

THE "NEW" POLICY OF THE USA TOWARDS SOUTH AFRICA :
THE BLACK CONSCIOUSNESS MOVEMENT'S VIEW

INTRODUCTION

Since the inauguration of Mr. Jimmy Carter as the President of the United States of America and the subsequent appointment of Mr. Andrew Young as the USA ambassador to the United Nations, there has been a great deal of talk about a change in USA foreign policy particularly her policy towards South Africa and in general her policy regarding Southern Africa and Africa as a whole.

Indeed, a number of statements and pronouncements made by the Carter administration, especially President Carter, his Vice-president Mondale and his UN Ambassador Andrew Young, have added fuel to this feeling of a change in American foreign policy. Our main intention here is to try to demonstrate that for Blacks in South Africa there is no firm indication or evidence that the policy of the USA towards South Africa, in particular, and Southern Africa, in general, has changed.

A GENERAL ANALYSIS OF U.S.A. POLICY TOWARDS SOUTH AFRICA

An adequate understanding and evaluation of the Carter administration's policy towards South Africa requires an analysis of the USA policy towards South Africa in its historical context.

It is our contention that no useful purpose could be served by evaluating the Carter administration's policy outside the laws of history as this will be an analysis out of context.

From time immemorial the USA policy towards South Africa has always been determined, conditioned and guided by her economic interest in South Africa in particular, and Southern Africa in general.

A corollary to this interest has been to thwart and kill any sign of initiative by the oppressed people of South Africa and Southern Africa to free and liberate themselves from the shackles of oppression and exploitation by the white minority regimes of Southern Africa.

Perhaps it is essential to go back to this question of the USA economic interest in South Africa.

As we have indicated above the main driving force behind the USA policy towards South Africa is her determination to protect and expand her economic interests in South Africa. This determination is well demonstrated by the growing USA investments in South Africa. Although no statistics are available for 1976, all the indications are that these investments are growing and expanding rather than decreasing and indeed there has not been any statement or indication from the Carter administration that the USA is about to decrease and ultimately withdraw USA investments in South Africa.

On the contrary, both president Carter and Vice-president Mondale and their UN ambassador Andrew Young have been advocating an increase in the USA investments in South Africa on the pretext that this will lead to the economic advancement of blacks in South Africa and their eventual liberation.

We are mentioning the issue of USA investments in South Africa because to us the crux of the matter and our oppression is the economic exploitation of our people by the white regime working as agents of the major imperialist powers whose interests are to maximize their profit at our expense.

We are also mentioning this issue because our fight is a fight against international monopoly capitalism which the USA and other western countries are trying to protect and promote in South Africa as a whole.

We have also mentioned at the beginning that another factor determining USA policy towards South Africa has been, and still is, her desire to kill any liberation struggle by the oppressed people of South Africa and

Southern Africa as a whole is characterized by this desire to destroy any initiative our people take to free themselves from the capitalist vicegrip.

We recall vividly all the intrigues produced by the USA in her efforts to kill any attempt by our people to liberate themselves. One recalls here the Kissinger study of the Southern Africa battle out of the National Security study memorandum number 3q g 1969; and the activities of CIA in monitoring and misdirecting the course of our struggle in Southern Africa. Indeed the importance of the memorandum 3q lies in the fact that it became the basis of the USA policy towards Southern Africa. Ever since the collapse of the Portuguese colonial empire and the liberation of Mozambique, Angola and Guinea-Bissau, the USA has vigorously pursued a policy geared towards the maintenance of the status quo in Southern Africa despite the public statements in support of human rights. Their involvement in Angola and Zaire in support of reactionary forces, despite their unconvincing morality, has further reinforced our belief that the USA policy towards Southern Africa will remain essentially what it has always been i.e. active support for the status quo and the minority white regimes.

Indeed there is nothing in the history of the USA policy towards South Africa which indicates that it ever supported progressive forces and the liberation struggle.

Even during the era of President Kennedy, hailed as an outstanding practising liberal, the USA policy towards South Africa was characterized by occasional verbal chastisement and rebuke of the white regime in South Africa counter-balanced by massive military support for the same regime and a constant flow of USA strategic and crucial investments in South Africa.

The Nixon-Ford administrations were perhaps, to us in any case, the most sincere administrations in respect of their policy towards South Africa because they came out clearly and unequivocally both in word and action in support of the white regimes in Southern Africa through their policy of "compromise" and channels of communication".

THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION'S POLICY TOWARDS SOUTH AFRICA

As we have indicated a great deal of discussion has been going on ever since the Carter administration came into power. At the centre of this discussion has been the argument that there has been a change in the USA foreign policy, especially her policy towards South Africa and Southern Africa.

One factor advanced in support of this argument has been a number of statements by the Carter administration calling for majority rule in South Africa.

One can admit however, that this is the first time that the USA has admitted that there is no majority rule in South Africa but whether this is

an indication of a change in American policy towards South Africa should be evaluated in the context of the overall American policy towards South Africa.

To us the acknowledgement of the non-existence of majority rule in South Africa by the Carter administration is not enough to persuade us to accept that there is a change in the USA policy towards South Africa mainly because in practise the USA is still pursuing the same policies it has always pursued in respect of South Africa i.e. continued support for the minority regime through investments, arms supplies and the moral and psychological support she gives to the Vorster regime.

Secondly, the Carter administration has not followed up its support for majority rule in South Africa by recognizing the black groups which represent the views and aspirations of the majority of the people of South Africa.

Indeed, there is no evidence that the Carter administration accepts ANC, PAC and BPC as authentic organisations which are fighting for the liberation of the people of South Africa and the ultimate creation of a free Azania.

All the discussion about our fate and future has been with Vorster and his regime, the same people who represent the white minority rule in South Africa.

There is also evidence that the USA is increasing its investments in the Bantustans and a large amount of capital is presently being ploughed into the Transkei.

All these facts nullify the Carter administration's lukewarm support for majority rule in South Africa.

There are some people, however, who argue that president Carter is very sincere in his call for majority rule in South Africa and that he sincerely wants to see a change in the overall policy towards South Africa.

As an individual and a person he may be sincere, but our argument is that we are not dealing with individual sincerity as President Carter represents a structure or system and as long as that structure or system exists his personal wishes must give in to the demands of a totality and as long as the American capitalist exists no individual or personal idiosyncracies or ambitions can ever develop fully and there is no indication that the American carnivorous capitalist system is about to crumble.

Our policy towards the USA will not be guided, therefore, by the personal sincerity of President Carter or the liberalism of Vice-president Walter Mondale but by the actions and complexion of the total American capitalist system. This is the context in which we are evaluating our policy towards the USA.

As soon as the American system stops supporting the white monolithic regime in South Africa through its investments, supply of arms, vetoing of UN Security Council resolutions concerning South Africa and begins to support the liberation struggle in South Africa and Southern Africa, we will also review and adjust our policy towards the USA.

WHY WE REFUSED TO MEET MR. ANDREW YOUNG WHILST HE WAS IN SOUTH AFRICA

A number of people have asked why we refused to meet Ambassador Andrew Young during his visit to South Africa in May, 1977. Others have even criticized us viciously and labelled us irresponsible for refusing to meet him. We have, however, stated in the press, why we felt there was no need for us to see him.

One of the major reasons we mentioned was that he should first meet the real leaders of the Black people in South Africa such as Sobukwe, Mandela, Biko and others. To us, his meeting with the white industrialists was a further confirmation that his visit was primarily intended to give further USA encouragement to the white regime in South Africa because it is the industrialists and other capitalists who form the rock foundation of the exploitive system that exists in South Africa and we have stated on a number of occasions that our fight is a fight against capitalism glossed over in white racism.

We also refused to talk to Mr. Andrew Young because we consider it a waste of time to hold any form of discussion with the USA government as long as they still support the white regime and Mr. Young is a representative of the USA government.

But over and above this, Ambassador Andrew Young came out in full support of capitalism in South Africa and to us that is support for the white regime in South Africa.

We also refused to talk to Mr. Young because he had talks with Bantustan leaders, especially Chief Gatsha Buthelezi, who is the most dangerous of all the Bantustan leaders because of his ability to change like a political camelion. This is a man who signs accords with the United Party, Nationalist Party, Progressive Reform and the other Bantustan leaders and still does not see anything wrong in his actions. Indeed Gatsha is a man of vaulting ambition and suffering from an acute bout of megalomania and has done a great deal to support the Vorster regime despite his verbal rejection of the Bantustan policy.

This is the man Mr. Young meets and embraces and still expects us to meet him, thus creating a false impression for our people that Gatsha, too, is one of the Black leaders.

But the greatest danger of Mr. Young's visit to South Africa is not connected with the fact that he met the wrong people to discuss the wrong

things as far as we are concerned. The most harmful consequence of his visit lies in the fact that he is black and his statements are likely to be accepted by some blacks because they believe him to be one of their race.

Secondly, Ambassador Young is a priest and they are always associated with righteousness. Therefore, the chances are that whatever he says is likely to be accepted by a number of blacks simply because he is a priest and could never therefore be associated with lies, exaggerations or simply not telling the people the real truth about the American system.

Thirdly, Ambassador Young is known to have been involved in the civil rights movements in U.S.A. and as such he is assumed to be qualified enough to make relevant and appropriate observations about our situation, so that his advice has to be taken seriously. We, however, believe that Mr. Andrew Young made a negative contribution to our struggle for liberation.

Firstly, he did not tell our people that no matter how sincere he is, he cannot change the U.S.A. policy towards South Africa i.e. that the U.S.A. policy is determined by the American system as a whole and not simply by vocal individuals who normally have no say in the board rooms of IBM, Ford Motors, General Motors and other major companies in the United States which have major subsidiaries in South Africa. We consider that Ambassador Young has been fraudulent in that respect.

Secondly, Young failed to denounce Gatsha Buthelezi as being a representative of the Bantustan policy.

Thirdly there is no evidence to suggest Mr. Young ever tried to meet people like Sobukuwe, Mandela, Biko and others, who are the real leaders of the people of Azania.

Fourthly, his outright support for the continued existence of capitalism in South Africa indicates to us that Mr. Young does not have a full grasp of the real problem facing blacks in South Africa. Hence, perhaps, his likening of our struggle with the 1960 Civil Rights movement in the United States.

We are, however, convinced that our struggle is a struggle against settler colonialism and imperialism and it is certainly not a civil rights struggle. We are fighting for total liberation and not the kind of meaningless and deceptive concessions given to American Blacks.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, we wish to reiterate our contention, that Ambassador Young's visit to South Africa coupled with the human rights statements by the Carter Administration is dangerous because it is creating false expectations among our people; the expectation that the policy of the U.S.A. towards South Africa has changed and therefore our struggle for liberation will be facilitated by the U.S.A.

Further, we wish to say to the Carter Administration that the only indications which will convince us that the policy of the U.S.A. towards the white regime in South Africa has changed or is changing is for the Carter Administration to force U.S.A. firms to withdraw their investments, stop vetoing U.N. Security Council resolutions against South Africa, actively support the liberation struggle in South Africa and Southern Africa as a whole, stop supplying arms of whatever complexion to the Vorster regime, stop undercover support for Bantustans by investing there.

Short of all this, we believe that there is nothing we can gain by meeting people like Mr. Young.