of the 1940s to the anti-apartheid movement of the 1980s. Alvin B. Tillery, Jr., *Between Homeland and Motherland: Africa, U.S. Foreign Policy, and Black Leadership in America* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 2011) provides another view, arguing that, among the black elite, domestic factors and goals largely affected the formulation of their policies towards Africa.

with the onset of the Cold War, African Americans in general ‘had little to say about Malan’s election’ and did not begin to respond forcefully to apartheid until black South Africans began the Defiance Campaign of 1952-1953.¹⁶⁶

This was not the case with the NAACP. The organisation played an important yet underrated role in keeping apartheid on the agenda during the early Cold War, continuing to pressurise the U.S. government to alter its policies towards South Africa and, thus, maintaining a spotlight on South Africa that would be taken up by a collective of groups – including the NAACP – from the mid-1950s onwards. A recent study that attempted to address the NAACP and its anti-colonial struggle during the early Cold War years is Alvin Tillery’s *Between Homeland and Motherland: Africa, U.S. Foreign Policy, and Black Leadership in America* (2011). His study of the black elite provides an interesting and informative discussion of the Congressional Black Caucus and the pre-World War II response of African Americans to Liberia and Marcus Garvey, for example. Tillery’s discussion of the NAACP in the early Cold War concludes that the organisation’s anti-communism enabled it to remain an effective anti-colonial force. However, Tillery does not consider South Africa or any other country in particular and appears to base his conclusions on a series of unsubstantiated newspaper statistics.¹⁶⁷ Further, Tillery does not make the link between NAACP activism in the late 1940s and its lasting impact on South African discourse by the mid-1950s.

¹⁶⁶ Meriwether, *Proudly we can be Africans*, 90-91.

¹⁶⁷ Tillery, Jr., *Between Homeland and Motherland*. For example, on page 94 Tillery states that ‘four black newspapers with the largest circulation’ had fewer articles about colonialism between 1936 and 1946 than they did between 1946 and 1955; and throughout the latter ten years, ‘NAACP anticolonialism took center stage in’ just over half of the items. Tillery concluded that African Americans supported the South African Defiance Campaign because out of articles related to it in the ‘four leading black newspapers’, 63 percent had a ‘positive tone’, 112.

Another reason for examining the NAACP is to address why they were interested in combating apartheid, how the Cold War climate affected this goal, the ways in which they sought to influence government policy and the broader American public opinion and to what extent they saw in South Africa a situation closer to their own predicament than anything else that was happening in the world. All of these issues are particularly relevant to this project because they provide a mirror image of the white opposition they faced, which also saw in South Africa a situation comparable to their own and thus attempted to sustain apartheid. By no means the only organisation to lobby on behalf of black South Africans – and others will be addressed – the NAACP provides an excellent means of investigating this issue because its longevity, size and scope have produced a wealth of information.¹⁶⁸ Furthermore, the NAACP is often regarded as the most traditional and unobjectionable civil rights group. It had an interracial membership that fervently opposed communism, it was middle class and its legalistic approach to racial reform set it apart from the direct action groups of the 1950s and 1960s that so threatened white southerners. Nevertheless, segregationists and white supremacists did not regard the organisation as moderate at all and targeted the NAACP fanatically.¹⁶⁹ Therefore, the anti-apartheid activism of the NAACP (and others) was really part of a two-pronged battle – against apartheid in South Africa and against forces in the U.S. that sought to maintain it. All the

¹⁶⁸ As a number of historians have commented, the records of the NAACP at the Library of Congress are immense. With approximately three million items in over eight thousand containers the collection encompasses an extraordinary amount of information, not just on the NAACP but on a number of other civil rights and anti-apartheid organisations as well. The sheer volume of files relating to foreign affairs (before and after decolonisation) and the United Nations reflects the Association's constantly-growing interest in international affairs.

¹⁶⁹ Manfred Berg, 'Writing the History of the NAACP: Trends and Challenges at the Association's Centenary', paper presented at The NAACP: A Centenary Appraisal Conference, 24-25 September 2009, University of Sussex. See also, James Rorty, 'The Embattled NAACP', *The Antioch Review* 19, no. 3 (Autumn 1959): 379-389.

while organisations like the NAACP had simultaneously to combat *de jure* and *de facto* segregation in the United States and cautiously navigate the risky path of Cold War anti-communism which was used as a weapon by both the segregationist South and the federal government.

It is fairly commonplace for scholars to suggest that South Africa assumed a more important position in U.S. foreign policy in the 1970s. As the previous chapter demonstrated, South Africa might not have been at the top of Washington policymakers' list but it always remained on the horizon, less important of course than the Korean or Vietnam War but important to the Cold War alliance nonetheless. However, even before the National Party came to power, NAACP staff lobbied against South Africa's control of South-West Africa, its treatment of the Indian population and the segregation that existed there under the previous government. When the National Party came to power in South Africa in 1948, civil rights activists in the United States were becoming increasingly aware of, and interested in, the plight of black Africans. Nesbitt observed that during the 1940s and early 1950s 'black radicals' such as W. E. B. Du Bois (former editor of the NAACP publication *The Crisis*) and Paul Robeson (performer and activist) were contributing to an African American anti-colonial movement. Through their organisation, the Council on African Affairs (CAA) and its publications, people received 'credible information about Africa' that was not widely available.¹⁷⁰ However, Nesbitt and others have also noted that the CAA suffered a serious decline in the late 1940s as it was blacklisted for the Marxist views of its leaders and marginalised and criminalised by the Cold War anti-communism that was rife during Truman's administration. By 1955, with only six members left, the

¹⁷⁰ Nesbitt, *Race for Sanctions*, 1.

CAA voted itself out of existence.¹⁷¹ Nonetheless, by identifying parallels between the racial problems facing African Americans and that of blacks elsewhere, anti-colonial black activists began to embrace the human rights of people everywhere and propagate a Pan-Africanism that had been popular in the 1920s.

George Fredrickson suggested that there were three distinct strands of Pan-Africanism in the early twentieth century; a conservative variety that sprung from the legacy of Booker T. Washington and his accommodationist theories; a 'liberal reformist' Pan Africanism, led by Du Bois and manifested in the Pan-African Congresses that he organised in the post-World War I decade; and the populist Pan-Africanism of Marcus Garvey and his Universal Negro Improvement Association.¹⁷² Fredrickson argued that Du Bois' Pan-Africanism was essentially compatible with the "'talented tenth" reformism' of the NAACP, which saw an international alliance of black elites and liberal whites as the best way to publicise racism and petition for change.¹⁷³ However, as Du Bois became more 'radical' he was dismissed from the NAACP. Du Bois and Walter White, executive secretary of the NAACP, had disagreed over foreign policy; Du Bois wanted to continue his anti-colonial battle, whereas the NAACP committed itself to combating domestic racial injustice.¹⁷⁴ At least that was the official, anti-communist party line to which White committed the NAACP. In her study of the United Nations and the African American civil rights movement, Carol Anderson argued that the all-encompassing, international human rights struggle was far harder to achieve than a more limited domestically-orientated civil rights struggle. Human rights, she

¹⁷¹ Reference to the marginalisation and criminalisation of the CAA: Nesbitt, *Race for Sanctions*, 10; reference to the disbanding of the CAA: Tillery, *Between Homeland and Motherland*, 72-74.

¹⁷² Fredrickson, *Black Liberation*, 145.

¹⁷³ *Ibid.*, 151.

¹⁷⁴ Von Eschen, *Race against Empire*, 116.

observed, was considered a dirty, communist-inspired concept, and those openly advocating such things might as well have been waving a banner for the Soviet Union. The Cold War, Anderson argued, ‘systematically eliminated human rights as a viable option for the mainstream African American leadership’.¹⁷⁵

However, the NAACP remained committed to standing firm against apartheid. One month after Malan’s election in May 1948, the NAACP adopted a resolution censuring apartheid at its Annual Convention in Kansas City, Missouri. The Association condemned the South African government, praised the efforts of black Africans seeking freedom and independence in British West Africa and the West Indies and called upon the U.S. government and the American delegation at the United Nations to take measures to ensure that black South Africans received ‘full civil, political and economic rights’.¹⁷⁶ Even before the National Party had gained power the NAACP had joined a demonstration against former prime minister Jan Smuts’ plans to annex South West Africa and picketed the South African Consulate in New York with placards reading ‘Negroes in America fight for their rights; Negroes in South African [*sic*] have no rights’.¹⁷⁷ The NAACP appeared to be acutely aware that their own oppressed situation was preferable to that of blacks in South Africa even before the Nationalists took power. By the time apartheid began to be implemented, Walter White wrote to Ralph Bunche (an African American diplomat involved with the United Nations’ formation and running) stating that a recent description

¹⁷⁵ Anderson, *Eyes off the Prize*, 5.

¹⁷⁶ ‘Resolutions Adopted by the 39th Annual Conference of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People’, Kansas City, Missouri, 26 June 1948, 9, Papers of the NAACP microfilm collection, Part I, 1909-1950, Reel 12, Group II, Series A, Box 41, Vere Harmsworth Library, University of Oxford.

¹⁷⁷ NAACP press release, ‘NAACP Joins Demonstration Against South African Annexation’, 22 November 1946. NAACP Records, Part II: General Office File, 1940-1955, Box II:A4, Folder 1, Africa, General, 1946.

he had of South Africa made 'Mississippi look idyllic by comparison'.¹⁷⁸ As such, the NAACP did not withdraw from the internationalisation of civil rights, but they did tread carefully and astutely adapted to the Cold War world.

In early 1948, the NAACP had backed Max Yergan's CAA faction over the discussion of whether to renounce formally communism within the ranks of the organisation. Paul Robeson had argued that the CAA should be open to people of any ideology. To do otherwise, he argued, would tie the Council to 'American imperialism' and he threatened to resign from the Board of Directors if the group formally disavowed communism. Yergan, meanwhile, opposed any communist connection whatsoever and appeared to have bested Robeson in a statement arguing that the CAA was 'not only an expression of the unique responsibility of American Negroes but also a reflection of the spirit and principles of our country'.¹⁷⁹ The NAACP leadership, under the direction of White, immediately acted to purge its organisation of any real or suspected communists. Indeed, Carol Anderson argued that White was so aggressively anti-communist that he was willing to 'misrepresent the sad state of affairs in black America' in order to refute Soviet propaganda about the oppression African Americans faced.¹⁸⁰ This brought some criticism from White's contemporaries but Tillery has written that few in the NAACP were surprised by the shift to anti-communism. Rather, he argued that leaders of the Association 'had charted a course that was both pragmatic about Pan-Africanism and vehemently anticommunist for most of the thirty years

¹⁷⁸ Walter White to Ralph Bunche, 3 December 1951, NAACP Records, Part II: General Office File, 1940-1956, Box II:A7, Folder 1, Africa, South Africa, General, 1950-1953. White had been given the dire description of South Africa by Graham Young of the Johannesburg Non-European Affairs Department.

¹⁷⁹ 'Commie Issue Splits African Affairs Group', *New York World-Telegram*, 4 February 1948.

¹⁸⁰ Carol Anderson, 'Bleached Souls and Red Negroes: The NAACP and Black Communists in the Early Cold War, 1948-1952', in Plummer (ed.), *Window on Freedom*, 93.

prior to World War II'.¹⁸¹ Certainly White was concerned about the propaganda threat. In December 1952 he wrote an 'urgent appeal' for funds to combat racism and inequality in the United States and, in part, framed it in Cold War terms:

This is a struggle which concerns the security of every American citizen. Prime Minister Malan of the Union of South Africa and Soviet Russia taunt our nation whenever we speak against racist and political persecution in other parts of the world.¹⁸²

Apart from propaganda like this, civil rights activists in general, and the NAACP in particular, were repeatedly charged with being communist-influenced, -infiltrated or -led and this only increased after the massive resistance movement began. For their unrelenting positions, Du Bois was indicted as a foreign agent and Robeson, although not charged with a crime, had his passport revoked.¹⁸³ Even before the Nationalists took power White ensured that the NAACP did all it could to avoid communist accusations. In 1946, before Yergan and Robeson split in the CAA, Alfred B. Xuma, president of the African National Congress in South Africa, visited the U.S. to attend a session of the United Nations General Assembly. Roy Wilkins, then editing *The Crisis*, wrote to White recommending that Xuma be invited to visit some of the NAACP's larger branches in order for him to 'give a first-hand picture of the situation of the native in South Africa'. Wilkins thought it prudent to inform White that Xuma and Yergan became acquainted in South Africa and Xuma was staying at Yergan's house. 'However, I do not believe Xuma is trading with the

¹⁸¹ Tillery, *Between Homeland and Motherland*, 75.

¹⁸² Draft letter or press release by Walter White, 2 December 1952, NAACP Records, Part II: General Office File, 1940-1956, Box II:A7, Folder 1: Africa, South Africa, General, 1950-1953.

¹⁸³ Nesbitt, *Race for Sanctions*, 20.

[Communist Party]’, Wilkins concluded.¹⁸⁴ White and Xuma were very similar in most respects; they had comparable social and economic beliefs and were both liberals who thought racial equality was best achieved through gradual reform within a capitalist society. However, Xuma was willing to cooperate with the Communist Party in South Africa as a means of pursuing immediate goals.¹⁸⁵ Despite Wilkins’ lack of information, the concern was there.

A similar exchange took place the following year when Quintin Whyte, director of the South African Institute of Race Relations (SAIRR), wrote to introduce himself and his organisation to the NAACP. Whyte wrote that he sought links with similar organisations in the United States and wondered whether the SAIRR and NAACP might exchange information for mutual benefit.¹⁸⁶ The same caution took priority and a memorandum from Du Bois a few weeks later revealed that White must have approached knowledgeable colleagues to vet the SAIRR for communist links. The SAIRR had quite long-established links to the United States and certainly was not communist aligned, but White made sure. The following month Du Bois wrote, ‘I am familiar with the [SAIRR] and its publications. They are very timid’, he continued, ‘but do publish some interesting news’.¹⁸⁷ With assurance from Du Bois, the NAACP and SAIRR began sharing information, thus forming a part of a sense of dual purpose between those in the U.S. and those in South Africa.

¹⁸⁴ Roy Wilkins to Walter White, 4 November 1946, NAACP Records, Part II: General Office File, 1940-1955, Box II:A4, Folder 1: Africa, General, 1946.

¹⁸⁵ Fredrickson, *Black Liberation*, 266.

¹⁸⁶ Quintin Whyte to Walter White, 22 August 1947, NAACP Records, Part II: General Office File, 1940-1956, Box II:A8, Folder 1: South Africa; Tobias, Channing H., 1947-1948.

¹⁸⁷ W. E. B. Du Bois to Walter White, 25 September 1947, in *ibid*.

Apart from links with organisations like the ANC or SAIRR, interested citizens of other countries wrote frequently to the Association and it was arguably the best known American civil rights organisation. The correspondence received from a variety of African countries reveals the extent of the NAACP's reputation on that continent as well as the Pan-African framework in which black civil rights activists in both continents were working. From the late 1940s onwards, the NAACP's head office received innumerable correspondence from Africa. Sometimes they were letters of introduction, informing the NAACP about a newly founded civil rights group and requesting the sharing of information. Often, though, they were letters from individuals requesting financial aid or sponsorship. One letter came from nineteen-year-old Tetteh Tawiah of the Gold Coast, British West Africa, who requested financial or other aid in order to attend university in the United States. Tawiah informed the reader that he had read about the NAACP in the *Negro Makers of History* and had read articles written by the organisation in the *Chicago Defender*.¹⁸⁸ Such publications certainly reached African audiences, most likely disseminated by African organisations cooperating with American organisations, and would surely have been of great impact to a segment of the urban youth who wanted more than their colonial rulers would provide for them. A similar letter came from A. Y. Silla of Sierra Leone in 1948, who wanted two hundred dollars to travel to the 'U.S. America that glorious land of liberty' in order to embark on a work scholarship at Taylor University, an evangelical Christian college in Indiana.¹⁸⁹ Though these are just two of many letters, they all revealed that black Africans regarded America as something of a promised land, where they could pursue their education and gain a better standard of life. Any information they had regarding racial segregation in the

¹⁸⁸ Tetteh Tawiah to the NAACP, 5 June 1948, NAACP Records, Part II: General Office File, 1940-1955, Box II:A4, Folder 2, Africa, General, 1947-1949.

¹⁸⁹ A. Y. Silla to Walter White, 31 May 1948, in *ibid*.

United States must have been overlooked in favour of the perceived better life they could have there. This kind of correspondence contributed significantly to a sense that African Americans were in a global struggle against white racism and colonialism. Similarly, the fact that these people wrote to the NAACP suggests that they considered the United States a better place because of civil rights organisations like the NAACP.

The replies that the NAACP sent usually informed their correspondents that the Association received ‘hundreds of letters’ from students wanting to advance their education in the U.S. but regrettably did not have the money to come to their assistance.¹⁹⁰ In the cases of the letters mentioned above, the NAACP took the liberty of referring Tawiah’s letter to the African Academy of Arts and Research and Silla’s letter to the Phelps-Stokes Fund – both New York-based philanthropic organisations.¹⁹¹ Like the NAACP, the Phelps-Stokes Fund received ‘scores of these letters’ and regretted that they simply could not afford to help them all either.¹⁹² The chance that any positive outcome emerged for the hopeful African students is slim but it demonstrates the transactions that passed between the United States and Africa. However, one letter written in 1961 more forcefully asserted the NAACP’s domestic agenda. When Reverend Z. E. Ngema of Zululand, South Africa, wrote to the Association requesting aid, John A. Morsell (assistant to Roy Wilkins) informed Ngema that he had been ‘misinformed regarding the purposes and programs’ of the NAACP. ‘We are concerned solely with securing equal citizenship rights for Negroes in

¹⁹⁰ Madison S. Jones, Jr., to Tetteh Tawiah, 1 July 1948, in *ibid.*

¹⁹¹ Walter White to Channing H. Tobias, 11 June 1948, in *ibid.*

¹⁹² Rachel Huntington (Secretary to Tobias) to White, 18 June 1948, in *ibid.*

the United States', Morsell explained, 'although we are very much interested in the movements toward freedom on the part of the peoples of Africa'.¹⁹³

This somewhat underplays the interest the NAACP had in African affairs, especially by the early 1960s, as well as the action they took on oppressed Africans' behalf. In particular, the Association was significantly involved in the United Nations and the way in which the American delegation dealt with matters pertaining to South Africa. Indeed, the anti-communist, middle class, interracial, liberal, integrationist depiction of the NAACP (often used to deride the Association) allowed it to assume a position of importance within national politics that other civil rights organisations did not achieve. The executive secretary of the NAACP could write to the president, the secretary of state, America's U.N. delegation or the secretary general of the United Nations and receive a remarkably swift response. Truman had courted the NAACP and won its support in return but the organisation did question his policies when they felt the need. Although scholars have suggested that anti-communism stifled the attempts of African Americans to build a global human rights discourse, the United Nations provided a forum in which oppressed peoples could begin to achieve the kind of recognition needed to bring about change. The NAACP took particular interest in the U.N. and championed it as an institution. Similarly, the impact the Association had on the fight against apartheid was part and parcel of the power the organisation wielded. Press releases, given to subscribing newspapers, meant that the Association's stance on South Africa (and indeed other matters) became widely known. From national dailies like the *New York Times* and *Washington Post* to African American

¹⁹³ John A. Morsell to Rev. Z. E. Ngema, 19 April 1961. NAACP Records, Part III: Administrative File, 1909-1969, Box III:A34, Folder 5 (2 of 2), Africa, General, 1956-1965.

papers like the *Chicago Defender* and more moderate southern papers including the *Atlanta Journal-Constitution*, NAACP press releases reached a wide audience and in part helped solidify the group as a leader in the global fight for equality.

In October 1953, Walter White and Channing H. Tobias (now NAACP chairman) sent a telegram to President Eisenhower, Secretary of State John Foster Dulles and U.S. Ambassador to the U.N. Henry Cabot Lodge. White and Tobias were concerned that South Carolina Governor James F. Byrnes might be appointed as spokesman for the U.S. in the General Assembly on the question of South Africa. Byrnes had been a close confidante of both President Roosevelt and President Truman yet had opposed integration and, recognising that *Brown* was on the horizon, had set about trying to realise the ‘separate but equal’ doctrine in his state. White and Tobias charged Byrnes with holding racial beliefs that ‘closely approximate [those] of Prime Minister Daniel F. Malan of South Africa’ and argued that appointing him spokesman for the South African issue would be ‘embarrassing to the American people and resented by many’. Byrnes was unfit to fulfil the role, charged White and Tobias, because of his own effort to ‘maintain apartheid’ in his own state’s public schools.¹⁹⁴ Byrnes was not a proponent of racial integration and Robert Murphy, Assistant Secretary of State, replied to the telegram, assuring the NAACP that Congresswoman Frances P. Bolton would represent America on the question of South African race relations.¹⁹⁵ The previous chapter demonstrated the continuity with which successive governments avoided criticising South Africa in the United Nations. As such,

¹⁹⁴ Channing Tobias and Walter White to President Eisenhower, John Foster Dulles and Henry Cabot Lodge, 16 October 1953, NAACP Records, Part II: General Office File, 1940-1956, Box II:A7, Folder 6, South Africa, Petition to the U.N., 1953.

¹⁹⁵ Letter from Robert Murphy to Channing Tobias, 28 October 1953. NAACP records, Part II: General Office File, 1940-1956, Box II:A7, Folder 6, South Africa, Petition to the U.N., 1953.

the NAACP did not in all likelihood have any notable influence over government policy towards South Africa during this period or appointments in the United Nations. Nevertheless, its correspondence with officials at a relatively high level in the State Department and United Nations suggests that the Association was regarded with the respect due to an important and influential group in the United States.

The following year, in December 1954, the U.S. Ambassador to the U.N., James Wadsworth, announced to the Ninth General Assembly that the U.S. would not vote to continue the U.N. committee investigating apartheid.¹⁹⁶ Tobias was prompted to send another telegram to Dulles and Lodge on behalf of the NAACP. By not supporting the resolution, Tobias argued, the U.S. delegation was giving ‘aid and comfort to the forces of bigotry and rabid racism in South Africa and throughout the world’. The NAACP therefore urged the U.S. delegation to reconsider and support the resolution.¹⁹⁷ Ambassador Lodge responded directly to Tobias and, though the telegram did not alter the position of the U.S. delegation, Lodge was keen to emphasise the similarities between his own U.N. delegation and the NAACP. ‘I am sure that any difference of view between the United States Delegation and the [NAACP] on this question is purely one of method’, Lodge wrote, and he assured Tobias that his delegation would continue to support all measures ‘which promise progress’ in the quest for equal rights globally.¹⁹⁸ As we have seen, Lodge felt that the U.S. delegation was losing respect among other countries in the U.N. but U.S. foreign policy under Eisenhower remained inflexible when it concerned South Africa.

¹⁹⁶ See chapter 1 for a fuller discussion of this decision.

¹⁹⁷ Tobias to Dulles and Lodge, 10 December 1954. NAACP Records, Part II: General Office File, 1940-1956, Box II:A7, Folder 2, Africa, South Africa, General, 1954-1955.

¹⁹⁸ Lodge to Tobias, 22 December 1954, in *ibid*.

Despite differences of opinion with the U.S. delegation to the U.N., under Walter White, the NAACP nonetheless involved itself in promoting the United Nations as a valuable institution. In a 1953 press release, White informed readers of his recent experience listening to U.N. delegations debating ‘such an explosive issue as the Union of South Africa against the world’. In defence of the U.N., White wrote, ‘What if people...had no place where they could talk instead of shoot things out.’ Acknowledging that the U.N. had ‘manifest shortcomings’, White nevertheless argued that ‘the United Nations does provide a place where men of every race, creed and political persuasion can assemble to match ideas and philosophies instead of living in separate and isolated cells dominated by fear and hate of their neighbors’.¹⁹⁹ He reported that in a few short years, many member states were no longer ‘confused or intimidated’ over the South African issue as they had been during the first General Assembly of 1948 when South African Ambassador G. P. Jooste ‘spewed defiance of the whole world against any interference whatsoever with South Africa’s doctrine of apartheid’. Now, White assured his readers, subsequent spokesmen condemned racism all over the world. Significantly, White concluded that growing American opinion of the United Nations could be judged in part by the fact that the U.N. was the number-one sightseeing attraction of New York at that time.²⁰⁰ As the next chapter will show, there were substantial numbers of Americans who opposed the United Nations and the values it stood for, creating an interesting dichotomy between African American activism, government inaction and white derision of the institution. Nevertheless, the NAACP’s

¹⁹⁹ NAACP press release, 19 November 1953. NAACP records, Part II: General Office File, 1940-1955, Box II:A634, Folder 8, United Nations, General, 1953-55.

²⁰⁰ Ibid.

support for the U.N. was clear and through it they championed not only the cause of black South Africans, but oppressed people across that continent.

As well as devoting considerable time to the question of apartheid, the NAACP also involved itself in matters of African affairs more generally. During the 'Year of Africa' Roy Wilkins, then executive secretary of the NAACP, wrote to the Secretary-General of the United Nations to explain his concern over the discriminatory treatment that African diplomats had received during their visits to the U.N. headquarters in New York. Wilkins offered the services of his organisation 'in whatever way may be appropriate' for the correction of conditions which had seen discriminatory practices in public accommodations.²⁰¹ The NAACP was, in Wilkins' estimation, 'in a unique position to be of assistance' in these matters since the 'reciprocal impact of their fight for independence and our fight for equality' had created relations with 'many African leaders' which continued to increase.²⁰² Such concern would have arisen from incidents like the New York City police detaining Ferdinand Oyono, the permanent delegate of Cameroon to the U.N.²⁰³, and events in Washington, D.C., where estate agents had been preventing African diplomats seeking homes there.²⁰⁴ Historian Michael Krenn observed that during the Kennedy administration, many African diplomats characterised Washington, D.C., as a 'hardship post' and regularly complained that they faced constant discrimination in trying to secure decent and affordable housing. During the early 1960s, the problem became ever-more apparent as twenty-four new African nations became members of the United Nations between 1960 and 1963.

²⁰¹ Roy Wilkins to Dag Hammarskjöld, Secretary-General of the U.N., 7 October 1960. NAACP Records, Part III: General Office File, 1956-1965, Box III:A326, Folder 1, United Nations, General, 1957-1963.

²⁰² Ibid.

²⁰³ 'NAACP Offers Aid To Abused UN Africans', *Chicago Defender*, 29 October 1960, 21.

²⁰⁴ 'African Envoys Face Bias in U.S.', *Daily Defender*, 28 September 1960, 2.

Furthermore, Krenn noted that African Americans were stunned by the discrimination foreign envoys faced and that the black press unanimously concluded that it was ‘wreaking havoc on America’s foreign policy’.²⁰⁵ The fact that black diplomats faced such discrimination in the nation’s capital city was an embarrassment for the U.S. government as well as a matter of great concern for the United Nations and African Americans whose interest in foreign affairs continued to grow.

The U.N. Secretary-General responded positively to Wilkins’ offer of help, informing him that a number of official and non-official groups in New York were already working to assist representatives of new African states, and suggested that Wilkins contact Alfred G. Katzin of the Executive Office of the Secretary-General for fuller information regarding what steps were being taken to avoid such discrimination.²⁰⁶ James Farmer, a leading civil rights activist and co-founder of the Congress Of Racial Equality (CORE) was also working for the NAACP at this time and became responsible for contacting and meeting with Katzin as a means of formulating NAACP policy on visiting African diplomats. Farmer reported that when he met with Katzin in January 1961 he was informed that U.N. policy was to avoid seeking publicity when discrimination of black diplomats occurred and, if complaints were made, they were to be dealt with by the United States delegation. Farmer noted that Katzin showed him the complete file of settled and pending cases regarding such issues and concluded that the U.S. delegation ‘asserts itself vigorously’ to solve such problems when they arose. ‘They realize that such incidents become fodder for

²⁰⁵ Michael Krenn, ‘The Unwelcome Mat: African Diplomats in Washington, D.C., during the Kennedy Years’, in Plummer (ed.), *Window on Freedom*, 163, 166.

²⁰⁶ Dag Hammarskjöld to Roy Wilkins, 8 November 1960. NAACP records, Part III: General Office File, 1956-1965, Box III:A326, Folder 1, United Nations, General, 1957-1963.

the propaganda guns of the communists', Farmer wrote, and stated that Katzin in fact believed – and provided 'considerable evidence' for his belief – that 'several of the highly publicized incidents were contrived'. In conclusion Farmer stated that there was little the NAACP could do beyond its offer of help and must wait for the U.N. to request its assistance – a situation Farmer felt was unlikely to arise. Only if African delegates themselves indicated dissatisfaction to the NAACP could they publicise or attempt to deal with the problems.²⁰⁷ When the diplomats took their complaints through the official channels, as Krenn showed, they were dealt with internally as a means of avoiding additional publicity. While the NAACP apparently accepted the protocol that they should not publicise occurrences of discrimination unless the litigant came to them directly, the Association did not shy away from criticising U.S. policy towards South Africa and publicising the atrocities of apartheid.

While Wilkins was correct in his assertion that the NAACP was regularly gaining new relationships with African leaders and organisations, the available records suggest that this was not so much the case with South Africa. Certainly, the Association spent considerable time and effort publicising the plight of black South Africans and criticising U.S. policy toward the apartheid state; but the extent of meaningful correspondence between the two countries does not reflect the commitment of the NAACP to ending apartheid. In April 1952, as the Defiance Campaign against petty apartheid laws began in South Africa, Walter White sent a widely-publicised telegram to James Moroka, then president of the ANC:

²⁰⁷ James Farmer to John Morsell, 2 February 1961, NAACP Records, Part III: General Office File, 1956-1965, Box III:A326, Folder 1, United Nations, General, 1957-1963.

[The NAACP] with [a] membership comprised of enlightened liberty-loving Americans of both races sends its greetings and pledges its unqualified support of the fight for freedom against Premier Malan's apartheid oppression of non-white peoples of South Africa. A bloody war was fought against German Nazism. Liberty cannot survive if Nazism is permitted [to] exist in South Africa or elsewhere in [the] world.²⁰⁸

Such solidarity continued to manifest itself in the sustained support the NAACP gave black South Africans and in its attempts to sway the opinion of Washington's foreign policymakers. However, tangible and regular transactions between the NAACP and its counterpart organisations in South Africa failed to materialise. This is even more surprising because during the 1950s, with the nonviolent direct action of the Defiance Campaign, black protest in South Africa and the American South was probably closer than in any other phase of the countries' liberation politics. Furthermore, the NAACP and ANC were the pre-eminent civil rights organisations in their respective countries. The NAACP did receive letters from South Africa. For example, Walter Sisulu, secretariat of the South African Congress of the People (an umbrella group for South African liberation organisations) Beata Lipman, secretary of the South African Peoples' Congress and Peter Brown, chairman of the Liberal Party of South Africa all wrote to White and Wilkins to introduce their organisations to the NAACP and offer support for what the NAACP was doing in the United States.²⁰⁹

²⁰⁸ Walter White to James Moroka, 8 April 1952, NAACP Records, Part II: General Office File, 1940-1956, Box II:A7, Folder 1, Africa, South Africa, General, 1950-1953.

²⁰⁹ Walter Sisulu to NAACP, 10 May 1955, NAACP Records, Part II: General Office File, 1940-1956, Box II:A7, Folder 2: Africa, South Africa, General, 1954-1955; B. Lipman to NAACP, 2 April 1953, NAACP Records, Part II: General Office File, 1940-1956, Box II:A7, Folder 1: Africa, South Africa, General, 1950-1953; Peter Brown to Roy Wilkins, 17 June 1963, NAACP Records, Part III: Administrative File, 1909-1969, Box III:A35, Folder 1: Africa, South Africa, 1956-1965 (folder 2 of 2).

These letters also reveal interesting limitations that affected both the NAACP and South African organisations in making links with each other. For example, Brown's letter was sent via an intermediary in New York, because 'If I address the letter to [Roy Wilkins at the NAACP] direct it is unlikely that it will ever get out of South Africa'.²¹⁰ Additionally, Cold War constraints continued to concern Walter White with regard to Sisulu. White wrote to Ralph Bunche at the United Nations to ask how the NAACP should respond to Sisulu and the Congress of the People. White still thought (mistakenly) that the ANC was 'completely free of any Communist infiltration' and had heard 'stories...charging that the South African Indian Congress is infiltrated'. He did not, however, know about the other groups under the banner of the Congress of the People – the Congress of Democrats and the Coloured Peoples Organisation.²¹¹ Bunche replied with little information about Sisulu or the organisation. All he knew was that Sisulu, along with some 20 others, 'has been cited as a Communist within the meaning of the Communist Suppression Act'.²¹² However, apart from letters of introduction like these it appears that regular two-way correspondence between the NAACP and such groups did not materialise.

In his comparative study of black South Africans and African Americans, Fredrickson came to the conclusion that a 'lack of sustained interaction on a common ideological wavelength' impacted negatively on black South African activists' interest in America. Furthermore, he noted that during the 1950s the ANC experienced a decline in popularity and membership as its 'bourgeois-liberal ideas' were eclipsed by the more militant Youth

²¹⁰ Peter Brown to Annie Laurie Williams, 17 June 1963, in *ibid*.

²¹¹ Walter White to Ralph Bunch, 9 September 1954, NAACP Records, Part II: General Office File, 1940-1956, Box II:A7, Folder 2: Africa, South Africa, General, 1954-1955.

²¹² Ralph Bunche to Walter White, 14 September 1954, in *ibid*.

Leaguers of the organisation. The Youth League collaborated with the South African Communist Party and thus promoted African nationalism domestically and supported the Soviet Union in world affairs. Contemporaneously, the lack of U.S. government support for black South Africans, demonstrated by its constant unwillingness to condemn South Africa in the United Nations, led to ‘hostility’ towards the United States.²¹³ Fredrickson’s argument is understandable and persuasive until he also argued that cold-war anti-communism in the U.S. immobilised African American protest with regard to foreign affairs:

The resulting failure of the moment to question publicly the world mission of American capitalism meant that its discourse could not have the relevance for the South African struggle that the rhetoric and ideology of some earlier African-American movements had possessed.²¹⁴

The NAACP was by no means limited to domestic civil rights battles. Rather, with the onset of the Cold War, White had managed to maintain the Association’s anti-colonial and anti-apartheid expression; and while the domestic struggle took precedence, as it would have to black South Africans too, South Africa remained firmly on the NAACP’s agenda before, during and after the American civil rights movement. It is possible that the lack of interest from South African blacks during the formative years of global black resistance prevented the creation of meaningful relationships developing between the NAACP and South African organisations. Similarly, once the liberal wing of the ANC was overtaken by a more militant faction that did not share the NAACP’s aversion to communism, the two groups would have continued on divergent paths. Finally, as the 1950s gave way to a new

²¹³ Fredrickson, *Black Liberation*, 266-267.

²¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 267.

decade, the National Party clamped down on dissension even further by banning the African National Congress and the Pan African Congress, thus forcing them underground. Fredrickson concluded that ‘Apparently the ANC had little inclination to identify itself publicly with the American civil rights movement’.²¹⁵ The NAACP, on the contrary, very publicly identified with black South Africans and protested on their behalf but tangible links between themselves and their South African counterparts just are not there.²¹⁶

Nevertheless, the Association’s commitment to an anti-apartheid movement that had not even fully developed yet was not questionable. Correspondence between Walter White and Eugene Black, the president of the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, reveals the ongoing dedication of the NAACP to black South Africa and its opposition to the U.S. government’s policy towards that country. In 1951, the NAACP opposed a proposed fifty-million-dollar loan to the Union of South Africa by the Bank. White sent a telegram to Black urging him, on behalf of the NAACP, ‘its 1,600 branches and its interracial membership’, to reconsider this loan ‘until South Africa ceases its defiance of the United Nations with respect to South West Africa and abandons its dangerous and vicious racist policies’.²¹⁷ In stating that both the government and financial leaders of Great Britain refused to give financial aid to South Africa ‘because its racial policies infuriate colored peoples everywhere’, White urged Black to reassess the decision to loan money to a ‘dangerous government opposed to all human decency’.²¹⁸ Eugene Black’s response informed White that it would not be possible to reconsider the loan as it had been approved

²¹⁵ Ibid., 265.

²¹⁶ To borrow Fredrickson’s terminology, while it is ‘difficult to prove a negative’, this conclusion is based on extensive research in the NAACP archive; Fredrickson, *Black Liberation*, 359n76.

²¹⁷ Walter White to Eugene Black, 1 February 1951, NAACP Records, Part II: General Office File, 1940-1956, Box II:A7, Folder 3, South Africa, Loan from International Bank for Reconstruction, 1951-1953.

²¹⁸ Ibid.

by the Bank's forty-nine member nations, including the U.S. government. Although Black wrote that the Bank should provide loans 'without regard to political or other non-economic influences or considerations', he also assured White that the projects the Bank had agreed to finance 'will benefit South African people regardless of color'.²¹⁹ Understandably White was unconvinced by Black's prediction that the loan would help all South Africans, and wrote as such when he informed Black that the 'grim and bloody truth of history in the Union of South Africa is that the native population enjoys virtually none of the benefits of government'.²²⁰ Black responded courteously but also emphasised again that the loan could not be reconsidered.²²¹

Two years later, in July 1953, Walter White was back on the case, writing to enquire, in light of two years of intransigence on the part of the National Party government, whether Black still believed the loan to have benefited both white and black South Africans.²²² As previously discussed, during the first few years of the 1950s, the National Party had continued to solidify its power and implement farther-reaching apartheid legislation until, by 1953, the bedrock of apartheid legislation had been put in place. Black told White that he thought the programmes financed by the Bank – particularly expanding the electric power and railroads of the country – had indeed helped the economy grow. Further, he suggested that 'it is likely that Africans have benefited economically rather more...than other sections of the community'.²²³ The markedly different views of the two men exemplify how well informed Walter White was and how misguided businessmen like

²¹⁹ Eugene Black to Walter White, 6 February 1951, in *ibid.*

²²⁰ Walter White to Eugene Black, 8 February 1951, in *ibid.*

²²¹ Eugene Black to Walter White, 28 February 1951, in *ibid.*

²²² Walter White to Eugene Black, 21 July 1953, in *ibid.*

²²³ Eugene Black to Walter White, 30 July 1953, in *ibid.*

Black were. Similarly, this correspondence reveals that although the NAACP had supported Truman and his Cold War foreign policy agenda, the organisation was at odds with the U.S. federal government, who consistently tried to maintain friendly diplomatic and economic relations with South Africa. Charting an anti-communist course through the early Cold War had not limited the NAACP's effectiveness in speaking out against apartheid South Africa. Moreover, returning to a cause two years down the line reveals White's commitment to combating the apartheid government as well as those he saw as partly responsible for its continuation.

In addition, White felt that the NAACP's commitment to Africa in general had impacted on the opinion of the American public at large. In May 1953, he recalled a 'friendly note' that was sent to him by a newspaper editor six years previously asking whether White was not 'overemphasizing the importance of Asia and Africa to America and the world'. White now happily addressed that query with the answer that three national weeklies, *Life*, the *Saturday Review of Literature* and the *U.S. News and World Report* had just devoted all or nearly all of their contents in the same week to Africa.²²⁴ Only the last report bothered White; it contained an interview with Max Yergan, former head of the Council on African Affairs turned rabid anti-communist apologist for apartheid South Africa. Certainly American interest in Africa had grown and while organisations like the CAA had fallen foul of the Cold War anti-communist climate, the NAACP had managed to maintain an internationalist agenda and continue a Pan African discourse that linked oppressed people of the African Diaspora together. In addition the NAACP's ability to keep South Africa on

²²⁴ Walter White, 'press release for subscribing newspapers', 7 May 1953, NAACP Records, Part II: General Office File, 1940-1955, Box II:A6, Folder 2: Africa, Publicity, 1951-1955.

its agenda and publicise its problems arguably gave rise to the renewed interest in South Africa that had emerged by the 1950s.

In 1953 the American Committee on Africa (ACOA) was founded by George Houser in New York. It was formed by an interracial group of civil rights activists who banded together in support of the South African Defiance Campaign. In the 1970s, Houser recalled that when the ACOA was formed, ‘American interest in and knowledge about Africa was something of a joke’. There was ‘a Tarzan mentality in the US about the continent’, he continued.²²⁵ Although this trivialises the work that the NAACP did in promoting anti-colonialism and drawing attention to apartheid during the early Cold War years, from the early-to-mid 1950s, new inter-organisational efforts did emerge with Africa in general, but apartheid in particular, as its focus. When news of the approaching Defiance Campaign reached Houser he was executive secretary of the CORE and he contacted Roy Wilkins at the NAACP with plans of how to publicise it in the United States and show ‘solidarity’ amongst Americans.²²⁶ Houser created an ad hoc committee called Americans for South African Resistance (AFSAR) and at a fundraising meeting raised ‘a few hundred dollars’ which was sent to the African National Congress.²²⁷ AFSAR, in its original capacity, was short-lived, as the Defiance Campaign ended in early 1953 when the National Party introduced severe punishments for civil disobedience. Houser and his small group of colleagues reassessed and founded the ACOA to broaden their scope to the whole of Africa

²²⁵ George M. Houser, ‘Meeting Africa’s Challenge: The Story of the American Committee on Africa’, *Issue: A Journal of Opinion* 6, no. 2/3 (Summer-Autumn, 1976): 16.

²²⁶ George Houser to Roy Wilkins, 10 March 1952, NAACP Records, Part II: General Office File, 1940-1956, Box II:A7, Folder 1: Africa, South Africa, General, 1950-1953.

²²⁷ George Houser to Canada Lee, 2 October 1952, in *ibid.*

as opposed to just South Africa. For two years, Houser recalled, they worked as a small, underfinanced outfit that did not know a great deal about Africa.²²⁸

Meriwether noted that the ACOA was ‘avowedly anticommunist’ and thus slowly, some black leaders began to associate with it. However, when 156 people were arrested in South Africa, sparking the four-year-long Treason Trial, African Americans, including the NAACP, gave more support to the ACOA and the organisation and its affiliates raised money for the defendants’ legal expenses and families.²²⁹ Back in 1953, the ANC had made links with other aforementioned South African protest groups – the Congress of Democrats, the Indian Congress and the South African Coloured People’s Organisation – in order to form the National Congress of the People. Grievances and demands were collected from local committees and drafted into the Freedom Charter, which was accepted by all the organisations involved and the South African Communist Party at a mass gathering in Johannesburg in June 1955. (Thus White’s concerns about communist infiltration were justified but his information was flawed.) The following year, 156 leaders of the Congress of the People were arrested – including Nelson Mandela and Albert Luthuli – and charged with treason and ‘conspiracy to overthrow the state’. After a long process, the state’s case was overturned by the Supreme Court in 1961, but Nigel Worden noted that the Treason Trial publicised the cause of the protesters both in South Africa and abroad.²³⁰

²²⁸ Houser, ‘Meeting Africa’s Challenge’, 16-17.

²²⁹ Meriwether, *Proudly we can be Africans*, 188.

²³⁰ Nigel Worden, *The Making of Modern South Africa*, 3rd ed. (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2000), 119. Similarly, Worden explained that the Supreme Court’s decision played an important role in the National Party’s decision to ‘rule without legal restraint’ and adopt the General Law Amendment Act of 1963 which gave police powers of detention without charge and of solitary confinement (119 and 122).

The interest in South Africa sparked by the Treason Trial, and the unity it had helped promote among American civil rights groups, was manifest on 10 December 1957 - Human Rights Day. One hundred and twenty three world leaders, representing thirty-eight nations from every continent, called for an international protest against South African apartheid on that day.²³¹ Initiated by the ACOA, the International Sponsoring Committee consisted of Eleanor Roosevelt as the international chairperson, Reverend James A. Pike as chairman of the United States' representatives and Martin Luther King, Jr., as vice-chairman. They decided that Human Rights Day would be a 'Declaration of Conscience on South Africa and Day of Protest' culminating in a freedom rally in New York's Manhattan Centre in the evening.²³² Pike and King wrote to Roy Wilkins at the NAACP to invite him to take part, an invitation which he accepted and Wilkins, along with Eleanor Roosevelt were among the guest speakers.²³³ In the aftermath of the Treason Trial and through the work of the ACOA, King became particularly interested in South Africa. Meriwether noted that he found the nonviolent protests of the 1950s and the leadership of Albert Luthuli (president general of the ANC) 'ideologically appealing' and became evermore convinced 'that black Americans and black South Africans were involved in essentially the same struggle'.²³⁴

During the latter half of the 1950s, then, the African American protest movement against apartheid experienced a great degree of cross-over between organisations and individuals and this was crucial for the expansion of transnational civil rights. While the Treason Trial

²³¹ *The Crisis*, December, 1957, 622, Newcastle University Library microfilm collection.

²³² Rev. James Pike and Rev. Martin Luther King to Ambassador Chester Bowles, 8 November 1957, available at <http://mlk-kpp01.stanford.edu/primarydocuments/571108-001.pdf>.

²³³ Rev. James Pike and Rev. Martin Luther King to Roy Wilkins, 3 October 1957, NAACP Records, Part III: Administrative File, 1956-1965, Box III:A195, Folder 2, Leagues and Organizations, ACOA, 1956-1959 and *ibid*.

²³⁴ Meriwether, *Proudly we can be Africans*, 188.

had piqued American activists' interest, the Sharpeville massacre more sharply focused African American thoughts on South Africa. Along with the rest of the world (bar some southern segregationists who will be examined in the following chapter) African American organisations moved swiftly to condemn the atrocity. Roy Wilkins wrote to the U.S. Secretary of State Christian Herter to demand a 're-examination of the relations' of the U.S. with South Africa. The 'butchery' that ensued when peaceful anti-pass laws protesters were fired upon by South African police in Sharpeville was, in Wilkins' assessment, 'unmatched except by the wholesale killings of the Hitler regime in Nazi Germany'.²³⁵ Additionally, just as White had suggested the International Bank loan was to blame for the extension and rigidity of apartheid, Wilkins laid partial blame at the door of the U.S. federal government: 'It is altogether possible that either the armored cars or the jet planes [which played a part in the Sharpeville massacre], or both, were purchased with funds made available to the Union of South Africa by the United States under its international aid program.' Wilkins then advocated withdrawing recognition of South Africa, recalling diplomatic representatives of the U.S. working in that country and cutting off all economic aid and commercial relations with the National Party government. 'We are not unaware that the steps we urge constitute a grave breach in relations between nations', Wilkins assured Herter, but continued to advise 'prompt severance to avoid any conclusion in the minds of the peoples of the world that the United States of America, itself born of protest against tyranny and oppression, condones wanton slaughter as an instrument of state power'.²³⁶

²³⁵ Roy Wilkins to Christian A. Herter, 22 March 1960, NAACP Records, Part III: Administrative File, 1909-1969, Box III:A35, Folder 1 of 2, Africa, South Africa, 1956-1965.

²³⁶ Ibid.

Two days later Wilkins made a statement on *Voice of America* condemning the ‘wanton butchery’ in South Africa for which ‘there is, and can be, no justification’. Wilkins also connected the events in South Africa to the race problem in the United States:

In condemning the government of the Union of South Africa for these inhuman killings, we are not unaware of the analogy to shortcomings in our own country. But there is a fundamental difference...In South Africa, the forces of government are solidly arrayed against the black majority. White supremacy is the national policy... [D]espicable as is the use of fire hoses and tear gas against peaceful student marchers in the South, no one has yet opened fire on them with machine guns.

Wilkins concluded by saying that in the U.S. the government and the people were moving away from oppression and towards equality and that citizens of both races may protest unfair treatment.²³⁷ While the Civil Rights and Voting Rights Acts were still a few years away, Wilkins recognised, as White had in 1951, the importance of South Africa and the different situations that black people in the two countries faced. The NAACP drew attention to South Africa not for the selfish reasons that segregationists would – to find a comparable situation to their own – but because the human rights of those worse off than African Americans was a worthy and important cause to champion.

Despite Wilkins’ request, the U.S. government did not sever relations with its Cold War ally, South Africa, nor did it impose any sanctions on the country as a result of the violence. Nevertheless, African American protest against apartheid did not cease. As the 1960s began, African American support for black rights in South Africa continued to grow. Simultaneously, the direct action protests in the American South, starting in 1960, sparked

²³⁷ Statement by Roy Wilkins, for *Voice of America*, 24 March 1960, NAACP Records, Part III: Administrative File, 1909-1969, Box III:A35, Folder 1: Africa, South Africa, 1956-1965.

the worst violence of the massive resistance era, but it also witnessed the birth of new civil rights organisations like the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) and led to increased cooperation between civil rights groups on domestic and international matters. As such, when the first American Negro Leadership Conference on Africa was held in November 1962, the delegates represented a wide array of American civil rights activists and the Conference involved the many organisations discussed this far. Co-chaired by A. Philip Randolph and Martin Luther King, the Conference sponsors included the ACOA, the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters (led by Randolph), CORE, the NAACP, the National Urban League, the Phelps-Stokes Fund, the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (led by King), SNCC and a number of black fraternities and sororities among others.

The planning and call committee included familiar names such as James Farmer, Randolph, Wilkins, King, Houser and Morsell. The resolutions that came out of the conference made it clear that black Americans in the U.S. had ‘a special responsibility to urge a dynamic African policy upon our government’. While acknowledging that they had ‘a serious civil rights problem’ of their own which ‘exhausts much of our energy’, the Conference was certain that ‘we cannot separate this struggle at home from that abroad’. As a result, the delegates reaffirmed their ‘ethnic bond with and historic concern for the peoples of Africa’ and resolved to commit themselves ‘to a wholesale involvement in the affairs of Africa’.²³⁸

The wary nature of transnational civil rights that had limited African American involvement in African affairs during the late 1940s and early 1950s had given way to a more aggressive commitment to equality globally. The Conference’s resolutions on South

²³⁸ *Resolutions*, American Negro Leadership Conference on Africa, Columbia University, 23-25 November 1962, 2-3, NAACP Records, Part III: Administrative File, 1956-1965, Box III:A196, Folder 6, Leagues and Organizations, American Negro Leadership Conference on Africa, 1962.

Africa firmly condemned the U.S. government; it criticised the U.S. delegation for continuing to oppose United Nations resolutions calling for sanctions against South Africa and urged the federal government to stop all military shipments to South Africa.²³⁹ As the previous chapter showed, the Kennedy administration made a half-hearted attempt to appease the international community and domestic critics by imposing a ban on selling South Africa arms for the implementation of apartheid, which allowed sales to go ahead for other things. However, the American Negro Leadership Conference called on its government to cease all arms trading with South Africa, rightly arguing that ‘no practical distinction can be made between weapons for maintaining apartheid and weapons for any other purpose’. The Conference also urged private businesses to stop loaning money to the National Party and asked the government to actively discourage public and private economic aid to South Africa.²⁴⁰ In fact, the demands put forth in the American Negro Leadership Conference Resolution in 1962 incorporated a number of the things that the Comprehensive Anti-Apartheid Act would finally address in 1986.

In the run-up to the conference, the *Washington Post* concluded that the three-day meeting of civil rights leaders was ‘indicative of the American Negro community’s growing interest in United States policies toward the newly independent nations of sub-Sahara Africa’.²⁴¹ The conference built upon the Pan-African Congresses of the early twentieth century championed by Du Bois and sought to strengthen the historical and cultural links between blacks in America and their counterparts in southern Africa. The *Washington Afro American*, moreover, stated that the beginning of the conference would be ‘one of the most

²³⁹ Ibid., 4.

²⁴⁰ Ibid.

²⁴¹ ‘African Policy Conference’, *Washington Post*, 11 September 1962, A12.

important days in the history of the colored American's relationships with Africa'. The newspaper asserted that this meeting would confront the fact that for years 'the State Department has peddled around the "great myth" that friction between colored Americans and Africans preclude any type of continuing relationship'.²⁴²

There certainly was a continuing interest among African Americans for South African affairs. By the time the second American Negro Leadership Conference on Africa took place in Washington, D.C., in September 1964, the resolutions were calling for essentially the same things, but the commitment of the delegates clearly had not waned. The Conference's resolution stated that African Americans 'condemn South African apartheid as a denial of basic human rights' and assured those who might adhere to that 'great myth' reported by the *Washington Afro American* that 'We identify with the struggle for justice and freedom in South Africa'. The resolutions adopted also called on the U.S. government to prohibit future investment in South Africa, support U.N. economic sanctions against that country and abandon the practice of excluding black Americans from diplomatic posts in South Africa.²⁴³ Again, the resolutions, like those adopted at the U.N. General Assembly were symbolic but were not realised. In 1948 Truman had chosen the course of U.S. foreign policy, and by extension, policy towards South Africa. Anti-apartheid activism of the 1950s and early 1960s could not alter it.

Nevertheless, the cooperation set in motion by the first Pan-African Congresses and the American Negro Leadership Conferences influenced other organisations to be set up in

²⁴² 'OUR Conference on Africa', *Washington Afro American*, 8 September 1962, 1.

²⁴³ Resolutions of the second American Negro Leadership conference on Africa, 24-27 September 1964. <http://www.anc.org.za/ancdocs/history/solidarity/anlca.html>.

support of black Africa. In 1966, when Houser was chairing the ACOA, he helped found the Committee of Conscience Against Apartheid, with Randolph as chairman. Their first task was a six-month campaign appealing to individuals and organisations to withdraw their accounts from the First National City and Chase Manhattan Banks, both of which made loans to South Africa.²⁴⁴ This was just the beginning of the disinvestment campaigns that would gather pace globally in protest to South African apartheid in the 1980s. Nevertheless, by the end of 1966, Randolph announced that over fifteen-million dollars had already been withdrawn from both banks.²⁴⁵ Furthermore, the level of cooperation over African issues did not stop at American borders. In June 1956, the Anti-Apartheid Movement (AAM) was founded in London, England, and this organisation would become a regular correspondent of American organisations.²⁴⁶ The ACOA and the AAM in particular frequently exchanged reading material and worked hard to keep each other informed on developments within their respective movements.

From a difficult start, when Cold War anti-communism looked as if it would stifle the Pan-African and internationalist instincts of African American civil rights activists, a broad-based coalition had been forged a decade later. Significantly, this transnational concept of civil rights was cultivated alongside – and in part due to – changes in American society in the aftermath of World War II. The Cold War was a double edged sword,

²⁴⁴ A. Philip Randolph to Roy Wilkins, 22 June 1966, NAACP Records, Part VI: Administrative File, 1961-1972, Box VI:A15, Folder [no number]: Africa, South Africa, 1966-1967.

²⁴⁵ Memorandum by the Committee of Conscience Against Apartheid, 2 December 1966, Anti-Apartheid Movement Collection, Bodleian Library of Commonwealth and African Studies at Rhodes House, Oxford University, MSS AAM 1358: USA – General Correspondence, 1965-1983.

²⁴⁶ The group was originally named the Boycott Movement and aimed primarily for consumer boycotts of South African goods. However, less than a year after its formation, the Sharpeville massacre encouraged the group to change its name to the Anti-Apartheid Movement and it became the most important anti-apartheid group in the U.K., working tirelessly to keep apartheid in the British news.

contemporaneously hindering a human rights-based agenda while also helping to force issues of racial inequality into global forums such as the United Nations. The NAACP played a central role in keeping South Africa, and Africa more generally, on the agenda of black activists as well as sustaining pressure on the federal government. While its primary concern was necessarily the survival of the domestic civil rights movement, the uncompromising stance on communism adopted by the NAACP leadership enabled it to take a more active and public role in South African affairs. When other groups fell by the wayside in the early Cold War, the NAACP kept Pan African politics relevant to African Americans and helped to create the climate in which the anti-apartheid and anti-colonial organisations could emerge from the mid-1950s onwards. When they did, the collaborative nature of the many aforementioned organisations created a forceful voice against colonialism and white supremacy. The NAACP's continued overt support for black South Africa, despite a lack of personal contact between the parties, reveals just how closely the NAACP identified with the South African situation. It also demonstrates the Association's commitment to international civil rights, something that segregationists would try to replicate and match in both symbolic and tangible ways.

Chapter Three

The Foreign Policy of Massive Resistance: Segregationists and South Africa, 1954-1965

Chicago art dealer Richard L. Feigen offered to buy Southern segregationists one way tickets to South Africa... 'it would seem a difficult project to relocate in the North the entire dissident Southern Negro population', he said, 'it would be more logical to send die-hard Southern segregationists to South Africa, where segregation is legal'.

– *Daily News Texan*, 3 May 1962.

In October 1955 the pre-eminent segregationist organisation in the American South, the Citizens' Council, published the inaugural issue of its newspaper. *The Citizens' Council* informed readers that the organisation and its publication were intended for everyone sympathetic to their struggle, not just those living in Mississippi, where the Council maintained its headquarters, and not just southerners. Editor William J. Simmons hoped that 'the Council movement will gain added momentum among patriotic Americans' and help create a 'wider understanding of the deadly attack on our society'.²⁴⁷ The four page newspaper included an article explaining that the organisation's 60,000 members were 'mobilizing Mississippi to guard both whites and Negroes'; nine different articles attacking the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP); a snippet on Liberia stating that whites there could not vote, own property or hold office; and two lengthy articles about South Africa, demonstrating that massive resisters in the American South were not alone in their fight to protect white supremacy.²⁴⁸

²⁴⁷ *The Citizens' Council* 1:1 (Oct., 1955): 1.

²⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 1-4.

The following year, the Association of Citizens' Councils of Mississippi published its annual report. Along with 80,000 members in Mississippi alone, the Council was 'corresponding regularly' with Americans all over the United States and people in Iceland, Alaska, Mexico, Germany, Australia, England, Rhodesia and South Africa.²⁴⁹ The Citizens' Council had been organised in response to the 1954 *Brown v. Board of Education* Supreme Court decision which ruled that segregated public schooling was unconstitutional. Given its meteoric rise to prominence and its influence all over the American South, the Council has been the focus of a number of studies of massive resistance. However, the Citizens' Council was also very influential in the development of a segregationist foreign policy and this is something that has hitherto been overlooked by historians. Over the last decade, scholars have examined the Council, its supporters and grassroots segregationists more generally and revealed that those opposing racial reform were not the 'monolithic, one-dimensional reactionaries' that the historiography of southern race relations often described them as.²⁵⁰ What has been missing, though, is an analysis of how segregationists responded to global politics by adopting a foreign policy agenda that positioned their movement in a broader national and international context. Thomas Noer's article on the foreign policy of segregationists demonstrated that they aligned themselves with other right-wing movements in America and came to regard their struggle alongside white supremacist regimes in southern Africa. However, he concluded that their national and international

²⁴⁹ Second Annual Report, Association of Citizens' Councils of Mississippi, August 1956, in the Hall-Hoag Collection of Dissenting and Extremist Printed Propaganda, John Hay Library, Brown University (hereafter cited as Hall-Hoag) MS.76.5:A10, Box 76.5-1, Folder 76.5/1006/1-GR.

²⁵⁰ Lewis, *Massive Resistance*, 4. As outlined in the introduction, and to name but a few, Numan Bartley and Tony Badger regarded massive resistance as a top-down, elitist phenomenon; Clive Webb and George Lewis examined grassroots activities of segregationists and uncovered individuals who truly believed that the white South could win the battle against integration; Lewis and Jeff Woods demonstrated how segregationists used the Cold War to discredit civil rights activity; and Lisa McGirr, Matthew Lassiter and Kevin Kruse have challenged the concept of southern exceptionalism by examining race and conservatism outside the South.

agenda was only ever a pragmatic move, something used as a last ditch effort to bolster their domestic agenda when massive resistance to integration was seen to be failing. As a result, he focused primarily on massive resisters in the early- to mid-1960s, thereby missing the continuity of segregationists' foreign interests.²⁵¹

This chapter reveals that segregationists were internationally minded from the outset. Furthermore, taken together with the following chapter, which examines the foreign policy of segregationists after massive resistance, I hope to demonstrate the ideological commitment of American segregationists to an international alliance of white supremacy as well as the continuity of their policies. Far from being isolated or regionally confined, the Citizens' Council actively sought and found affirmation of its ideology of white supremacy outside the South and outside the United States. With a racially stratified society closer to their own than anywhere else in the world, South Africa became an ally and model for southern segregationists. As such, they increasingly viewed their battle as a global fight for the maintenance of white supremacy. Scholars have often described white southerners as insular, defensive and reactive. Historian and contemporary observer James W. Silver described Mississippi as a 'closed society', which withdrew further into itself when faced with external challenges.²⁵² However, closer inspection shows that when faced with the threat of integration, the Citizens' Council sought to unify the South without shutting the region off from the outside world. Rather than closing ranks, the Council was marketed as an inclusive, not an exclusive, movement. By leaving a door conspicuously open for any

²⁵¹ Noer, 'Segregationists and the World'.

²⁵² Silver, *Mississippi: The Closed Society*, 6.

and all sympathisers and supporters, no matter their regional or national origin, the Citizens' Council laid the groundwork for national and international partnerships.

In order to demonstrate the internationalist outlook of massive resisters this chapter begins by analysing segregationist publications, particularly *The Citizens' Council* newspaper in the latter half of the 1950s. It reveals not only the way in which southern segregationists reported on South African apartheid but also how this fitted into a broader reportage of race relations in the 'British world'. What emerges is the beginning of an international alliance of white supremacy among individuals and organisations of Anglo-Saxon descent. The chapter then turns to the other side of this partnership by examining the *South African Observer*, a monthly journal published in Cape Town. This ultra-right wing, fervently anti-communist and rabidly anti-Semitic publication borrowed heavily from American periodicals and newspapers and reveals that a remarkable amount of material was sourced from the United States for reprinting in South Africa. The *South African Observer* has thus far been overlooked by Americanists and South Africanists but it demonstrates that U.S. ideologies of conservatism, anti-communism, segregation and white supremacy had traction in South Africa and exposes a rapid transatlantic exchange of literature. Finally, this chapter uses the case study of Wesley Critz George, a North Carolinian segregationist, professor and 'racial scientist' to investigate the links between the United States and South Africa at a personal level. This study necessarily prioritises middle and upper class individuals and organisations because it was these organisers, editors and academics that provided the most substantial links between the U.S. and South Africa. However, it was also their publications that often informed grassroots segregationists about local, national and international affairs.

When massive resistance emerged in the aftermath of the *Brown* school desegregation decision, segregationists were already at a disadvantage. As the previous chapters have shown, they had a federal government under Dwight Eisenhower (1953-1961) that was not personally in favour of court-ordered integration but was, on occasion, forced into ensuring that the law of the land was obeyed. Furthermore, he was far more committed to battling Soviet propaganda that arose from southern segregation. In addition, segregationists had to compete with the NAACP, as well as other civil rights groups, which had been condemning white South African racism before apartheid was even implemented. Finally, segregationists also had to try and match the significance and symbolism of a long and well-established tradition of Pan-Africanism as well as the moral and religious arguments successfully used by civil right leaders. In order to try and create a comparable sense of alliance between white supremacists, segregationists had to organise and then position their struggle in a broader context and this is exactly what they did.

The *Brown* decision threw the white South into a state of turmoil. *De jure* and *de facto* segregation had controlled southern race relations since the *Plessy v. Ferguson* Supreme Court decision of 1896 upheld the constitutionality of racial segregation under the infamous doctrine of ‘separate but equal’. Nearly six decades later, the *Brown* decision was regarded as a great triumph by African Americans and the NAACP legal team that had sponsored the case. However, the court decision created panic amongst segregationist southerners – and many more that would not perhaps have referred to themselves as this but held many of the same beliefs, if unarticulated – as they feared the loss of their cherished ‘southern way of life’. In July, two months after the *Brown* decision, the Indianola Citizens’ Council was

established in Sunflower Country, Mississippi. Formed by Robert B. Patterson, a plantation manager, along with a group of the town's local civic and business leaders, the Citizens' Council represented the outcome of a local attempt to counter the region-wide threat that school desegregation posed.²⁵³ The Council movement quickly spread across the American South and, by the end of its founding year, claimed chapters in more than thirty Mississippi counties and was organising additional chapters in neighbouring states.²⁵⁴ Though undoubtedly a racist and dangerous organisation, the Citizens' Councils professed to be law abiding states' rights activists, opposing the perceived usurpation of states' rights by the Supreme Court. Their newspaper's tagline read, 'Dedicated to the maintenance of peace, good order and domestic tranquillity in our Community and in our State and to the preservation of our States' Rights.'²⁵⁵ The letterhead of the organisation's official correspondence, however, read 'States' Rights' and 'Racial Integrity' and it was the obsession with this latter point which made the *Brown* decision such a threat.²⁵⁶

School desegregation, being one of the most emotionally charged subjects, went to the heart of southern white fears.²⁵⁷ Unlike voting rights or the concept of black and white southerners sharing a lunch counter, school integration affected the region's youth, and ultimately brought fears of interracial relationships to the fore. Without schools to ingrain the long-held notions of white supremacy, white southern school children might no longer understand and adhere to the supposed necessity of racial separation, particularly in the realm of intimate relationships. Both white southerners and South Africans shared a fear of

²⁵³ McMillen, *The Citizens' Council*, 19.

²⁵⁴ Bartley, *The Rise of Massive Resistance*, 85.

²⁵⁵ *The Citizens' Council* 1:1 (Oct., 1955), 1.

²⁵⁶ Second Annual Report, Association of Citizens' Councils of Mississippi, August 1956, Hall-Hoag.

²⁵⁷ Webb, 'A Continuity of Conservatism': 328.

miscegenation. Jane Dailey argued that school integration was inextricably linked to a fear of interracial relationships – this was not solely a potential fearful outcome, but seen as the inevitable result of racially mixed schooling.²⁵⁸ Similarly, Abby Ferber stated that the white South's obsession with interracial sexuality 'cannot be overemphasized' and school desegregation in particular was 'always including and implying concerns about sexual intimacy'.²⁵⁹ Similarly, in South Africa Afrikaner politicians were a rising middle class in the decade after apartheid was implemented and 'they feared their English and black adversaries as much as they distrusted their own lower class to maintain separateness and purity of race'. They were, Hermann Giliomee argued, 'racist to the extent that miscegenation was considered an evil that would lead to the degeneration of their race', but what they lacked, was a conviction that the 'superior' whites would logically triumph over the 'inferior' blacks. As a result laws were enacted to criminalise interracial relationships and marriage.²⁶⁰ An editorial in the *Meridian Star* summed up southern and South African white fears: 'Massive integration will mean future intermarriage [which] means the end of both races...and the emergence of a tribe of mongrels.'²⁶¹

The Citizens' Council quickly organised to unite the South and created a publication to warn white southerners of the dangers that integration would bring. It also reached out to Americans north of the Mason-Dixon Line and like-minded allies outside the United States. In its first issue, *The Citizens' Council* printed two articles on South Africa. Both were

²⁵⁸ See Jane Dailey, 'Sex, Segregation, and the Sacred after *Brown*', *Journal of American History* 91 (2004): 119-144.

²⁵⁹ Abby L. Ferber, *White Man Falling: Race, Gender, and White Supremacy* (Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 1998), 85-88.

²⁶⁰ Giliomee, 'The Growth of Afrikaner Identity', 200-201.

²⁶¹ 'Never Say Die', *Meridian Star* (Mississippi), 31 May 1961, Citizens' Council Collection, Box 1, Folder 32, J. D. Williams Library, University of Mississippi (hereafter cited as Citizens' Council Collection).

written by Sydney Eustace Denys (S. E. D.) Brown, who was the editor and publisher of the aforementioned *South African Observer* and both sought to link together white segregationists in the United States and South Africa and demonstrate that the two societies were facing the same perceived problems. One of the columns had been a letter that Brown sent to the Citizens' Council congratulating them for their organisation and informing them that their attempt to maintain segregation would be supported by whites, not just in South Africa, but across the continent:

Many Whites in Africa will be heartened by the news that you are organizing as you are doing, because our local English newspapers – and the U.S. Information Services – give the impression that Integration is becoming an accomplished fact in the U.S.A. The news of your fight will not only give a great measure of moral support here, but will help us to burst through the Press iron curtain.²⁶²

The second piece of writing was reprinted from an article that Brown had sent to the *South Carolina News and Courier* (an oft-used source for the Council newspaper) explaining that the 'liberal' press misrepresented apartheid and segregation. The editorial that accompanied Brown's article explained that segregationist southerners were 'often mocked and abused for political reasons by their own countrymen', thus instilling in them a sympathy for 'the race problems of South African white men'.²⁶³ Just as southerners alleged that they were used as a political scapegoat by the rest of the nation, Brown wrote that South Africa had also been 'marked out...as an enemy because it is a bastion of white conservatism; because it believes in national sovereignty and western Christian civilization; and because it will not

²⁶² Letter from Brown to the Citizens' Council of Mississippi, *The Citizens' Council* 1:1 (Oct. 1955), 4.

²⁶³ 'The Myth of "World Opinion"', *News and Courier*, reprinted in *The Citizens' Council* 1:1 (Oct., 1955): 2.

accept the Fabian, Socialist and Communist doctrine of Equality'.²⁶⁴ 'World opinion today is not the opinion of the people of the world' Brown asserted. Rather,

It is a highly unreal myth manufactured and purveyed by the press, the radio, television and the news agencies... World opinion welcomes the destruction of white nations, supports the national struggles of black and brown men. It hails the end of segregation of black and white – a segregation that men by their very nature seek and prefer. It sees nothing wrong with British women being sired by blacks. Englishmen becoming colored.²⁶⁵

All of these issues would have struck a chord with white southerners. They too complained that lies were being spread about the South, that black and white alike were content with the racial and social norms of the segregated South and that interracial relationships must be avoided at all costs. While Brown asserted that this was all part of a world myth, Joseph Crespino has analysed the myth, or metaphor, of Mississippi. There were, he found, three different tropes involving Mississippi and the United States as a whole that emerged during the civil rights era; Mississippi as the 'closed society'; the idea that the whole of America was actually Mississippi writ large; and Mississippi as the scapegoat for the nation's sins.²⁶⁶ Crespino observed that the scapegoat metaphor was 'a staple of southern segregationist rhetoric', which had its roots in the abolitionist battles of the early nineteenth century between slaveholders in the South and Yankee traders in the North who, slaveholders pointed out, had sold them their slaves to begin with.²⁶⁷ So, while southern segregationists pointed to northern hypocrisy, Brown and white South Africans pointed to the hypocrisy of much of the rest of the world, who, they charged, attacked their apartheid

²⁶⁴ Ibid.

²⁶⁵ Ibid.

²⁶⁶ Joseph Crespino, 'Mississippi as Metaphor: Civil Rights, the South, and the Nation in the Historical Imagination', in Matthew D. Lassiter and Joseph Crespino (eds.), *The Myth of Southern Exceptionalism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), 100.

²⁶⁷ Ibid., 100, 109.

society without having harmonious and egalitarian communities themselves. At the end of Brown's article, the *News and Courier* concluded with its own assessment: 'Today the white people of South Africa and the white people of the Southern states are the targets of many critics. Those critics do not live with the same race problems that exist in the two regions.'²⁶⁸ It was the kind of articles and letters written by Brown that *The Citizens' Council* liked to print. They reaffirmed segregationists' faith in white supremacy, assured them that they were not alone in their battle against domestic integration and external criticism and played on traditional fears of southern whites. Just as Brown had asserted that 'world opinion' wanted white women to be 'sired by blacks', *The Citizens' Council* described the NAACP as 'mongrelizers', 'race mixers' and proponents of miscegenation.²⁶⁹ So obsessed were they with the thought of interracial relationships that the suggestion that black advocates of integration were only really after white women was a common argument for segregationists.

Early anti-miscegenation and Cold War arguments by segregationists often acknowledged the wider world. In 1957 the Association of Citizens' Councils of Arkansas published a pamphlet stating, 'There is not a single example in world history of any white nation or civilization that remained strong after racially integrating with a colored race.' Egypt, Rome, Greece and Brazil, amongst others, were used to demonstrate that racial integration destroyed white civilisations and any 'national greatness was permanently lost'. The pamphlet called not just for southern unity but national unity too; the white North was

²⁶⁸ 'The Myth of "World Opinion"', *News and Courier*, reprinted in *The Citizens' Council* 1:1 (Oct., 1955): 2.

²⁶⁹ *The Citizens' Council* 1:1 (Oct., 1955): 2, 4.

asked to help their 'racial brothers' before it was too late.²⁷⁰ The National Association for the Preservation of the White Race also saw the need for unity, but they promoted an international white supremacy which was all the more necessary within the Cold War context. Americans were so afraid of communism, the newsletter argued, that 'we are accepting the only deadly thing about Communism, the Negro, in order to fight Communism. Our first move should be to quit sending American treasure to Asia or Africa or any colored race. Help all white people anywhere.'²⁷¹ Rather than simply being used as a handy tool, Cold War concerns sharpened segregationists' minds to the necessity of national and international support. Furthermore, it was not only southerners who sought to defend segregation. The *American Nationalist*, a California-based publication revealed conservative Americans' distrust of the United Nations in the wake of its 1955 decision to investigate apartheid South Africa. The decision was relevant to Americans because 'it raises the question of whether the UN also assumes a similar sovereignty over American Soil'. If so, then it was 'only a matter of time before it will be conducting similar investigations into the race question in, say, Mississippi or Georgia'.²⁷² The United Nations was regularly attacked by segregationists and their South African counterparts. In July 1956 *The Citizens' Council* announced that the U.N. intended to brainwash the world's children with UNESCO-prepared anti-racist manuals. UNESCO was, of course, 'a Communist dominated group', and this plan only further proved that claim because 'racial

²⁷⁰ Association of Citizens' Councils of Arkansas, *The Citizens' Councils...Their Platform*, 1957, Hall-Hoag, MS.76.5, Box 76.5-1, Folder 76.5/1020/1-GR. This statement about the collapse of great powers after integration was reprinted in various forms by many segregationist organisations.

²⁷¹ National Association for the Preservation of the White Race newsletter, n.d (the stamp of receipt was 30 August 1954), NAACP Records, Part II: General Office File, 1940-1955, Box II:A672, Folder 4: White Supremacy, General, 1952-1955.

²⁷² *American Nationalist* 4:40 (Jan., 1956), NAACP Records, Part III: Printed Matter, 1952-1969, Box III:118, Folder 7: Hate Literature, 1954-1960 (folder 1 of 4).

mongrelization' was a 'basic tenet of Red philosophy'.²⁷³ For segregationists, both civil rights groups and the U.N. promoted integration as a means of ensuring the sexual mixing of the races, which in turn was the ultimate communist plot.

Beginning in January 1956, *The Citizens' Council* began showing greater interest in South Africa, a country they revered for its racial policies and anti-communism. The front page included news articles on three South African cities. In Cape Town it was reported that the National Party was 'moving towards strengthening the segregation structure' by removing 'Cape Coloured' citizens from the voting register. In Bloemfontein the National Party had been 'bitterly attacked' by the African National Congress (ANC) who, according to the newspaper, advocated 'an intense brand of negro nationalism that calls for negro control of all parts of Africa'. Finally, in Pretoria one hundred 'African witch doctors' had met to try and dignify their medicines made out of pulverized hyena claws, rhinoceros horns and dehydrated feet of baboons, amongst other things.²⁷⁴ Although references to South Africa was often descriptive (and often false) these small articles represented the main arguments used by segregationists against decolonisation and for white supremacy and demonstrated a growing interest in South Africa. The ANC's calls for freedom and democracy were, apparently, 'recurring phrases in communist literature'.²⁷⁵ Similarly, black Africans were regarded as uncivilised and barbaric and those that did want freedom and democracy were simply communists attempting to cut the white man out of Africa. The information that the South African government was strengthening apartheid, however, provided a model for segregationists to strive towards. Although the African American protest for

²⁷³ *The Citizens' Council* 1:10 (July, 1956): 1.

²⁷⁴ *The Citizens' Council* 1:4 (Jan., 1956): 1.

²⁷⁵ Ibid.

enfranchisement and equality had been gathering pace since the end of World War II and threatening southern segregation, it was not inevitable in early 1956 that massive resistance would fail. Indeed, the flashpoints of massive resistance, such as the federal government protecting black rights in Little Rock or Ole Miss, had not yet happened. If segregationists looked across the Atlantic and saw the National Party further entrenching apartheid and offering a different route towards white supremacy, many segregationists would have felt it was equally viable for them to maintain Jim Crow.

A few months later, *The Citizen's Council* again demonstrated the kind of articles they liked to print on South Africa. Ernst G. Malherbe, principal of the University of Natal, was quoted as saying that 'complete chaos' would ensue if South Africa was pressured by outside forces to enfranchise black Africans.²⁷⁶ While South Africa in fact resisted the forces of inexorable change for decades to come, at the time the Citizens' Council would arguably have taken some solace from the fact that another white community was facing the same kinds of pressures that segregationists in the South did and being able to report that in the face of such challenges whites in South Africa were strengthening segregation, not allowing it to be dismantled. Articles like this also mirrored the general way in which segregationists reported on newly emerging independent black nations in the late 1950s and especially after 1960.

In the aftermath of the Sharpeville massacre, *The Citizens' Council* and other segregationist publications again came out in support of the National Party. The Council proudly informed readers that the Mississippi legislature had gone on record in support of the South

²⁷⁶ *The Citizens' Council* 1:8 (May, 1956): 4.

African government's handling of the recent 'racial strife'. The state legislature commended the National Party 'for its steadfast policy of segregation and the staunch adherence to traditions in the face of overwhelming external agitation'. Simmons noted that the Citizens' Council opposed the statement of condemnation given by the U.S. government, unaware, of course that Eisenhower had not authorised it. The resolution, readers were informed, was also sent to the U.S. Secretary of State and the South African government, thereby disassociating the state and its people from 'unwarranted and unwise U.S. intervention in South Africa's internal affairs'.²⁷⁷ Mississippi's legislature had placed the state apart from the vast majority of the global community who immediately moved to condemn the massacre, the National Party and its increasingly entrenched policies of apartheid.

The racist *Georgia Tribune* reported the Sharpeville massacre rather differently:

The disturbances at Sharpeville were the result of a planned demonstration by some 20,000 Bantu in which demonstrators made a deliberate attack on a police station with assorted weapons, including firearms. Demonstrators fired the first shots and the police were forced to fire in self-defense and also to avoid even more tragic results. Allegations that the demonstrators were "peaceful and unarmed" are completely untrue.²⁷⁸

It is significant that the Citizens' Council did not report Sharpeville in this way. Although they informed readers that the Mississippi legislature had praised the South African police for its handling of the situation, they did not use the kind of inflammatory language that publications like the *Georgia Tribune* did. Neil McMillen explained that the Citizen's

²⁷⁷ *The Citizens' Council* 5:7 (Apr., 1960): 1.

²⁷⁸ *Georgia Tribune* 27:28, 26 May 1960, 1, NAACP Papers, Part III: Printed Matter, 1952-1969, Box III:118, Folder 7: Hate Literature, 1954-1960 (folder 2 of 4).

Councils were ‘the most “respectable” wing of the resistance movement’.²⁷⁹ By distancing themselves – at least overtly – from the violent image of the Ku Klux Klan, the Councils largely managed to maintain an image of respectability amongst white southerners (despite journalists’ attempts to show otherwise) and counted upstanding members of the southern community as well as a number of powerful politicians in their ranks. As opposed to the Klan’s cross-burning imagery and racial violence, the Councils instead sought to achieve their desired results by using economic and social pressure to ‘dissuade’ civil rights activity. Despite taking steps to distance themselves from violent imagery, the Citizens’ Council and the Klan shared many of the same views. While the Council supported white South Africa, the United Klans of America used the example of apartheid in South Africa as two of their forty ‘reasons for segregation’.²⁸⁰ Michael Klarman thus aptly observed that the only difference between moderates and extremists was not their preference for segregation, but the costs they were prepared to bear in order to maintain it.²⁸¹

To further its ‘respectable’ and ‘reliable’ journalism, *The Citizens’ Council* began regularly publishing articles by John R. Parker of South Africa in the aftermath of the Sharpeville massacre. Not only had *The Citizens’ Council* sourced a South African writer but he also arguably lent the *Council*’s editorials on Africa an air of legitimacy. In 1965 Alfred Hero, Jr. published his findings of numerous interviews with southerners regarding foreign affairs. He concluded that only a minority of his interviewees who were better educated and economically more prosperous, possessed much information about colonial states or

²⁷⁹ McMillen, *The Citizens’ Council*, vii.

²⁸⁰ United Klans of America, Inc., ‘Forty Reasons For Segregation’, 1965, Hall-Hoag, MS.76.21, Box 76.21-1, Folder 76.21/31/1-GR. This pamphlet mentioned that segregation was successful when ‘outside agitators’ were removed, as in South Africa; another of its reasons was that ‘South Africa is more productive and prosperous than the entire remaining continent’.

²⁸¹ Michael Klarman, ‘Why Massive Resistance?’ in Webb (ed.), *Massive Resistance*, 23, 29.

territories seeking independence between 1959 and 1962. Many other whites, who were less informed, viewed African Americans and black Africans as innately inferior and were uncomfortable about these supposedly unsophisticated societies gaining self-rule. They believed that if South Africa made the transition to black majority rule, ‘the accomplishments of the Europeans over decades’ would be reversed and it would take generations for black Africans to overcome their ‘native naïveté and violence’.²⁸² Perhaps Hero’s ‘less informed’ interviewees gleaned their information from publications like *The Citizens’ Council*, whose audience would have been particularly susceptible to its propaganda about South Africa. Similarly, if Hero was correct in finding that even the better-educated southerners knew little of African affairs, the *Citizens’ Council* and its South African correspondent would step into the void as the voice of accuracy and reason.

In arguing for a particular foreign policy in which whites recognised the importance of global white supremacy, the Citizens’ Council had to compete with conflicting news reports in the national and international media which tended to be more liberal, reporting favourably on racial equality and decolonisation. Parker, of the Transvaal province of South Africa, was actually more of a copy editor than a local reporter. Nevertheless, with a readership generally ready and willing to believe negative things about black Africa it would have raised the profile of *The Citizens’ Council*’s foreign policy wing. Just as the Council’s newspaper often sourced articles from other segregationist publications, Parker provided the Citizens’ Council with articles from pro-apartheid newspapers in South Africa.

²⁸² Hero, Jr., *The Southerner and World Affairs*, 184-188.

Parker's articles played on the widespread rhetoric of segregationists and white South Africans that they were unfairly judged and misrepresented, that independent African black states were unstable, dangerous and anti-white, that the white race was superior and that whites in the U.S. and South Africa shared a common bond. His first article for *The Citizens' Council* was taken from the pro-National Party Johannesburg daily newspaper *Die Vaderland*. It argued that the world had been quick to attack the South African government for 'putting down native riots recently' – a reference to the Sharpeville massacre – but hesitant to criticise 'black brutalities in the Congo'. Similarly, South Africa's foreign minister, Eric Louw, was quoted as saying that the reaction of the U.S. press to Sharpeville was part and parcel of the anti-colonial 'campaign in the United Nations during recent years'. Furthermore, Louw asserted that the American media had been 'in a pickle' and forced into silence regarding the Congo while still being eager to 'give South Africa a stab' whenever possible.²⁸³ Louw frequently accused the United Nations delegations of hypocrisy and although the U.S. government commented as little as possible on South Africa, National Party officials always suggested that they were unfairly singled out for criticism. Southern segregationists would have felt sympathy for the South African government because they too accused their federal government and Supreme Court of interfering in states' rights. Other articles (usually reprints) submitted by Parker included a damning portrayal of independent Ghana as a country run by a dictator, condemnation of western nations for undermining white influence in Africa by supporting decolonisation, and an article 'proving' the inferiority of black people and explaining why, despite a favourable environment south of the Sahara, 'the Negro has been a voluntary cannibal,

²⁸³ *The Citizens' Council* 5:11 (Aug., 1960): 4. Parker's subtitle used the standard rhetoric of hypocrisy in the world's press: 'After Sharpeville a great outcry; after the Congo – Silence...'

while the white man has not'.²⁸⁴ He played on the virulent brand of white supremacy that was a common factor among both segregationist southerners and white South Africans.

From his first article, Parker's address had been included in an obvious effort to encourage communication between *The Citizens' Council's* readers and Parker – an exchange which would lead to an added feeling of camaraderie, further exchanges of publications and generally an increasing interest among southerners for African issues. Indeed, in November 1960, Parker's regular column was accompanied by a message from the editor, Simmons, stating that their South African correspondent was 'receiving a steady stream of mail from our readers'.²⁸⁵ His most interesting article then came in March 1961. Rather than regurgitating news from various South African papers for the Council's segregationist audience, Parker reported that a new organisation had been founded with the aim of 'promoting firm bonds of friendship between the Southern states of the U.S. and the Union of South Africa'. The Society of the Two Souths, as it was named, had been established in Germiston, Transvaal, in January 1960 and a second branch had been launched in Pretoria within a week. Parker was secretary of the Society of the Two Souths and provided the organisation's address in Johannesburg. Essentially, the Society functioned as a pen-pal matching service. With several dozen white South Africans apparently already desiring correspondence with white southerners, people 'with the same interests could enjoy exchanges and correspondence', Parker wrote, 'thus fostering lasting friendships which could lead to later exchanges of visits'.²⁸⁶

²⁸⁴ *The Citizens' Council* 6:1 (Oct., 1960): 3; *The Citizens' Council* 6:3 (Dec., 1960): 4; *The Citizens' Council* 6:2 (Nov., 1960): 3.

²⁸⁵ *The Citizens' Council* 6:2 (Nov., 1960): 3.

²⁸⁶ *The Citizens' Council* 6:6, (Mar., 1961): 4.

The Society of the Two Souths also had some grander aims. Some of the projects planned by the new society, alongside the formation of correspondence clubs, included forging closer journalistic cooperation, organising exchange visits, establishing closer commercial ties and ‘securing consulate representation in the South, at New Orleans or Houston’.²⁸⁷ In a lengthy editorial note that accompanied Parker’s article, Simmons explained to his readers the details of postage rates and speed for mail to South Africa and other services offered by the Society, which included ‘cultural and geographical films on all aspects of South African life’ that could be loaned to interested parties. Similarly, the Society wished to receive films depicting life in the American South. Most significant, for its purposes, was the planned exchange programme for South African and southern newspapermen, who would spend between three and six months working on the staff of the other’s newspaper. ‘The overall aim of the Society’, Simmons wrote, ‘is to present facts objectively, depicting the South and South Africa as they are, and in this way to defeat the activities of irresponsible reporters who consistently paint false pictures of the Two Souths’.²⁸⁸ The Society of the Two Souths was an attempt to break through the press iron curtain that Brown had complained about in his first article to *The Citizens’ Council*.

The following month, Parker wrote a letter to the *News and Courier* to further publicise his Society. He requested that southerners who were corresponding with white South Africans should meet periodically to ‘exchange information gleaned from letters’. He also wrote that those in the South and South Africa that had already been ‘paired off’ should ‘widen the

²⁸⁷ Ibid.

²⁸⁸ Ibid.

circle of correspondents at both ends'. The letter informed interested parties in the American South that they would receive 'a regular free supply of authentic literature' on South Africa and Parker also emphasised that 'White' southerners who wished to find a South African pen-pal should write to him. Furthermore, Parker promised 'responsible' southern clubs, societies, universities and schools 'the surprise of their lives once they see our high standard of living and how well the Bantu (Negroes) are treated in their own Bantustans'.²⁸⁹

This appeared to be a major development in relations between like-minded segregationists in the American South and their counterparts in South Africa. While one generally finds a significant but rather unbalanced relationship between the two groups of 'southerners' during this early period – with southern segregationists appearing to be far more interested in South African whites than South Africans were in them – occasionally one finds tangible links between groups, individuals and publications which exemplify the desired outcome of massive resisters' foreign policy aims. How well established the Society of the Two Souths became is difficult to ascertain and a lack of references to it suggest it was short-lived. Hero's only mention of it was that it 'became active'.²⁹⁰ Certainly it had floundered by 1966, and probably some time before that.²⁹¹ However, the correspondence between pen-pals paired up by this organisation may well have outlasted the Society itself. Furthermore, the establishment of such a society reflected Parker's outlook from the South African

²⁸⁹ Letters to the editor, *News and Courier*, 29 April 1961, 6-A.

²⁹⁰ Hero, *The Southerner and World Affairs*, 420.

²⁹¹ U.S. Rightists Speak Out in South African Journal, *New York Times*, 9 January 1966, 17. This article featured S. E. D. Brown who noted that there had been a Society of the Two Souths to connect sympathetic whites in both countries but it had not lasted.

viewpoint that some South Africans, at least, were identifying with U.S. southerners just as they did with whites in the apartheid state.

Parker's assertion that the world would be amazed to see how well South African blacks lived was echoed in other American publications. In March 1961, the associate editor of the segregationist *News and Courier*, Anthony Harrigan, went to South Africa. From there, he reported a series of ten articles on South Africa running consecutively from 17 March. His reports were very favourable to the National Party government and its policy of apartheid. They focused on the strategic importance of South Africa in the Cold War, its military strength, its imminent withdrawal from the British Commonwealth, the fact that the U.S. and South Africa must remain allies and the generous way in which black South Africans were treated.²⁹² 'South Africa is the United States' best and only true friend on the African continent', Harrigan wrote. Moreover, 'South Africans are the Americans of the African Continent'. They were, in his estimation, truly anti-communist and fighting to contain Soviet expansion as America was.²⁹³ Harrigan also sought to tell his readers what South African Prime Minister Verwoerd's 'separate development' really was. 'Europeans mistakenly believe [apartheid] means permanent denial of political rights to non-whites', Harrigan wrote, when in fact, the 'Bantu homelands' were not only giving black South Africans freedom to rule themselves, but the government was spending millions of dollars improving their social services.²⁹⁴ Southerners who were not aware from other news outlets that blacks in South Africa were denied political rights and that the 'homelands' were to be

²⁹² See, for example, 'South Africa: Strategic Sentinel Against Red Attack', 17 March 1961; 'Afrikaners Glad To Break With Britain', 19 March 1961; and 'South Africa To Become A Major Power', all in the *News and Courier*.

²⁹³ Anthony Harrigan, 'South Africa And USA Should Be Allies', *News and Courier*, 29 March 1961.

²⁹⁴ Harrigan, 'South Africa Protects Bantus', 23 March 1961 and 'Homelands For The Bantu Being Developed', 24 March 1961, in the *News and Courier*.

poor and insufficient land would have been (wrongly) informed by such a series of articles. In the final assessment, the *News and Courier* was segregationist, but it was not a segregationist monthly paper like the *Citizens' Council*. It was a daily newspaper with a readership to serve. Clearly Harrigan thought that those who bought and read the *News and Courier* would be interested in South African articles.

In a similar vein, *The Citizens' Council* reprinted an article from the *Banner*, a southern Californian newspaper, in the spring of 1961 entitled 'U.S. Could Learn From South Africa'. It argued that under the National Party's policy of separate development there was 'not a nation on earth that is doing as much for its Negro population as is South Africa'. Ignoring the destructive and oppressive nature of apartheid, the article argued that, in preparing black South Africans for their independent 'homelands', their social, economic and educational programmes had been greatly improved.²⁹⁵ Articles like this, from California or South Africa were intentionally picked by Simmons because they represented more than just praise for South Africa and a disdain for liberal America. Rather, they spoke to the original aims set out by Simmons years before; *The Citizens' Council* was to be a publication for and by those of the massive resistance struggle, representative of segregationists everywhere.

Reports on South Africa in *The Citizens' Council* shared similarities with articles on race relations elsewhere in the world. In particular, the *Council* paid close attention to the newly emerging race relations in Britain in the mid-1950s. In the aftermath of World War II, a new and fast moving migration began bringing people from the West Indies to England and

²⁹⁵ *The Citizens' Council* 6:7-8 (April-May, 1961): 3.

racial tension began to develop. In December 1955, *The Citizens' Council* reported that London was struggling to provide enough housing 'for the flow of West Indians pouring into the country seeking jobs' – estimated at more than 15,000 between January and September of that year.²⁹⁶ By February of the following year the Council was still curious as to how this new race mixing would pan out. Its newspaper reported that racial tension in the UK was rising and that in London black immigrants were 'clamoring for an NAACP organization'. White Britons, however, had also responded to the growing racial tension and *The Citizens' Council* reported that the Nationalist Club of Birmingham along with other 'thoughtful Britons' were protesting the increasing number of interracial marriages and seeking immigration restrictions.²⁹⁷

The Citizens' Council's interest in English affairs shows a commitment to wider international race issues and the commentary on interracial marriages mirrored their own fixation with miscegenation. As this story of the so-called 'Windrush generation' developed, segregationist Englishmen also came into contact with the Citizens' Council and its publication. In May 1956, L. J. Irving of London wrote a letter to the organisation attacking the immigration of West Indians to England and offering support to the American segregationist cause. 'A copy of your pamphlet on the menace of racial integration had come into my possession', wrote Irving, and he stated 'I am in complete sympathy with your cause'. Irving lambasted his 'stupid' nation for allowing a once white state to permit entry to 'African negroes straight out of the jungle'. Irving assured the Council that 'If there's any real trouble in the South...your cause will enjoy a great measure of support in

²⁹⁶ *The Citizens' Council* 1:3 (Dec., 1955): 3.

²⁹⁷ *The Citizens' Council* 1:5 (Feb., 1956): 1.

England.²⁹⁸ Again, such messages of support assured readers that the ‘embattled’ South was not alone in its quest to defend white supremacy and that support for the campaign of massive resistance existed elsewhere.

Irving was not just a keen observer. Like Parker in South Africa he was an organiser – an influential member of Oswald Mosley’s fascist Union Movement in Britain. In his study of Mosley, Graham Macklin noted that UM activists ‘drew comfort from a shared sense of racial identity’ with white southerners and that the ‘stalwart defence of white supremacy by the Segregationist South remained inspirational to the UM’.²⁹⁹ There was, then, a relationship emerging between England, the American South and South Africa. Racists in England looked to the segregated South as the bastion of white supremacy and segregationist southerners in turn looked to apartheid South Africa as the epitome of white domination. South Africa, at this time, needed to look nowhere; apartheid was firmly entrenched and showed no signs of weakness. Nevertheless, individuals like Parker and Brown were clearly interested in the battle against integration in the American South and felt impelled to offer their support and help organise links between the two peoples. Macklin noted that Irving received ‘generous packages’ of racist propaganda from the nationalist Mississippi-based *White Sentinel* for distribution in England.³⁰⁰ It is likely that he also found out about the Citizens’ Council through that organisation or acquired its details himself. Scholars have noted the difficulties of determining the membership of the Citizens’ Councils and circulation figures for its publications in the U.S., yet alone abroad.

²⁹⁸ *The Citizens’ Council* 1:9 (June, 1956): 3.

²⁹⁹ Graham Macklin, *Very Deeply Dyed in Black: Sir Oswald Mosley and the Resurrection of British Fascism after 1945* (London: I. B. Tauris and Co., 2007), 70.

³⁰⁰ *Ibid.*

In November 1956, Simmons estimated the national circulation of the paper to be 40,000.³⁰¹ Three months earlier, the Citizens' Council boasted of 'half a million members in the South alone'.³⁰² Of course not all members would have paid for the newspaper but the figures differ wildly. McMillen and Bartley estimated that in its heyday it probably had no more than 250,000 members.³⁰³ Membership and circulation figures, then, remain uncertain; the only certainty amongst scholars was that the figures were surely significantly less than the Councils themselves would have quoted. It seems reasonable to conclude that often publications would have been requested by interested persons abroad, such as Brown and Irving and the Council HQ in Mississippi gladly obliged. From there on, it is likely that publications were duplicated and circulated by Council-esque organisations or individuals keen to fulfil such a role in other countries.

When Irving wrote to the Council again in August 1956 his letter revealed that he had been sent a number of segregationist publications and a copy of *The Citizens' Council* after his last correspondence. Irving had wanted more, though, and visited the U.S. Information Service in London to request further information on the Citizens' Council. He was left sorely disappointed: 'by the expressions on their faces, I gathered that the English staff of the Information office had never even heard of a Citizens' Council'. To add insult to injury, when Irving asked instead for information on racial segregation in general, 'their faces lit up and I was shown a great heap of books and pamphlets published by the U.S. government, the NAACP and other de-segregationists'. Irving was indignant that the

³⁰¹ *The Citizens' Council* 2:2 (Nov., 1956): 2.

³⁰² *The Citizens' Council* 1:11 (Aug., 1956): 1.

³⁰³ McMillen, *The Citizens' Council*, 153; Bartley, *The Rise of Massive Resistance*, 84.

British, in his view, ‘are informed of one side of the question only’.³⁰⁴ Thus the U.S. foreign information services in both South Africa and Britain were presenting a pragmatic Cold War view of American race relations; true, the U.S. delegations in the United Nations accepted that its country still had problems, but they certainly were not to be publicised. For the NAACP, the internationalisation of civil rights was aided by information distributed in foreign information offices. For the Citizens’ Council, though, circulation of its publications beyond U.S. borders rested upon the activities of committed individuals.

S. E. D. Brown was one of these individuals. When he first wrote to the Citizens’ Council in October 1955 his article had been accompanied by an editorial note from Simmons. Brown had ordered 2,000 copies each of Reverend G. T. Gillespie’s ‘A Christian View on Segregation’, Thomas P. Brady’s ‘Black Monday’ – the ‘handbook’ for the Citizens’ Council – and the Council’s own pamphlet, ‘The Citizens’ Council’.³⁰⁵ While segregationist southerners and their South African counterparts shared many ideological similarities, it was on the matter of religion that they most clearly diverged. In South Africa, Afrikaners and their Dutch Reformed Church promoted the policy of segregation. Indeed, Hermann Giliomee noted that South Africa’s first apartheid prime minister, Daniel Malan, remarked that ‘It was not the state but the church who took the lead with apartheid. The state followed the principle laid down by the church in the field of education for the native, the colored and the Asian. The result? Friction was eliminated’.³⁰⁶ Meanwhile, David Chappell’s studies have demonstrated that the southern church gave ‘no significant

³⁰⁴ *The Citizens’ Council* 1:11 (Aug., 1956): 3.

³⁰⁵ Letter from Brown to the Citizens’ Council of Mississippi, *The Citizens’ Council* 1:1 (Oct., 1955): 4. Reference to ‘Black Monday’ as the Council’s handbooks is in McMillen, *The Citizens’ Council*, 17.

³⁰⁶ Giliomee, *The Afrikaners*, 460.

support to segregation' during the civil rights era, which severely damaged the legitimacy and courage of segregationists. There were, however, lower level local preachers who 'could not afford to leave God's position in the matter uncontested', not while black preachers such as Martin Luther King received 'international recognition as moral authorities'.³⁰⁷ Gillespie's arguments (one of the most popular tracts on segregation and religion) were 'tentative and strained', Chappell explained, addressing the fact that the bible did not definitively give a pro- or anti-segregation argument rather than finding solid scriptural support for the separation of the races.³⁰⁸ While it is difficult to ascertain where, and to whom, Brown distributed his 2,000 copies of Gillespie's speech, it is likely that religious defence of segregation had more traction in South Africa, where the Dutch Reformed Church already supported apartheid, than in the American South where segregationists instead focused on racial purity and states' rights arguments in place of concrete scriptural evidence for white superiority.³⁰⁹ Brown not only distributed these pamphlets but also used them for his own publication, where religion often met science.

S. E. D. Brown launched the *South African Observer* in Cape Town in 1955. It shared many similarities with *The Citizens' Council*; both were presented as publications that gave readers the 'truth' about what was happening in the American South and South Africa, they were pro-segregationist, anti-communist, opposed the alleged illegitimate interference of the United Nations and they both consisted largely of reprints from other conservative and right-wing American publications. The *South African Observer* was a fairly substantial

³⁰⁷ David L. Chappell, 'Religious Ideas of the Segregationists', *Journal of American Studies* 32, no. 2 (1998): 239-240, 257, 260.

³⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, 245.

³⁰⁹ Wilhoit, *The Politics of Massive Resistance*, 57. Wilhoit argued that massive resistance included these two basic myths of 'white supremacy racism' and 'states'-rights federalism'.

publication, usually around sixteen A4 pages in length and consisting of small writing and little by way of pictures. The *Observer*, however, was far less ‘respectable’ (employed as McMillen used the word) than the Citizens’ Council publication. It frequently published anti-Semitic material, defended ‘scientific racism’ and included wild conspiratorial pieces about the ‘communist takeover’. Nevertheless, both Brown and Simmons wanted to promote white unity and present an international view of white supremacy.

There is little known about Brown; the only biographical information appeared in his obituary printed by members of his family in the *South African Observer*. Brown was born in Natal, South Africa, in 1910. A stint in the British South Africa Police of Southern Rhodesia during the 1930s greatly influenced him as he began to learn about politics and communism. Brown returned to South Africa to join the armed forces when World War II broke out and fought throughout Africa. However, he refused to sign the ‘Second Oath’, by which South African men would be required to fight outside Africa, and was discharged. ‘Further fruitful years of studying politics followed’, but there is no mention of any institution and it is unlikely that he completed any formal higher education. In 1946 Brown formed the Sons of South Africa, an organisation in which ‘he hoped Afrikaners and English-speaking South Africans would find each other in a shared patriotism to South Africa and a joint national conservatism’. This organisation was apparently ‘smashed by the English press and the Rand Jewry’. He continued writing letters to the press until they eventually ‘refused to publish his letters’. It was then, in 1955, that Brown launched the *South African Observer*.³¹⁰

³¹⁰ ‘Death of S. E. D. Brown’, *South African Observer* 33:12 (Jan., 1991): 1-2.

Academic reference to Brown has been slight and always brief. There have been a few accurate mentions of Brown as a ‘notorious anti-Semite’ whose publication lauded Holocaust denial writing.³¹¹ Richard Thurlow described Brown as a person who ‘produced an extreme ‘anti-communist’ ideology which exceeded Afrikaner nationalism in its virulence’.³¹² Kenneth Grundy revealed that Brown and his writings were closely associated to the Herstigte Nasionale Party – the ultra-conservative faction that broke away from the National Party in 1969 in opposition to Prime Minister John Vorster’s outward-looking policy.³¹³ To be sure, by the mid-1960s the *South African Observer* even became too right wing for the Vorster government, who denounced the paper after Brown accused the prime minister of ‘liberalism’ and the ‘betrayal of the White Man’. John D’Oliveira, a journalist who wrote an authorised biography of Vorster, described Brown, quite accurately, as the ‘spokesman for South Africa’s lunatic-fringe rightists’.³¹⁴ However, by examining some examples of how the *South African Observer* reported on America, we glean a better understanding of how the radical right-wing in South Africa viewed the United States in the context of civil rights protest and the Cold War as well as how they propagated a transnational white supremacy.

³¹¹ Brown was described as a ‘notorious antisemite’ [*sic*] in [No Author], ‘Apartheid’s Encounter with Reality’, *Patterns of Prejudice* 16, no. 3 (1982): 32. Milton Shain refers to Brown in ‘South Africa’, in David S. Wyman and Charles H. Rosensveig (eds.), *The World Reacts to the Holocaust* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996), 682-684, and ‘Ambivalence, Antipathy, and Accommodation: Christianity and the Jews’, in Richard Elphick and Rodney Davenport (eds.), *Christianity in South Africa: A Political Social and Cultural History* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), 284. Gideon Shimoni referred to Brown as a ‘known anti-Semite’ who condemned Israel’s criticism of South Africa and questioned the loyalty of South African Jews, in *Community and Conscience: The Jews in Apartheid South Africa* (Lebanon, New Hampshire: Brandeis University Press, 2003), 72.

³¹² Richard C. Thurlow, ‘Conspiracy Belief and Political Strategy’, *Patterns of Prejudice* 12, no. 6 (1978): 1.

³¹³ Kenneth W. Grundy, *Confrontation and Accommodation in Southern Africa: The Limits of Independence* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1973), 269.

³¹⁴ John D’Oliveira, *Vorster: The Man* (Johannesburg: Ernest Stanton, Ltd., 1987), 222. D’Oliveira was a political correspondent for the Johannesburg *Star*.

The *South African Observer* reveals a remarkable transatlantic flow of right-wing literature. It often reprinted articles from American publications including the *News and Courier*, the New York *American Mercury*, the Texas *Southern Conservative*, the New Orleans *Independent American* and *American Opinion*, the organ of the John Birch Society. It also published articles written by well-known American conservatives such as James J. Kilpatrick, Billy James Hargis and Strom Thurmond. Interestingly, though, it then also made its way back across the Atlantic to subscribers in the United States. It is not clear how widely read the *South African Observer* was in America. Like other right-wing groups, Brown refused to reveal how many American subscribers he had. 'It's not how many but who', Brown said. 'We have some very influential readers – a couple of generals and a couple of admirals. They tell us they have to read The S. A. Observer to find out what's really going on in America'.³¹⁵ Such organisations tended to portray the image that they were much bigger and influential than they were and used the excuse that subscribers preferred anonymity to avoid discussing membership numbers. However, Brown clearly had a readership in the United States.

Although one can fairly say that not everyone who subscribes to a publication writes letters to the editor, much of the correspondence sent to the *South African Observer* came from outside the South, exemplifying that right-wing support for apartheid South Africa was by no means confined to the 'segregated South'. A number of letters came from New Yorkers. One praised the South for being the 'last stronghold of regional consciousness in the United

³¹⁵ 'U.S. Rightists Speak Out in South African Journal', *New York Times*, 9 January 1966, 17.

States'³¹⁶ and another praised Brown for an article written about the devious way in which the U.S. government tended to send only 'left-wing' visitors to other countries.³¹⁷ A professor from New York wrote that higher education in the United States was being taken over by 'leftists' and 'liberals' and that 'Indoctrination is being substituted for education.' The author also had a warning for South Africans: 'This situation will develop in South Africa unless your government takes measures to stop the infiltration of some of your universities by Leftists. This is an impression I gained when I recently visited your country.'³¹⁸ There is, then, a sense of camaraderie between the two white populations. Another warning came from San Francisco. The author bemoaned that the U.S. was 'moving rapidly toward the inevitable crisis' of communist takeover. 'But don't let them and their pro-Communist-filtered news media fool you folks' the author wrote. 'You are fortunate in having your government on your side. You will win through providing you stand united and firm.'³¹⁹ A writer from Virginia echoed Brown's sentiments in his first letter to the newly launched *Citizens' Council*: 'There is a striking similarity between the 'world opinion' which is so unjustly and maliciously directed against your white people in South Africa and that directed against the white people of the South in our United States.' The author asserted that apartheid or segregation was the only way in which whites and blacks could live together 'in an atmosphere of peace and goodwill'. Furthermore, the letter revealed an internationalist view of the white race: 'It should be significant that this is the opinion of the great majority of white people everywhere who have had to deal with the

³¹⁶ J. W. B. (New York) to the *South African Observer* 6:4 (Aug., 1960): 15. (Unless otherwise noted, all issues of the *South African Observer* used here are held in the Davis Library at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.)

³¹⁷ M. K. H. (New York) to the *South African Observer* 6:6 (Oct., 1960): 16.

³¹⁸ 'Professor' (New York) to the *South African Observer* 7:4 (Aug., 1961): 16.

³¹⁹ W. A. S. (San Francisco) to the *South African Observer* 7:4 (Aug., 1961): 16

problem first hand'.³²⁰ Without information to prove otherwise, these writers must be taken at face value to provide useful analysis. The letters are characterised by a sense of communist conspiracy, white superiority and also a conviction that white South Africa would withstand the international pressure (which it did for many years). They also help to reveal why some Americans became so interested in South Africa; that country was seen to be succeeding in maintaining the racial status quo and avoiding the communist threat while the United States was perceived to be failing.

Brown was concerned with political issues in the U.S. because, in his view, America had become 'the nerve center of international liberalism', a view held by his readers as well.³²¹ As such, prominent figures in Washington repeatedly suffered at the hands of the *South African Observer*. For example, 'Who or What is Ralph Bunche?' was an article reprinted from the *American Mercury* in 1959, which accused him of being an unintelligent communist who somehow soared to great heights among contemporaries by 'picking the winning side'.³²² A lengthy article on Adlai Stevenson (Kennedy's U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations) taken from *American Opinion* unsurprisingly depicted Stevenson as soft on communism, a failed presidential candidate and someone who then became 'not the United States Ambassador to the United Nations, but the United Nations Ambassador to the United States'.³²³ Stevenson, being a proponent of liberalism in the Democratic Party and ambassador to the U.N., was an obvious enemy for any right-wing American or South African at the time. As previously noted, the U.N. was viewed at best with suspicion and at

³²⁰ R. T. J. (Virginia) to the *South African Observer* 6:6 (Oct., 1960): 16.

³²¹ 'U.S. Rightists Speak Out in South African Journal', *New York Times*, 9 January 1966, 17.

³²² *South African Observer* 5:4 (Aug., 1959): 7, WCG Papers, Subseries 1.4, Box 7, Folder 44.

³²³ *South African Observer* 8:11 (June, 1963): 11-14.

worst – by the likes of the Citizens’ Council and Brown – as an untrustworthy communist organisation that interfered in domestic issues of sovereign states. It was a preference of such publications to ‘expose’ figures high in the government to support their McCarthyite claims of communist infiltration at every level of society and politics. Stevenson actively petitioned the U.N. against apartheid South Africa and opposed the continued strategic trade with South Africa that the Kennedy administration carried out.³²⁴ Thus, he directly threatened the life militant anti-communists and segregationists in both countries were trying to preserve.

The *South African Observer*, like *The Citizens’ Council*, picked articles to teach their audience who was the enemy and, crucially, to ensure that people in America and South Africa (as well as sympathetic readers in other countries) were in agreement with, and actively supported, their cause. The *South African Observer* borrowed very heavily from *American Opinion* and although the John Birch Society’s support for white southern Africa will be looked at in the following chapter, this particular article on Adlai Stevenson helps to shed some light on how closely connected Brown was with his counterpart editors in the U.S. There appears to be no information on how Brown acquired all the American news articles that he did. However, both the *South African Observer* and *American Opinion* ran the Stevenson article in their June 1963 issues, which suggests that Brown would have been in touch with the John Birch Society about acquiring the article before it went to print in the United States.

³²⁴ Peter J. Schraeder, *United States Foreign Policy Toward Africa: Incrementalism, Crisis, and Change* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 200-204.

Despite the fact that Brown's publication was heavily dedicated to U.S. issues, it could be pro-American and anti-American at the same time. He picked articles that showed how well massive resistance was working – thus praising American segregationists and showing white South Africans that they were not alone – and also picked, and wrote his own, editorials to condemn what he perceived as the American government favouring black Africa over white Africa in the United Nations. An article reprinted from the *Orlando Sentinel* revealed that in the six years since the *Brown* decision, 'only slight headway has been made in the South'. The Deep South still had segregated schools and the article praised the people of Prince Edward County, Virginia, for closing down their public schools when the order to integrate came. Pieces like this would have been chosen to show South Africans that segregation still had a toehold in the United States. In the same issue, Brown wrote that the American embassy in Kenya had just employed a person involved with the 'Mau Mau murders and atrocities' to fill one of its 'most influential posts'.³²⁵ Ultimately, his keenness to relay not only American information, but articles from American publications does suggest that there was demand for such a publication in South Africa. It has proved impossible to determine how much of a demand and the lack of scholarly and journalistic references to Brown and his publication suggests that it was probably not particularly widely read. South Africa largely banned unsympathetic foreign journalists, the National Party controlled the radio waves, and television was not introduced until 1975. If, therefore, interested white South Africans did want information on the American government and race relations they may well have got their information from propaganda such as the *South African Observer*. Certainly it continued in publication until at least 1991 and for the South Africans who did want to read an English-language

³²⁵ *South African Observer* 6:3 (July, 1960), 12, 16.

publication like the *Observer*, Brown had a captive audience because there does not appear to be anything else on the market like it.³²⁶

As previously mentioned Brown acquired articles from the United States, printed them in his publication and then distributed the *South African Observer* in South Africa as well as returning the package to interested parties in the U.S. Articles that particularly interested Brown came from Wesley Critz George, Emeritus Professor of Histology and Embryology at the University of North Carolina. George was a researcher of the genetics of race and his writings on 'racial science', being lengthy pieces or chapters of books, revealed Brown's belief in eugenics. Historian George Lewis revealed that in the aftermath of the *Brown* decision, George 'single-handedly' transformed North Carolina's faltering massive resistance movement by attempting to bring 'scientific certainty' to the argument for segregation and white supremacy.³²⁷ Lewis noted that as George disseminated his writing on racial genetics around North Carolina, he attempted to ensure that he was not regarded as a prejudiced racist. Although his work differed little from other tracts on racial science, his scholarly style, referenced diligently, lent an air of respectability to his cause.³²⁸ Nevertheless, the arguments put forth in his work were designed to prove the standard segregationist rhetoric: that the morality of non-whites was hereditarily inferior to that of whites and that miscegenation would cause the demise of American civilisation.³²⁹

³²⁶ *South African Observer* 33:12 (Jan., 1991): 2. Brown died in September 1990 and the January 1991 publication told readers that Brown's family intended to continue the publication 'if it is within their power'.

³²⁷ George Lewis, "'Scientific Certainty': Wesley Critz George, Racial Science and Organised White Resistance in North Carolina, 1954-1962', *Journal of American Studies* 38, no. 2 (Aug., 2004): 233.

³²⁸ *Ibid.*, 234-235.

³²⁹ *Ibid.*, 236-237.

In 1962 George became particularly well-known following the publication of *The Biology of the Race Problem*, a manuscript written at the request of Alabama Governor John Patterson as part of his state's efforts against integration. While *The Biology of the Race Problem* met with Patterson's acceptance, the book was in the end shelved. However, it had attracted much attention among like-minded friends and colleagues and, with Patterson's consent, it was privately published. It would remain George's best-known work. Much of the notoriety it produced came from George's association with Alabama's infamous segregationist governor George Wallace, who hosted the book's press release in his Montgomery office when he was governor-elect.³³⁰ By October 1962 the Britons Publishing Company in London had taken over the bulk of the distribution of the booklet, which by the end of that year, according to the publishing house, had made its way 'all over the White World' and was 'doing a lot of good' for the segregationist cause.³³¹ Lewis noted that from the beginning of massive resistance, George had realised the necessity of winning the hearts and minds of whites outside the South.³³² He had done even better and attracted the attention of like-minded individuals in Scotland, London, France and South Africa.

A rapidly-moving international network of racial scientists and those who supported George's work seemed to build up quickly. Raymund Bamford of Edinburgh wrote to George in October 1963, enclosing a copy of his own reprinted version of *The Biology of the Race Problem*. He informed George that he had sent 200 copies to the Union Movement

³³⁰ Interview with Wesley Critz George by Roy Flewelling, 17 December 1971-8 February 1972, 15-16. WCG Papers, Series 4L, Box 21, Folder 148.

³³¹ Anthony Gittens of the Britons Publishing Co. to WCG, 18 October 1962, WCG Papers, Subseries 1.4, Box 9, Folder 64.

³³² Lewis, 'Scientific Certainty', 234.

shop in Victoria and retained 200 more for ‘personal mailing purposes’.³³³ Here, then, is a repeating link between American segregationists and Mosley’s Union Movement. Irving had contacted the Citizens’ Council for material and now he was receiving George’s publication via Bamford in Edinburgh. Bamford was, according to his own letterhead, a ‘Publisher of Political Pamphlets’. He also asked George whether he knew of any segregated schools or colleges in the U.S. which might employ him as an elementary mathematics teacher, since he felt unable to pursue his plans to study at Edinburgh University. ‘[It] is quite wrong to do so in integrated classes’, Bamford wrote, ‘especially where our girls are subject to the attention of Afro-Asians or at least associate with them without any notions of Race Hygiene’.³³⁴ In return, George wrote that he hoped his pamphlet ‘may help to alert your people to the hazzards [*sic*] in the current race-mixing pressures’ and ensured Bamford he would try to help him find work in a segregated U.S. school.³³⁵

A couple of years later it transpired that Bamford had passed George’s work on to an acquaintance in Paris. Fabrice Laroche, associate editor of Editions Saint-Just, a Parisian publishing house, wrote to George asking for permission to translate *The Biology of the Race Problem* into French and reprint it for distribution. Laroche also wrote that he had been in touch with Robert Gayre editor of *Mankind Quarterly*, a Scottish journal that continued to print articles by scientific racists when most ceased.³³⁶ George replied that he was pleased to give permission for a French reprint and noted that there was ‘no financial

³³³ Raymund Bamford to WCG, 10 October 1963., WCG Papers, Subseries 1.4, Box II, Folder 77.

³³⁴ Ibid.

³³⁵ WCG to Bamford, undated, in *ibid*.

³³⁶ Fabrice Laroche to WCG, 18 September 1966, WCG Papers, Subseries 1.4, Box 12, Folder 89.

profit motive involved in the writing or the publishing of the booklet and so no financial conditions need be involved in permission to reprint'. George did ask for a copy when it was reprinted and enclosed some other literature written by American racial scientists Carleton Putnam and Henry Garrett as well as some work by himself.³³⁷

Though an adherence to scientific racism appears absurd to most observers today and indeed appeared illogical and abhorrent to many of George's contemporaries, the writings and ideologies of such people are historically significant. They add to our understanding of the multifaceted attack on integration, which could include violence and intimidation but which was also often articulately and intellectually (if misguided) expressed. As previously noted, the southern clergy's failure to find biblical support for segregation hindered massive resistance.³³⁸ In his article, Lewis noted that George tried to provide religious and scientific arguments for segregation, and while the former required an open mind, the latter, George believed, had been proved.³³⁹ This kind of scientific research was supposed to offer empirical proof of white superiority and black inferiority. If a 'fact' could be established, it could not be undermined by social science, which had been used to discredit the arguments of racial theorists like George. In the aftermath of World War II, white supremacists had sought out new ways to legitimise their belief in the necessity of racial segregation as well as their commitment to ideologies of white superiority. Theories of racial science were strongly denounced following the Holocaust, but this did not mean they disappeared altogether. Even when UNESCO's investigation reported in 1950 that there was 'no scientific justification for race discrimination' and that race was 'less a

³³⁷ WCG to Laroche, 22 September 1966, WCG Papers, Subseries 1.4, Box 12, Folder 89.

³³⁸ Chappell, 'Religious Ideas of the Segregationists'.

³³⁹ Lewis, 'Scientific Certainty', 245-246

biological fact than a social myth', people like George did not change their views.³⁴⁰ Gavin Schaffer's article on scientific racism and the *Mankind Quarterly* journal argued that in the post-war era, science was 'subsumed into politics as protagonists on both sides of the segregation debate used science to justify ideological positions'.³⁴¹ The journal, founded in 1960 by Reginald Gates in Edinburgh and still in operation today, went against the post-war grain from the outset. Schaffer suggested that it grew in part out of the *Brown* decision since 'anti-"racial" science played a defining role' in the Supreme Court's decision and that the journal in fact 'owed its very existence to the American pro-segregation lobby'.³⁴² Again, then, U.S. events were inspiring British racists as South African events inspired American white supremacists.

If Schaffer is correct then it goes some way to explaining why racial scientists joined this increasing group of right-wing American thinkers, whether defined as segregationists, massive resisters, white supremacists or radical anti-communists. The forum that racial theorists once had no longer existed, but new ones, such as *American Opinion*, the *South African Observer* and *Mankind Quarterly*, surfaced that merged all these categories together. If the *Brown* decision was yet another rejection of scientific racism then it stands to reason that intransigent racial scientists and segregationists would become inextricably linked. Arguably these people were more influential than some of the disjointed efforts of massive resisters in the South as they presented what many would have seen as biological

³⁴⁰ Elazar Barkan, *The Retreat of Scientific Racism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 341.

³⁴¹ Gavin Schaffer, "'Scientific Racism Again?': Reginald Gates, the *Mankind Quarterly* and the Question of 'Race' in Science after the Second World War", *Journal of American Studies* 41, no. 2 (Aug., 2007): 253. Barkan also makes the argument that political beliefs had a greater impact on attitudes towards race than scientific commitment. Rather, racial theories could be used to support any number of claims: Barkan, *The Retreat of Scientific Racism*, 343.

³⁴² Schaffer, 'Scientific Racism Again?', 261, 272.

evidence for the inferiority of Africans and African Americans. Furthermore, the academic work and publishing houses that disseminated such articles quickly seemed to stretch across not just regions but continents.

George certainly did not moderate his views once scientific racism had been debunked and his interest in South Africa appeared to grow in the early 1960s. Brown reprinted sections of *The Biology of the Race Problem* in the *South African Observer* in early 1963, representing not only his, but his readers' interest in the discredited theory of racial science.³⁴³ George's personal link with South Africa is revealed by correspondence between himself and a South African pen-pal by the name of Harold Sampson. Sampson used to be a professor of law at Rhodes University and during the time of correspondence was working at the Supreme Court in Grahamstown, South Africa, where he lived. Sampson became George's most prolific writing partner in South Africa.³⁴⁴ It was exactly what Parker and his Society of the Two Souths would have wanted; the exchange of ideas, experience and essentially finding out more about each other's way of life. When they started corresponding is unclear. The first letter was actually from Sampson's wife, Jean, informing George that her husband was away on Circuit for a month. She thanked him for sending his letter and photos, saying she would frame a picture of George and remember him as 'one in the world with a right mind'. Jean shared her husband's views on race. 'There seems to be a total disregard for the white skin now', she wrote, adding that she was beginning to view the white race as 'frail' beside the black, who 'in turn sense that we are a

³⁴³ Brown reprinted the introduction to Wesley George's *The Biology of the Race Problem* in *South African Observer* 8:6 (Jan., 1963): 10-11 and chapter ten of the work, in which George attempted to discredit Franz Boas' work on environmentalism in *South Africa Observer* 8:7 (Feb., 1963): 9-12.

³⁴⁴ The relationship between George and Sampson is unclear to the extent that most of the letters archived include Sampson's correspondence but not George's replies. However, the collection certainly suggests that they corresponded more regularly than George did with any other South African.

little afraid of them'. Finally, Jean signed off by informing George that she had a number of copies of *Race, Heredity and Civilization* (one of George's works that attempted to link religion and race) and was passing them on to everyone she could.³⁴⁵ The subsequent letters from Jean's husband reveal one of ways in which men and women responded differently to the threat of integration. Certainly scholars have begun to look at female segregationists, but Jean's letter reveals a sense of fear, while her husband's were defiant.³⁴⁶

Sampson wrote to George in August 1962 and asked for clarification about a potentially new development in the U.S.: 'Can you tell me if there is any truth in a radio report I heard to the effect that in the States there is a Negro movement, with the support of 250,000 seeking a separate state for Negroes?' In using the so-called 'Bantustans' of South Africa as a point of reference, Sampson wrote that such a 'Negrostan movement' would in fact be in line with the globally-approved concept of self-determination, and argued that by forcibly removing black South Africans to 'homelands' the Nationalists were giving them the rights

³⁴⁵ Jean Sampson to WCG, WCG Papers, Subseries 1.4, Box 9, Folder 61; Lewis, 'Scientific Certainty', 245.

³⁴⁶ Although scholarship on female segregationists and proponents of apartheid lags significantly behind that of men, there have been efforts to address the imbalance. Within American historiography see, for instance, Elizabeth Gillespie McRae, 'White Womanhood, White Supremacy, and the Rise of Massive Resistance' and Karen Anderson, 'Massive Resistance, Violence, and Southern Social Relations: The Little Rock, Arkansas, School Integration Crisis, 1954-1960', in Webb (ed.), *Massive Resistance*. In South African historiography see Shula Marks and Stanley Trapido, 'The Politics of Race Class and Nationalism' and Isabel Hofmeyr, 'Building a Nation from Words: Afrikaans Language, Literature and Ethnic Identity, 1902-1924', in Marks and Trapido (eds.), *The Politics of Race, Class and Nationalism in Twentieth Century South Africa* and Belinda Bozzoli, 'Marxism, Feminism and South African Studies', *Journal of Southern African Studies* 9, no. 2 (Apr., 1983): 139-171. There are similarities between the positions of women in the two countries. Hofmeyr and McRae both revealed that women were seen as, and took on the role, of teachers. They promoted unity of race, the Afrikaans language and opposed the marrying of non-Afrikaner men in South Africa; and in the American South McRae reveals that women took on the role of teaching white supremacy. Anderson and Bozzoli both demonstrated that a threat to masculinity was posed by desegregation in the South and the influx of black Africans to previously white workplaces in South Africa, thus the propagation of segregation helped to restore the dividing line between the races and ensure continued white (masculine) supremacy. Marks and Trapido summed up Afrikaner women in a way that also appropriately describes women in the segregationist movement in the American South: women 'could be, and frequently were, simultaneously workers and housewives, socialists and nationalists, white supremacists and internationalists'.

they wanted.³⁴⁷ Despite international non-recognition, the Cold War alliance between the U.S. and South Africa meant that the National Party was not condemned more forcefully for its homeland policy. As a result, they forged ahead with the removal of black Africans to reservations and also promoted them as solutions to racial tensions in other countries, especially the American South.³⁴⁸ Likewise, southern journalists like the aforementioned Harrigan sought to present Americans with the National Party's rhetoric. Sampson's question about the 'Negrostars' certainly reveals a gap between fact and fiction in the reports that he heard in South Africa. With censorship rife, South African whites could report whatever they wanted; especially welcome would be reports that parts of the international community approved of the National Party's policies for once.

A few months later, Sampson wrote again, telling George that he had found his article on Franz Boas.³⁴⁹ George had specifically repudiated Boas, a man he blamed for the influence of environmentalism in social science, in *The Biology of the Race Problem*.³⁵⁰ Sampson did not see George's article on Boas in the *South African Observer* because Brown did not print it until the following year. However, he again revealed the link between Anglo-Saxon brethren in the U.S., South Africa and England complaining that Jews in the 'integration campaign' were 'spitting the term "fascist"' at Mosley. He revealed that the threat of United Nations sanctions did not worry South Africans; it would not harm their economy Sampson wrote, and would only 'strengthen the cause of race separation'. 'The moral victory will be ours', Sampson defiantly wrote. He also told George that he would read

³⁴⁷ Harold Sampson to WCG, 13 August 1962, WCG Papers, Subseries 1.4, Box 9, Folder 62.

³⁴⁸ Alan Lester, Etienne Nel and Tony Bins, *South Africa, past, present and future: gold at the end of the rainbow?* (Harlow, England: Pearson Education Limited, 2000), 191.

³⁴⁹ Sampson to WCG, 8 November 1962, WCG Papers, Subseries 1.4, Box 10, Folder 75.

³⁵⁰ Lewis, 'Scientific Certainty', 238.

about the National Party further in the October issue of the *South African Observer*, suggesting that both men were subscribers. Finally he sent George a copy of the *Eastern Province Herald*, with a letter from Sampson in it, so he could see what was reported in South African papers.³⁵¹

Sampson was certainly a prolific writer and deeply committed to white supremacy. Edward Webster, now a professor of sociology in South Africa, applied for a Rhodes scholarship in 1965 and recalled a meeting with Sampson. When attending his interview, a member of the selection committee quickly asked Webster what he thought about school integration, especially in the light of experiences in the American South where ‘white girls were being raped by ‘negroes’ and where it was leading to ‘a nation of half-breeds’’. Webster was liberal, opposed apartheid and was offended by the question. He replied that he thought school integration was inevitable, desirable and that he would like to teach at an integrated school when he completed his studies. Webster’s questioner declared that he was ‘a traitor to the white race’ and with no support from the rest of the committee, Webster’s interview, and hopes for the scholarship, was over. Webster was not aware at the time that his questioner was the ‘notorious racist’, Harold Sampson. He and Sampson had been ‘clashing swords for some years’ in the columns of the *Eastern Province Herald* where Sampson’s regular correspondence was signed ‘The Reader, Grahamstown’.³⁵²

Sampson and George continued to exchange letters and information. In January 1963 Sampson wrote to tell George that *The Biology of the Race Problem* had arrived and that he

³⁵¹ Sampson to WCG, 8 November 1962.

³⁵² Edward Webster, ‘Rebels with a Cause of their Own: A Personal Reflection on my Student Years at Rhodes University, 1961-1965’, *Transformation: Critical Perspectives on Southern Africa* 59 (2005): 104.

was going to purchase as many as possible for five rand.³⁵³ In the same month the *South African Observer* printed the introduction of George's work. Brown's editorial note remarked that 'this important scientific document...deserves the widest publicity and distribution' and gave contact information for those wishing to purchase copies of the pamphlet. Sampson's five rand would buy him twenty copies.³⁵⁴ Sampson informed George that he also planned to send a copy to South African Prime Minister Verwoerd urging him to make 'official use of the Report for all the propaganda possible'.³⁵⁵ Given Sampson's penchant for correspondence and his growing commitment to racial science, it would not be surprising if he did. However, it is also unlikely that Verwoerd would have been particularly interested in these English-speaking racists and their theories of racial science.

Saul Dubow explained that unlike in Britain and the U.S., where eugenics dominated racist thinking by the end of the nineteenth century, in South Africa, scientific theories of racial superiority had been unnecessary because the 'paternalism which bound black and white together there presented white supremacy as part of the natural order of things in its (im)moral universe'.³⁵⁶ The study of anthropology emerged after World War I, not just as a scientific and academic interest, but as a political means of determining 'native policy'. It evolved into theories of 'cultural adaptation' whereby segregation was presented as a means of promoting indigenous culture instead of forcing Africans into 'alien European moulds'. Certainly, this fed upon racist assumptions but was not dependent on theories that

³⁵³ Sampson to WCG, 7 January 1963, WCG Papers, Subseries 1.4, Box 10, Folder 68.

³⁵⁴ *South African Observer* 8:6 (Jan., 1963): 10, WCG Papers, Subseries 1.4, Box 10, Folder 70.

³⁵⁵ Sampson to WCG, 7 January 1963.

³⁵⁶ Saul Dubow, 'Race, Civilisation and Culture: The Elaboration of Segregationist Discourse in the Interwar Years', in Marks and Trapido (eds.), *The Politics of Race Class and Nationalism*, 72, 75.

could be disproved.³⁵⁷ Verwoerd's 'separate development' was presented in this way, as a means of allowing fair and just cultural development. Proponents of scientific racism like Sampson and Brown had certain uses; their writings supported some government claims such as the alleged hypocrisy in the United Nations and the threat of communism in black Africa. Also they vocally and consistently supported apartheid, thus assisting the unity between English- and Afrikaans-speaking South Africans. Beyond that, they were probably an embarrassment.

Nevertheless, the correspondence between George and Sampson reflects that there were still people who wanted to hold on to 'traditional' biological arguments about race. The rejection of scientific racism in both the U.S. and South Africa (as well as elsewhere in the world) left people like George increasingly marginalised. However, this would have inadvertently helped to create the transnational discourse that emerged. These adherents to outdated theories felt that white supremacy throughout the world was threatened and they were still determined to tell the truth, as they saw it. In the early 1970s George explained that his growing interest and participation in public white supremacy (although he would not have termed it as such) stemmed in part from the post-World War II global rejection of racism. 'Along with this nation-wide or perhaps world-wide pressure to bring about the amalgamation of the races, or at least integration of the races', George recalled, 'there was also world-wide pressure to inculcate into the minds of the people an ideology which I consider intellectually unsound'.³⁵⁸ Furthermore, when asked what he hoped the significance of his work was, George replied, 'I like to believe that in the long run "truth"

³⁵⁷ Ibid., 80, 84-85, 89.

³⁵⁸ Transcript of an interview with Wesley Critz George conducted by Roy Flewelling, 10-11.

will prevail.’ Unfortunately, he thought this had not happened yet, not because he had not found ‘real scientific data’, but because of ‘outside agitators’ and external forces that were set against him from the outset. Radical forces controlled the nation; both Democratic and Republican presidents appointed integrationists to high government positions who ‘forced...the advancement of Negroes’; American universities had been overrun with ‘left-wingers’ who indoctrinated students; the churches have supported integration; and the media ‘day after day’ have made the public believe that integration is ‘honorable [and] Christian’.³⁵⁹

The retreat from scientific racism was perhaps not so complete and swift after World War II as it seems. Not only did George continue working on the subject, but he maintained his belief that such views would become accepted again when the public realised the ‘truth’. Furthermore, George inspired Sampson, the retired law professor, to turn his own hand to scientific racism. In 1966 Sampson published *The Principle of Apartheid*, which was a racist and anti-Semitic book that borrowed heavily from George’s *The Biology of the Race Problem*, articles from *Mankind Quarterly* and other unreferenced material, presumably newspaper articles, as he would write things like ‘reported from Washington’. The usual suspects were attacked: Jews were trying to end all discrimination; communists were attempting to subvert power from the ‘more intelligent classes’ to those ‘less able to think for themselves’ and thus amenable to ‘mass direction’; the American government was ‘appeas[ing]... the Negro’; and ‘backward non-white peoples’ had a ‘natural appetite [for] equal wealth and prestige’.³⁶⁰ Sampson sent George a copy of the book and informed him

³⁵⁹ Ibid., 20.

³⁶⁰ Harold F. Sampson, *The Principle of Apartheid*, 2nd ed. (Johannesburg: Voortrekkerpers, 1967), 20.

that it had been ignored by all the English 'liberal' newspapers in South Africa apart from the *Cape Times*, whose review was 'short and pitifully captious'. He also said that he had asked the churchmen to answer his 'Biblical analysis' but received no reply. Sampson's explanation for the lack of media reviews was that the 'liberals cannot answer the arguments'.³⁶¹ As for his so-called biblical analysis, it essentially rested on the finding that 'there is no Biblical authority for the contention that racial integration rather than racial separate development conforms to the will of God'.³⁶² His argument differed little from the poor attempts that Chappell identified.

Nevertheless, Sampson boasted that half of the first edition had sold within one month and he was waiting for a second edition and an Afrikaans version to arrive. An attempt to reach both the English- and Afrikaans-speaking audience suggests Sampson shared the conviction of many white supremacists that race superseded nationality or ethnic divisions. Furthermore, he asked George to give him information on any American agencies that might distribute it.³⁶³ It is likely that his printing editions were small and that the book was not very widely read. However, Sampson's book did end up in the hands of one very influential American – Senator Robert F. Kennedy. When Kennedy visited South Africa in June 1966, the National Party essentially ignored him and stifled information about his visit by barring foreign journalists from entering the country.³⁶⁴ On the first day of his visit, Kennedy met with editors of Afrikaans- and English-language newspapers. D. G. Scholtz, editor of *Die Transvaler*, refused to meet with Kennedy, saying that his religious beliefs

³⁶¹ Sampson to WCG, 21 December 1966, WCG Papers, Subseries 1.4, Box 12, Folder 90.

³⁶² Sampson, *The Principle of Apartheid*, 73.

³⁶³ Sampson to WCG, 21 December 1966.

³⁶⁴ 'Bobby Kennedy: A Political Safari', *Washington Post*, 5 June 1966.

prohibited him from discussing politics on a Sunday. However, he sent a deputy instead with the gift of a new book to help Kennedy ‘understand South Africa better’: *The Principle of Apartheid* by Harold Sampson. Kennedy returned the favour with a newly published book of his own, *The American Negro Reference Book*.³⁶⁵

Sampson’s book was not particularly good and relied heavily on secondary literature thus contributing little.³⁶⁶ Nevertheless, while the English-language papers ignored it, the editor of *Die Transvaler* obviously saw enough merit in it to ensure that Senator Kennedy had a copy. Both George and Sampson and the books, articles, pamphlets and letters that they wrote, represented an enduring commitment to racial science and an equal dedication to promoting white supremacy internationally. George’s interest in South Africa did not begin and end with Harold Sampson. He also corresponded more than once with people in Natal, Johannesburg and Cape Town in South Africa, and Bulawayo and Marandellas in Southern Rhodesia. In Southern Rhodesia, George corresponded with a local M.P., John Newington, regarding genetic differences between the races, similarities between black Rhodesians and African Americans and, once again, how the United Nations was a meddling, but largely ineffective organisation. Further, Newington noted that he had ‘appeared on television’ in Rhodesia and used George’s writings ‘extensively’.³⁶⁷

³⁶⁵ ‘Kennedy Gets Book on Apartheid, Gives One on U.S. Negroes’, *New York Times*, 6 June 1966, 1.

³⁶⁶ Although it has not been possible to find out much about this book, the online international library search at worldcat.org reveals that three versions were printed, all in English. Four British libraries, fifty-eight American libraries and five South African libraries (including Rhodes at Grahamstown) hold copies.

³⁶⁷ John Newington to WCG, 12 October 1962 and 21 December 1962, WCG Papers, Subseries 1.4, Box 9, Folders 64 and 66. Newington was a political candidate in the 1962 Southern Rhodesian election for the constituency of Hillcrest. He campaigned for the Rhodesian Front Party, which won the election and set the country on its course of continued apartheid and towards its Unilateral Declaration of Independence.

George's interest in the racial affairs of other nations, and the personal links he made in places like South Africa, provide a most direct and informative link at an individual level; and all the people George corresponded with noted how useful his writing on racial matters were to their own struggles. It was in the realms of scientific racism and the ideologies' proponents that regular individual links between white supremacists in the U.S. and southern Africa have appeared most clearly. Moreover, if a Rhodesian M.P. used George's findings on television to support his own claim for the continued separation of the races, arguably scientific racism continued to have more traction in white Africa than it did in the United States. Though scientific racists quickly became an oft-criticised minority in the post-war era, their commitment to their cause and the links they forged globally clearly had an impact on a number of people. Not only did people like George influence white supremacist thinkers elsewhere, but he also had an impact on politicians, such as the governors Patterson and Wallace who publicly endorsed his work, which in turn affected some grassroots thinking as well. Scientific racists added yet another dimension to this melting pot of segregationists, conservatives, mainstream and radical anti-communists, anti-integrationist politicians and white supremacists that looked to South Africa. The interest that groups like the Citizens' Council, editors like Harrigan and scientific racists like George took in South Africa represented segregationists' desire to maintain white supremacy in the United States and support it in white Africa. As the period of massive resistance came to a close, segregationists that were not willing to accept the inevitable societal changes looked increasingly to southern Africa where Jim Crow, rather than being dismantled, was writ large as the law of the land.

Chapter Four

Massive Resisters after Massive Resistance: Segregationists, South Africa and Rhodesia, 1965-1975

The republic of South Africa is as misunderstood internationally as our own Southland in misunderstood in the United States and throughout the world.

– George W. Shannon, *The Citizen*, Vol. 21, No. 9, June 1976

In 1968, an article in the Citizens' Council's magazine noted that during the course of its fourteen-year lifespan, representatives of the organisation had reached outside of the American South and appeared on numerous television programmes, radio shows, spoken at many different colleges and universities and even attended seminars conducted by the United Nations Association of Canada. Furthermore, Council officials had appeared on television and radio in both South Africa and Rhodesia.³⁶⁸ The organisation's official publication, *The Citizen*, had replaced the four-page *Citizens' Council* newspaper in 1961. It was a glossy, professional-looking magazine, filled with colour pictures and detailed editorials from domestic and foreign contributors. In a far-reaching effort to publicise the segregationist struggle, the Citizens' Council was as active as ever.

Many thoughtful observers might wonder why the organisation still existed in 1968. After all, in fourteen tumultuous years the Council had experienced an unprecedented rise to prominence, catapulted 'white rights' into the mainstream, caused havoc and fear among those regarded as enemies and arguably had a number of successes in its attempts to destabilise both national and local civil rights activities as well as delaying racial reform.

³⁶⁸ *The Citizen*, 13, no. 2 (Nov., 1968): 18, Hall-Hoag, MS.76.5:A10, Box 76.5-1, Folder: 76.5/6/2-SER. (Unless otherwise noted, all issues of this publication are held in the Hall-Hoag collection.)

Nevertheless, despite the best efforts of the segregationist South, the Civil Rights Act (1964) and Voting Rights Act (1965) had been passed. *De jure* and *de facto* Jim Crow was outlawed and for the first time since the aftermath of the Civil War, America's black population had real reason to feel buoyed along with solid anti-discriminatory legislation to support their newfound optimism.

As early as January 1958, southern newspaper editor and racial moderate Harry S. Ashmore published a book entitled *An Epitaph for Dixie*. 'There are not enough Confederates left now to muster a squad', Ashmore argued, adding that southern states now voted for a Republican president and the Supreme Court had 'struck down the legal basis for segregation of the races'.³⁶⁹ Well-respected in his profession, Ashmore had shot to fame in 1957 following his Pulitzer Prize winning coverage of the Little Rock school integration crisis. Ashmore, then executive editor of the *Arkansas Gazette*, had written a piece for *Time* magazine shortly before his book was published. He was not, according to the article, the 'ardent integrationist' Arkansas Governor Orval Faubus accused him of being. Rather, Ashmore defined himself as a 'realist'.³⁷⁰ There were undoubtedly a great many southern 'realists' who did not get swept along with the segregationist bandwagon. Many would have preferred segregation, believed in white superiority and feared the changes being heaped upon southern society; but they had also accepted the *Brown* school desegregation decision in 1954 and would accept the Civil Rights and Voting Rights Acts of the mid-1960s.³⁷¹

³⁶⁹ Harry S. Ashmore, *An Epitaph for Dixie* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, Inc., 1958), 14.

³⁷⁰ Harry S. Ashmore 'A Southern Challenge and Epitaph for Dixie', *Time*, 4 November 1957, 129.

³⁷¹ See David L. Chappell, *Inside Agitators: White Southerners in the Civil Rights Movement* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1994) for a study that exposes the lack of unity among white southerners and

Ashmore had been a little premature in his assessment. Some of those who did organise, protest and create massive resistance were as unwilling to accept racial reform in 1965 as they had been a decade before. To be sure, massive resistance had failed. Nevertheless, some of the organisations and individuals discussed in the previous chapter remained committed to white supremacy and massive resistance in the South evolved into an internationally-focused defence of white supremacy. As the following chapter will reveal, new groups even sprang up to join the growing international grouping of white supremacists. This chapter, however, seeks to demonstrate the continuity of right-wing support for white southern Africa. Having argued previously that segregationists' interest in foreign affairs had been evident from the beginning of massive resistance and was not solely a means of bolstering their domestic agenda, this chapter reveals not only continued support for South Africa, but also for a new bastion of white supremacy in southern Africa, Rhodesia. By examining the continuing support for white Africa by segregationist organisations and their publications, one can see that when massive resistance in the American South was defeated and African Americans across the United States were finally granted equality under the law those opposed to racial reform did not simply fade away. The joint forces of racism, anti-communism and conservatism ensured sustained support for white southern Africa in the United States. Furthermore, by revealing the ways in which the U.S. government and black activists continued to respond to South Africa and Rhodesia, this chapter also demonstrates a continued battle between black and white in the United States. Before 1965, segregationists and civil rights activists had clashed over domestic

highlights those southern whites who preferred segregation but not at the cost of violence and social upheaval and thus acquiesced.

reform; now each side of the debate sought to win the ‘battle for Africa’. Although some segregationists remained committed to promoting white supremacy abroad, anti-apartheid activism similarly increased. Meanwhile, Washington’s foreign policy makers continued on the Cold War path set out for them twenty years before.

In August 1965, President Lyndon B. Johnson signed into law the landmark Voting Rights Act which outlawed the discriminatory practices that had denied African Americans the vote. Just three months later, on 11 November 1965, Southern Rhodesia unilaterally declared its independence from Great Britain. While most of the imperial powers had granted independence to their African colonies by this time, Rhodesia’s governing body of whites refused to accept Britain’s demand that black majority rule must come before independence. This Unilateral Declaration of Independence (UDI) was regarded as an illegal move by almost all of the world’s governments but the Rhodesian Front party, headed by Ian Douglas Smith, forged ahead regardless. Just three years after UDI, Smith, the first Rhodesian-born Prime Minister, was described as ‘the most improbable, most unexciting rebel in British history’. Despite having ‘nothing of the flaming revolutionary about him’, one Salisbury reporter wrote, Smith had ‘a toughness, guts and an uncanny political sense, which have kept the Rhodesians shouting for him’.³⁷² Despite near universal condemnation, United Nations sanctions and domestic agitation, Ian Smith’s intransigent, white supremacist government managed to avoid a transition to black majority rule for fifteen years.

³⁷² John Worrell, “‘Our Independence Is Real,’ Says Ian Smith: But he faces economic attack, guerrilla attack, right-wing attack’, *New York Times*, 27 October 1968.

There were, however, exceptions to the predominant view that Rhodesia was an illegitimate, racist state. Though no country formally recognised its independence, Portugal (which resisted the wave of African decolonisation until the mid-1970s) and South Africa (which maintained white minority rule long after Rhodesia became the black-governed state of Zimbabwe in 1980) had a more ambivalent relationship with the Smith regime. Smith may have seemed an unlikely rebel, but he quickly attracted attention in the United States where some people regarded him as an inspirational revolutionary. In the introduction to Ian Smith's memoirs, historian Richard Wood wrote that the Rhodesian prime minister was 'Depicted mostly as an obstinate, dour leader of a right-wing white minority government' who had received 'an almost universally hostile press – even at home in Rhodesia'. In Wood's opinion, though, none of the innumerable books written about the country explained how Smith managed to strike a chord with both the domestic and international public at the same time as they criticised him. Wood's answer was that Smith 'secured the admiration of many ordinary people, who admired his unwavering stand for his principles'.³⁷³ A good number of Americans could certainly be counted among the ranks of those abroad who greatly respected Smith and, more than that, actively sought to improve his standing within the United States.

Beginning in earnest in 1960, the rapid decolonisation of Africa and the granting of majority rule to new black African States had left the white-run British colony of Southern Rhodesia fearful that such change would come their way. In opposition to the governing United Party's policies, the more right-wing Rhodesian Front party was formed in March

³⁷³ J. R. T. Wood's introduction in Ian Smith, *The Great Betrayal: The Memoirs of Ian Douglas Smith* (London: Black Publishing Ltd., 1997), vii-viii.

1962 and, having run a campaign essentially based on avoiding black majority rule, they won power in the election of December the same year. However, the newly elected prime minister, Winston Field, failed to convince his party members that he could stem the tide of black nationalism and gain independence from Britain. In April 1964, Field was unseated and his deputy, Ian Smith, became prime minister.³⁷⁴ The Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland, consisting of the British self-governing colony of Southern Rhodesia and the British protectorates of Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland, had been dismantled just months before. With the prospect of black governments on Southern Rhodesia's borders, Smith and his supporters undoubtedly wanted independence more than ever. Almost as soon as Smith took over as leader, his fears were realised; Nyasaland became independent Malawi in July and Northern Rhodesia gained independence as Zambia in October. Smith was now prime minister of a small, landlocked country that was becoming increasingly surrounded by black states. Apartheid South Africa and the Portuguese colony of Mozambique, to Rhodesia's south and east respectively, remained 'safe' for now; but Zambia and Malawi to the north had become independent black nations and the British protectorate of Bechuanaland, on Rhodesia's western border, would also surely adopt black majority rule in line with Great Britain's decolonisation of its African territories.³⁷⁵

The only way to be certain of continued white rule was independence and in his first press conference Smith said that he hoped this could be achieved through negotiation although he

³⁷⁴ Robert C. Good, *U.D.I.: The International Politics of the Rhodesian Rebellion* (London: Faber and Faber, 1973), 41.

³⁷⁵ The British protectorate of Bechuanaland became independent Botswana on 30 September 1966, less than a year after the Rhodesian UDI.

could ‘visualise circumstances which might drive us to do something else’.³⁷⁶ The inference was that if independence was not granted, it would be taken. Smith sparred with Britain’s new prime minister, Harold Wilson, with each man trying to negotiate very different settlements. Britain simply could not sanction one of its colonies becoming a white supremacist sovereign state and Smith was unwilling to back down. Over the next year the threat of UDI was very real and much talked about in the political and public arena.³⁷⁷

Towards the end of September 1965, Robert Komer of the U.S. National Security Council sent President Johnson a memorandum discussing possible options for the U.S. if Smith forged ahead. Komer pointed out that Rhodesian UDI would be both ‘legally and morally wrong’, but his main concern was that a United Nations General Assembly was coming up and ‘we need African votes’. The answer was to back a British request for Security Council support for U.K. measures against the Rhodesians as a means of pre-empting a ‘disruptive Afro-Asian and Soviet bloc initiative’; secondly, the U.S. could join a Commonwealth boycott of Rhodesian tobacco and take other economic measures since ‘our trade with Southern Rhodesia is minimal compared to that of the UK’; and finally, they would discourage intervention by ‘Afro-Asian nations of Rhodesian African nationalists’.³⁷⁸ For Johnson’s administration, like those that came before, it was not continued white rule in southern Africa that troubled them but the instability that might arise. The UDI, not minority white rule, was described as immoral. By early October, U.S. foreign policy

³⁷⁶ Good, *U.D.I.*, 42.

³⁷⁷ Ibid.

³⁷⁸ Robert W. Komer to President Johnson, 29 September 1965, *FRUS* 1964-1968, Vol. XXIV: Africa, document 468, Office of the Historian.

officials were reassessing the situation again. A resolution at the United Nations was imminent and the U.S. was thus urging a 'carefully phrased resolution' on Rhodesia as a means of clarifying to Smith that he would face severe international opposition if he insisted on UDI. Further, Johnson's Special Assistant for National Security Affairs, McGeorge Bundy, wanted 'to avoid the much more inflammatory and tendentious resolutions that hot-headed Africans would prefer'.³⁷⁹ 'Carefully phrased' meant a moderate resolution not befitting the seriousness of the situation. Furthermore, Europeanists, rather than Africanists, still controlled the State Department and thus control over, rather than cooperation with, African delegations was the desired outcome.

By mid-October 1965 a National Intelligence Estimate revealed that Cold War anxieties were still prominent. UDI was pending and the CIA made some longer range projections. Officials believed that 'for the next several years at least' political and economic sanctions would not end white rule in Rhodesia. Furthermore, they thought that Smith's ability to maintain internal security and sustain his country would frustrate African states and make life difficult for the West in the United Nations as they pressured Britain and the U.S. to take firmer action against Rhodesia. Finally, the likelihood that the Western powers would be unable to resolve the issue would provide 'opportunities for Communist propaganda'.³⁸⁰ The assumption that Smith would prevail regardless of U.S. or U.N. action largely dictated U.S. policy towards the intransigent country. Moreover, the Vietnam War was already, and would remain, Johnson's primary concern. He was a staunch anti-communist and 'kept America on a Cold War footing', determined not to be 'the president who lost Vietnam to

³⁷⁹ McGeorge Bundy to President Johnson, 6 October 1965, in *ibid.*, document 447.

³⁸⁰ Special National Intelligence Estimate, 13 October 1965, in *ibid.*, document 482.

communism'.³⁸¹ The Korean War had, for a time, conveniently distracted Truman and Eisenhower from the issue of white Africa. The Vietnam War, a much longer, bloodier and unsuccessful conflict would do the same for Johnson and his successor, Richard Nixon, until American troops withdrew in 1973.

With evidence of an impending Rhodesian UDI overwhelming, Wilson flew to Salisbury, the Rhodesian capital, on 25 October 1965, for one last six-day-long attempt to convince Smith to yield.³⁸² Clearly the trip was in vain. In a message to Johnson, Wilson wrote that being in Salisbury 'was like being present at the fifth act of a Greek tragedy'. Smith's government, in Wilson's estimation, was 'impervious to argument', only divided on whether to 'commit suicide now or later'.³⁸³ Wilson's assessment and the U.S. State Department estimations had been correct. Ten days after Wilson's message, Smith announced Rhodesia's Unilateral Declaration of Independence.

At eleven o'clock, British time, on the morning of 11 November – symbolically, the start of the British Armistice day remembrance – Smith proclaimed Rhodesia to be independent, beginning with some very familiar words:

Whereas in the course of human affairs history has shown that it may become necessary for a people to resolve the political affiliations which

³⁸¹ Campbell Craig and Fredrik Logevall, *America's Cold War: The Politics of Insecurity* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2009), 217-218.

³⁸² Good, *U.D.I.*, 49.

³⁸³ Message from Prime Minister Wilson to President Johnson, 1 November 1965, *FRUS* 1964-1968, Vol. XXIV: Africa, document 488, Office of the Historian.

have connected them with another people and to assume amongst other nations the separate and equal status to which they are entitled...³⁸⁴

On first glance, any ordinary observer might be excused for thinking this was the beginning of the American Declaration of Independence of 1776. Indeed, among the many declarations of independence that followed America's, the Rhodesian document was the most closely modelled on the U.S. version.³⁸⁵ In his study of global declarations of independence, David Armitage has shown that over half the countries of the world have a declaration of independence and many of these drew directly on the famous American document, which was the forerunner of this 'global phenomenon'.³⁸⁶ Therefore, Ian Smith was by no means the first to utilise the American Declaration of Independence, but in using the U.S. model, Smith did not just declare independence but also employed the imagery and symbolism directly related to the American Colonies' struggle of 1776. In his memoirs, Smith wrote that in preparing Rhodesia's own declaration, his committee had studied documents that had come before and concluded that 'Obviously the most appropriate was the American declaration'.³⁸⁷ While Smith did not elaborate on this comment, parallels are plain to see. The framers of the American declaration and their Rhodesian counterparts, who came nearly two centuries later, were both seeking independence from Great Britain, both had largely been self-governing colonies and both were committees of white men of European ancestry breaking free of the perceived shackles of British rule.

³⁸⁴ Opening paragraph of the Unilateral Declaration of Independence of Southern Rhodesia, 11 November 1965, reproduced in David Armitage, *The Declaration of Independence: A Global History* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2007), 243.

³⁸⁵ Armitage, *The Declaration of Independence*, 135.

³⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 4.

³⁸⁷ Smith, *The Great Betrayal*, 103.

Even before the event, the similarities had not gone unnoticed. If Smith announced Rhodesia's independence, it would be only the second unilateral declaration of independence against Britain in its history, the first being the American colonies in 1776. So familiar was the prospect, that more than two years before Rhodesia's UDI, the British government had investigated potential military plans if such an announcement was made; the resulting document was, ironically, entitled 'Boston Tea Party'.³⁸⁸ The comparison was not overlooked by those in the United States either. Articles in numerous newspapers and journals noted that although Rhodesia's document had borrowed words from the American declaration, many of the central ideals were omitted; most notably Rhodesia's proclamation included no reference to individual rights or the American document's famous concept that all men are created equal. Further, many argued that while the American colonies had rightfully rebelled against the 'tyranny' of the British government due to numerous concerns including taxation and judicial practices, the Rhodesian declaration had at its core the race question: the attempt of 220,000 whites to continue to dominate and oppress approximately four million blacks.³⁸⁹

To be sure, the majority of the world, its governments and its citizens condemned the Rhodesian UDI as an illegal move and opposed continued white minority rule there. Britain imposed sanctions on selected Rhodesian goods, before enacting a full embargo on Rhodesian trade in 1966. That same year, in December 1966, the United Nations invoked

³⁸⁸ Armitage, *The Declaration of Independence*, 136.

³⁸⁹ See for example, Dana Adams Schmidt, 'Rhodesians Borrow Phrases From 1776' in the *New York Times*, 12 November 1965, 1; Robert G. Weisbord, 'On Declaring Independence: U.S.A. and Rhodesia' in *The Crisis*, Vol. 73, No. 3, March 1966, 147-150, 182.

mandatory sanctions for the first time in its history.³⁹⁰ Having decided that the situation in Rhodesia constituted ‘a threat to international peace and security’, the sanctions required all member states to cease importing a number of Rhodesian products including asbestos, iron ore, chrome, pig iron, sugar, tobacco, copper, meats, hides, skins and leather.³⁹¹ As a member of the United Nations, America was expected to adhere to these directives and they did for some years.

However, there was a significant portion of American society that approved of Smith’s rebel regime and worked tirelessly to shore up white Rhodesia and encourage additional support for Smith’s enclave of white supremacy. *The Citizen* informed readers that ‘Since Britain under Churchill defeated Hitler in 1940, no other country has so challenged the admiration of mankind as Rhodesia’.³⁹² *American Opinion* remarked, ‘Three cheers for Rhodesia, and may their spirit be contagious!’³⁹³ The Rhodesian situation was a new focus for those in the United States wishing to maintain white superiority, but support for apartheid South Africa also remained strong. Citizens’ Council leader and editor of its magazine, William J. Simmons, wrote to the *South African Observer* in 1965 to tell its readers that the white South was not giving up:

While you may gain the impression from your press that “all is lost” in the South, I assure you that such is not the case. Our determination to win the fight for survival is not only undiminished, but increases as the tempo of the conflict rises. The majority of white opinion runs strongly in favour of racial integrity. Sooner

³⁹⁰ Good, *U.D.I.*, 207.

³⁹¹ Anthony Lake, *The “Tar Baby” Option: American Foreign Policy Toward Southern Rhodesia* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1976), 287.

³⁹² *The Citizen* 13:6 (Mar., 1969), 4.

³⁹³ *American Opinion* 10:6 (July-Aug., 1967), 72, Hall-Hoag, Box 76.23-11 JBS/RW, Inc. (Unless otherwise noted, all issues of this publication are held in the Hall-Hoag collection.)

or later it will burst the bonds of the propaganda and politics that have confined it.³⁹⁴

Shortly after his letter was printed, the Voting Rights Act was passed but instead of retreating from an internationalist agenda, Simmons made a trip to South Africa. He had been inspired to go following his attendance at the aforementioned United Nations Association of Canada. Simmons recalled in an interview that among the speakers was a South African, named De Villier and ‘he and I were jointly attacked’. Simmons remarked that it was not the first time that southerners with his racial beliefs ‘were accused of being like South Africa’, so he thought ‘if this is the collar we’re going to wear, I want to see what sort of collar it is’. As such, Simmons and his wife, Bobbe, spent three and a half months in South Africa in 1966. While there, they also visited Rhodesia and Simmons said that he formed friendships in both countries with people whom he still kept in ‘very close contact’ with.³⁹⁵

The interview was conducted in 1979, when Rhodesia was on the brink of making the transition to black majority rule. *The Citizen* was still in publication and Simmons’ views had not changed. When his interviewer asked his thoughts on apartheid and the forced removal of black South Africans from the cities, Simmons said that he thought ‘it worked very well’. He explained that because of the ethnic divisions within the black community, they did not want to integrate with each other any more than they wanted to integrate with white South Africans.³⁹⁶ Indeed, Simmons praised the National Party’s concept of ‘separate

³⁹⁴ *South African Observer* 10:10 (May, 1965), 16.

³⁹⁵ Transcript of an interview with William J. Simmons conducted by Orley B. Caudill, 26 June 1979, 87-89. Available at the Civil Rights Digital Library, <http://digilib.usm.edu/u/?coh,6382>.

³⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 88.

development' arguing that it gave blacks 'citizenship in their own tribal lands'. Furthermore, he addressed the negative reporting of pass laws, the protest against which had led to the Sharpeville massacre, saying that they were actually designed to 'keep out all the immigrants' that had been flooding in from independent black African states. Ultimately, he recalled that he and his wife 'felt very much at home there' and 'South Africa reminds me of this country as it probably was fifty years ago'.³⁹⁷ Simmons appeared somewhat nostalgic for the segregated southern way of life.

Simmons was not the only southern segregationist to see a rose-tinted version of the old American South in southern Africa. In his study of Mississippi Senator James O. Eastland, Chris Myers Ash wrote that when it became clear to him in the late 1960s that the segregated South could not be restored, he 'became somewhat wistful about the passing of the old order and sought a return to the kind of life he had known'. Eastland found what he was looking for in Rhodesia. He saw in the illegal country 'an island of stable white minority rule in a sea of Communism, decolonization, youth protest, and other attacks on the traditional world order'. For Eastland, Ian Smith was analogous to George Washington and white Rhodesians were 'latter-day Americans sacrificing for their freedom'. Like Simmons, Eastland chose to visit Rhodesia and South Africa in 1969. On his return he announced, 'The future of Rhodesia is indeed bright'. Also like Simmons, white supremacist states at the southern tip of Africa reminded Eastland of home: 'A close up look at Rhodesia gives one the impression it is much like our native Mississippi', Eastland reported. He did, however, mention that similarities were clearer to see in Sunflower

³⁹⁷ Ibid.

County than in the state as a whole.³⁹⁸ It is no coincidence therefore that Sunflower County was not only where the first Citizens' Council had been established in 1954 but also where Eastland had a vast plantation. Eastland had been 'intimately allied' with the Mississippi Citizens' Council.³⁹⁹ As ardent segregationists it is not surprising that both he and Simmons mourned the death of Jim Crow.

Timing, therefore, was very important in segregationist support for Smith's Rhodesia. Just as the segregated South that they sought to maintain appeared lost to them, Rhodesia provided an impressive model for Americans who were berating the 'interference' of the federal government and the successes and excesses of a 'communist-influenced' civil rights movement. Where southern segregationists had failed, Smith, in their eyes, had triumphed. Ultimately Smith's 'victory' would be a pyrrhic one that would not last, but for fifteen years Rhodesia provided a *cause célèbre* around which American white supremacists could rally. And rally they did.

While segregationists supported Rhodesia, civil rights activists protested the Johnson administration's inaction. The day after UDI, Roy Wilkins, head of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) sent a telegram to President Johnson:

Our national policy and long tradition demand strong and effective supporting steps against the naked racist policy of the white Rhodesian rebels. It is intolerable that five percent of the Rhodesian population, already enjoying more

³⁹⁸ Chris Myers Asch, *The Senator and the Sharecropper: The Freedom Struggles of James O. Eastland and Fannie Lou Hamer* (New York: The New Press, 2008), 262, 264, 265.

³⁹⁹ McMillen, *The Citizens' Council*, 19, 309.

than ten times the annual income of the remaining ninety-five percent, should be permitted in the Twentieth century to continue this racial and economic slavery.⁴⁰⁰

Johnson's assistant secretary of state, James Greenfield, assured Wilkins that the U.S. would not recognise Smith's regime and adhere to the resolutions of the Security Council. Additionally, Greenfield wrote that the U.S. had withdrawn its Consul General from Salisbury to further exemplify American opposition.⁴⁰¹ However, the U.S. consulate in Rhodesia remained open and functioning until Britain's decision to withdraw diplomatic representation in June 1969 forced the U.S. to take the same action in March 1970.⁴⁰²

By the end of 1965, the NAACP adopted a resolution on Rhodesia that boldly challenged white supremacy in the world. The organisation's board of directors demanded that Johnson's government enact 'any sanction within our power', an embargo on all trade, and lend assistance 'to nations which may feel impelled to launch military moves against the Rhodesian regime'.⁴⁰³ Additionally, the NAACP stated that non-white nations had

provided too much evidence of the falseness of the inflammatory doctrine of white supremacy to sit idly by while it is used as a spur to racist demagogues across the world and as a vehicle to oppressive power.⁴⁰⁴

By advocating complete isolation of Rhodesia, supporting the idea of potential military intervention and attacking the theories of racial science which they saw ingrained in Smith's rebellion, the NAACP had thrown down the gauntlet to segregationists.

⁴⁰⁰ Roy Wilkins to President Johnson, 12 November 1965, NAACP Papers, Part III, Box III:A34, Folder 11.

⁴⁰¹ James L. Greenfield to Roy Wilkins, 26 November 1965, in *ibid.*

⁴⁰² 'U.S. May Close Office', *New York Times*, 25 June 1969, 4 and *News and Courier*, 10 March 1970, 1.

⁴⁰³ 'Resolution on Rhodesia Adopted Unanimously by the Executive Committee of the National Board of Directors of the NAACP', 13 December 1965, NAACP Papers, Part III, Box III:A34, Folder 11.

⁴⁰⁴ *Ibid.*

Meanwhile, South Africa, like Rhodesia was entering a period of confidence.⁴⁰⁵ A year after UDI, South African Prime Minister Hendrik Verwoerd was assassinated in the Cape Town House of Assembly. Balthazar John Vorster was elected to be the new prime minister and his time in office was characterised by his outward-looking policies. He assured his white electorate that white South Africa would ‘fight to the end with all that we have got’ but also displayed some flexibility with regard to petty apartheid laws, such as international sporting events, and promoted diplomatic relations with black Africa.⁴⁰⁶ C. David Dalcanton observed that white South Africans began to realise that although most countries still disapproved of apartheid, few were prepared to attempt to force change. Ultimately, it had become clear that the United States and Britain were unwilling to support any serious measures against South Africa in the United Nations, a suspicion further evidenced by the fact that sanctions against Rhodesia had not toppled the Smith government.⁴⁰⁷ As such, American segregationists had two bastions of white supremacy and anti-communism in southern Africa to rally around.

In spite of the achievements of the civil rights movement and the anti-racism legislation of Johnson’s government, an article in the *Chicago Defender* in November 1965 suggested that the whole world was following the ‘U.S. Dixie Script’. ‘Race prejudice Southern style is becoming the pattern of race prejudice for the world’, Gordon Hancock wrote. Apartheid in South Africa was ‘largely fashioned after the “Apartheid” of the Southern United States’,

⁴⁰⁵ The latter half of the 1960s in South Africa has been seen as the beginning of a period of confidence by a number of scholars. See, for instance, Geldenhuys, *The Diplomacy of Isolation*, 34 and C. David Dalcanton, ‘Vorster and the Politics of Confidence, 1966-1974’, *African Affairs* 75, no. 299 (Apr., 1976): 163-181.

⁴⁰⁶ Barber and Barrett, *South Africa’s Foreign Policy*, 2; Geldenhuys, *The Diplomacy of Isolation*, 34.

⁴⁰⁷ Dalcanton, ‘Vorster and the Politics of Confidence’, 165.

Hancock argued, and there were existing organisations with one common purpose – ‘to hold the Negro back and shackle him in his race toward the goal of full citizenship’. Hancock wrote that the organisations were the Citizens’ Council, the John Birch Society, the Ku Klux Klan and Nazism.⁴⁰⁸ While the publications of the Citizens’ Council and S. E. D. Brown have already been established, the John Birch Society’s publication, *American Opinion* had been, from its inception a staunch supporter of white Africa and South Africa in particular, viewing it as the anti-communist stronghold in Africa.

Formed in 1958 by Robert Welch, a retired candy manufacturer, the Massachusetts-based John Birch Society (JBS) was a radical, paranoid, right-wing organisation that was nothing less than obsessed with the perceived international communist threat. A 1961 article in *Life* magazine observed that the JBS had its roots in ‘the frustration that many Americans feel at seeing the nation baffled, thwarted and humiliated in the cold war’.⁴⁰⁹ Welch shot to notoriety when he charged that powerful figures in the U.S. government, including President Dwight Eisenhower and Chief Justice Earl Warren were members of the Communist Party and by the early 1960s the JBS had approximately 60,000 members in chapters all over the United States.⁴¹⁰ A contemporary news reporter, Gene Grove, explained that the JBS’s sudden rise was due to the fact that it filled a void. Senator Joseph McCarthy’s death in 1957 had left the extreme anti-communists with no rallying point.

⁴⁰⁸ Gordon Hancock, ‘World Racism Following The U.S. Dixie Script?’, *Chicago Defender*, 27 November 1965.

⁴⁰⁹ ‘The John Birch Society: patriotic or irresponsible, it is a subject of controversy’, *Life* 50, no 19, 12 May 1961, 125.

⁴¹⁰ Although Welch never revealed membership figures, historians have agreed that this figure was representative of the JBS membership during the peak of its popularity in the early 1960s. See Lisa McGirr, *Suburban Warriors: The Origins of the New American Right* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001), 63, 76; Ronald Lora and William H. Longton (eds.), *The Conservative Press in Twentieth Century America* (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1999), 504.

Welch had ‘a wide acquaintance in conservative circles, a forceful personality’ and a magazine in which to print his ideas. Grove noted that he was not publicly identified as an anti-Semite, a racist, or an anti-Catholic and thus was not ‘tarred with any of the brushes which contaminate so many of the leaders of the radical right’.⁴¹¹ One must wonder whether Grove actually read an issue of *American Opinion*; it was often racist, anti-Semitic and wildly conspiratorial. Welch had published articles on racial science by Wesley George and his publication’s tone can largely be summed up by the way in which it reported the Sharpeville massacre in 1960:

137 policemen, isolated by the cutting of their telephone wires and surrounded by 20,000 frenzied savages armed with clubs, knives, and revolvers, having used tear gas in vain and being the targets of pistol-fire from the mob, opened fire themselves and killed fifty-eight of the insurgents before the rest ran away. This set off screams of indignation in our Communist-influenced press, and our State Department spat at South Africa in protest at the denial of the blacks’ civil right to stomp white men to a pulp when disinclined to eat them.⁴¹²

It is the kind of report one would expect to read in KKK literature rather than a supposed anti-communist journal. To be sure, much of Welch’s publication was shocking; it certainly had some ultra-right wing contributors (including anti-Semites and Holocaust deniers as well as fantasists who charged the U.S. president of communist subversion) and it did not always create good publicity. However, it did become a popular organisation and boasted chapters all over the United States. In terms of southern support, Alfred O. Hero explained that ‘the newly urbanized Southern working class has seemed especially open to leadership by charismatic and authoritarian figures who would appeal to their anxieties and insecurities with dogmatic, oversimplified “solutions”’. Welch certainly fit the bill. His

⁴¹¹ Gene Grove, *Inside the John Birch Society* (New York: Fawcett Publications, 1961), 39.

⁴¹² *American Opinion* 3:7 (July-Aug-Sep., 1960): 95, Hall-Hoag, MS.76.23, Box 76.23-11. (Unless noted otherwise, all *American Opinion* issues are located in the Hall Hoag Collection).

McCarthyite claims that communist infiltration was taking place at every level of American social, political and economic life, along with the well-known scapegoats employed, provided a visible figure against which to fight. Hero also thought that across America, those who had recently moved up into the middle class, and who were particularly concerned with 'social acceptance', tended to be 'more authoritarian' and thus the JBS received the majority of its financial support from these status-anxious newly prosperous people.⁴¹³ Lisa McGirr also exemplified how and why the John Birch Society was able to flourish so successfully and so quickly. Like in the South, the JBS filled a void in the California neighbourhoods McGirr studied. She noted that while many people who formed and joined JBS chapters in the West did not necessarily share the paranoid and conspiratorial theories of Welch, 'they saw the society as the only organized voice for the right wing'.⁴¹⁴ Neil McMillen noted that the Council movement did not have a particular authority figure with 'sufficient power to dictate policy'. President Roy Harris was, in McMillen's estimation, 'little more than a figurehead' and even the most powerful staff member, William Simmons, 'never presumed to speak in anything but general terms for the organization's rank and file'.⁴¹⁵ Arguably when massive resistance failed, some may have desired a strong-willed leader to follow more than ever before. The JBS, then, managed to attract supporters in every corner of the United States by being organised. Ronald Lora and William Longton argued that by 'avoiding public exposure for nearly two years, the Birch Society quickly achieved a dominant position among the competing organizations emerging as the core of the radical Right'.⁴¹⁶

⁴¹³ Hero, *The Southerner and World Affairs*, 354.

⁴¹⁴ McGirr, *Suburban Warriors*, 10.

⁴¹⁵ McMillen, *The Citizens' Council*, 160.

⁴¹⁶ Lora and Longton, *The Conservative Press in Twentieth-Century America*, 503.

With the benefit of hindsight, most scholars condemn the John Birch Society as a fringe, extremist organisation with a membership of paranoid conspirators producing publications filled with insupportable claims, racism and anti-Semitism. In fact, a number of contemporary critics charged the JBS with the same crimes.⁴¹⁷ Indeed, the same is frequently (and deservedly) said for any number of the other right-wing organisations that appear in this thesis. That said *American Opinion* serves a useful purpose in constructing the burgeoning international linkages of white supremacists. As an anti-communist organisation the JBS was necessarily internationalist in scope, scouring the world nervously for the next communist attack. As such, the JBS did not tend to report on South Africa and Rhodesia more often than anywhere else, but they perceived them to be bastions against communism on an increasingly red continent and so were certainly two significant nations. As Hancock wrote in the *Chicago Defender*, taken together, the Citizens' Council and the JBS created quite a substantial pro-apartheid lobby.

In June 1965, journalist Drew Pearson reported that Welch had revealed to him the necessity of taking the JBS outside national borders in order to 'preach the John Birch gospel'. Recruits were signing up in record numbers in the U.S., Welch claimed, and chapters were organising in Australia, Brazil and South Africa. While evidence of JBS chapters in South Africa has not been found, the English-language press in South Africa reportedly attacked Vorster in 1967 for his alleged 'association with racist elements of the

⁴¹⁷ For example, William F. Buckley and his *National Review* were aligned with Welch until he called the president a communist and thus, in Buckley's view, damaged the conservative movement.

Church League of America and the U.S. John Birch Society'.⁴¹⁸ Pearson also noted that Welch sought to refurbish the JBS's image by becoming slightly less fanatical and, where the organisation had previously been semi-secretive, Welch was now beginning to court the press.⁴¹⁹ The tone of the articles in *American Opinion* did not seem to differ substantially from those printed during the first half of the 1960s but the international scope of the journal was demonstrated by its articles and contributors. Eric D. Butler, of the Australian League of Rights, a group described by Welch as Australia's 'most significant' anti-communist group contributed quite regularly to *American Opinion*. He had written an article on Rhodesia following a trip there. It included pictures of gruesome black on black violence to exemplify the author's argument that black nationalists were stirring up trouble. Before that, he argued, race relations between blacks and whites in Rhodesia had always been good.⁴²⁰ The scaremongering that Welch had used when he first launched the organisation was still a part of, not only *American Opinion*, but also similar anti-communist groups in the Anglo-Saxon world. Welch's own assessment of Rhodesia ignored the race question. He judged that 'Rhodesians [were] taking a determined stand against their enemies, in a political and military sense.' Oddly enough, some of what Welch wrote did not differ greatly from the U.S. State Department's assessment around the period of UDI. He rubbished the 'loud-mouthed African states' for attacking Rhodesia while in Washington, policymakers had been concerned about 'hot-headed' African delegations in the United Nations. He also concluded, like Johnson's government, that Rhodesia was likely to withstand sanctions.⁴²¹

⁴¹⁸ *Miami News*, 19 January 1967, 10 and *Tri-City Herald* (Washington) 20 January 1967, 13.

⁴¹⁹ Drew Pearson, 'Bircher Found Hard at Work', *Tuscaloosa News*, 3 June 1965, 4.

⁴²⁰ *American Opinion*, 9:2 (Feb., 1966), 11-17.

⁴²¹ *American Opinion* 9:2 (Feb., 1966), 47-48.

One of the JBS's biggest coups was having regular contributions from George S. Schuyler, an African American who, like Max Yergan, had been liberal and worked with the NAACP before the McCarthy era inspired in him a rapid swing to the right. Regular columns entitled 'From Africa' gave *American Opinion* readers a damning indictment of black Africa from a black American. His arguments, as were most in the JBS publication, were based on the communist threat: 'The Communist conspirators are delighted over their successful inroads in Black Africa', Schuyler wrote. Furthermore, the 'Marxist pack in the Organization of African Unity' was going to 'howl for the blood of white-ruled Southern Africa'.⁴²² Each year, in the summer issue of *American Opinion* the annual 'scoreboard' would be printed; this scored a country on communist takeover and judged whether it had gone up or down from the previous year. Inevitably it went up, as the communist threat, perceived by Welch, became greater and greater. Indeed, Pearson noted in his article that when he went into Welch's office, the JBS leader had a map which was covered in varying shades of reds and pinks, denoting how complete the communist takeover in each country was. Pearson wrote that 'Even the most right-wing dictatorships are colored light pink'.⁴²³ When Schuyler reported on South Africa in 1970's scoreboard, it was in very favourable terms, but it was also largely correct:

During the year [South Africa] has flouted its traducers and enemies, and flaunted its growing industrial, commercial, financial, and military power. It has perfected its much-denounced system of *apartheid* with Bantustans, border industries, and growing mass housing for the poor. Its expanding fleet and air force is prepared to challenge the Soviet naval expansion in the Indian Ocean...The establishment of diplomatic relations with black countries of

⁴²² *American Opinion* 10:10 (Dec., 1967), 57-58.

⁴²³ *Tuscaloosa News*, 3 June 1965, 4.

southern Africa has strengthened the buffer against Communist invasion...The last remaining (overt) Communists have been detained or forced into exile.⁴²⁴

Schuyler was basically correct in his assumption that white South Africa was confident and stable. After Vorster became South Africa's prime minister trade with black African nations increased because of South Africa's economic and technological strength. South Africa's foreign minister, Dr H. Muller, defined South Africa not as a separate entity in the continent and not only a country '*in Africa but of Africa*'.⁴²⁵

However, Vorster's outward looking policies were not appreciated by everyone in the National Party and a split between *verligte* (those willing to accept some of Vorster's détente policies) and *verkrampte* (those opposed to any reforms, especially those regarding racial matters) factions came to a head in 1969. Vorster insisted on implementing his new sports policy, which included non-whites taking part in the country's Olympic team and welcoming integrated overseas sports teams. The *verkramptes*, led by Albert Hertzog opposed it in well-versed anti-miscegenation terms: Rugby matches are associated with eating and dancing parties and social mixing where young men and women will associate with non-whites.' Vorster called an early election for 1970 with the intention of getting rid of the *verkrampte* elements.⁴²⁶ Although Hertzog had opposed Vorster's inclusion of English-speakers in the party, S. E. D. Brown and his *South African Observer* played quite a direct role in the party split and although he was not an Afrikaner, he spoke for the Hertzog faction. A report from Cape Town for the *Christian Science Monitor* revealed that 'For some time Mr. Brown and the South African Observer dominated conversation in the

⁴²⁴ *American Opinion* 13:7 (July-Aug., 1970), 54.

⁴²⁵ Dalcanton, 'Vorster and the Politics of Confidence', 166.

⁴²⁶ *Ibid.*, 174.

lobbies of Parliament.⁴²⁷ In 1967 Vorster berated the *South African Observer* for singling out members of the National Party and accusing them of being liberals and daily Afrikaans newspapers ran the story condemning Brown's journal.⁴²⁸ Although Brown's journal remained defiant, the obituary written by his family noted that Vorster's condemnation of the journal caused problems. Nevertheless, it noted that 'over the years the *S.A. Observer* had recovered many of the subscribers lost after 1966, and found new ones'.⁴²⁹

He certainly appeared to have maintained American readers. In September 1967, Revilo P. Oliver, an ultra-right wing professor of classics at the University of Illinois and semi-regular contributor to the *South African Observer* and *American Opinion* wrote to Brown with words of support. 'I do not know how many subscribers [the journal] has in the United States', Oliver wrote, 'but I do know that the "South African Observer" is read by every American who is a serious student of African affairs'. Furthermore, he stated that it was 'the *only* South African publication that is widely read and profoundly respected by Americans'.⁴³⁰ Other Americans also wrote to give Brown support in his time of need. Retired Lieutenant General of the U.S. air force, George E. Stratemeyer, from Florida wrote an open letter to Vorster saying that South Africa had 'many thousands of friends' in the U.S. in spite of the fact that the country was condemned by the press. 'In my opinion, Stratemeyer wrote, 'this has been brought about by S. E. D. Brown and his "South African Observer" which is read extensively throughout our country'. He pleaded with Vorster to

⁴²⁷ 'Afrikaners wage fight for power', *Christian Science Monitor*, 27 July 1967, 2.

⁴²⁸ *South African Observer* 12:12 (Sep., 1967): 1.

⁴²⁹ *Ibid.*, 33:12 (Jan., 1991): 1

⁴³⁰ *South African Observer* 12:12 (Sep. 1967): 14.

commend, not condemn, Brown.⁴³¹ In the following issue, Brown printed another long, open letter to Vorster from Peggy Smith in New Jersey. In her opinion Brown's publication was the only 'true voice of conservatism and freedom' coming out of South Africa. 'When you attack S. E. D. Brown, you attack *all* of us', Smith wrote.⁴³² These writers asserted that the *South African Observer* was the source of all African knowledge and, although Brown did begin to write more of his own editorials in the late 1960s, he still reprinted a lot of articles from American publications. In fact, given the bad press Brown received after his attack on the National Party, it would not be surprising if he ended up with more readers in America than South Africa.

In terms of pro-white southern Africa support in the United States, the Citizens' Council remained one of South Africa and Rhodesia's biggest supporters. To assist them in their efforts, the preference of many Americans for non-intervention in other states' affairs gave segregationists an advantage: people may not like apartheid but they were also unwilling to involve themselves in South Africa's domestic affairs. In December 1967, journalist Cyrus L. Sulzberger wrote an article entitled 'Pipe Down on South Africa'. In arguing that the U.S. should stay out of South Africa's domestic issues, Sulzberger wrote:

This country has a race policy which I personally find abhorrent and absurd. It is also exceedingly arbitrary in applying justice to white opponents, but that is South Africa's affair, not ours. We dislike Poland's ideology and yet we entertain polite relations. We dislike Spain's ideology but keep military bases there. We dislike Portugal's ideology – and stay allied.⁴³³

⁴³¹ Ibid., 13:1 (Oct., 1967): 13,

⁴³² Ibid., 13:2 (Nov., 1967): 6.

⁴³³ C. L. Sulzberger, 'Pipe Down on South Africa', *Richmond Times-Dispatch*, 16 December 1969.

Sulzberger's argument very closely echoed that of Secretary of State Dean Rusk, the Europeanist who fought against Africanist G. Mennen Williams over adopting sanctions against South Africa. Both he and Sulzberger noted the arbitrary way in which foreign policy was directed by the U.S. government. The U.S. government, however, did, to a large degree, stay out of South African affairs. In 1967 Johnson extended for ten years the mutually beneficial U.S.-South Africa atomic energy agreement; in 1970, the U.S. delegation to the U.N. under Richard Nixon (1969-1974) abstained from a Security Council resolution which called on all countries to strengthen their commitment to the arms embargo against South Africa; the U.S. also abstained from voting on a U.N. General Assembly resolution in 1973 which recognised the South West Africa People's Organization as the official representative of Namibia (South West Africa); and under Gerald Ford (1974-1977) the U.S., Britain and France vetoed a 1974 draft Security Council resolution recommending South Africa's expulsion from the U.N.⁴³⁴

The Citizens' Council, however, was not pleased with U.S. foreign policy. In January 1969 Simmons wrote that the American government had been conducting an 'unforgivable cold war against our friends in South Africa and Rhodesia' for twenty years.⁴³⁵ Simmons argued that a 'liberal establishment' had led to a 'bankrupt foreign policy' which punished America's 'friends' and rewarded its 'enemies'. Referring to inner city race riots which took place in the latter half of the 1960s, Simmons wrote that they were not directly caused by 'black mobs' but by a white liberal establishment that 'awakened the mobs, then aroused

⁴³⁴ Mokoena, *South Africa and the United States*, 16-18.

⁴³⁵ *The Citizen* 13:4 (Jan., 1969): 11.

them, and finally refused to contain them'.⁴³⁶ Simmons revealed the oft-used claim of 'outside agitators' to explain African American protest; during the civil rights era northern outsiders were to blame for stirring up trouble among southern blacks and now, in the late 1960s, the federal government was to blame for race riots since they 'awakened' black people to begin with. The argument is an old segregationist one, and one that apartheid proponents used as well – that African Americans were perfectly content and it was external forces that caused friction.

The Citizens' Council also asserted that both black and white Americans would be much happier and better off with an Ian Smith to lead the United States. Similarly mirroring the apartheid governments of southern Africa, Simmons addressed the rise of black power by arguing that black Americans and Africans were simply incapable of taking on positions of power and carrying out their duties fairly and justly: 'it should...be remembered that history – especially modern African history – demonstrates that blacks suffer most under Black Power'. For Simmons the choice of voters – now that African Americans could utilise the franchise – was between black politicians who would not protect 'the political, social and financial stability of their communities' or 'responsible white leaders who will enforce the law impartially and maintain local stability' for all citizens 'as they have done in the past'.⁴³⁷ During massive resistance segregationists claimed that white politicians and groups like the Citizens' Council protected both white and black citizens and that black Africans were incapable of self-rule; fifteen years later, Simmons was using the same rhetoric. In Rhodesia, he claimed, black Africans understood this and 'the bantu chiefs and

⁴³⁶ Ibid., 12:10 (July-Aug., 1968): 16-17.

⁴³⁷ *The Citizen* 13:9 (June, 1969): 5-6.

headmen support Prime Minister Ian Smith in preference to Black Power'. As such, Simmons argued that what America needed was 'more Ian Smiths' to replace 'mealy-mouthed white politicians spouting clichés'.⁴³⁸ The Rhodesian prime minister was regarded as a pioneering figure by the Citizens' Council; but he was almost universally condemned. As such, the case of Rhodesia really captured segregationists' attention. South Africa, on the other hand was thriving under Vorster.

In June 1972 *The Citizen* reprinted an article of a speech made by South Africa's ambassador to the United States, J. S. F. Botha. The content spoke of the U.S.-South Africa 'special relationship' which connected people of the two countries. It was, therefore, similar to the articles that the Council's previous publication, *The Citizens' Council*, favoured. Botha stated that the average South African did not see America as a foreign country. Rather, 'he readily feels at home' in the U.S.⁴³⁹ Certainly the aforementioned visits of Simmons and Eastland reflected the same feeling by (segregationist) Americans about southern Africa. Botha spoke of the common history shared by Americans and South Africans: their forefathers both settled new lands and the pioneers came from the same countries of Western Europe. He boasted of famous Americans, including President Herbert Hoover and Mark Twain who had worked and lectured in South Africa respectively. As with many South African politicians, Botha did not fail to mention the military alliance, in which 'South Africans and Americans have fought side by side in the two World Wars and in Korea'.⁴⁴⁰ It was never a point of concern that a number of Afrikaners, including Malan, were sympathetic towards the Nazis rather than the allied

⁴³⁸ Ibid., 6.

⁴³⁹ *The Citizen* 16:9 (June, 1972): 4.

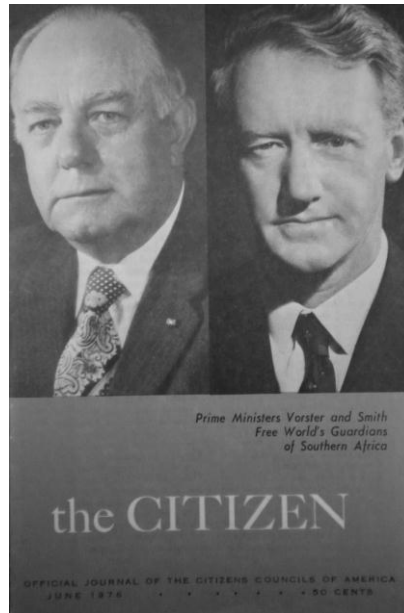
⁴⁴⁰ Ibid., 4-5.

forces during World War II and many even joined the German war effort by way of South West Africa⁴⁴¹ The only area that South Africa and the U.S. really diverged, Botha argued, was on the issue of race. Indeed, Botha stated that the composition of the racial make-up of the two countries obviated any comparison and, therefore, because this was not properly understood in the U.S., South Africa was ‘judged, quite wrongly’. Rather, Botha argued that separate development was the only solution for a country with a populace made up not only of black and white, but a host of divisions within the black population.⁴⁴² Oddly enough, the Afrikaner National Party did not find it necessary to remove forcibly English-speaking South Africans to their own ‘homeland’ as well.

From the end of massive resistance the Citizens’ Council had been building up to a June 1976 issue of *The Citizen* that was almost entirely devoted to South African Prime Minister John Vorster and Rhodesian Prime Minister Ian Smith. The cover revealed the two heroes of segregationists in the American South:

⁴⁴¹ Brian M. Du Toit, ‘The Far Right in Current South African Politics’, *Journal of Modern African Studies* 29, no. 4 (Dec., 1991): 631.

⁴⁴² *The Citizen* 16:9 (June, 1972): 9.



The Citizen, Vol. 21, No. 9, June 1976

George W. Shannon, who took over from Simmons as editor of *The Citizen* wrote a decade after UDI:

Students may search in vain for a reason why the United States, an American nation founded by white European immigrants and celebrating the 200th anniversary of its Declaration of Independence from Great Britain, would have condemned Rhodesia...for having followed in its path.⁴⁴³

In Shannon's opinion, this question was more pertinent to his contemporaries than future scholars since those in the present 'may still have time to reverse the course on which we have embarked'.⁴⁴⁴ Segregationist Americans would not be able to forestall the transition to black majority rule in Rhodesia any more than they could reverse the changes that had swept across the United States – and especially the American South – in the twenty years since the *Brown* decision. Given the major changes in American society and law over the

⁴⁴³ *The Citizen* 21:9 (June, 1976), 4.

⁴⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 5.

previous two decades, Shannon must have realised – however reluctantly – that the changes to race relations and racial equality in the United States could not be reversed regardless of segregationists’ best efforts. In fact, such a realisation had undoubtedly been dawning on segregationist Americans for quite some time. If, in the early 1960s, they still thought that it was possible to win their battle for white supremacy, by the time of Rhodesia’s UDI at the end of 1965, massive resistance had clearly failed. Yet ten years later, in the mid-1970s, the Citizens’ Council still hoped that the inexorable racial changes could be reversed.

Chapter Five

Organised Assistance: Rhodesia's American Friends, 1965-1975

As Rhodesia celebrates yet another year since her Unilateral Declaration of Independence...it is time to pay tribute to the brave anti-communist people who have heroically held fort in that wonderful country.

— American Friends of Rhodesia newsletter, November 1972

Standing in stark contrast to the racial developments that had swept across the United States in the 1950s and 1960s was a little land-locked country in southern Africa. Ian Smith's white-ruled Rhodesia did not just capture the imagination of southern segregationists; further afield, a number of northern American groups sprung into action in the wake of UDI and worked to support and encourage the white supremacist Rhodesian Front government. This chapter examines American support for Rhodesia, from quickly-organised groups to highly influential congressmen and senators. The extraordinary support for Rhodesia in the United States exemplifies the expansion of segregationist foreign policy, the further blending of white supremacist and anti-communist agendas and, in the main, the continuation of Cold War priorities over human rights issues in southern Africa for subsequent U.S. administrations.

Alongside well established groups such as the Citizens' Council and the John Birch Society, a whole host of new organisations emerged with the single focus of Rhodesia as their *raison d'être*. For example, the American Friends of Rhodesia, the Massachusetts Friends of Rhodesia and the ambiguously-named American-Southern Africa Council and the American-African Affairs Association all emerged in the aftermath of Rhodesian UDI

to support an increasingly isolated white southern Africa. Many other newly formed groups were small organisations with intriguing names and acronyms. Approximately four months after UDI, in March 1966, segregationist columnist James J. Kilpatrick wrote:

Some 15 organizations have sprung into being spontaneously, among them Friends in America of Independence for Rhodesia (FAIR), the Rhodesian Independence Gung Ho Troops (RIGHT) and Hooray for Ian Smith, Titan of Rhodesian Yearnings (HISTORY!).⁴⁴⁵

He observed that ‘While most of these are in the late confederacy, where the spirit of independence still grows like goldenrod, friendly mail comes from all over.’⁴⁴⁶ The groups that Kilpatrick referred to were relatively short-lived, but groups outside the American South proved to be far more influential and long-lasting, creating significant links with Rhodesian officials as well as American politicians who supported Ian Smith’s illegal country. These single issue focus groups exemplified the efforts of groups like the Citizens’ Council to put the defence of white southern Africa on the agenda of American citizens. From the beginning of the civil rights struggle in the United States, opponents of black equality had emphasised the need to view the race question in a national and international context. Now their white adversaries were continuing to do the same thing.

The New England-based American Friends of Rhodesia (AFOR) founded by Major E. William Gaedtke in 1966, was one of the leading organisations in the pro-Rhodesia struggle that emerged in the United States. According to Gaedtke, AFOR functioned ‘in an effort to counteract liberal propaganda on Rhodesia and to stimulate interest and appreciation for the

⁴⁴⁵ James J. Kilpatrick, ‘Rhodesia No Threat To African Peace’, *Evening Independent* (St. Petersburg, Florida), 19 March 1966, 8-A.

⁴⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

Rhodesian struggle'. 'Rhodesia have been at our side in three world wars – World War I, World War II, and Korea', he wrote, adding that 'thousands of Rhodesians have given their lives in defense of liberty – yours and theirs'.⁴⁴⁷ From the mid-1950s segregationist organisations had complained about the 'liberal' media and the press 'iron curtain'. The publications discussed in the previous chapters attempted to remedy this perceived problem by creating propaganda of their own; now AFOR did the same thing. By drawing on the countries' past military alliances, Gaedtke invoked a sense of duty. Rhodesia had consistently supported the United States and the allied forces, he argued, and now Americans should stand by Rhodesia, not simply to repay a favour, but because it was the right thing to do. Indeed, Smith was very proud of his own service as an RAF pilot in World War II and often repeated that Rhodesia had helped those that now shunned her. Having been severely injured and hospitalised after hitting a bomb shelter on take-off in Egypt, and having his spitfire shot down by German anti-aircraft fire in Italy, Smith finally made it to Britain, where, he wrote, he had wanted to be since the outbreak of war. Smith described himself and his comrades as 'Britishers' and thus felt that Rhodesians, though now independent, had been forced to take such a step because Britain had lost its way.⁴⁴⁸ Rhodesians saw themselves as the true Englishmen and sought to maintain this English enclave in southern Africa rather than allow black Africans to take control. A folk tune called 'The U.D.I. Song' became very popular in Salisbury, Rhodesia, just months after the country's illegal move to independence and exemplifies this claim to be the righteous

⁴⁴⁷ American Friends of Rhodesia newsletter, September 1969, Hall-Hoag Box 76.46-1, Folder HH1040.

⁴⁴⁸ Smith, *The Great Betrayal*, 12-14, 23.

Englishmen: ‘And you can call us rebels and you can call us rogues/We were founded by an Englishmen by the name of Cecil Rhodes’ went the defiant lyrics.⁴⁴⁹

Defiant as white Rhodesians appeared to be, they were almost universally condemned and thus were keen to cultivate alliances overseas. As such, Gaedtke’s praise for Rhodesia was duly noted and Smith’s government appeared pleased to have been offered such a determined hand of friendship. Having ‘helped to keep Rhodesia in the free world’, AFOR received a Citation of Appreciation and the Rhodesian Independence Award from Ian Smith for its ‘unfaltering support and work for Rhodesia and her continued Independence’.⁴⁵⁰ In a note to Gaedtke and his organisation, which was reprinted in newsletters a number of times, Ian Smith wrote:

I trust that soon our joint efforts will restore the former warm friendship that had, until lately, always existed between the Governments of the United States and Rhodesia. Warm friendship still continues between our peoples. Again I thank you and all our American friends who are making such efforts to sustain us in our efforts to maintain our national freedom and independence against the evil machinations of those who, for their own purposes, are trying to destroy Rhodesia by economic warfare. Rhodesians will not let you down because we are going to maintain our national freedom and independence.⁴⁵¹

White Rhodesians, especially at the governmental level, were far more receptive to American support, campaigning and declarations of friendship than South Africans. In South Africa, American friendship had been mainly limited to the English-speaking. The intense nationalism of Afrikaners meant that the desire to protect their distinct identity took precedence over a concept of international white ‘brotherhood’ at this time. Furthermore, in

⁴⁴⁹ ‘Letter from Salisbury’, *The New Yorker*, 12 November 1966, 139.

⁴⁵⁰ American Friends of Rhodesia, *Rhodesian News*, August 1968, Hall-Hoag, Box 76.46-1, Folder HH1040.

⁴⁵¹ American Friends of Rhodesia, *Editorial Briefs*, October 1968, in *ibid*.

the latter half of the 1960s, apartheid South Africa was not in the kind of precarious situation that white Rhodesia found itself in. The National Party had firm control of South Africa and despite international criticism – which had become regular at the United Nations but without real force to impel change – the collapse of the apartheid regime was still more than two decades away. White Rhodesians, however, provided a far more analogous model to white Americans within the Anglo Saxon, Pan-Europeanist context that segregationists were trying to create.

The American Friends of Rhodesia organised celebrations each year to mark Rhodesia's UDI, sent out postcards with messages of support for Rhodesia, told members to boycott British goods and even organised trips to the country. Just under a year after UDI, a contingent of AFOR representatives paid a three-week visit to Rhodesia, at their own expense. Unsurprisingly, this visit was given great attention by *Rhodesian Commentary*, which was published fortnightly by the Rhodesian Ministry of Information, Immigration and Tourism in Salisbury and distributed both domestically and overseas.⁴⁵² In his study of American policy toward Rhodesia, Anthony Lake, a former diplomat, foreign service officer and government advisor, wrote that AFOR was 'the most effective of the pro-Smith groups'. It churned out information glorifying Rhodesia, ensured that everything it produced made its way to any pro-Smith groups in America and organised tours of Rhodesia for sympathetic Americans.⁴⁵³ In its report of the visit, *Rhodesian Commentary* noted that the American Friends of Rhodesia had branches in a number of U.S. states and a membership of between 8,000 and 10,000. The tourists had reportedly been 'greatly

⁴⁵² *Rhodesian Commentary* 1, no.18, 19 September 1966, 1, Hall-Hoag, Box 76.46-5, Folder HH2486.

⁴⁵³ Lake, *The "Tar Baby" Option*, 104.

impressed with the African standard of living' and contrasted it to the slums in Washington, D.C. that 'an African would be ashamed to live in' and that stood 'practically a stone's throw from the Senate'.⁴⁵⁴ Criticism of northern inner cities was a standard trope of segregationist rhetoric and by contrasting Rhodesia's black residential areas so favourably against the United States' capital city, *Rhodesian Commentary* and AFOR argued that Rhodesia's Africans were far better off than African American citizens. This was propaganda at its best and clearly intended to strengthen links between Rhodesia and America. The article continued to note that in each place the American guests visited in Rhodesia, 'they have created friendships – a tangible link now with Rhodesia and the growing number of friends in America'. Furthermore, the Rhodesian Minister of Information, Immigration and Tourism, Jack Howman, said to the American visitors:

We will need all the support we can get for many years to come. We have not taken on this war just for self-preservation. We have taken this action because we believe we have a part to play in the world. We have nothing to hide and we have much to be proud of.⁴⁵⁵

In their comments of thanks, both Smith and Howman suggested that Rhodesians were in need of the support of people in the United States and this would have been music to the ears of many a pro-Smith American. For the best part of a decade American segregationists had been reaching out to international allies, trying to find affirmation of their beliefs and ways of life elsewhere and seeking confirmation that they too had an important role to play in how the post-World War II world would be shaped racially, socially and politically. Now the readers of these publications in the United States were being rewarded and buoyed by

⁴⁵⁴ *Rhodesian Commentary* 1, no. 18, 19 September 1966, 1, Hall-Hoag, Box 76.46-5, Folder HH2486.

⁴⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 4.

the knowledge that they too were needed and that their actions might assist Rhodesia and keep that country safe from the perceived catastrophe of black rule and the communist take-over that would surely accompany it.

Reliable information on AFOR's membership and finances has proven unattainable. While the organisation's newsletters undoubtedly included a degree of boosterish rhetoric, AFOR did appear to have fairly considerable reach within the United States and, significantly, perhaps a greater reach in Rhodesia as well as quite a close relationship with the Rhodesian government through its Ministry of Information. It was this that no doubt led to AFOR's growth over the latter half of the 1960s. A lengthy article in *The New Yorker* in November 1966, entitled 'Letter from Salisbury', explained that AFOR was a group 'that the Ministry of Information works hard to promote'.⁴⁵⁶ The fact that the Rhodesian government cultivated an alliance with AFOR suggests that it was one of the more influential pro-Rhodesia lobbies in the U.S. and one which the Rhodesian Ministry of Information concluded had the ability to combat at least some of the negative propaganda that Rhodesia sought to challenge abroad. However, Calvin Trillin, the author of *The New Yorker* article, came to the conclusion that the Smith regime 'no longer seems to be making a serious attempt to influence mainstream opinion in countries such as the United States and Canada' and instead focused largely on internal propaganda.⁴⁵⁷ However, writing just one year after UDI, the author was a little premature in his assessment. In fact the Rhodesian Information Service would continue disseminating propaganda throughout America from its Washington, D.C. office and would work more closely with AFOR and other organisations

⁴⁵⁶ 'Letter from Salisbury', *The New Yorker*, 12 November 1966, 168.

⁴⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 170.

as the 1960s progressed. Indeed, by the end of the decade, AFOR would become an umbrella organisation for a whole host of pro-Rhodesian groups.

In March 1968 an exiled, Iowa-born Bishop of the Methodist Church in Rhodesia told the *Chicago Daily Defender* that the American Friends of Rhodesia had 180 chapters across the United States. Civil rights advocate Bishop Ralph E. Dodge explained the ‘phenomenon’ of AFOR as follows:

The cause of civil rights in the U.S. has moved forward, to the alarm of some and the satisfaction of others. The pattern of discrimination in this country appears to face ultimate defeat. Those whose emotions have not changed, are turning their attention to another part of the world where the white minority still has absolute power.⁴⁵⁸

Like *Rhodesian Commentary*’s claim that AFOR had up to 10,000 members by the autumn of 1966, Bishop Dodge’s claim that AFOR had 180 chapters cannot be verified. However, while the Rhodesian government had something to gain by exaggerating the size and scope of its American support, Bishop Dodge, in his quest for racial equality in Rhodesia would, if anything, play down AFOR’s influence. The fact that he did not suggests that Dodge saw AFOR as a quickly-growing organisation that posed a threat to people like him, who sought to expose Rhodesian racism, not cover it up. The success of the American Friends of Rhodesia in the United States reflects the fact that the organisation filled a void; it would have appeared as an attractive outlet for a number of Americans who felt sympathy towards Smith’s Rhodesia.

⁴⁵⁸ Kay Leslie, ‘Christians of U.S. Are Scored’, *Chicago Daily Defender*, 9 March 1968, 1. According to the article, Bishop Dodge was expelled from Rhodesia by the Smith government ‘three years ago’. No reason was given but the day before he was served with deportation papers, Dodge had spoken about racism in Rhodesia on a television broadcast. Since then he had administered the affairs of his church from neighbouring Zambia.

Interestingly, Trillin's article noted that the Rhodesian government 'has been particularly successful at home in convincing Rhodesians of the support they enjoy abroad'.⁴⁵⁹ It was, undoubtedly, important for Smith to maintain the morale of such a small minority of whites in his country and American efforts over the years of his premiership made this easier for him to do. As such, Smith and his government positively lapped up the support of American organisations that proliferated after UDI and even formed a quasi-governmental body called the Friends of Rhodesia Trust to 'handle the largesse of foreign friends'.⁴⁶⁰ AFOR quickly proved that its members were more than just cheerleaders for the Rhodesian cause when they embarked on a tour of Rhodesia in the early autumn of 1966. While *Rhodesian Commentary* had celebrated the visit, Trillin had a rather different view of events. He reported that the AFOR contingent was certainly greeted with much fanfare at Bulawayo airport, with an official from the Ministry of Information and the chairman of the Friends of Rhodesia Trust among the welcoming party. The observation balcony of the airport had been adorned with American flags and an enormous banner:⁴⁶¹



American-Southern Africa Council newsletter, 1966,
Hall-Hoag, Box 76.46-1, Folder HH 1807.

⁴⁵⁹ 'Letter from Salisbury', *The New Yorker*, 12 November 1966, 173.

⁴⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 174.

⁴⁶¹ *Ibid.*

Trillin, however, mocked what he regarded as a rather derisory AFOR delegation, writing that the group consisted of ‘two intense young organizers...two couples in their thirties or forties [and] ten people who could have passed for the anti-fluoridation faction of a retirement community’s Republican Club’.⁴⁶² Interestingly, Trillin reported that in late 1966 AFOR was better known in Rhodesia than in the United States. Even relatively well informed Rhodesians were apparently shocked when American visitors said they did not know that AFOR was a ‘potent force’ in U.S. politics.⁴⁶³ However, the organisation must have grown significantly by the time Bishop Dodge described its reach less than two years later. While designed to shore up support for Smith in America, during its formative period, AFOR took on a rather different role in the pro-Rhodesian story. Smith’s government viewed AFOR’s symbolic value to its cause as significant during these early days of Rhodesian independence and, as a result, circulated propaganda that AFOR was already a powerful and influential pro-Rhodesian force in America.

This helps to explain why a relatively small group of AFOR members received such a stately welcome in the autumn of 1966. They toured the townships and the game reserves, enjoyed a briefing on the current political situation by Howman, Minister of Information, dined with cabinet ministers and even met Prime Minister Ian Smith in parliament. ‘It is

⁴⁶² Ibid., 174-175. In her chapter entitled “‘Not a So-Called Democracy’: Anti-Fluoridationists and the Fight Over Drinking Water’ in ed., Robert D. Johnston, *The Politics of Healing: Histories of Alternative Medicine in Twentieth-Century North America* (New York: Routledge, 2004), 124-133, Gretchen Ann Reilly explained that during the 1950s some extreme conservatives in the anti-fluoridation movement believed that the fluoridation of water was actually a communist plot to kill millions of Americans and destroy the United States (137-138).

⁴⁶³ ‘Letter from Salisbury’, 174.

doubtful if even the Ministry of Information believed that a group of elderly, obscure right-wingers could have much affect on American opinion', Trillin wrote, 'but after months of presenting the Friends of Rhodesia as a power in American politics, it would obviously have been impossible to greet its representatives with anything less than Cabinet Ministers'.⁴⁶⁴ Inadvertently, the grand welcome AFOR received in Rhodesia would have bolstered the organisation's standing back home in America, where it did need publicity to grow. Similarly, a publicised display of foreign support would have been significant not only to whites within Rhodesia, who may have become despondent in light of the United Nations sanctions and unrelenting criticism, but also to project an image to the rest of the world that Smith's government had support, and that support came from the most powerful country in the world, the United States. Unfortunately, in the United Kingdom these hopes were not realised. The *Guardian* newspaper described the AFOR delegation by quoting Trillin's unfavourable comparison with the anti-fluoridation retirees and ended by remarking, 'They even met the Prime Minister – so hungry must he be for friends. Or Friends.'⁴⁶⁵ Nevertheless, Rhodesia's government could not afford to be picky about which support they acknowledged. Its neighbour, South Africa, was an independent, sovereign state and while its apartheid policies were morally reprehensible to most observers, the National Party government was, at this time, entitled to run the country as it saw fit. Rhodesia, however, was an illegal state and the future of its black citizens rested on the world's continued condemnation and pressure upon the Smith regime to relinquish control of the territory to the majority African population before a mini South Africa was formed. Similarly, Smith's government and supporters felt that the future of Rhodesia's white

⁴⁶⁴ Ibid., 176.

⁴⁶⁵ 'Tough Proconsul', *The Guardian*, 9 December 1966, 20.

population was at stake and thus they necessarily accepted and relied upon any external support they were offered. Ultimately, AFOR's trip to Rhodesia and the splendid reception that awaited them benefited both the organisation and the Rhodesian Front government.

While the Rhodesian information service had reported that the organisation had up to 10,000 members in 1966, by 1968, AFOR informed members that it had associations in Switzerland, Italy, West Germany, France, New Zealand, Australia, Belgium, Holland, Spain and Portugal.⁴⁶⁶ During the following year, the organisation published a comprehensive list of the worldwide groups and organisations which had been established to support Rhodesia and work towards improving its image within the international community. In addition to the countries listed above, which hosted chapters of AFOR, the newsletter provided full information on pro-Rhodesian groups in Austria, Canada, Denmark, Finland, France, the United Kingdom, the Isle of Man and South Africa. This newsletter also shed light on the sheer number of pro-Smith organisations that had been formed in the United States including groups in California, Connecticut, Kentucky, New York, Washington, D.C. and Tennessee.⁴⁶⁷ AFOR was still growing too; by June 1969 it boasted of 20,000 members and informed readers that it was organising an official Board of Policy and sought applications from those wishing to take on positions of leadership.⁴⁶⁸

⁴⁶⁶ American Friends of Rhodesia Newsletter, 1968 (month unknown), Hall-Hoag, Box 76.46-1, Folder HH1040.

⁴⁶⁷ American Friends of Rhodesia Newsletter, 1969 (month unknown), in *ibid.* Each country's list of pro-Rhodesian groups included the name and address of the organisation(s). The list of American groups included Friends of Rhodesian Independence branches in Orange County, California, Fairfield, Connecticut, and St. Matthews, Kentucky; the American-Southern Africa Council of Washington, D.C.; the American-African Affairs Association of New York; the Southern States Industrial Council in Nashville, Tennessee; and the Massachusetts-based John Birch Society.

⁴⁶⁸ American Friends of Rhodesia Newsletter, June 1969, in *ibid.*

By the end of 1969, the American Friends of Rhodesia wrote again to its supporters with further news of growth. The organisation had relocated from Nashua, New Hampshire to Pepperell, Massachusetts, and noted, 'we are now prepared to expand our activities to an extent we never dreamed possible'. AFOR recognised the need for allies and a large membership and thus wrote, 'we will work in full co-operation with any sincere anti-Communist group and will offer our full assistance to any group indicating they desire our assist'.⁴⁶⁹

While AFOR's commitment to anti-communism was no doubt genuine, it also served as a convenient cover-up for more blatant racism. In the latter half of the 1960s when AFOR was functioning, overtly racist language and imagery were seldom used, especially by organisations like AFOR that presented themselves as respectable and professional groups of people. However, just as the Citizens' Councils had masked their white supremacist beliefs behind an – albeit genuine – anti-communism, AFOR's newsletters often remarked on how well whites and blacks got along in Rhodesia, how neither race wanted social change and how black Africans there utterly opposed the so-called communist-led guerrilla warfare that was occurring in states around them. An editorial written by frequent-contributor W. E. D. Stokes, in one of AFOR's newsletters, argued that Rhodesia should be supported because it was more than capable of supporting 'a very large population and should become a beach head to which English folk can migrate from worn out Britain, so that a population of three times as many whites as blacks is not beyond the realm of

⁴⁶⁹ American Friends of Rhodesia Newsletter, Christmas 1969, in *ibid.*

possibility in due course'.⁴⁷⁰ Clearly the fact that blacks constituted a vast majority in Rhodesia (as in South Africa) was concerning. Black majority rule might not have been inevitable at this time, but the changes sweeping across the continent certainly pointed in that direction. Similarly, Rhodesia's governing party faced added difficulty by virtue of the fact that it was not a recognised sovereign state but an illegal white supremacist territory. If both races really were content with the political and social situation in Ian Smith's Rhodesia, such ambitious, and unrealistic, suggestions of repopulating Rhodesia with white English migrants would not have been necessary.

AFOR, then, had lasted for the five years from UDI to the end of the decade. A great many other pro-Rhodesian groups, named by Kilpatrick previously, had died out. According to Gaedtke, by early 1969 only two organisations remained, AFOR being one of them.⁴⁷¹ His explanation for this was twofold. Firstly, he accused many other organisers of having an 'amateurish' approach. Gaedtke did not question their initial sincerity and commitment to white Rhodesia but concluded that the pro-Rhodesian struggle was simply a 'sounding board' for the viewpoints of other organisations and, as such, they lacked the ability to maintain their commitment when Rhodesia 'ceased making sensational headlines'.⁴⁷² The second and 'prime' reason given for the demise of pro-Rhodesia groups was 'apathy'. Though essentially reaffirming his first point, Gaedtke argued that people were too easily guided by the 'liberal' press, who stopped reporting as frequently on Rhodesia and focused

⁴⁷⁰ American Friends of Rhodesia, *Editorial Briefs*, 1968 (month unknown), Hall-Hoag, Box 76.46-1, Folder HH1040.

⁴⁷¹ American Friends of Rhodesia Newsletter, 1969 (month unknown; the newsletter stated that thirty-nine months after UDI, only two pro-Rhodesia groups remained, which would approximately date the publication at February 1969), 1, in *ibid*.

⁴⁷² *Ibid*.

instead on other matters as a means of ending Americans' interest in that country.⁴⁷³ However, Gaedtke had another reason for committing nearly a whole page of his newsletter to this so-called apathy; it seems that 'apathy' was in fact a byword for 'money'. The second page of his newsletter was mostly used to inform readers that without immediate financial support, AFOR, like the other pro-Rhodesia groups, would cease to function. Gaedtke emotively wrote of numerous cartons of mail gathering dust because they lacked the money for postage, the fact that the previous two newsletters had failed to cover their costs and how he had slept 'but a few hours these past weeks' due to his worries over mounting unpaid bills.⁴⁷⁴ As a final encouragement, AFOR's leader suggested that anyone 'who reads our newsletters, nods in agreement, and then sets them aside is, in effect, crippling up and indirectly, albeit unwittingly, helping the Enemy'.⁴⁷⁵ Gaedtke's boastful claims of AFOR's growth to 20,000 members should, thus, be measured against this desperate appeal. Having members is one thing, but if they are essentially honorary and do not donate their time and money to the cause, they are keeping the pro-Rhodesia momentum going in the United States but not contributing to the day-to-day functioning of the organisation.

The fact that many pro-Rhodesian groups had relatively short lives before being disbanded was most likely a combination of both the financial pressures of running effective organisations and the difficulty of sustaining interest among the American public. There were no doubt significant numbers of people who supported Smith's Rhodesia in the aftermath of UDI and these individuals made it possible for a plethora of groups to emerge

⁴⁷³ Ibid.

⁴⁷⁴ Ibid., 2.

⁴⁷⁵ Ibid.

supporting that country. However, pro-Rhodesian Americans in general were clearly not numerous enough or sufficiently committed to maintain all these different groups. Gaedkte's apathy argument was very thinly veiled behind his monetary needs. Most people who took it upon themselves to build and run such an organisation would not have been as wealthy as, for example, Robert Welch of the John Birch Society who was able to completely abandon his family's candy manufacturing to work full time for the JBS. To be sure, such organisations were required to levy membership fees and/or charge for publications to cover costs incurred by publicising the group, printing newsletters and distributing its propaganda. However, despite a great many right-wing leaders emphasising the 'white cause' above and beyond anything else, there would have been competition between such groups for potential membership among the American public.

AFOR's publications, for example, could not really be compared to those of the JBS or the Citizens' Council. By the end of the 1960s these large organisations were producing monthly journals, glossy and colourful magazines that would not only praise Rhodesia, but also report widely (if not always correctly) on a great many other national and international matters. AFOR, however, usually offered two or three page newsletters, often consisting of a cover story by Gaedtke and an editorial by Stokes. They usually looked like they had been rattled off on a typewriter and, as such, simply could not compete for very large membership figures. They were rather amateurish publications, and therefore it is doubtful that Gaedtke could charge much more than the postage for them. Rather, AFOR asked supporters to buy pamphlets and pro-Rhodesia postcards (which they probably made a small margin of profit on) and appealed for donations and stamps. AFOR's longevity, then, would be largely attributable to the relationship it managed to forge and maintain with other

organisations, like the American-Southern Africa Council, and the Rhodesian Information Service and the publicity it received in return. Well established groups such as the Citizens' Council and John Birch Society were notoriously secretive about their membership figures, often hiding a diminishing number of supporters behind claims that members wished to remain anonymous. Therefore, AFOR would not be the first group to exaggerate the size of its membership or bank balance. Within the historical context of such groups it is likely that AFOR's size and influence was exaggerated by its leader. It was, after all, a propaganda outfit, designed to combat negative accounts of Rhodesia in the United States; and to have any chance of success, Gaedtker would have tried to position his organisation among the powerful American lobbying groups. Despite informing members that AFOR had relocated during the winter of 1969 and was now ready to 'expand our activities to an extent we never dreamed possible', all signs point to the demise of AFOR at the end of 1969.⁴⁷⁶ It would return though.

An organisation's size, wealth or lifespan is not necessarily a remark on its influence. All of these groups felt they were far larger and more important than they really were and acted as such. As a result they did leave a lasting impression on parts of the American public. Apathy alone did not cause sympathetic Americans to abandon white Rhodesia; rather, they simply could not subscribe to every conservative, racist or right-wing publication going. It did not mean that segregationist and anti-communist Americans did not support white Rhodesia but that any kind of organised movement was far more fluid, comprising of many short-lived, smaller organisations rather than one dominant and enduring organisation such

⁴⁷⁶ American Friends of Rhodesia Newsletter, Christmas 1969, Hall-Hoag, Box 76.46-1, Folder HH1040. This appears to be the last newsletter AFOR produced until 1972 when it became active again.

as the Citizens' Council for the segregationists and the JBS for the radical anti-communists. Race and communism were enduring matters and perhaps that is why enough support existed to justify one large and well-established organisation. Since the onset of decolonisation, though, southern Africa had been a region largely defined, in American eyes at least, by whichever colony or independent nation was in the headlines at any one moment. In the main this viewpoint permeated Americans at all levels of society from the government to the grassroots. That is not to say that conservative Americans' interest in white southern Africa was unimportant or fleeting; on the contrary, the affairs of other white-ruled areas time and again assumed a central position in white American thought and this helps to explain the sheer number of groups that placed white Africa firmly on their agenda or formed with the sole intention of functioning as a pro-white Africa lobby.

The American-Southern Africa Council (ASAC) was another group which emerged with the sole intention of supporting Rhodesia in particular but white southern Africa more broadly as well. This Washington, D.C. based organisation had an ambiguous name, insofar as it was not immediately obvious which side of the struggle the group was on. However, ASAC supported apartheid South Africa and Ian Smith's Rhodesia and dedicated much of its time to fundraising for the latter, which, despite Smith's obstinacy, was assumed to be suffering in the wake of U.N. sanctions. ASAC represented continuity in conservative thinking on Africa. It was born out of the American Committee for Aid to Katanga Freedom Fighters (ACAKFF) which had been organised in response to the Congo crisis of 1961.⁴⁷⁷ Historian Gerald Horne noted that ASAC 'provided an umbrella to shield Anglophobes and Anglophiles alike', with the former opposing the British Labour

⁴⁷⁷ Horne, *From the Barrel of a Gun*, 102.

government's perceived betrayal of Salisbury and the latter 'smitten with the idea that Salisbury was the repository of values that – though born in London – had long since perished in the "Anglo-American" world'.⁴⁷⁸ Headed by John Acord, ASAC was founded in 1966 and worked closely with AFOR.

ASAC's bi-monthly *American-Southern Africa Review* was a professional looking publication and its advertising pamphlets were equally colourful and glossy. Like AFOR, the JBS, the Citizens' Council and any other groups that were able to create tangible links abroad, ASAC was proud to show readers its direct links with Ian Smith by reprinting a message Smith had sent to ASAC. Interestingly, it was the exact same message previously quoted in this chapter that AFOR so proudly printed.⁴⁷⁹ Although Smith clearly did not pen a personal message to the organisations that were working so fervently on his behalf in the United States, there is no doubt that the Rhodesian government valued the support and saw in its struggle something that affected more than just Rhodesia's destiny. This notion of internationalism tied in well with propaganda in America that had, for over a decade now, argued that racial matters should be viewed within a global context.

American support for Rhodesia was not just symbolic. AFOR and ASAC, together with the Rhodesian government, went to great lengths to assist Rhodesia financially and simultaneously they flouted the United Nations and the Johnson Administration which had signed up to the sanctions. In 1966, the American-Southern Africa Council asked

⁴⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁷⁹ ASAC's message from Smith was printed in its *In Action* pamphlet, undated, Hall-Hoag, Box 76.46-1, Folder HH1807. Although the archive catalogue dated this pamphlet at 1965, it was actually published later, since it referred to the U.N. mandatory economic sanctions against Rhodesia, which were enacted in December 1966, and a 1967 banquet hosted by ASAC.

supporters to ‘Break the Blockade – Buy Rhodesian Products’.⁴⁸⁰ Serving as a salesman for this enterprise, ASAC sent out a seven-page catalogue of Rhodesian products with its newsletter, including mainly copper items but also hand carved curios such as ash trays with animal skin attached and bottle openers modelled to look like an ‘African Witch Doctor’. Copper and skins were barred under the sanctions and the items, symbolic of Africa’s great animals and tribal black crafts, were clearly meant to appeal to a foreign white market.⁴⁸¹ Working alongside AFOR, ASAC also coordinated a massive drive to encourage supporters to buy ‘independence bonds’, which were four-and-a-half percent, tax-free, three year, £1 bonds sold after UDI.⁴⁸² By 1967, ASAC reported that a check for \$12,000 had been presented to the Postmaster General of Rhodesia by AFOR director, James Smeed, for the purchase of these bonds.⁴⁸³ Realistically, the sale of independence bonds and copperware would not make or break Rhodesia. However, the fact that pro-Smith Americans wanted to contribute financially as well as symbolically to the white struggle in Rhodesia demonstrates how seriously they regarded the Rhodesian issue and how dedicated they were to the cause.

Just as American segregationists had looked for support at the highest levels of state and national government when the civil rights movement began, pro-Rhodesia groups in the United States found willing allies in the U.S. Congress. Indeed, the support that ASAC and AFOR enjoyed from conservative politicians was crucial to their success. It not only served to encourage their efforts but also afforded them a veneer of credibility. By no means a

⁴⁸⁰ ASAC newsletter, 1966, 1, Hall-Hoag, Box 76.46-1, Folder HH 1807.

⁴⁸¹ Ibid., 1-2.

⁴⁸² Elaine Windrich, *Britain and the Politics of Rhodesian Independence* (London: Croom Helm Ltd, 1978), 79.

⁴⁸³ ASAC newsletter, 1967. Hall-Hoag Collection, Brown University, Box 76.46-1, Folder HH 1807, 1.

fringe group with an unintelligent membership, ASAC joined well known senators and congressmen in supporting Rhodesia. ASAC's highlight, if it had come to fruition, was its proposed 'Congressional Mission' to Rhodesia, in the hope of counteracting what they perceived as unfair and incorrect propaganda against Rhodesia. A 1967 newsletter reported that nine congressmen had already accepted ASAC's offer: John Ashbrook (Ohio), Albert Watson (South Carolina), Gene Snyder (Kentucky), Tim Lee Carter (Kentucky), William Dickinson (Alabama), John Rarick (Louisiana), Dan Kuykendall (Tennessee), John Duncan, Sr. (Tennessee) and James B. Utt (California).⁴⁸⁴ These were by no means the only political figures to support Rhodesia. Well known segregationist figures such as Alabama Governor and presidential hopeful George Wallace, South Carolina Senator Strom Thurmond, Virginia Senator Harry F. Byrd and Mississippi Senator James Eastland all staunchly supported Ian Smith and thus brought together the struggle for white supremacy at home and abroad.

However, despite significant support for Ian Smith's Rhodesia in Congress, it should be noted that ASAC's publicised 'congressional mission' to Rhodesia was rather embellished. Shortly after the organisation first announced plans for this trip, they distributed a subsequent newsletter informing readers that up to twenty congressmen and a news staff of six were now expected to join the tour at a cost of \$2,564.25 per person. 'This means that we desperately need \$66,670 to guarantee the success of this vital mission', chairman John Acord wrote, before pleading with readers for contributions.⁴⁸⁵ The initial mention of individual congressmen did not appear to cause much of a stir, but using their names to

⁴⁸⁴ ASAC newsletter, 1967 (month unknown), in *ibid*.

⁴⁸⁵ ASAC newsletter, 1967 (month unknown; it was a separate newsletter to the previous reference), in *ibid*.

solicit money, apparently without their knowledge, drew attention to ASAC. Historian Raymond Arsenault noted that although Ashbrook was one of the Smith regime's leading supporters in the House of Representatives, in January 1968, he criticised ASAC's unauthorised use of the congressmen's names. After receiving 'tentative acceptance' from the nine members of Congress, Ashbrook argued, ASAC then used their names without permission to try and raise the considerable sum of \$66,670. In the end only two House members – John Rarick (Democrat, Louisiana) and Thomas G. Abernathy (Democrat, Mississippi) – actually went to Rhodesia in January 1968. They were accompanied by Wainright Dawson, chairman of the United Republicans of America and Karl Hess, a speech writer for Barry Goldwater in the 1964 presidential campaign.⁴⁸⁶ The publicity for the proposed congressional mission revealed that the trip was sponsored by ASAC, but coordinated by the American Friends of Rhodesia. If many of the smaller groups that emerged in the wake of UDI had fallen by the wayside, the pro-Rhodesian groups that still functioned in the United States had become closely interlinked. Indeed, the *American-Southern Africa Review* increasingly incorporated the newsletter of the Friends of Rhodesian Independence, another group which by now had come under the 'Friends of Rhodesia' banner.⁴⁸⁷

Though the tour of Rhodesia did not include as many people as originally planned, ASAC nonetheless publicised the event in a newsletter and included a picture of Rarick shaking hands with Ian Smith.⁴⁸⁸ Rarick may not be wholly representative of the congressional bloc

⁴⁸⁶ Arsenault, 'White on Chrome', 49, 56n40.

⁴⁸⁷ *American-Southern Africa Review* 2, no. 2, February-March, 1967, 1 in Hall-Hoag, Box 76.46-1, Folder HH1807.

⁴⁸⁸ ASAC newsletter, undated (presumably shortly after the January 1968 trip), in *ibid.*

that supported a white Rhodesia; he was a staunch conservative and segregationist – which does fit the mould – but when his career in congress ended in 1975 he went on to write articles for the *Fiery Cross* (the official publication of the United Klans of America) and was a presidential candidate for the American Independent Party in the 1980 election campaign.⁴⁸⁹ However, he is representative of a hard core support for white Rhodesia in the U.S. Congress, which worked tirelessly to promote Rhodesia and encouraged sympathetic Americans to keep fighting on behalf of Ian Smith.

The vast majority of the aforementioned congressmen named in ASAC's newsletters were southern but considerable support for Rhodesia existed among non-southerners and southerners alike in Congress. Ashbrook and Utt, though representatives from outside the South, were staunch conservatives and anti-communists. Utt (Republican, California) was an 'ultraconservative' who had opposed all civil rights legislation in the 1960s. He introduced one resolution calling for the U.S. to withdraw from the United Nations after accusing Dr. Ralph J. Bunche, Undersecretary of the U.N., of having communist sympathies and another to abandon sanctions against Rhodesia.⁴⁹⁰ Ashbrook (Republican, Ohio) represented a new, younger breed of conservative. He was just 32 when he was elected to the House of Representatives in 1961 and, according to the *Nation's Business*, a U.S. Chamber of Commerce publication, took a conservative stand on all major issues.⁴⁹¹ Pro-Rhodesian congressmen, then, were not only southerners clinging to the 'lost cause' but also young conservatives who exemplified the continuity of racial conservatism in

⁴⁸⁹ Rarick wrote an article about Andrew Young in a 1977 edition of the *Fiery Cross*, Ku Klux Klan Collection, Box 2, Folder 4, J. D. Williams Library, Archives and Special Collections, University of Mississippi.

⁴⁹⁰ *New York Times*, 27 May 1970, 29; *New York Times*, 2 March 1970; *New York Times*, 13 January 1967, 81.

⁴⁹¹ *Nation's Business*, 41, no. 5, May 1961, 44.

American politics. In fact the *Nation's Business*, which appraised new congressmen like Ashbrook, noted that many new additions to the House of Representatives in this 87th Congress of 1961 were 'sharply conservative' compared to new liberal members that had characterised the previous Congress. Furthermore, it reported that some congressional leaders regarded this influx of 'outspoken young conservatives' as the start of a lasting trend and also considered it 'representative of the philosophy of the nation as a whole'.⁴⁹² As a result, the build up of conservatives in Congress from the beginning of the 1960s helped pave the way for the pro-white settler lobbies there that rallied around South Africa and Rhodesia during that decade and beyond.

John H. Rousselot (Republican, California) was another new recruit to the 87th Congress and exemplified the links between the conservative youth in government and the extreme right-wing in public as well as the continuity of conservative influence. Rousselot was 33 when he was elected to the House in 1961 having run an ultraconservative campaign. After failing to win re-election for the 1963 term, Rousselot became the national public relations director for the John Birch Society, a position he held until 1967. When he ran again for Congress in 1970, he won the seat in spite of his opponents accusing him of extremism and publicising his JBS connection. Rousselot remained in Congress until 1983 when he then served as a special assistant to President Ronald Reagan.⁴⁹³ The pro-Rhodesia faction in Congress, then, grew in part out of this arrival of young conservatives, not necessarily southern, who bolstered the existent old guard of conservatives and segregationists. Senators like Eastland and Thurmond represented continuity in Congress; they had fought

⁴⁹² Ibid., 36.

⁴⁹³ Ibid., 36, 52; *New York Times*, 27 May 1970, 29;
<http://bioguide.congress.gov/scripts/biodisplay.pl?index=R000469>.

for white supremacy in the South and now fought for white supremacy in Rhodesia. Freshmen like Ashbrook and Rousselot came from a different background; they were young and were not southerners, yet they merged with these long-standing and unwavering politicians to strengthen the racially conservative bloc in Congress and create a powerful coalition there that increasingly lobbied for Smith's Rhodesia.

The American-Southern Africa Council's 1967 campaign to take U.S. congressmen to Rhodesia coincided with, and perhaps sought to exploit, this significant growth of the pro-Rhodesian lobby on Capitol Hill. In his study of southern congressmen and the Rhodesian issue, Arsenault noted that before UDI, congressmen – southern or otherwise – remained silent on Rhodesia.⁴⁹⁴ There had been only one exception and that was, unsurprisingly, Senator Allen Ellender of Louisiana. He had gained notoriety during a 1962 visit to Africa where he said publicly that no African nation should be independent because black Africans were incapable of self-government. This subsequently led to a number of independent black states refusing him entry. In mid-October 1962, Ellender embarked on a tour of foreign service posts in Africa that lasted nearly ten weeks. Starting in the north of the continent and working his way down through innumerable countries, he spent some time in South Africa at the end of November before finally arriving in Salisbury, Rhodesia, where he was invited to meet the press at the American Library Auditorium. In an article the following year, South African activist Collin Gonze concluded that the 'self-imposed restraints on his Jim-Crowism, necessary to get him through black Africa without being

⁴⁹⁴ Arsenault, 'White on Chrome', 48.

lynched, must have all but disappeared' once Ellender was in white Africa.⁴⁹⁵ Amongst other derogatory comments, Ellender said that after visiting 23 African countries he had not found a 'single competent government' or any indication that such 'capability exists'.⁴⁹⁶ Over the following few days Uganda, Tanganyika (Tanzania), Ethiopia, and the Congo all refused Ellender entry and, though his plane landed in Somalia and Kenya, he was advised not to stay.⁴⁹⁷ In his continued defence of a white Rhodesia, Ellender was somewhat ahead of the time. He was also at odds with the Kennedy Administration with the president having received nineteen African leaders in the year since he took office in November 1961.⁴⁹⁸

Ellender was not so at odds with members of Congress, though, and a significant number opposed what they perceived as President Kennedy's and then President Johnson's Cold War 'liberalism'. After Rhodesia's UDI, therefore, many senators and representatives joined Ellender in his support of Ian Smith. Indeed, by January 1967, the *New York Times* reported that the Johnson administration, having recently enacted economic sanctions against Rhodesia, now 'expressed concern over the amount of pro-Rhodesia sentiment on Capitol Hill'.⁴⁹⁹ In the Senate, Paul Fannin (Republican, Arizona) called U.N. sanctions against Rhodesia 'dictatorial, deceitful and dangerous' and said that he had already received 'hundreds' of telegrams and letters from constituents who also opposed the

⁴⁹⁵ Collin Gonze, 'With Ellender in Africa', *Africa Today* 10, no. 5 (May, 1963), 6. Gonze edited *Africa Today*, the monthly publication of the American Committee on Africa.

⁴⁹⁶ *New York Times*, 2 December 1962, 50.

⁴⁹⁷ The *New York Times* ran almost daily articles reporting firstly on Ellender's statements and then the African states revoking his right of entry: 2 December 1962, 50; 4 December 1962, 1; 5 December 1962, 17; 6 December 1962, 9; 8 December 1962, 28. Gonze's article noted the warning against staying in Somalia and Kenya.

⁴⁹⁸ *New York Times*, 5 December 1962, 16.

⁴⁹⁹ *New York Times*, 13 January 1967, 81. President Johnson imposed economic sanctions against Rhodesia on 3 January 1967, by executive order.

sanctions.⁵⁰⁰ In the House of Representatives James Utt introduced a resolution to abandon sanctions against Rhodesia. His lengthy list of reasons included the oft-used charge that the U.N. was unlawfully meddling in the domestic affairs of a sovereign nation; that trade with Rhodesia was valuable to America, especially the chrome which America would otherwise have to buy from the Soviets; and that UDI had been ‘in the same great tradition as our own Declaration’.⁵⁰¹ These congressmen framed their arguments around economic and political matters and Cold War anti-communism. Southern senators like Ellender or Eastland were not afraid to speak in racial terms, while congressmen outside the South were careful to restrict their arguments to non-racial matters.⁵⁰² This largely parallels what was happening amongst grassroots pro-Smith groups in the United States. Organisations like the American Friends of Rhodesia and the American-Southern Africa Council were cautious to avoid overt arguments of white supremacy. Instead they used words like ‘civilised’, which essentially meant ‘white’, disguised racism behind anti-communism and suggested that black Rhodesians were perfectly content under Smith’s illegal regime, drawing on the ‘outside agitator’ argument that southern segregationists used during the civil rights movement. By employing such code words and largely avoiding overt racial arguments, during the latter half of the 1960s it seemed almost acceptable for American politicians to support openly Ian Smith’s white-ruled Rhodesia and work alongside pro-Rhodesia groups.

One event that exemplified the closeness of ASAC and U.S. politicians was a May 1967 ‘Peace with Rhodesia’ banquet, sponsored by ASAC and held in Washington, D.C. An

⁵⁰⁰ Excerpts of Fannin’s speech to the Senate on 12 January 1967 reprinted in the *American-Southern Africa Review* 2, no. 2, February-March 1967, 3, Hall-Hoag, Box 76.46-1, Folder HH1807.

⁵⁰¹ Excerpts of Utt’s speech in Ibid.

⁵⁰² In ‘White on Chrome’, Arsenault presents a comprehensive analysis of the differences between southern and non-southern congressmen on the Rhodesia issue and concludes that southerners dominated the pro-Rhodesia faction in the Senate while non-southerners took the lead in the House of Representatives.

ASAC newsletter reported that Thurmond, Rarick, and Representatives Durward Hall of Missouri and Albert Watson of South Carolina were among the guest speakers.⁵⁰³ It was South Carolina's fiery Senator Strom Thurmond that made the headlines though. He announced that the Rhodesian Cabinet had wired a telegram to himself and the U.S. government offering to send 5,000 'crack troops' to Vietnam and that this offer was Smith's attempt to restore relations with the United States. When questioned, State Department officials said they knew nothing of the offer.⁵⁰⁴ The Rhodesian government, however, did not immediately deny the story. Smith said in Parliament that his government had 'made no decision' about sending troops to Vietnam, but when asked directly he admitted that no offer had been made in terms of 5,000 soldiers. Journalist John Worrall, writing from Salisbury for the U.K. *Guardian*, noted that the Rhodesian government was anything but embarrassed by its 'American friends'. On the contrary, Worrall reported that 'Rhodesians are deliberately cultivating their image in America as a powerful force against communism in Africa and the world at large.'⁵⁰⁵ Worrall also mocked Thurmond's statement, writing that it caused some amusement amongst Rhodesians who opened their businesses the next day with quips like 'When are you off to Vietnam, old boy?'⁵⁰⁶ In the end, Rhodesia did not send their 'crack troops' to Vietnam, but this misunderstanding did not damage either ASAC or the Rhodesian Front government and both seemed to embrace the publicity. Like all propaganda, the truth was far less important than how the information was received and how it might serve to boost segregationist morale.

⁵⁰³ ASAC newsletter, 1967, Hall-Hoag, Box 76.46-1, Folder HH 1807.

⁵⁰⁴ *Ottawa Citizen*, 19 May 1967, 5.

⁵⁰⁵ *Guardian*, 20 May 1967, 7.

⁵⁰⁶ *Ibid.*

The American-Southern Africa Council took full advantage of this open support for Rhodesia in Congress and, though censured for its attempt to solicit money, maintained contact with influential politicians. Furthermore, ASAC developed beneficial links with the official Rhodesian Information Office (RIO) which continued to function out of its Washington, D.C. office in spite of American sanctions.⁵⁰⁷ Like the government-run South African Information Service, the RIO devoted much time, energy and money toward improving perceptions of Rhodesia and Ian Smith in the United States and ASAC created substantial links with important Rhodesians in America. Kenneth Towsey, a Rhodesian counsellor and head of the RIO in the American capital, held a party at his Maryland home to celebrate the second anniversary of Rhodesia's independence on 11 November 1967. This was just one of many festivities organised across America to celebrate the second anniversary of UDI. However, this gathering boasted important guests. From ASAC's ranks, chairman John Acord, who also published the *American-Southern Africa Review*, John D. McComb, treasurer and *Review* writer, and his wife, Carol, editor of *Review*, were among Towsey's guests. Other notable guests including John Hooper (Rhodesian Information Minister), Wilhelm Botha (first secretary of the South African Embassy), Wally Maher (South African Information Officer) and Roque F. Diaz (Portuguese press attaché) represented southern Africa's white minority regimes. Representing American segregationists were Congressmen John Rarick of Louisiana (who had taken part in

⁵⁰⁷ Prexy Nesbitt, 'Trilateralism and the Rhodesian Problem: An Effort at Managing the Zimbabwean Liberation Struggle', in Holly Sklar (ed.), *Trilateralism: The Trilateral Commission and Elite Planning for World Management* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: South End Press, 1980), 394.

ASAC's tour of Rhodesia) and Harold R. Gross of Iowa as well as Senator James Eastland's press secretary Kenneth Tolliver.⁵⁰⁸

The Rhodesian Information Office was a force to reckon with. President Johnson's administration could have closed it down when mostly all other countries did so but they chose not to. Cold War priorities took precedence over morality once again and showed the continued disparity between the American government's verbal condemnation of white southern Africa and its limited physical action against these rogue regimes. Further, when the Congressional Black Caucus formed in 1969 and called for its closure on the grounds that its chief, Towsey, represented an illegal government and should be deported, their request fell on deaf ears. Towsey had permanent resident alien status and could only be deported for criminal acts. David D. Newsom, U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs during Richard Nixon's presidency (1969-1974) wrote that as a result of such pressure, Towsey was vigilant about how he conducted the RIO and took care 'to avoid any direct lobbying that might bring him into conflict with the law'.⁵⁰⁹ Newsom recalled his own experience in trying to deal effectively with the propaganda that came out of the Rhodesian Information Office at an incredible rate:

Invariably, when I spoke to audiences in U.S. cities on African policy, a man or woman would rise to ask questions, reading from yellow slips provided by the Rhodesian Information Service: "How can we let down our true friends in Africa?" "Do you want to see the communists take over the vital minerals in southern Africa?"⁵¹⁰

⁵⁰⁸ *American-Southern Africa Review*, 2, no. 6, November-December 1967, 6, Hall-Hoag, Box 76.46-1, Folder HH1807.

⁵⁰⁹ David D. Newsom, *The Imperial Mantle: The United States, Decolonization, and the Third World* (Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press, 2001), 168.

⁵¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 166.

This kind of ‘standard’ questioning permeated most arguments about Rhodesia (and apartheid South Africa) at the time. A myriad of intense racial prejudices were hidden behind much-used rhetoric of anti-communism or the symbolism of Rhodesian independence mirroring the rebellion of the American colonies two centuries previously.

While it is not clear whether the Rhodesian Information Office in Washington had a direct impact on ASAC’s tours, financing or membership, the RIO almost certainly worked, in some capacity at least, alongside any pro-Rhodesian group that existed or contacted them for assistance. For RIO officials to be celebrating Rhodesia’s independence day alongside Friends of Rhodesia workers and America’s elected politicians suggests a carefully created and maintained network of those who supported Ian Smith and would lobby on his behalf. Furthermore, the RIO sought to provide information they felt people were not getting elsewhere. In one newspaper article, William F. Buckley, Jr., editor of the influential conservative publication *National Review*, argued that Towsey ‘had been in a position to be useful to newspapermen who desire information about Rhodesia that isn’t easy to get elsewhere’. Buckley continued to state that the RIO ‘handles a great deal of material – stories, statistics, photographs, field accounts, notices of negotiations – which do not come in automatically from the world’s press, and do not come in at all from the front line press’.⁵¹¹

Buckley’s assertion was correct to an extent. For those who wanted it, Towsey’s information service was on hand to provide America’s conservative press with the pro-

⁵¹¹ William F. Buckley, Jr., ‘U.S. to Comply With UN Freeze on Rhodesian Funds’, *Milwaukee Sentinel*, 17 September 1977, 10.

Rhodesian propaganda they desired (and, assumedly, the stories that their readers wished to have). James J. Kilpatrick, editor of the politically conservative *Richmond News Leader*, quickly befriended those working at the RIO. In an article that mocked the assumption that the RIO was in fact a ‘Chapter of the Great Rhodesian Conspiracy’, Kilpatrick reported that he had a lunch meeting with Towsey and Hooper where they discussed the recent opposition to the ‘mere existence of a Rhodesian Information Office at 2852 McGill Terrace’. Kilpatrick obviously thought that those reading his article might appreciate the contact information. He supported the existence of the RIO by suggesting that those who opposed it wanted ‘no information about Rhodesia distributed’, which appeared strange to Kilpatrick since they all resided ‘in a nation purportedly dedicated to free speech’. Kilpatrick humorously concluded that ‘the conspirators voted to express their grateful thanks for all the support they are getting from Americans as private citizens’ before returning to ‘the real world of Washington, D.C., where friendly little nations are harassed’.⁵¹² Segregationists like Kilpatrick had long claimed that their opinions were not properly represented in the national press. They would have felt affinity with Rhodesians on this matter and actively sought to acquire the kind of information that pro-Rhodesian groups published.

In an attempt to combat what the pro-Rhodesian faction saw as bias in the national media, a conservative contingent had organised a ‘fact-finding mission’ to Rhodesia shortly after UDI. Congressman John Ashbrook, conservative author and co-founder of the *National Review* Ralph de Toledano and Max Yergan (ex-NAACP activist turned anti-communist crusader) visited Rhodesia and published their findings in the hope of correcting Rhodesia’s

⁵¹² James J. Kilpatrick, ‘Rhodesia No Threat To African Peace’, *Evening Independent*, 19 March 1966, 8.

story that had, in their minds, ‘been so pitifully misrepresented to the world’.⁵¹³ In late 1965 Yergan and William A. Rusher, publisher of the *National Review*, founded the American-African Affairs Association (AAAA) in New York. Like ASAC, the AAAA was an ultra-right wing organisation, with an ambiguous name, and publications which suggested a degree of credibility that was undeserved. David Henry Anthony concluded that the AAAA grew out of ‘the decisions of four unpopular African White minority regimes to undergo systematic propaganda facelifts by successively engaging a retinue of seasoned overseas public relations specialists’.⁵¹⁴ Although South Africa, Rhodesia, Angola and Mozambique undertook their PR campaigns separately, ‘the political economy of Southern Africa, with its interlocking companies and labor boards, made cross-border communications a practical necessity for capital’.⁵¹⁵ As a result, if one found a useful ally in the United States, the others would quickly be informed. The AAAA, in addition to ASAC, AFOR and the like, proved to be a willing and helpful collaborator.

Yergan, Ashbrook and de Toledano’s report, entitled *Rhodesia: Pointing the Way to a Multi-Racial Africa?* was released on 16 February 1966. The authors’ collaboration demonstrates the degree to which pro-Rhodesian groups and individuals cooperated from very early on. The report professed to supply the proper information that other sources had failed to provide:

⁵¹³ American-African Affairs Association newsletter, undated. NAACP Papers, Part VI: Administrative File, 1961-1972, Box VI: A14, Africa, Rhodesia, 1966-1967.

⁵¹⁴ David Henry Anthony, III, *Max Yergan: Race Man, Internationalist, Cold Warrior* (New York: New York University Press, 2006), 256. Anthony’s study provides the most detailed account of Yergan’s life and political affiliations.

⁵¹⁵ Ibid.

Since [Rhodesia] has been significantly in the news for many months, it might have been expected that the American press would have sent numerous able reporters to Salisbury...to report developments there at first hand. Instead, news reaching the United States has come almost exclusively from British circles...Dubious sources at the United Nations have added their mite to the muddle of misinformation.⁵¹⁶

The twelve page account essentially questioned whether Smith's government was stable, legitimate, and had support amongst black and white Rhodesians; what sections of society sanctions might harm; whether the Rhodesian government was racist; and whether the country could 'cope' with the concept of 'one man, one vote'. Unsurprisingly, the report found that Smith's government was 'legitimate and legally elected' and that the African members of the parliament 'do not favor the surrender of the country to the African nationalists'.⁵¹⁷ Its findings were essentially the same as the Citizens' Council's and South Africa's foreign ministers that were discussed in the previous chapter. Sanctions, apparently, only served to 'bring the people together' under Smith's leadership with the only loser being Great Britain and it was widely agreed between white and black Rhodesians that 'at this point in Rhodesia's development, the precipitate introduction of Western political ideas would benefit no one'.⁵¹⁸ In terms of the Rhodesian government's philosophy, the AAAA's mission found that 'Rhodesians see the "one man, one vote" principle as a form of reverse racism [that] would destroy the white community completely and deprive the country of all the techniques of a modern society.' Like other groups opposing racial equality in Africa, the report suggested that the perceived negative experiences of other decolonised African states gave weight to the argument that the political system in Rhodesia should be left alone and that those Africans living within 'their

⁵¹⁶ American-American Affairs Association, *Rhodesia: Pointing the Way to a Multi-Racial Africa?* 1, NAACP Papers, Part VI: Administrative File, 1961-1972, Box VI: A14, Africa, Rhodesia, 1966-1967.

⁵¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 3.

⁵¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 6-7.

tribal organizations [show] scant interest in the exercise of the suffrage'.⁵¹⁹ The ultimate conclusion of the report comes as no surprise: 'A stable government [which] commands the virtually unanimous support of the white population and the respect of a preponderance of the Africans.' The economy was said to be stable and growing and if Smith was to fail, 'all of Africa will suffer' and Rhodesia's black citizens would revert to 'tribal wars'.⁵²⁰

Everything in the report could have been written by innumerable other pro-Rhodesian, segregationist organisations and individuals. The well-rehearsed argument that Rhodesia's black and white citizens approved of Smith's government and did not want any kind of racial change and that Smith's independence should be officially recognised was repeated throughout pro-Rhodesian sections of the United States from conservatives in Congress to overtly racist organisations like the Ku Klux Klan.⁵²¹ Nevertheless, the report was written in an easily understandable way while still giving the impression that it was based on respectable and intellectual research. Thanks to Congressman Ashbrook's involvement and influence in government, this report even made its way into the *Congressional Record*.⁵²² This shows how significant it was for organisations such as the AAAA or ASAC to count conservative politicians among their membership. Ten years previously, American politicians stood up for segregation and white supremacy (though mostly calling it states' rights). Now they supported white minority regimes in southern Africa and continued to lend an air of respectability to groups that, regardless of their rhetoric, opposed racial freedom and equality both at home and abroad.

⁵¹⁹ Ibid., 7-8.

⁵²⁰ Ibid., 11.

⁵²¹ For example, Knights of the Ku Klux Klan, 'White Solidarity With Rhodesia', *The Crusader* (Nov-Dec., 1976), page number unknown, Hall-Hoag, Box 76.21-1X, Folder HH977.

⁵²² Kenneth W. Grundy, 'The Congressional Image of Africa', *Africa Today* 14, no. 1 (December 1966), 9. Grundy noted that Ashbrook inserted the report into the *Congressional Record* on 8 March 1966.

It was not only prominent politicians that made overt support for white Rhodesia somehow respectable. The aforementioned *National Review*, founded in 1955, was one of the most influential and intellectual conservative publications in the United States and, on the Rhodesian question, fell squarely into the Smith camp in the years after UDI. With a *National Review* co-founder partaking in the Rhodesia fact-finding mission and the magazine's publisher co-founding the AAAA, the publication once again exemplifies the inextricable links between the various pro-Rhodesian groups in the U.S. A sample of articles written by regular contributors to the magazine represents the *National Review*'s stance on Rhodesia.

Just days before UDI was announced, Thomas Molnar wrote that on his first visit to Rhodesia after the breakup of the Federation in 1963 he had found a precarious situation and low morale among the people. On his return from an imminently independent Rhodesia, he reported that he had seen 'a changed, self-confident, toughened climate' in which Smith had strong nationalist support in both urban and rural Rhodesia. 'They believe independence is not only a political necessity, but a psychological requirement', Molnar wrote. 'Only in an independent Rhodesia', he continued, 'will the white man feel secure enough about his future to liberalize further his policy toward the black man'.⁵²³ This argument, given by the intellectual powerhouse that was *National Review*, differed little from that of benevolent segregationists, who argued that African Americans had been helped over the years by white Americans and that to rush forward prematurely towards

⁵²³ Thomas Molnar, 'Rhodesia at the Crossroads', *National Review*, Vol. XVII, no. 44, 2 November 1965, 971, microfilm collection, held at the University of Sussex Library.

equality would be disastrous. Molnar believed that Rhodesia would gain independence because it was part of a 'Third Africa' that was 'getting strong enough to have its own way'. This 'Third Africa' referred to large, cohesive white populations such as Rhodesia and South Africa, which were 'backed by political and economic force', and, unlike much of decolonised Africa, had, in Molnar's estimation, staying power. In conclusion, Molnar wrote that Smith's government could not retreat from the quest for independence 'for on their shoulders rests the survival of the entire white community'.⁵²⁴ This fatalistic forewarning of the horrors that befell whites in black-ruled African nations again mirrored the openly racist arguments against decolonisation that segregationists had used during the late 1950s and early 1960s.

In another article one year after UDI, political theorist James Burnham argued that the 'hypocrisy' of British and American spokesmen on Rhodesia was 'stupefying'. He argued that President Johnson's claim that America would not recognise a minority government was hypocritical because there was not a single government in all of Africa 'that can show a legitimate claim to representing anything more than a minority'. It seems that Burnham was considering only white Africans as he concluded that, in fact, South Africa and Rhodesia were the most democratic nations in Africa since they were the 'free and open choices of the whites (and, quite possibly, the tacit choices of a fair number of non-whites)'.⁵²⁵ Yet again, the argument that black citizens were content under their white governments was a standard party line of segregationists, used to defend white regimes in southern Africa as well as Jim Crow in the American South. While the language in these

⁵²⁴ Ibid., 972.

⁵²⁵ James Burnham, 'Global Apartheid', *National Review*, Vol. XVIII, No. 42, 18 October 1966, 1036.

National Review articles were less overtly racial, the essence of the pro-Smith argument differed little from those by more extreme segregationists and anti-communists.

An editorial by editor, Buckley, in 1969 revealed where *National Review* drew the line. During that year, Smith proposed a new constitution for Rhodesia that would make the country a republic, sever the last ties with Britain and perpetuate white rule by reserving a majority of seats in parliament for whites, meaning that blacks could never achieve majority control of the country. Many critics saw this as a step toward creating South African apartheid in Rhodesia.⁵²⁶ ‘We have tried to understand Rhodesia’s fearsome dilemmas sympathetically’, explained Buckley, ‘and we have sharply criticized the irresponsible, sterile hostility that so much of the world has directed against Rhodesia’. However, *National Review* opposed this new constitution on the grounds that it was ‘fundamentally racist and fundamentally despotic’. Buckley did not believe it was within his publication’s remit to tell the Rhodesian government how to conduct itself and neither did he believe the U.S. government had a right to intervene in Rhodesia’s domestic affairs; nevertheless, he did believe it was right and proper for the *National Review* to state its conviction that the proposed constitution was ‘immoral, unnecessary and imprudent’.⁵²⁷ The implication of Buckley’s argument was that he could continue to feel sympathetic towards white Rhodesia if Smith did not make the politics of his government overtly racist.

Although the *National Review* did not give Smith’s Rhodesia unconditional support, Buckley did interview Smith for his long running television show *Firing Line*. Recorded in

⁵²⁶ ‘Rhodesia Publishes New Constitution’, *New York Times*, 12 September 1969, 50.

⁵²⁷ *National Review* editorial, Vol. XXI, No. 23, 17 June 1969, 578.

Salisbury, Rhodesia, in March 1974 and aired in America the following month, Smith would have been able to reach the living rooms of countless Americans. Buckley asked whether ‘as a civilized Rhodesian, a part of the Western tradition’, Smith felt a responsibility to stimulate political equality. Smith responded with an answer that would have struck a chord with any number of segregationist Americans: ‘I believe that this is something that must be evolutionary. I think you’ve turned this into a revolution to your detriment’.⁵²⁸ Smith also ensured that he mentioned the friendship which he felt existed with the United States and wanted to enjoy once again at an official level, with diplomatic recognition, once Rhodesia’s independence had been officially accepted.⁵²⁹ While Smith would never receive the official seal of approval from the American government, he would continue to enjoy broad-based support among American citizens as well as considerable publicity in publications and programmes like Buckley’s. By creating a sense that the pro-Rhodesian lobby was respectable, it not only encouraged more people to take up the cause but also brought it into the mainstream in a way that overt segregationists were never really able to do once the civil rights movement had taken hold.

Unlike *National Review*, the pro-Rhodesia lobby in Congress that had grown in strength in the latter half of the 1960s did not see the proposed racist constitution of 1969 as a barrier to its continued support of Rhodesia. In fact its greatest achievement came in 1971 with the Byrd Amendment, which permitted the importation of ‘strategic and critical materials’ from Rhodesia to the United States. Essentially, they wanted to import chromium ore from

⁵²⁸ *Firing Line*, ‘The Question of Rhodesia’, 4-5, aired 28 April 1974. The transcript is available at the Hoover Institution Library and Archives, Stanford University, <http://hoohila.stanford.edu/firingline/programView2.php?programID=615>.

⁵²⁹ *Ibid.*, 13.

Rhodesia which was seen as crucial to Cold War stockpiling. Without this trade, the pro-Rhodesia lobby argued that the U.S. would be forced to purchase the chrome from Russia. The amendment was named after Virginia Senator Harry F. Byrd, Jr., a diehard segregationist and supporter of Rhodesia. By passing the Byrd Amendment, the U.S. government ‘officially broke the only mandatory, comprehensive sanctions program ever voted under [the United Nations] charter’.⁵³⁰ This was no mean feat and was seen as a significant boost by the pro-Smith faction of society. It was all the more surprising since it came just over a year after the Nixon Administration took the decision to close the American consulate in Rhodesia. The State Department first indicated that it might close its Rhodesian consulate in June 1969, when Smith’s government first drafted the new constitution.⁵³¹ The U.S. government took the decision to close its consulate in March 1970 after the new constitution had been disseminated and Britain had severed its diplomatic ties with Rhodesia. When announcing the closure, President Nixon’s Secretary of State, William P. Rogers, stated that on his recent trip to Africa, black nations had expressed their unhappiness over America’s continued political presence in Salisbury.⁵³² Southern senators Strom Thurmond and James Eastland responded with indignation. Eastland called the move ‘a long step backward’ in U.S. foreign policy and accused the American government of bowing to ‘Britain’s demands’. Thurmond touched upon the Byrd Amendment, which was in the pipelines:

It would be a great strategic mistake for the United States to sever relations with this brave little nation, since Rhodesia produces more chromium ore than any country in the world except Soviet Russia... In a world crisis, we will need the

⁵³⁰ Lake, *The “Tar Baby” Option*, 198.

⁵³¹ ‘U.S. May Close Office’, *New York Times*, 25 June 1969, 4.

⁵³² *The News and Courier*, 14 August 1970, 1.

close friendship of Rhodesia in order to secure supplies of chromium ore, as it is vital to our defense.⁵³³

Thurmond spoke overtly of Cold War priorities, but by mentioning the ‘brave little nation’ and a ‘close friendship’ between the U.S. and Rhodesia, the segregationist senator did not miss the opportunity to praise and encourage white Rhodesia.

On closer inspection, the closure of the U.S. consulate in Salisbury was more a symbolic move than a political one. While the office had twenty-seven staff in 1965, there were only six in 1970.⁵³⁴ Therefore, in line with years of duplicitous policy towards southern Africa, the U.S. government made a gesture to appease black Africa that would not really affect the U.S. Just one year later, the Byrd Amendment was passed, showing that Cold War alliances still took clear precedence under President Nixon. Supporters of the Byrd Amendment argued that it would not entirely nullify U.S. Sanctions against Rhodesia; rather, it was simply a case of protecting America’s interests by maintaining a healthy stockpile of a crucial material and lessening U.S. dependence on Russia.⁵³⁵ However, Robert Good revealed that the United States already had more than twice the amount of chromium ore that the Office of Emergency Preparedness recommended for stockpiling.⁵³⁶ Thus, the Byrd Amendment appealed to the anti-communist vein that ran through segregationists and, happily for pro-Rhodesians, provided a means of supporting white Rhodesia through unnecessary trade.

⁵³³ Ibid.

⁵³⁴ Ibid.

⁵³⁵ Lake, *The “Tar Baby” Option*, 200.

⁵³⁶ Robert C. Good, ‘Rhodesia: Towards a New Policy Context’, *Africa Today* 18, no. 4 (Oct., 1971): 10.

A whole host of little-known groups and individuals as well as the better-known, larger organisations provided the impetus for continued American interest and support for white Rhodesia. The fact that an ultra-conservative core in Congress as well as influential right-wing journalists lobbied on behalf of Ian Smith's Rhodesia reflected a sentiment among the pro-Rhodesian American public and encouraged them to keep rallying for white Africa. Politicians and grassroots activists were further aided by the hypocrisy that came out of Washington. Edgar Lockwood, director of the Washington Office on Africa from 1972 to 1980, concluded:

For at least five years, the United States has pursued a double-faced policy toward Rhodesia – openly claiming to support the demand of the 96 percent African population for majority rule but covertly giving a steady stream of material and psychological support to the illegitimate minority regime.⁵³⁷

In fact the American government pursued a contradictory policy towards Rhodesia for most of the country's fifteen-year existence. With the exception of President Jimmy Carter (1977-1981), under whom, the Byrd Amendment was repealed, the successive administrations of Johnson, Nixon and Ford showed remarkable continuity. Much like U.S. policy towards South Africa, American presidents trod cautiously with Rhodesia, verbally condemning the illegal white supremacist state while maintaining a quiet Cold War alliance with the country.

Not long after the Byrd Amendment was passed, the American Friends of Rhodesia reappeared. In August 1972, Gaedtke wrote that AFOR had been reactivated in anticipation

⁵³⁷ Edgar Lockwood, 'Testimony on Rhodesia and United States Foreign Policy', *Issue: A Journal of Opinion* 5, no. 3 (Autumn, 1975): 24.

of ‘a renewed effort to crush Rhodesia after the elections’.⁵³⁸ That November, the incumbent president Richard Nixon and the Democrat candidate George McGovern would campaign for the White House. McGovern ‘championed the very sorts of Kennedy/Johnson views that Middle America (the white masses) had come to shun’, generally including social and economic reforms for the poor and taking notice of youth movements.⁵³⁹ Although Nixon won, AFOR clearly thought it was necessary to campaign once again for Rhodesia. ‘We urge each and every one of you to join in the struggle to keep Rhodesia in the free world’, Gaedtke wrote, and asked his readers to ‘stand 100% behind Rhodesia in its heroic struggle against communist enslavement’.⁵⁴⁰ W. E. D. Stokes, a regular editorialist for AFOR’s publications, argued that there was a ‘Pan-African plan to drive the White population out of Africa’. However, he assured readers that despite ‘terrorist’ efforts, relations between the races in Rhodesia were ‘remarkably tolerant’. Finally, he appealed to the common history that the right-wing saw in Rhodesia’s UDI: ‘Rhodesia’s battle for self-preservation is the same battle that America fought in the Revolution of 1776.’⁵⁴¹

In September 1972 AFOR’s newsletter was dedicated to slating McGovern but by the following month the organisation had thrown its support behind the right-wing American Party. Presidential nominee John Schmitz and vice-presidential nominee Thomas Anderson ‘Pledge to end the present administration’s anti-Rhodesian sanctions policy and extend to Rhodesia the full diplomatic recognition which that nation is clearly entitled.’ A vote for either McGovern or Nixon was now ‘a vote for Communistic Socialism’ and AFOR asked

⁵³⁸ AFOR Newsletter, August 1972, 1, Wilcox Collection, Kenneth Spencer Research Library, University of Kansas (hereafter cited as Wilcox Collection).

⁵³⁹ Lulat, *United States Relations with South Africa*, 181.

⁵⁴⁰ AFOR Newsletter, August 1972, 1, Wilcox Collection.

⁵⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 3.

all its members to support the American Party.⁵⁴² The interwoven nature of these right-wing parties can again be seen by the fact that unsuccessful presidential nominee Schmitz, a representative for Orange County, California, had been a 'long-standing member of the John Birch Society'.⁵⁴³ By August 1974, AFOR was still functioning in spite of an attack. Gaedtke informed readers that the organisation's headquarters, which had relocated to Dorchester, Massachusetts, had been fire-bombed. AFOR's leader remained defiant: 'Were we not effective – The enemy would not have tried to silence us'.⁵⁴⁴

Rhodesia enjoyed unprecedented support among right-wing Americans from the time of UDI until Rhodesia became Zimbabwe in 1980. A sense of urgency to support this small African country when most of the world condemned it meant that it became the most important foreign matter for many white supremacists for over a decade. Crucially, the issue of Rhodesia was one which segregationist Americans could really involve themselves in if they so wished. From joining organisations to buying Rhodesian products or bonds, there were many opportunities for Americans to feel that they were directly contributing to the white cause in Rhodesia in a way that they had not yet needed to with South Africa. In Rhodesia, segregationist Americans saw their own story being repeated. From a declaration of independence in 1965 to the end of white supremacy fifteen years later, Rhodesia's white population battled against inexorable change just as American segregationists had during the civil rights movement. Significantly, the pro-Rhodesia lobby at a political level was consistent and powerful. The struggle to preserve legally-sanctioned segregation in the

⁵⁴² AFOR newsletter, September 1972 and AFOR newsletter, October 1972, Wilcox Collection.

⁵⁴³ *New York Times*, 5 November 1972.

⁵⁴⁴ AFOR newsletter, August 1974, Wilcox Collection, 1. Although there is no reason to suspect that the story was fabricated, I have not been able to find any news record to clarify the report of this fire-bombing.

American South had been lost by the time of Rhodesia's UDI, but the same political actors who had resisted civil rights reform continued to support white supremacy in a broader international context. The massive resisters of the 1950s and 1960s were far from defeated and, rather than vanishing from sight, they remained an influential political force.

As the latter half of the 1970s progressed, groups like AFOR and ASAC appeared to have run their course and they became less active. Having out-lived most of the other single focus pro-Rhodesian groups and having cultivated an air of respectability by avoiding overt racism, Rhodesia's American friends created tangible links with the Rhodesian government, counted influential politicians among their ranks and worked tirelessly and, for a short time at least, successfully, to promote white Rhodesia in the United States. American support for Rhodesia represented significant cooperation between those at the grassroots and those in Congress, between diehard segregationists and Cold War anti-communists, between those living in every region of the United States and between American organisations and the Rhodesian government. While ASAC and AFOR had been functioning, long-standing groups like the Citizens' Council and the John Birch Society had continued to support southern Africa.

In 1975, Portugal finally granted independence to its colonies of Angola and Mozambique leaving Rhodesia almost entirely surrounded by black states and, with the black nationalist movements there becoming increasingly powerful, even South Africa's government began to withdraw support and request a settlement. Under the administrations of Nixon and Ford, the U.S. had agreed to give South Africa more time to alter its social (not political) policies if it helped to pressure Smith to relinquish power in Rhodesia. The American government

wanted a black Rhodesia that ‘would keep the country within a South Africa dominated economic system’.⁵⁴⁵ Once again, avoiding communist influence was paramount. Eventually Smith realised he could not win his white supremacist battle. Negotiations for a transfer of power began in 1978 and in 1980 Rhodesia became independent Zimbabwe. American segregationists had not been able to prevent racial equality at home or majority rule in Rhodesia, but they were not yet ready to abandon white Africa. After a fifteen year battle for Rhodesia, America’s unrelenting white supremacists – organisationally, much smaller and certainly evermore marginalised – returned their attention to the remaining bastion of white supremacy, South Africa, with the hope that there, America’s enduring segregationists would see their efforts bear fruit.

⁵⁴⁵ Thomas, *The American Predicament*, 75-76.

Conclusion

Since the African National Congress took power in South Africa, crime and violence have run rampant. Cannibalism is on the rise... According to well informed sources, the death of Nelson Mandela will trigger a massacre of the White population. Today South Africa is less than 10% White. Someday, American Whites will be a minority. IT CAN HAPPEN HERE!

— Shelby County, Tennessee, Council of Conservative Citizens, April 2005.⁵⁴⁶

Fifty years after the *Brown v. Board of Education* school desegregation decision, the Council of Conservative Citizens, successor to the Citizens' Council, used the same scaremongering tactics that had been used by white supremacists in the American South for decades. The name of the organisation had changed, albeit only slightly, and the organisers were largely a new breed of right-wing militants who had replaced the old guard. Nevertheless, the rhetoric was the same: black Africans were savages and black rule in Africa would lead to the annihilation of the white population. The Tennessee Council of Conservative Citizens was by no means alone in its continued propagation of racist literature and white supremacist ideology. In 1985, the South Louisiana Citizens' Council published an article written by George W. Shannon, editor of *The Citizen*, informing readers that 'meddlers from abroad' had whipped black South Africans 'into a barbarous frenzy'. In comments more than a little reminiscent of his predecessors, Shannon once again drew on the historical links between Anglo-Saxons in the United States and South Africa:

South Africa's white government has always been a friend to the United States. It has fought on our side in every war in which we have been engaged. Its white

⁵⁴⁶ Photographic essay, Shelby County, Tennessee, Council of Conservative Citizens, April 2005, available at <http://web.archive.org/web/20050204012636/cofcc.org/shelby.htm>. This paragraph on the website had a number of spelling errors which I have corrected.

citizens are descended from European stock who landed on its shores in 1652, only 32 years after other European migrants landed at Plymouth Rock. With its history so closely paralleling our own, why can't we leave South Africa alone and let it settle its own problems?'⁵⁴⁷

In Virginia, meanwhile, the American-Afrikaner Union had been founded by 1990. It was an ultra-right wing white separatist organisation supporting the South African Conservative Party's desire to have a unified South Africa comprised of independent nations, one of which would be a homeland for the white population.⁵⁴⁸ Its newsletter also informed readers of the analogous experiences which bound together Americans and South Africans: 'Southerners and Afrikaners share similar national histories: agrarian traditions; victims of imperialist wars (Civil War and Boer War); victims of Communist-inspired racial unrest; unjustly vilified by leftist-internationalist media.'⁵⁴⁹ The 'communists' were still to blame for the civil rights movement in the United States and the black liberation movement in South Africa. Furthermore, just as S. E. D. Brown and William J. Simmons had complained thirty-five years before, the 'press iron curtain', was still unfairly misrepresenting racists in both countries.⁵⁵⁰ Well into the 1980s, 1990s and the twenty-first century, then, the roots of massive resisters' foreign policy can still be seen. The South Africa Conservative Party (Konserwatiewe Party) had been formed in 1982. Brian Du Toit described it as 'ultra right' and a party which 'appeals to both Afrikaner nationalistic sentiments and to white racist values'. In fact, Du Toit concluded that 'It may in the end be a white rather than strictly an

⁵⁴⁷ George W. Shannon, 'Will South Africa's Whites Meet Same Fate as Indians?', *The Citizens' Report* (monthly newsletter of the South Louisiana Citizens' Council, Inc.) December 1985, 2, Hall-Hoag, MS.76.5:A10, Box 76.5-1, Folder 76.5/27/2-SER.

⁵⁴⁸ American-Afrikaner Union newsletter, September-October 1990, 1 and letter from Edward G. Taylor, director of the AAU to Leslie, 4 October 1990, Hall-Hoag MS.76.72, Box 76.72-1, Folder 76.72/1966/1-GR.

⁵⁴⁹ American-Afrikaner Union newsletter, September-October 1990, 2, in *ibid*.

⁵⁵⁰ *The Citizens' Council* 1:1 (Oct., 1955): 2.

Afrikaner movement.⁵⁵¹ At last, the American right-wing had found a white South African grouping that, like white supremacists in the United States, prioritised race over ethnicity and nationality.

This thesis has demonstrated the continuity of American segregationists' search for alliances and affirmation of their racial beliefs. James Barber and John Barratt described the South African government's foreign policy as a 'search for status and security' and this also very appropriately describes southern segregationists during massive resistance.⁵⁵² From the beginning of massive resistance, white southerners who opposed racial reform looked increasingly outside their regional and national borders for comparable racial situations elsewhere. It is logical that the white minority regimes of southern Africa captured their imagination; as the National Party won power and began to implement apartheid, massive resisters could see a parallel situation – a racially stratified society, but moving in the opposite direction to the American South. As such, segregationists' thoughts began to be increasingly focused on a desired international alliance of white supremacy. Thirty years after the first Citizens' Council chapter was formed, the right-wing in South Africa also looked beyond its borders for confirmation of their racial beliefs. It may have taken a while, but the transition is also understandable. Southern segregationists had looked for external support as their cherished Jim Crow way of life came under threat. Until 1982, when South African Prime Minister Pieter Willem Botha announced a political transition to power sharing, white South Africans had never had cause to be concerned. The National Party had established a firm grip on the country in the 1948 election and year on year increased its

⁵⁵¹ Du Toit, 'The Far Right in Current South African Politics', 633, 637.

⁵⁵² Barber and Barratt, *South Africa's Foreign Policy*.

parliamentary majority.⁵⁵³ As the changes that had swept across the rest of the world in the post-War War II period finally caught up with white South Africa, those unwilling to accept the inevitable end of white supremacy in South Africa looked for ideological and practical support among like-minded individuals in the United States.

While international pressure undoubtedly helped to bring about the reform that slowly took place in South Africa, the United States government had largely remained South Africa's Cold War ally. As late as 1977, R. F. (Pik) Botha, South Africa's Minister of Foreign Affairs, spoke to an American television audience to condemn what he perceived as President Jimmy Carter's call for 'one man, one vote' in South Africa. Botha described such a formula as the 'height of immorality' and continued to say that it would equate to white South Africa 'negotiating their own destruction'. Finally, in a statement that must have reminded some American viewers of Alabama's former segregationist governor George Wallace, Botha said, 'You want us to accept this new commitment – a commitment to suicide. Forget it. No way. We shall not accept that; not now, not tomorrow, never, ever.'⁵⁵⁴ Botha's outburst led Hodding Carter of the U.S. State Department to clarify that Washington was not strictly demanding 'one man, one vote' in South Africa; rather, they

⁵⁵³ Ibid., 640.

⁵⁵⁴ P. W. Botha quoted in Nagan, 'The U.S. and South Africa' Lemarchand (ed.), *American Foreign Policy in Southern Africa*, 237. In his 1963 inaugural address as governor of Alabama, George C. Wallace spoke the following words in response to what he perceived as northern "outsiders" imposing change on the South: 'Let us rise to the call of freedom-loving blood that is in us and send our answer to the tyranny that clanks its chains upon the South. In the name of the greatest people that have ever trod this earth, I draw the line in the dust and toss the gauntlet before the feet of tyranny . . . and I say . . . segregation today . . . segregation tomorrow . . . segregation forever.' Available at the Alabama State archives: http://www.archives.state.al.us/govs_list/InauguralSpeech.html.

were requesting that South Africa move towards a ‘full democratic society’.⁵⁵⁵ Washington’s policymakers continued to tread carefully around South Africa.

In January 1981 a CIA report exemplified that the U.S. government’s priorities were unchanged. It noted that the United States had ‘a longstanding interest in the responsiveness of White South Africans to Nonwhite aspirations for political, economic, and social equality’. However, at stake was not only ‘American principles’ but the country’s Cold War agenda. ‘U.S. objectives in preventing racial conflict in South Africa’ stemmed from the potential that such violence might damage ‘US economic and strategic interests there’ and create ‘openings for the Soviets throughout the region’.⁵⁵⁶ Ronald Reagan became America’s new president in 1981 and, after a period of détente under Carter, he escalated the Cold War. Campbell Craig and Fredrik Logevall described Reagan’s Cold War policies aptly, and the description portrays his relationship with South Africa well: ‘he wanted to divide the world cleanly again into black and white, with the Soviet Union and its allies on one side, and the United States and its allies – no matter how distasteful some of them might be – on the other’.⁵⁵⁷ The crux of America’s ‘special relationship’ with South Africa was that of a Cold War alliance. Despite segregationist claims that the U.S. government was abandoning its valuable ally, South Africa, Cold War expediency consistently outweighed matters of morality for successive U.S. administrations. Furthermore, both Washington’s defence of South Africa and its occasional condemnation of apartheid had an influence on segregationists’ relationship with white southern Africa.

⁵⁵⁵ Nagan, ‘The U.S. and South Africa’, 237.

⁵⁵⁶ CIA, ‘South Africa: The Politics of Racial Reform’, 1, available at FOIA.

⁵⁵⁷ Craig and Logevall, *America’s Cold War*, 311.

Segregationists looked at the world in both racial terms and Cold War terms. Furthermore, they also came to be part of a transatlantic Anglo-Saxon grouping that brought these aspects together in a partnership of white supremacy. The influence of Pan-Africanism undoubtedly prompted segregationists to look outside what was once a 'closed society' and astutely position their struggle in a broader international context. This not only enabled them to find affirmation of their own racial beliefs in white southern Africa; it also provided a model for like-minded individuals and organisations in Britain. The transatlantic flow of literature that developed created a sense of camaraderie between the international right-wing. Moreover, this study has shown that in real terms, American segregationists were more successful in creating lasting, tangible links with their southern African counterparts than organisations like the NAACP were. The phasing of both massive resistance and apartheid was different. As Jim Crow was being dismantled, apartheid was being stringently constructed. Nevertheless, through publications like *The Citizens' Council*, *The Citizen*, *American Opinion* and the *South African Observer*, one can see that ideological affiliation between the two segregated societies existed. For the African American freedom struggle, however, its counterpart liberation movements in South Africa were banned and forced underground, causing an ideological shift away from nonviolence and toward militancy, thus making meaningful contact difficult to achieve. Segregationists had significant points of comparison upon which to claim parallel histories as well as current situations; anti-communism, a hatred of the United Nations and a belief in the inability of black Africans and Americans to engage successfully in political institutions all provided points around which whites in different countries could rally.

There is no doubt that the American experience was not as conspicuous in the South African mind in the mid-twentieth century as the Afrikaner experience was for U.S. segregationists. However, in spite of this, southern segregationists recognised historical and contemporaneous parallels between themselves and white southern Africans and keenly utilised the similarities to defend their position. Furthermore, segregationists across the United States continued to lobby on behalf of white South Africa during and long after massive resistance. In the case of Rhodesia we have seen far more direct examples of contact. While scholars had previously examined the diplomatic links between the U.S. government and Smith's illegal regime and the pro-Rhodesian congressional lobby, the story had not been completed by linking government strategy to the international policies of American segregationists. The grassroots organisations that worked tirelessly to promote Rhodesia among Americans had thus been overlooked. Not only has this thesis revealed the unprecedented support for Ian Smith at a local level, but it has also exemplified how closely related organisations like AFOR and ASAC became with those in positions of political power.

This study has sought to present a new interpretation of the international scope of segregationists both inside and outside the American South. It has revealed that the Citizens' Council, men like Wesley Critz George and publications like *American Opinion* and the *South African Observer* all survived in part because of their outward looking policies. For George, his beliefs were outdated even before the period of massive resistance but he held on to them nevertheless. By 1972 he was still hoping that 'scientific racism' would be revived and accepted by people as the 'truth' that George believed it to be. He was highly in favour of those who were still writing racial science in the early 1970s,

commenting that ‘they are doing they same sort of thing that others began doing twenty years ago’. Although the work of racial theorists like George had been widely discredited after World War II, he thought that scholars now might now ‘have greater success and cooperation due to the fact that the public is observing a daily demonstration of the things these men support, and which my colleagues supported before’. George was referring to the fact that he thought society had eroded and that both whites and blacks were ‘becoming aware of the ill-effects of’ integration.⁵⁵⁸ This argument recalled the regularly-used segregationist argument that all once-great nations had been destroyed and suffered a dramatic fall from prominence after integration and miscegenation. In the final assessment, it was not just scientific racists that were continuing the work of their predecessors. Southern segregation had evolved and adapted to tackle the civil rights movement, the Cold War and decolonisation.

Segregationists, anti-communists and scientific racists all found affirmation of their position and beliefs in apartheid South Africa, and later, in Rhodesia as well. As their own racial order came under threat they had a perfect model across the Atlantic where the National Party government was creating the kind of white-dominated society that many segregationists dreamed of. Though regarded as anachronistic to most thoughtful observers, offshoots of the Citizens’ Council, the John Birch Society and journals like *Mankind Quarterly* are still fully functioning vehicles of white supremacy today. Indeed, in his study of the racist journal Gavin Schaffer wrote, ‘If the *Mankind Quarterly* can be described as

⁵⁵⁸ Transcript of an interview with Wesley Critz George conducted by Roy Flewelling, 17 December 1971-8 February 1972, WCG Papers, Series 4, Box 21, Folder 148.

successful in any way its success was that it kept going at all.’⁵⁵⁹ Therefore, these people and organisations are not just historically relevant but still have a place in contemporary society. Although these groups are now incredibly marginalised, their roots are in the much broader-based segregationist movement of the mid-twentieth century.

The creation of this partnership of white supremacy was the result of the continued effort of organisers, editors and publishers like William Simmons, Robert Welch, S. E. D. Brown, William Gaedkte and John Acord. The closeness of the partnership is particularly evident in the *South African Observer*. The extraordinary transatlantic flow of literature that enabled Brown to get the articles he needed from the United States and then distribute the journal not just in South Africa but back in America too does suggest it was a significant publication for some people. It almost certainly was not an enormously widely read journal, but then neither would *The Citizen* have been by the 1970s and 1980s when it was still in publication. Whites in America wanted to read about South Africa and, although I do not think as many, whites in South Africa were keen to follow the movement of massive resistance in the American South.

The personal links as well as the exchange of literature has also revealed a wider sense of unity with the Anglo-Saxon world. Through this realisation, personal and inter-organisational relationships facilitated correspondence, ideological debate, the sharing of literature and devoted propaganda efforts. The ways in which southern segregationists sought alliances in southern Africa (as well as with other parts of the ‘British World’) demonstrates that they were not defensive and closed. Neither did they only look outside

⁵⁵⁹ Schaffer, “Scientific Racism Again?”, 276.

the South only when massive resistance appeared to be failing. Rather, they were ideologically and practically committed to an international concept of race unity and white superiority. Historian Joseph Crespino wrote recently that one of the challenges for scholars researching Mississippi was ‘to reconcile the continuity of white racism in the South with both the evolution of its expression and the dramatic changes that have swept the state and region’.⁵⁶⁰ I hope to have provided at least part of an answer here. To be sure, Mississippi was the citadel of white supremacy during massive resistance; however, it was also a great force in disseminating that belief outside regional and national borders. This thesis has demonstrated that the Mississippi Citizens’ Council immediately saw its struggle against integration as a regional, national and international battle. The foreign policy that they created and the interested parties like Brown in South Africa who contacted them, bolstered southern segregationists, strengthened the massive resistance movement in the short-term and also contributed to a lasting, global white supremacy that is still evident today.

⁵⁶⁰ Crespino, ‘Mississippi as Metaphor’, 108.

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