

THE JIMMY CARTER AND RONALD REAGAN ADMINISTRATIONS' POLICIES TOWARD APARTHEID SOUTH AFRICA: DIVERGING RHETORIC, CONVERGING ACTIONS

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The case scrutinized in this paper is that of the American approach to systemized racial segregation, most commonly known as the South African system of apartheid, under the administrations of Jimmy Carter and Ronald Reagan. More specifically, the article is built as a comparative study of both presidencies' respective anti-apartheid approaches. What is noted in that regard is that the different language used by both presidents not only produced expectations of a diverging plan of action, but also generated a generally positive historical verdict on Carter's policy in South Africa and a quite different profile of the policy of his successor. In opposition to that perspective, this article intends to demonstrate that the obvious divergence in rhetoric between Jimmy Carter, Ronald Reagan and their foreign policy aids hides striking similarities in practice and clearly converging approaches to diverse issues relating to the official American attitude toward that internationally recognized moral evil. What is also argued is that what characterized the Carter and the Reagan administrations alike was a clear absence of a concrete desire to end an infamous episode of racial injustices that drew worldwide attention and activism for several decades.

INTRODUCTION

On April 27th, 1994, thousands of anti-apartheid activists around the world finally saw decades of struggle pay off and triumphantly watched Nelson Mandela being elected the first black president in the first democratic election of South Africa. The now-defunct apartheid era is a very important subject of study. Apartheid was the system of government introduced by the National Party of South Africa as early as 1948 soon after they won national elections. The system was built on complete separation between the whites, blacks and coloured, clearly perceived as inferior by the government, and was to last many decades to come. The flow of legislation that shortly followed the initiation of the system prohibited mixed marriages, relocated blacks to very poor homelands, imposed separate education and facilities on non-whites, drastically restricted the latter's rights and freedom, and with the pass system rendered them aliens within their own country. The racist white South African government also engaged in a relentless effort to silence any dissenting voice, and various attempts by blacks to speak up against oppression were met by governmental repression. The growing tension was translated into repeated high profile episodes of confrontation between blacks and the white police. The best known of these episodes were the Sharpeville event in 1969 and the Soweto uprising of 1976. Because of the extreme human rights abuses inherent in the apartheid system, and the

large-scale oppression of South African blacks and coloured, the moral dilemma of South Africa began to attract public and official activist attention globally.

The role of a country like the United States in the global anti-apartheid campaign is worth studying. A comparison between the respective approach to South African institutionalized racial discrimination under Jimmy Carter and Ronald Reagan is carried out in this article. What ought to be mentioned in that regard is that it was the fundamentally different rhetorical pronouncements of both administrations that motivated this research and the ensuing attempt to study the record behind rhetoric. The major point to be made is that while Carter and Reagan diverged dramatically in terms of their rhetoric, their policies in South Africa obviously converged and were characterised by a clear low priority devoted to the objective of dismantling apartheid. This can be seen in their shared opposition to punitive economic sanctions, defence of the white government in the United Nations and defective implementation of the UN mandatory arms embargo against the Republic.

THE DIVERGING RHETORIC OF THE CARTER AND THE REAGAN ADMINISTRATIONS

Jimmy Carter and the Human Rights Foreign Policy

In writing about the presidential election period of the year 1976, Kandy Stroud, a reporter, claimed that “few felt like celebrating America this year...” and that “there was not that much to celebrate”. The time was a time of pervasive dissatisfaction with politics, and a prevailing sense of disillusionment among the American people following the double fiascos of the country’s lengthy entanglement in the Vietnam War and the Watergate scandal (Morris 224). Because the then democratic candidate to presidency, Jimmy Carter, campaigned on a political agenda that promised that furthering respect of human rights would be central to his objectives, he appeared to be the kind of man that the United States would elect. As soon as he was elected, the new president promised to “make America proud again” (Vogelgsang 110), and to propel concern with human rights to the forefront of American politics. To many observers his focus was expected to have a considerable impact on American foreign policy formulation.

Jimmy Carter’s reputation as a human rights president at home and abroad was reinforced by a number of appointments. These included the human rights activist, Andrew Young, who became the United States ambassador to the United Nations, Cyrus Vance, who was appointed Secretary of State, and who was deeply engaged in defending the rights of the poor before his appointment, and Zbigniew Brzezinski, who assumed the position of National Security Advisor (Cornwell 2002). According to Peter J. Schraeder, these high ranking officials were bound by a common desire to downplay the importance of the Cold War in their approach to understanding the conflicts on the African continent as well as the rest of the world (215). Furthermore Carter’s distinctive focus on human rights was reaffirmed with a Presidential Directive (NSC-30) dated February 17, 1978. The Directive made it clear that “it shall be a major objective of US foreign policy to promote the observance of human rights throughout the world”. The president detailed the foundations of what he referred to as “the United States human rights policy” and defined the cases and circumstances involving human rights violations and hence requiring American intervention. These cases consisted of governmental overuse of power at the expense of individual freedoms and liberties, including “torture, degrading treatment, arbitrary arrest or imprisonment, lengthy detention without trial and assassination”. In such instances the

Democratic president promised that the United States would intervene and leverage its influence to preserve individual freedom worldwide¹.

In terms of rhetoric, the new administration's foreign policy seemed to adopt a completely new focus, and significant changes in vocabulary seemed to be introduced with the major discourse being used that of morality and humanitarianism. In his inaugural address, in 1977, Carter referred to human rights several times. He expressed the belief that United States foreign policy should drastically alter its priorities towards a nobler "fight against poverty, ignorance, and injustice". He also stated that under his administration American diplomacy would offer "a clear-cut preference for these societies which share with us an abiding respect for individual human rights" (Vogelgsang 110). Four months after his inauguration, Carter announced to a commencement audience at the University of Notre Dame that he had "reaffirmed America's commitment to human rights as a fundamental tenet of our foreign policy" (Forsythe 140). In his first Senate testimony on foreign assistance, Secretary of State Cyrus Vance, offered a similar perception to that of President Jimmy Carter. Vance highlighted two very important objectives of what the United States role abroad should be. His definition again contained terms and vocabulary belonging to the same lexis used by the Democratic president. He explained that American intervention in world affairs was meant "to demonstrate America's compassion for the poor and dispossessed around the world," and "to contribute to the cause of peace" (Trimiew 66). On another occasion, Vance proudly announced that "the defence of human rights has been and continues to be one of the principal goals of the foreign policy of this administration". What was common in the language of different actors in the Carter administration was that the traditional reference to geopolitical and national interest considerations was largely silenced, a fact that can be illustrated by Carter's contention "we are now free of that inordinate fear of communism"(Hayward 111). With Carter the focus was for the first time placed on America's role and moral imperative to fight for fundamental human rights nationally as well as internationally.

The Carter's administrations' commitment to human rights was therefore rhetorically strong. Frequently found concepts in Carter's discourse were those of "freedom", "liberation", and "human rights". Through his speeches and public discourse Jimmy Carter emerged as not only a firm human rights supporter, but more importantly, his rhetoric displayed an obvious consistency in this commitment throughout his presidency. Upon his nomination as the 39th American president in July 1976 Carter declared: "ours was the first nation to dedicate itself clearly to basic moral and philosophical principals, a revolutionary development that captured the imagination of mankind". Almost a year later, at the 1977 Notre Dame Commencement, his appeal to the same principals seemed unwavering when he declared that "because we know that democracy works, we can reject the arguments of those rulers who deny human rights to their people". This commitment did not appear to become tarnished at the end of his term since in his farewell address he appealed to the new Republican administration to emphasize human rights as much as he had done because " America must always stand for these basic human rights" (Rosenbaum 77).

In considering American relations with Africa prior to the Carter presidency author Steve Marsh explains that "US African policy in the 1950's and 1960's was one of benign neglect of black Africa and generally cautious support of South Africa's white apartheid regime" (91). Carter's views about racial equality, however, were expressed as early as 1971 in his inaugural address as the governor of Georgia. In that speech he announced that "At the end of a long campaign, I... say to you quite frankly that the time for racial discrimination is over...no poor, rural, weak, or black person should ever have to bear the additional burden of being deprived of

¹ The Presidential Directive is available at the online Jimmy Carter library at www.jimmycarterlibrary.gov/documents/pddirectives/pres_directive

the opportunity of an education, a job or simple justice.”² What is important about this statement and others by Carter is the kind of expectations they created. In fact, after the Democratic candidate’s election, hope grew among anti-apartheid activists that a completely new approach to US South African relations was in sight. This hope was reinforced by the fact that the president expressed regret at the time of his campaign that he did not effectively help the civil rights movement in the United States, and promised that if elected president he would remedy that (Schraeder 215). As a matter of fact, not long after assuming office, Jimmy Carter travelled to Africa, thus becoming the first American president to go to that continent. Once there he expressed yet again his rhetorical commitment to democracy and morality. In a speech in Lagos, Nigeria he explained the outline of American policy in Africa and proudly announced to the African audience “we share with you a commitment to majority rule and individual human rights...this commitment shapes our attitude toward your continent” (Rosenbaum 256).

The rhetoric of the Carter administration concerning racial discrimination, as described above, promised a significant departure from the anti-apartheid policies of previous US presidencies. The Carter administration seemed to be profoundly against any racial discrimination and thus the apartheid policy of the South African government. Cyrus Vance reinforced this trend when he made a speech detailing U.S. policy in that country in early July, 1977. In this speech before the annual meeting of the National Association of the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) he put the South African government on notice that its relations with the US would deteriorate dramatically if no tangible effort was made soon to reverse the discriminatory apartheid system. The stated objective of such action was to allow the full and effective political participation of all South African citizens regardless of their races. The Secretary of State expressed the belief that it was imperative for the South African government to start negotiations with the black majority. He also warned the white Afrikaner minority that in case of resistance on their part “our relations will inevitably suffer; we cannot defend a system that is based on racial domination and remain true to ourselves” (Massie 413-414). Andrew Young was also said to be very outspoken against apartheid. His rhetoric appeared to share the then prevailing assumption that this systemized discrimination was simply unacceptable. He declared once that “at some point we’ve got to come to the conclusion that we’re no longer going to finance apartheid. When we come to that conclusion, it’s amazing how quickly the South Africans will come to their senses” (Massie 410).

Herbert B. Rosenbaum once expressed the belief that “Carter understood that promoting democracy and promoting human rights were not processes independent of each other”. He also explained that it would have been inherently irrelevant to point the finger at human rights violations occurring in a specific context without taking into consideration the political system in which they occurred (81). It is therefore only logical to infer that Carter should have understood that the answer to the plight of South African blacks was to make an effort to force the government imposing a system as internationally abhorred as apartheid to effect some changes, and establish a more propitious ground for democracy and majority rule. What is clear is that, theoretically, in comparison with the Ford and especially the Nixon administrations, who offered only transient and careless attention to the problem of racial discrimination in South Africa, changes in the approach of the United States toward that country appeared to be in sight. The signs were the appointment of proponents of human rights and racial equality in top positions in the Carter administration, the African foreign policy review that was carried out shortly after he entered the White House, and the rhetoric and statements by Carter himself and top members in his administration. The answer to the question of whether the rhetoric met the action is provided in the second section of this discussion.

² Governor Jimmy Carter inaugural address, Atlanta, Georgia. January 12, 1971. Available online at www.carterlibrary.org.

Ronald Reagan and the Focus on National Interest

In the 1981 presidential election Republican candidate Ronald Reagan defeated his Democratic counterpart Jimmy Carter, and became the 40th president of the United States. He held this position for eight successive years. When Reagan became president it appeared that there would be a dramatic change in American politics, and that his predecessor's conception of foreign policy would be completely reversed in favour of a new approach. Accounts of 20th century American politics generally set the Jimmy Carter and Ronald Reagan presidencies apart as far as their ideologies and objectives were concerned. In an article entitled "Human Rights, the National Interest, and US Foreign Policy" written in the *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, author Jerome J. Shestack writes: "President Carter made human rights a key focus of US foreign policy, when the Reagan administration began, it denigrated human rights policy" (17). David P. Forsyth on the other hand contends that "Reagan had co-opted human rights to ulterior, geo-strategic purposes". His opinion was reinforced by the fact that early in his campaign Ronald Reagan openly criticized the place that human rights had occupied in Carter's foreign policy agenda and blamed his administration for allowing the Soviets the opportunity to reinforce their power in the world (158). An example of that is a statement by Reagan that "Carter ignored growing Soviet Power and influence, abandoned friends and assisted in Marxist revolutions" (Scott 16).

As a matter of fact, a close scrutiny of the new administration's ideological inclination and rhetoric unveils fundamental differences separating Reagan and his aides from Carter and members of his administration. While the Carter administration was associated with a renewed emphasis on human rights and morality, the new one came to be viewed as synonymous with an obsessive concern with growing Soviet influence and expansion. It was also associated with the provision of overt and covert support for rebels fighting Marxist influence in various places around the world, especially in Central America. Unlike Carter and his aides, the new Republican administration would see that an enhanced role of human rights was out of context, would put less emphasis on morality, and focus its energies on countering the perceived Soviet threat. Reagan, who believed that "strategically vital parts of the world fell under the shadow of Soviet power" decided to take a new turn of action to remedy the situation. A new doctrine outlining the contours of the new governmental orientation regarding foreign policy was devised, and was called the "Reagan Doctrine".

In a book entitled *Deciding to Intervene: the Reagan Doctrine and American Foreign Policy*, author James M. Scott explains that whereas concern with Soviet advances in different parts of the third world had pertained to different administrations preceding Reagan, the policy of containment was different from the strategy adopted by Reagan. Scott makes a difference between two concepts characterizing the style in which the United States dealt with the Soviets in the Cold War Period; one is "prevention" and the other is "cure". The last was adopted by Reagan and emphasized the need to take effective action to reverse Soviet gains in the third world rather than just preventing them. Reagan therefore went a step beyond containment which he perceived as a "defeatist strategy" (2). For Reagan the answer or the "remedy" was to "rollback" Soviet gains, using methods as varied as "economic isolation" and "destabilization through insurgency in the third world" (Bodenheimer and Gould, 1989). The president's new approach to foreign policy was endorsed in a number of National Security Decisions Directives, namely NSDD 32 and NSDD 75. The stated objectives of United States foreign policy according to these directives would be to "deter military attacks by the USSR... by a coalition of states friendly to US interests" and to "contain and reverse the expansion of Soviet control". The directives also defined the kind of threats that may be posed to American national security, and explained the role that allies were expected to play in America's fight against the Soviet Union. Rollback, as it was described in these directives, therefore epitomized Reagan's belief that

containment was not enough³. This doctrine was applied in countries like Afghanistan, Angola, Cambodia, Ethiopia, Mozambique and Nicaragua. Accordingly, under the new administration, various rebellions in diverse parts of the globe came to be seen, to use Ronald Reagan's words, as "explosions against repression and lack of freedom" provoked by communist-influenced governments⁴.

Rhetorically, the new president's language contained echoes of his ideological inclinations. His belief in the necessity of rolling back Soviet influence was imbedded in such statements as "the United States have not neglected to strengthen our traditional alliances in Europe and Asia". It may also be seen in the cases in which he talks about the American compulsion to "stand by our democratic allies and to develop key relations with [its] partners in the Middle East and other countries"⁵. His representative to the United Nations showed, on several occasions, the same commitment; as, for instance, when she assured rebels against leftist inclined governments that "we will help you" (Scott 16). On the other hand, Reagan's rhetoric conveyed a vision of a world that is characterized by chaos and disorder. In one of his State of the Union addresses, he expressed the belief that the United States is "approaching the end of a bloody century plagued by a terrible political invention"⁶. On another occasion he talked about "a mounting danger in Central America that threatens the security of the United States, a danger that will not go away; it will grow worse, much worse" (Weiler 32).

Unlike Carter, who stressed human rights and a morally oriented foreign policy, Reagan's rhetoric focused on constructing a threatening environment and on defining a real and potent danger that must be removed. In an article entitled "Subverting the Rhetorical Construction of Enemies through Worldwide Enfoldment," author Kimberley Elliot explains that "government must rhetorically construct their enemies to gain both congressional and public support because many of America's enemies are of little threat to the public" (2). Most of Reagan's foreign policy rhetoric was dedicated to that very purpose, which explains his labelling of the Soviet Union as an "evil empire," a "totalitarian evil," and a "negative force that persecutes"⁷. Through his rhetoric Reagan tried to connect different insurgencies and disturbances in the world to a larger anti-communist battle, and to secure public and congressional support for intervention.

Furthermore, Reagan's vision divided the world into two camps, good and evil. The obvious objective of such a division was to set the United States apart from a system that "openly proclaims and practices an alleged right to command people's lives and to export its ideology by force"⁸. His rhetoric was largely built on contradictions, creating two parallel images clearly distinct from one another. He consequently talks about "terrible totalitarianism" and vigorous democracy" about "free election," and "one party system". For him the world is divided between those who "seek subversion and conflict" and those "who preserve freedom and peace", between Americans whose "highest aspiration" is peace and the other who is represented as "an enemy to freedom". The USA becomes a force of "peaceful change" and the Soviet Union a force of "disorder and violence". Another important feature of Reagan's rhetoric was the manner through which he idealized the image of foreign allies and supporters when describing them as "people who have struggled to take control of their own destiny" and when he refers to "the brave people of Afghanistan," and the contention that "freedom fighters are the key to peace". Building on that, he assured them of America's unwavering support when announcing that "you're not alone freedom fighters, America will support you with moral and material assistance".

³ NSDD 32 and NSDD 75 are available online at www.fas.org/irp/offdocs/nsdd/index.html

⁴ Extracted from the Ronald Reagan Speech to the House of Commons, June 8, 1982. available online at <http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/mod/1982reagan1.html>

⁵ Ronald Reagan State of Union Address, January 26, 1982. Reagan's State of Union Addresses are available online at <http://odur.let.rug.nl/~usa/P/rr40/rr40.htm>

⁶ Ronald Reagan Speech to the House of Commons, June 8, 1982.

⁷ Ronald Reagan State of Union Address, February 2, 1985.

⁸ Ronald Reagan State of Union Address, February 4, 2006.

Additionally, whereas Carter highlighted humanitarian and moralistic objectives as a fundamental tenet of his foreign policy, the Reagan administration put a huge emphasis on national security and the national interest. While talking about foreign assistance, shortly after Reagan was elected President, his Secretary of State Alexander Haig concluded that what was important was "to be able to meet the strategic objectives of the United States for which the aid program is itself conducted" (Van Der Veen, 6). In 1983 he also argued that Carter's emphasis on human rights over national security had weakened the United States" (Van Der Veen 7). National interest under the new administration gained an enhanced and reinforced position in foreign policy formulation. Since Reagan linked American national security with events taking place outside the borders of the United States "virtually any foreign adventure" became identifiable as "vital to the national security". As a result asking congress for \$100 million in aid for a group of rebels became perceived as no more than "a small part of our present defense budget--to the defense of our own southern frontier". Similarly, helping the insurgents of Nicaragua became vital because it is "a Soviet ally on the American mainland only two hours' flying time from our own borders" (Weiler 32).

What also ought to be mentioned is that, despite Reagan's endorsement of an aggressive foreign policy, his rhetoric was not devoid of human rights and moralistic references. Like many presidents preceding him he built most of his discourse on notions of American exceptionalism, moral superiority and an underlying sense of mission. His speeches also contained echoes of an underlying belief in American leadership. On various occasions he presented the United States as a "crusader" who would "take freedom to the next step", and even talked about the American "crusade for renewal"⁹. Reagan used language that emphasized the belief that Americans are divinely destined to lead the world and bring salvation to humanity as a whole. He contended that Americans "didn't seek this leadership...It was thrust upon us...The American people have a genius for splendid and unselfish action, and into the hands of America, God has placed the destinies of afflicted humanity" (Weiler 34). However, unlike Carter's commitment to American moral superiority, which appeared genuine and which was described by some authors as "personal," Reagan's use of human rights rhetoric appeared instrumental (Forsythe, 1993). In fact, it may be argued that Reagan used that language for a completely different objective, namely to smear the Soviet reputation even more so as to justify the aggressive foreign policy his administration embraced with regards to communist advances in the world.

Reagan therefore built his foreign policy on a very distinct perception of how relations with foreign countries ought to be conducted. His perception was clearly conveyed through his rhetoric, which described the overall priorities and various considerations that should guide such relations. Various countries received different degrees of prominence in the Reagan's agenda of foreign relations depending on the role they would play in his administration's worldwide communist battle. Some countries and situations acquired a high status in this agenda while others stayed very low in Reagan's diplomatic concerns. Regarding South Africa, a negative verdict on the Reagan administration's answer to the problem of apartheid in that country was widely shared among many authors. Those who wrote in this context explained that the Reagan era was marked by a "significant [US] retreat from the strong support Carter had given to Black Nationalism, and majority rule" (Nolan 93). Author Donald R. Culverson, even talks about "rejuvenation of Pretoria's friendship with Washington (90), and Peter J. Schraeder refers to the Reagan administration's "upgrading ties with South Africa" (6). Whereas the Carter administration was highly vocal in its criticism of South African apartheid, Reagan changed the rhetoric, tempered the criticism and rather attempted reconciliation with the white minority regime in Pretoria.

Chester Crocker, an Assistant Secretary for African Affairs in the Reagan administration played a very significant role in devising the Reagan administration's policy toward South

⁹ Ronald Reagan State of Union Address, January 25, 1984.

Africa. He saw a departure from Carter's confrontational approach toward the government of that country necessary (Coker 154). Crocker put together a policy termed "constructive engagement," which described the style in which the United States would pursue its foreign policy in Africa in general and South Africa in particular. He believed that change in South Africa should occur progressively, without "revolutionary cataclysm" and that the United States should work with the South African government and not against it to achieve that purpose (Coker 155). Constructive engagement was described by writer Donald Culverson as a strategy that "involved ongoing conversation and cooperation with the minority regime". Indeed, it was a policy that built on the assumption that reform could only come if the South African government was given incentives to embrace and accept change. It appears that for Crocker the existence of racial discrimination did not necessarily call for an instant dismantling of apartheid (88). What is also obvious is that other strategic and geopolitical concerns were given priority in defining the kind of relations that would link the United States under Reagan to South Africa under the Afrikaner government.

The rhetoric of the Reagan administration was illustrative of the new direction his relations with the minority South African government was given. In one of his speeches Reagan defended the Botha administration in South Africa by saying "they have eliminated the segregation that we once had in our own country" (Weiler 106). Furthermore, in a telegram to all African diplomatic posts, the president made it clear that the "broad objective" of the United States in Southern Africa "is to strengthen this region of growing importance to American Interests"¹⁰. By so doing Reagan appeared unconcerned with the plight of thousands of black South Africans suffering under a rigid system of racial segregation. Since his views were widely shared by members of his administration, these foreign policy officials also displayed significant rhetorical support of the Afrikaner government; his representative to the United Nations even stated that "racism is not as bad as Marxism" (Culverson 88). Crocker went as far as praising the South African government through the contention that "white politics are demonstrating a degree of fluidity and pragmatism that is without precedent in the past generation" (Coker 155). In another telegram to American diplomatic posts in the world, the American Secretary of State used a protective tone when revealing that the United States "would recognize and deal objectively with the South African government's legitimate security concerns". The Secretary of State went further to claim that Americans have certain national security interests in the region that "could not be jeopardized for the sake of moralistic pronouncements"¹¹.

Presidential doctrines and rhetoric are instruments meant to assert general purposes and objectives. While that purpose for Carter was to restore public trust in American values and promote a human rights oriented foreign policy, Reagan used his speeches to identify a wicked and powerful enemy, build a stronger military and adopt a more aggressive containment policy of Soviet influence. It is clear from what precedes that, apart from common references to notions of American exceptionalism and sense of mission, the Democratic administration of Jimmy Carter and the administration of his Republican counterpart Ronald Reagan contrasted dramatically in terms of ideology and rhetoric. It is also clear that given these differences one would expect both presidents' actual policy in South Africa to show a similar contrast. Having established that expectation, the research proceeds to study policy decisions adopted under these respective presidencies and the extent to which they epitomized the differences in ideology and rhetoric between Jimmy Carter and Ronald Reagan.

¹⁰ The telegram is available online at <http://foia.state.gov/documents/FOIADocs/000055CE.pdf>

¹¹ The telegram is available online at <http://foia.state.gov/documents/FOIADocs/0000529D.pdf>

THE CONVERGING PRACTICES OF THE JIMMY CARTER AND RONALD REAGAN ADMINISTRATIONS

Opposition to Economic Sanctions

Economic sanctions are not an unfamiliar policy option to the United States. As early as 1919 President Woodrow Wilson expressed his administration's support of this coercive measure when stating that "a nation that is boycotted is a nation that is in sight of surrender. Apply this economic peaceful, silent deadly remedy and there will be no need for force. It is a terrible remedy. It does not cost a life outside the nation boycotted, but brings pressure upon the nation which in my judgment, no modern nation could resist" (Hufbauer 9). Accordingly, of the more than sixty sanction cases between the years 1945 and 1990 more than sixty percent were introduced by the United States and more than twenty five percent of these were unilaterally adopted by the US government (Hufbauer, 1990). Different countries were sanctioned by the United States throughout the country's history allegedly because of their human rights records. In addition to the Soviet Union, Poland and Romania, severe embargoes were adopted against China, North Vietnam, Cuba, and North Korea (Combs).

In South Africa however, apart from the mandatory arms embargo which is discussed shortly, the United States was an unwilling participant in the widely accepted domestic and United Nations' proposed economic sanctions. Reagan's and Carter's shared uneasiness about economic sanctions can be inferred from a number of recently declassified domestic and foreign policy documents. Kenneth Mokoena, who compiled an important portion of these documents in a book entitled *South Africa and the United States: the Declassified History*, has allowed researchers access to a collection of US declassified cables, memorandums and foreign policy directives that give clear insights into the Carter and the Reagan administrations' stand-point concerning the adoption of economic sanctions against South Africa. A November 1977 a confidential State Department cable displayed Andrew Young's strong opposition to any UN decision calling for tougher punishment of South Africa's policies including economic sanctions. Shortly after the adoption of the United Nations arms embargo, Secretary of State, Cyrus Vance, in a confidential cable to American embassies in Africa, gave the instruction that "in the event that African officials raise the possibility of further sanctions, posts should avoid commitment," evade the topic, and "find ways to divert the conversation" (Mokoena 78, 97, 86).

The same is noticed with declassified foreign policy documents on South Africa under Ronald Reagan. National Security Directive 187, adopted in September 1985, clearly stated that one of the guidelines that would govern US policy in South Africa would be a continued effort "to combine the resources of the White House and the Departments of State, Treasury and Commerce to oppose, or satisfactorily limit the imposition of new legislative sanctions against South Africa" and to explain why "punitive sanctions are counterproductive". Furthermore, in a memorandum sent to Assistant Secretary of State Chester Crocker, Ambassador Herman Nickel talked about the need for economic sanctions as a "fallacious syllogism". He even favored a similar attitude towards sanctions among other western countries because "continued opposition to punitive economic measures by key allies strengthens the US position in its domestic debate". What is worth noting, in this context, is that this attitude, that is promoting collaboration among western countries for a collective blocking of sanctions against Pretoria, was also shared by officials under the Carter administration. Secretary Vance for instance displayed frustration in 1977 when he noted that several anti-apartheid African resolutions were put to a vote in the United Nations Security Council "despite efforts by the Western five" (Mokoena 92, 130).

Not only did both presidents voice a clearly negative feeling against sanctioning apartheid as soon as they assumed leadership of the United States, but they were also consistent in their

rejection of sanctions and in shielding South Africa against any attempt to isolate it economically throughout their presidencies. Despite Pretoria's intransigence and inflexibility, the Carter administration continued to articulate threats that were never translated in actual policy, and vague promises of future action that never came. In 1978 the president threatened "to change its position of opposing mandatory sanctions". In 1979 William Dimfery, a member of Carter's UN delegation declared in front of the General Assembly that if Pretoria did not reverse its racial practices the US "[would] consider other ways to bring about change". As late as 1980, a few months before the termination of Carter's term in the White House, he still did not adopt any punitive trade action, and his Assistant Secretary of State for African affairs still talked about American South African relations "being dependent upon progress towards the elimination of apartheid" (Thomson 94). The result was that by the end of Carter's presidency, as Alex Thompson describes, the United States was merely "describing a situation in South Africa and condemning it" (109). Concerning the Reagan camp, in 1985 Crocker called the House of Representatives' attempt to introduce comprehensive sanctions against South Africa as a "path of madness" (Thomson 141). Reagan himself, after the Congress overrode his veto and ratified the Comprehensive Anti-apartheid Act against South Africa, declared that "the imposition of additional economic sanctions at this time would not be helpful to the achievement of our objectives..." (Thomson 154). As late as 1987, the President implored Congress and the international community, in a speech delivered in July that year, to "resist this emotional clamor for punitive sanctions" (Mokoena 37).

When examining Jimmy Carter's and Ronald Reagan's attitude towards apartheid-directed economic sanctions, one cannot fail to notice the double standards embraced by the United States as far as this sanction policy was concerned. George W. Shepherd notices that "the failure of the United States to support mandatory economic sanctions on the rationale that they are likely to be ineffective and futile is neither plausible nor in accordance with its history. The record of US sanctions against Cuba, Libya, and the Soviet Union, imposed in furtherance of perceived US foreign policy objectives, attests to the continuation of such measures notwithstanding their lack of success" (10). The staunch opposition of the United States to any form of trade restriction against white South Africa was indeed obviously inconsistent with its long sanction history, especially when the Soviet Union and its allies were the subjects of this kind of action. In fact, shortly after the Second World War, the United States started what was called "a campaign of economic sanctions" against the Soviet Union. The campaign was launched by the Department of Commerce, which, through the adoption in 1949 of the Export Control Act, imposed very strict controls over the American items that would be sold to the Soviet Union and communist states (Combs).

The United States sought to cut off the Soviet Union's access not only to American trade but also to that of other countries of the world. In the Battle Act of 1951 the US threatened to cut assistance to any nations that refused to embargo strategic goods to the Soviet Union. This stands in complete contradiction to the US attempt to convince western states to resist the call of economic sanctions against South Africa, as seen in a number of declassified documents. The United States for example adopted the strongest and longest of its sanctions against Cuba, but also levied its influence on the Organization of American States to do the same, and threatened to inflict strong penalties on American and foreign overseas companies which continued to trade with that country. It consistently worked towards coordinating a concerted international effort to punish the Soviets. Talk about coordination between the United States and western allies to oppose sanctions was also seen in National Security Directive Decision 272 of May 1987. The directive stated that the major objectives of US Southern African policy included "coordination of major political and economic initiatives in the US Southern African policy with key allies and friends". It also refers to the "achievement of adequate western burden-sharing and division of

efforts in pursuit of the above goals," the goals being a coordinated American-western effort to silence the international demand for sanctions¹².

Defending South Africa in the United Nations

What further made Carter's and Reagan's respective policies towards that part of the globe strikingly similar was the equally deployed effort to defend the racist government against any other UN actions and criticism. In addition to blocks of UN proposals of economic sanctions against South Africa, resolutions vetoed by Carter included calls to end all military collaboration with apartheid in 1979, attempts to strengthen the arms embargo that same year, a proposal to offer assistance to the oppressed people of South Africa and their liberation movement, calls to strengthen sanctions and others. On the other hand, resolutions that were never adopted, because vetoed by Reagan, involved condemnation of an attempted coup by South Africa on the Seychelles, a similar condemnation of South Africa for its Namibian policies, and a call to end all economic aid to South Africa, including the rejection of a request of a 1.1 billion loan from the IMF¹³.

The United States' incessant attempt to protect and defend South Africa saw Carter and Reagan casting consecutive negative votes within the same Security Council or General Assembly meeting. On October 1977, for instance, Carter's representatives vetoed three resolutions proposed by African states to the Security Council to punish South Africa. The proposed resolutions were meant to impose strict economic sanctions, including a ban on foreign investment and arms sales, an end to cooperation in the nuclear field and the repeal of licences to manufacture weapons (Grundy 55). In March that same year, the same individuals once more vetoed three multilateral resolutions calling for some punitive action against South Africa (Minter 289). In April 1981, the United States envoys to the UN Security Council from the Reagan administration cast four consecutive vetoes over decisions aimed at instituting coercive measures for South Africa's illegal presence in Namibia (Thomson 118).

Furthermore, that same desire to protect South Africa dictated to the United States the compulsion to reject a large number of resolutions, sometimes more than eight, within a very limited time frame. In 1979 Carter vetoed seven resolutions that would have condemned South Africa's attacks on neighbouring states, while at the same time renewing pledges of international rejection of the apartheid system. The next year, out of nine resolutions targeting apartheid the United States submitted a positive vote for only two of them. The trend intensified into the Reagan presidency, which in 1983, rejected eight UN apartheid-oriented decisions. In 1984 alone, the president rejected ten UN resolutions targeting the apartheid system and South Africa's foreign and domestic policy decisions. Between 1977 and 1985 the United States used its veto against South African-oriented resolutions more than forty times. The figure is even more striking when we compare it to the number of times that same veto was used by the USSR, which was none (Mokoena 83).

Alex Thomson notices that "occasionally the administration's steadfast support of the Pretoria government saw the US voting in a minority of one" (118). A clearly perceivable pattern of American vetoing conduct under the Carter and the Reagan administrations was that it was sometimes done with no, or very few, followers. On March and October 1977, the US was joined solely by Britain and France in vetoing African-inspired UN resolutions against South Africa. Likewise, under Reagan the US and only two other western nations used their vetoes against a UN resolution that would have rejected South Africa application for a loan. A hundred twenty

¹² NSDD 272 is available online at www.fas.org

¹³ UN Resolutions against South Africa that were vetoed by the United States are available online at www.krysstal.com/democracy_whyusa03

two positive votes were cast for the proposed step. In some cases, the United States vetoed UN decisions targeting South Africa, while other member states were unanimous in positively voting for them. On August 1981, the US was the only country to veto a resolution aimed at showing the United Nations discontent at South Africa's continued occupation of South West Africa. A few months later it chose to use its veto against the General Assembly resolution 36/172B which would have made the year 1982 "the international year of mobilisation of sanctions against South Africa". That same year, the United States representatives at the United Nations were the only envoys to veto a resolution calling for a reinforced UN role in addressing the issue of apartheid in sports (Pomeroy 80-81).

It becomes clear that both Carter and Reagan attempted to offer South Africa what Alex Thompson refers to as "diplomatic protection" (118). When chairing a 1984 House of Representatives hearing having as its subject "the Current Crisis in South Africa," Joseph Wolpe pointed out that "when the American government uses its veto power in the United Nations to block resolutions condemning South Africa... the real message that is conveyed to the South African authorities is that they now have a much freer hand to do what they will" (the Current Crisis). Rejection of any other kind of UN resolutions against apartheid indeed had quite serious repercussions as such attitudes were bound to reinforce Pretoria's arrogance and intransigence, and to send the wrong signals to the Afrikaner government that inflexibility would not be punished, and that American protection against any condemnation was unwavering. As a matter of fact, William Minter notices that there had been a growing confidence within South Africa's governmental circles that "western negotiations" led by the United States would not resort to a big stick to reinforce their suggestions" (289). William Pomeroy also believes that the United States' opposition to different UN resolutions directed against South Africa helped the apartheid regime survive and stand in the face of growing international condemnation, explicitly suggesting that "South African rulers have had powerful allies and supporters... that have vetoed, blocked and made unthinkable most UN resolutions on apartheid" (25).

Defective Implementation of the Arms Embargo

The mandatory arms embargo against South Africa was the most meaningful piece of legislation adopted by the United Nations against the apartheid system. The embargo was adopted under chapter VII of the UN charter declaring the activities of the Afrikaner government a threat to international peace and security. Under the provisions of the resolution, member states of the Security Council were put under the obligation to terminate arms-related dealings of any kind with Pretoria. This included "ceasing any provision to South Africa of arms and related materials of all type," and "reviewing all existing contractual arrangements with and licenses granted to South Africa relating to the manufacture and maintenance of arms with a view to terminating them". Resolution 418 also outlawed "cooperation with South Africa in the manufacture and development of nuclear weapons..." and the exchange of police and military personnel between countries implementing the embargo and Pretoria.

Various scholars stressed the need for devising the best mechanism and monitoring bodies for an effective embargo implementation, and for the achievement of the objectives of arms control in general. Kenneth Grundy and David Cortright for instance explain that arms embargos may be efficient because if they are well implemented, they "weaken [a target government's] ability to project power against neighbours and against their own subjugated people" (Grundy 104), and that "if they are effectively enforced, they have the potential to save innocent lives" (Cortright 153). What has also been stressed among academic circles is the role that world leaders were expected to play as far as embargo implementation was concerned. The responsibility of the prominent members in the UN Security Council in terms of the success or failure of the arms embargo was given special attention, and the part that a country like the

United States had to play was therefore crucial. After the initiation of the UN embargo every nation had to take the steps it deemed appropriate for an effective embargo implementation. As far as the United States is concerned, such regulations were expected to mirror the long professed appreciation of pervasively improved human rights standards, and the repulsion of injustices. What experts documented, however, was that a considerable number of loopholes and structural problems characterized American Embargo Implementation under Carter and Reagan alike.

Continued illegal sales to South Africa were one of the most important of these loopholes. Co-authors Douglas George Anglin, and Timothy M. Slaw affirm that "it is impossible to enforce an effective arms embargo against South Africa unless its trading partners are prepared to exercise greater control over their transactions with the republic" (43). Considering the amount and the intensity of smuggling activity and illegal transfer of arms and related material to South Africa during the late 1970's and throughout the 1980's, it is very unlikely that the United States under both Carter and Regan exerted much of the control the authors are talking about. Important instances of such embargo-violating arms transfers to the Afrikaner government indeed occurred under the Carter administration. The most important of these was the Space Research Corporation case. During this time the United States under the Carter presidency provided South Africa with one of the most advanced artillery systems in the world and made it possible for the racist government to develop "a world-renowned artillery system called G6" (Leonard 149). This weapon was said to have been used by the South African government during its invasion of Angola to assist in the rebellion against the Marxist government (Van Wyk 152-155). More cases involved Concealable Body Armor of America Corporation, which was able to smuggle handguns, semi-automatic rifles, and rounds of ammunition to South Africa between April 1977 and April 1978, and to "falsify customs documents to conceal the shipment". Two other major US arms manufacturers, namely the Olin Corporation and Colt Industries, defied UN resolution 418 and maintained illegal sales of rifles, shotguns and ammunition to the South African government. Furthermore, in 1980, the London-based International Institute for Strategic Studies report revealed that between the years 1978 and 1980 South Africa was able to acquire a number of US heavy arms, including tanks (Pomeroy 40). These instances, coupled with a number of other cases smaller in magnitude, clearly indicate that a significant number of American arms manufacturers and dealers were able to circumvent the embargo under Carter and to secure South Africa's access to a large portion of American arms exports.

Likewise, serious smuggling activity was also conducted during Reagan's first and second terms in office. Under Reagan a damming company named Mc Nay Ltd. was able to export a significant amount of military items like radars and missiles to South Africa over a period of four years (Van Wyk 233). Two years after Reagan assumed office, a California company was even able to sell helicopters to the South African police (227-230). In April 1982, the Commerce Department gave a license for the export of 2500 electric shock batons, for crowd control, to South Africa (Leonard 157). The shock sticks sent to South Africa were used for mob control in the southern US states during the civil rights disturbances of the 1960's (Pomeroy 80). During Reagan's second term more cases of illegal dealings with South Africa occurred. A US firm called Newport Aeronautics Sales was able to sell Pretoria strategic military technical manuals which are said to have enhanced white South Africans' ability to manufacture their own weapons instead of having to import them, and consequently develop self sufficiency in arms production (Van Wyk 291-293). The same year a former US army analyst transferred secret technical information to South Africa's military attaché in the United States (Van Wyk 289).

The smuggling activity that took place under these two respective administrations was far from scarce or insignificant. What is worth noting, in this context, is that the cases uncovered do not allow an all-encompassing assessment of the extent of illegal transactions that took place. William Pomeroy, for instance, contends that "the amount of smuggling of arms from the US is difficult to estimate and can only be indicated by those instances in which operations have been detected" (72). It only makes sense, as William Pomeroy believes, that the smuggling activities

that became public “are obviously but the tip of the concealed iceberg of the illegal arms trade with apartheid South Africa” (63). Furthermore, despite the fact that the text of the UN resolution outlawed the exchange of military and police members between countries enforcing the embargo and South Africa, this clause was also violated under both Carter and Reagan. In November 1979 the US armed services committee made a visit to South African military bases, including the naval base at Simons town. When asked about the visit, the chairman of the committee simply answered that South Africa was vital to American strategic interests, “otherwise we would not be here” (Pomeroy 63). A high ranking South African officer, namely the head of technical training at the South African police college, also visited the United States during the Carter presidency (Van Wyk 199). Under Reagan, in 1983, two South African police officers were able to join a convention of the International Association of chiefs of police held in Detroit, and between 1981 and 1984 ten South African naval and air force officers received training by the US coast guard in search and rescue techniques (Van Wyk 211).

The different embargo violations unveiled are strongly indicative of a number of weaknesses in the American embargo regulations. These structural problems were, to say the least quite considerable and most of them could have been easily circumvented. For example, the ban on arms exports to South Africa did not cover several governmental and military agencies that shared a strong responsibility in the enforcement of the apartheid system. For example the Carter and the Reagan administrations’ sales were prohibited to ARMSCOR, a South African state-owned corporation which was charged with enhancing South Africa’s arms productions and importing foreign arms and technology, mostly from the country’s western partners, but not to its related agencies and subsidiaries, the number of which was eleven (Naylor 156). Computers and other equipment were therefore “available and widely used among many South African military contractors,” like African Explosives, Chemical Industries, and military electronic producers (Van Wyk 135). Furthermore, while it was Ronald Reagan who had always been blamed for relaxing the arms embargo and allowing the transfer of dual-use items to the South African government, what was noted was that the same happened under the Carter administration. When asked about the items that the embargo covered, a Department of Commerce official stated that “literally anything as trivial as paper clips or toilet paper that might be destined for use by the South African military or police” (Van Wyk 107). Grey area sales, like light aircraft, computers and electronic equipment or sales of items that had a civilian as well as a military use, were however allowed by Carter and Reagan alike. Accordingly, Under Carter, and over a single year period, fifty Cessna light aircraft and other civilian type planes were sold to South Africa despite the fact that these had already been used by the South African government to crush domestic rebellion and transport soldiers (Van Wyk 124). Reagan, on the other hand, gave permission in 1982 for the sale of six aircraft, the model super king 200, which had been used by the United States in various military missions (Van Wyk 213).

Despite official assurances that these dual use items would not be used by the South African security forces, a specialized opinion explained that “enforcement is a difficult matter in this area” (Leonard 152), which highlights another weakness in American embargo regulations, namely the absence of efficient end-use monitoring. In fact, American regulations concerning the embargo stipulated that items would be transferred to South Africa on the condition that they did not “contribute significantly to military or police operations” (NARMIC 12). However, officials at the Commerce Department, for instance, recognized that the United States “had no criteria to determine how useful an item might be to the South African security forces” and whether or not such bodies would have access to these items. So, when Reagan relaxed the arms embargo and allowed exports of aircraft and helicopters to the Afrikaner government, he had absolutely no guarantees that the security forces or the military would not lay hands on these dual-use commodities (NARMIC 12). The United States had more reasons to worry given the fact that the South Africa government devised several pieces of legislation enabling the government to confiscate any military or nonmilitary item during emergencies. This legislation included “the

National Supplies Procurement Act”, “the Defense Act” and “South Africa’s Official Secrets Act” (NARMIC 68).

An important weakness in the American regulations designed to enforce the arms embargo consisted of the fact that the United States seemed to have no control whatsoever over commodities produced by US overseas corporations. Carter and Reagan, therefore, did not have the ability to control the sales of their multinationals within the South African market, no matter how strategic and powerful the products in questions were (NARMIC 65). One of the serious repercussions of this flaw, for example, was that in 1977, ITT, a major US overseas company operating in South Africa, signed a partnership agreement with South Africa’s leading military electronics corporation Altech, that would enable the latter to have “access to all design, manufacture and technological developments made by ITT anywhere in the world” (NARMIC 59). At the same time Carter was expressing strong vocal condemnation, and moral outrage, at Pretoria’s segregation and oppression of its own citizens, while Reagan was working hard to gain acceptance for his constructive engagement initiative, South African news papers and journals were publishing ads for US-origin military products. In 1978 a South African distributor proudly advertised “a new series of miniature band pass filters for use in aerospace, military and similar applications”. This was originally made by a Californian company (NARMIC 57). Under Reagan, another local distributor marketed American made “industrial and military style D connectors” (NARMIC 58).

A critical problem of lack of resources surfaced during Carter’s and Reagan’s administrations and mirrored the low priority given to the embargo. Despite the prior US knowledge of the magnitude of work and organization involved in the attempt of embargoing a nation, the resources available were far below what was needed. In some departments, very meager efforts were deployed to avoid smuggling cases. This was better summed up by a House of Representatives sub-committee investigation which concluded that:

“The failures of adequately implementing the arms embargo against South Africa were due to problems in the US export controls rather than accidental negligence... government agencies had failed to adopt procedures to effectively implement the embargo, the office of munitions control was unable to enforce arms licensing regulations because of lack of resources. The office had seven officers who had to handle approximately 30,000 license applications per year, in addition to the lack of technical experts who could adequately define weapon components” (Van Wyk 116).

William Minter points out that the US bodies responsible for implementing the mandatory embargo could have avoided this kind of weakness in the American embargo regulations if “improved procedures had been set up,” which was never done according to the same author because of the lack of a sincere US moral commitment to dismantle apartheid’s military structures (291). The issue of lack of moral commitment to stringently enforce the embargo by American presidents was indeed addressed by many researches. In addition to William Shepherd, who argues that “the implementation of the arms embargo was marked by the lack of executive branch commitment,” (10) a report prepared by the US subcommittee on Africa stated that there was “serious negligence on the part of US agencies” (Minter 292). The American Friends Service Committee explains that the weak and unsuccessful implementation of the mandatory arms embargo, and especially continued high tech equipment sales to South Africa, went beyond a mere “set of inadequate regulation” and was rather due to the absence of the “fundamental political will necessary to make the embargo stick” (NARMIC 71).

One of the most important requirements of UN resolution 418 was that nuclear collaboration with apartheid South Africa was to be terminated immediately. Nevertheless, a number declassified documents clearly indicate that the United States, which entered a nuclear

cooperation agreement with South Africa in 1957, maintained this agreement throughout the Carter and the Regan administrations. A cable from the State Department unveiled a clear US objection, voiced by Cyrus Vance, to the United Nations' bringing to vote resolutions aimed at curtailing collaboration with South Africa's nuclear capacity. Cyrus Vance made it clear in this cable that international efforts should center on attempting to "win South Africa adherence to the non proliferation treaty and not on punitive measures". In April 1981 a draft set of State Department talking points recognized that the US under Reagan "places a high priority on the continued nuclear cooperation with South Africa". Another cable sent that same year by Secretary of State Alexander Haig to the US embassy in Pretoria revealed that the United States was fully willing "to provide assistance in the area of research reactor LEU [Low Enriched Uranium] fuel fabrication technology," and that the Reagan administration encouraged "possible follow-on cooperation that could include training of South African fuel experts" (Mokoena 116, 129, 117).

Furthermore, in the late 1970's and through the 1980's, leading US computer companies had extensive dealings with the South African government notwithstanding the embargo. By 1978 for example the world's first computer supplier IBM was also the largest South African partner, and by the 1980's, under the Reagan presidency, a South African computer survey documented the fact that 75 percent of the computers in South Africa were acquired thanks to American corporations operating in that country (NARMIC 7-9). What ought to be mentioned is that American computers were widely used by different South African departments enforcing the apartheid system. These departments include the Plural Affairs Department, responsible for government regulation of the black population, the Department of Internal Affairs, which kept thousands of files on whites, blacks, and colored to tighten and back up the Afrikaner control over the segregationist system of government, the Department of the Interior, and the Defense Department. Officials from the latter department talked about "the increasingly important role" computers had in local government due to the role they played in the preservation of white control. Sophisticated US computers consequently allowed the minority government what NARMIC experts describe as "an unrivaled control" over "racial classification," the movement of blacks within South Africa and the discriminatory "National Identity System" (NARMIC 24).

Another factor that might allow better insights into the degree of prominence a strict embargo implementation was given was Washington's response to some secret corporate or individual weapon sales to South Africa. Studying the kind of judicial sentences that met these different offences also serves the purpose of determining whether or not the official reaction bore significant difference between Carter and Reagan. Keeping in mind that continued illegal sales of arms to the government of South Africa presented real threats to the success of the embargo's objective, one may infer that the more severe the punishment was, the more committed the administration was to end apartheid. In this context, what was noticed was that a number of large scale prohibited exports were taken to court when Carter and Reagan were in office.

As far as Carter is concerned, three major cases may be invoked. The first two involved the Olin Corporation and Colt Industries. Despite being the first corporations to be charged with embargo violations, and what this implied in terms of example setting, sentences were to say the least very mild. Olin Corporation, which was found guilty of shipping arms to South Africa and using a number of forged export licenses over a period of five years, had to pay \$ 500,000 for charity programs, which was, as Van Wyk notices, a tiny fraction of the penalty for such an offence in the case of another country such as the USSR (Van Wyk 142). As for Colt Industries, only one employee was convicted, and was sentenced to a single year in prison. The third case, and the most serious, was that of the Space Research Corporation. Only two individuals, including the president and chief scientist, and his assistant, respectively Gerald Bull and Rogers Gregory, received sentences which did not exceed one year in prison with six months suspended. The Space Research Corporation had to pay a fine that did not exceed a hundred thousand dollars (Van Wyk 165).

Several arms smuggling prosecutions were also lunched under Reagan. The first case involved three individuals, namely Jack Holiday, the owner of an aviation company located in California, who was persecuted for the sale of a number of helicopters gunships to the South Africa government. The second was Gider Schiff, charged with attempting to smuggle helicopters to South Africa for the payment of \$ 500,000 dollars, and Omar Ally Khan who had to answer for his attempt to arrange the illegal shipment of these Bell UH-1 helicopters. The case, which required a five-month investigation by the US customs service, resulted in nothing more than a one year suspended sentence and four years probation for the three offenders (Van Wyk 227-230). Another famous case which became public under Reagan was that of Towers and Parks, following which Peter Towers and John Parks received a two-year suspended sentence for "willfully and knowingly" exporting military items including pistols, automatic rifles and grenade launchers, to South Africa (Van Wyk 230-231). In the Dolce case, the conviction of a former US army civilian operations analyst for spying for the South African government, through the transfer of secret technical information to South Africa's military attaché in the States, led to a 10-year jail sentence for the convicted. This was a sentence much shorter than the death penalty, or life imprisonment, required for such a felony (Van Wyk 298).

The lack of effective embargo enforcement was further highlighted by the machinery put in place to implement embargoes against other countries, especially when these sanctions were coloured by "national security" considerations, like the measures adopted against the Soviet bloc. William Minter notices that compared to measures undertaken against the Soviet Union "the ban [on South Africa] was blatantly porous" (291). In fact, it is worthwhile mentioning that compared to the restrictions and seriousness attributed to the enforcement of sanctions against communist governments, especially the Soviet Union, the weakness characterizing the implementation of the 1977 arms embargo was even more glaring. The US government under Reagan allowed the transfer of a highly performing computer, a Sperry Univac, to one of South Africa's arms manufacturer's agencies, namely Atlas Aircraft, in October 1981, and only few weeks later refused the export of pencils and rulers to schools in Kampuchea, the former Cambodia, because "the school supplies could be constructed as development aid", and "might strengthen the Kampuchea government" (NARMIC 1).

It becomes clear that the implementation of UN resolution 418, or the mandatory arms embargo, was not carried out without serious loopholes. Instead of the rigorous controls expected from a world leader, and UN most prominent member, what rather characterized the US implementation of the embargo was, to say the least, an underlying weakness and deep lack of seriousness, especially compared to other trade restrictions adopted against the Soviet bloc. What is also clear is that striking similarities in embargo implementation were seen between the Carter and the Reagan administrations. Absence of effective machinery to enforce and monitor the embargo, extensive transfer of US technology and computers to the South African government and military agencies, Washington's mild reaction to some large scale violations of the arm control, in addition to continued US South Africa cooperation in the nuclear field, were equally present under Carter and Reagan. What the study of the implementation of the 1977 arms embargo reveals is a low level of concern given to strict enforcement, which is in turn indicative of an even lower level of priority accorded to black South Africans and their fight for freedom.

CONCLUSION

In the light of the above discussion, it may be concluded that the only aspect that was found to really separate the Carter from the Reagan administration, in terms of South African policies, is one related to appearances. While Carter repeatedly tried to disassociate the United States from any open public relations with the racist government of South Africa, Reagan displayed an open

willingness to associate with the white minority government of Pretoria. Despite the diverging rhetoric which created fundamentally different foreign policy outlooks, and set the two presidents far apart in terms of expected policy actions, the similarities in practice between the Carter and the Reagan administrations far outweighed the differences. The Democratic and the Republican presidents alike resisted extreme measures against apartheid, and never supported either domestic or Security Council demands for full economic sanctions. Both presidents seemed reluctant to deploy the needed effort towards an effective embargo implementation, and displayed an equal reluctance to end nuclear collaboration with South Africa. Instead of living up to his promises, Carter neither accepted nor actively worked towards implementing a radically new agenda in South Africa. What he attempted to do was to alter the image of American-African policy, but what he eventually succeeded in doing was to perpetuate and make even wider the gap between the official rhetoric and the corresponding behaviour.

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