

# South Africa threatens world peace

by Oladapo Fafowora  
Nigerian Ambassador to the U.N.

Apartheid South Africa is an unmitigated evil which cannot be justified or tolerated under any circumstances by the international community. The apartheid system is so inherently evil and abhorrent that it represents a negation of all the intrinsic values that all civilized nations so dearly cherish. The international concern aroused by apartheid South Africa is not merely that racial discrimination exists there. There are many other countries where discrimination on the basis of race, color, or creed also exists. What is so uniquely abhorrent about South Africa is that racism and racial discrimination have been totally institutionalized, enshrined in law, and made all pervasive. It totally dominates all aspects of the lives of South Africans, white or black, and it has the full support of the law. It is also vigorously and ruthlessly enforced by the white minority South African regime.

The apartheid doctrine under which the black majority of about 80% of the total population are denied their basic and fundamental human rights has engendered a profound and widespread frustration among young blacks in the territory. Many have already left the country to join the liberation movements — the ANC and the PAC. Many more will do so in the future since there is little or no hope of reforms in South Africa. The strategy of peaceful demonstration and protests has been abandoned in favor of violence, because of the ruthless suppression of any dissent in apartheid South Africa. Many blacks have been shot, as in Sharpeville, for protesting against the unjust laws of the South African regime. A rising tide of violence now seems to engulf both white and black not only within South Africa itself, but beyond South Africa's borders. The apartheid regime, in a misguided attempt to suppress internal rebellion and conflict in South Africa, has embarked on a reckless campaign of military attacks and other

acts of destabilization against its neighbors of the Frontline States. It has also sought to weaken, divide, and undermine the Frontline States, particularly Angola and Mozambique, by sponsoring and financing dissident movements in these countries — the so-called MRM, and UNITA.

The upshot of all this is that as the circle of violence widens on the African continent, even far away countries like the U.S. will be subjected to strong conflicting pressures to support one side or the other. The ensuing debate could quickly mobilize African political and economic pressures against those Western countries that appear to be either indifferent, or that overtly or covertly support the apartheid regime. To put it bluntly, if South Africa fails to deal justly and effectively with its own internal racial problem, that failure will not only present the Western world with a crucial dilemma, but may well lead to a conflagration from which the Western world will not be able to escape. And the prospects of such a conflagration have been made even greater by South Africa's development of nuclear weapons capability.

The danger which a nuclear-armed racist South Africa presents to the African continent is an extremely grave one. It calls for urgent and prompt response from the African states. Is it any wonder, therefore, that at the recently concluded summit of the OAU, the outgoing Secretary-General, Mr. Edem Kodjo, in his valedictory address, also called on African states to abandon their policy of denuclearization of Africa in favor of the development of a nuclear weapons capability. And we know that at least three African states are now within the threshold of achieving nuclear weapons capability. The danger which a proliferation of nuclear weapons states in Africa presents to world peace and security is obviously serious.

Apartheid is a system of racially

biased laws which wholly circumscribes every facet of the daily lives of the blacks in South Africa, limiting their economic liberties, and prohibiting any significant voice in the government that controls their existence. What is the racist regime doing to redress this situation? The answer is little or nothing. The regime is fully aware of both the internal and external criticism of its racist policy. But apart from a partial relaxation of the so-called petty apartheid, it has not taken any concrete steps towards the elimination of the notorious apartheid laws. The basic structure of apartheid remains virtually intact.

### Prospects for the future

What are the prospects for the future? The racist regime of South Africa is determined to maintain its obnoxious apartheid system at all costs, and against all odds. It has refused to confront the issue of political participation for the blacks. The prospects for a peaceful change are therefore bleak. Already, there are growing signs that fundamental changes will come only through revolutionary violence. The young blacks have now reluctantly accepted violence as the only means of overturning the system, and the growing acceptance of violence as a tool for change has stimulated interest in radical ideologies.

At the United Nations and other international fora, the African states have consistently expressed their total opposition to racist South Africa and aim at the total diplomatic isolation of the racist regime. Among the Western powers, too, there is considerable anxiety and concern about the dangerous direction in which South Africa is hell-bent on moving, for in the event of a bloody conflict, the Western countries will see their considerable economic and financial investments go up in smoke.

There are many in the West, particularly here in the United States who continue to underestimate the

inherent danger which the apartheid regime represents for long term economic relations between the West and Africa. Many are still disposed to blame the conflict situation in South Africa on what they call Soviet expansionism. Such people are quick to denounce black agitations and their liberation movements as communists. But this is a profound error of judgment on their part. The struggle of the blacks in South Africa for freedom is not ideological. The freedom fighters are not Soviet proxies or puppets. They have taken to arms not to advance any particular ideology but to advance the cause of freedom in South Africa. They are defenders of the freedom and values which are the foundations of civilized government.

Because South Africa is the dominant military power in Africa today, many people in the West believe that the regime will be able to take care of things. But it is only a question of time before South Africa's military superiority is reversed. As the economic strength of the African states increase, they will gain the resources to support the liberation struggle inside South Africa. In the event of a military conflict, the West will be unable to stand in strategic alliance with South Africa because to do so would be regarded as supporting a political system that is a complete negation of the basic human rights of its own population, and hence unacceptable to their own people.

Some are sympathetic to the reform. A program of economic reform is highly desirable in itself, but it is unlikely to bring about the necessary political reforms fast enough. But the political issue must be confronted squarely. For the blacks, social and economic advances is not an adequate substitute for political power.

(Excerpts from address of June 18th, Portland State University)

## Proposal offers tax relief

by Charles Goodmacher

A proposal giving immediate property tax relief for homeowners by closing income tax loopholes currently available to the wealthy, passed the Senate Revenue Committee Friday. Committee Chairperson Chuck Hanlon, D-Cornelius, predicted a vote on the measure this week.

The Hanlon measure calls for a reduction of \$5 per \$1,000 of assessed value in residential property taxes for schools. Critics say that this flat rate reduction formula favors rural and wealthy areas whose tax rates are currently lower than urban rates.


The homeowner-only aspect of the Hanlon plan relieves drastically from the tax relief called by the House-approved sales tax measure. The sales tax proposal called for re-

ductions in all property taxes, commercial as well as residential (even though business won't pay any sales tax).

Most Portland area senators told the *Observer* that they are either undecided or opposed to the Hanlon plan as currently written. Senators McCoy, D-Portland, and Gardner, D-Portland, are undecided. Senator Ryles, R-Beaverton/West Portland, is against the measure as is Senator Monroe, D-Portland. Senator Jan Wyers, D-Portland, told the *Observer* that he strongly favors the closing of the income tax loopholes proposed by Senator Hanlon.

The \$5 cut in property tax rates will cost the state about \$394 million of which \$82 million will be recaptured from the \$800 million federal tax breaks given to wealthy Oregonians over the past three years. (Please turn to Section II Page 5)

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The U.S. National Academy of Design held an art competition and awarded second place to a work which the judges then learned had been hanging upside down.

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Scholars today have some doubts as to whether Americus Vesputius, for whom the Americas are named, ever traveled here at all.

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Do you have a morbid fear of the number 13? Then you have triskaidekaphobia.

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## OSP inmates demonstrate

by Asmar Abdul Seifullah

At the end of 1982 there were 412,303 inmates in U.S. state and federal prisons. Also, an estimated 210,000 persons were confined in the nation's jails on June 30, 1982. Thus, jails held one inmate for every two inmates held in state and federal prisons. Three of every five of those persons who were in the nation's local jails had not been convicted of an offense.

The unconvicted were waiting to be formally charged (arraignment), waiting for pretrial release (bail, release on own recognizance, etc.), or waiting for trial. The convicted were awaiting sentence, awaiting revocation hearings on a technical violation of parole or probation, awaiting transfer to a prison or other correctional facility, or serving their sentence in jail. Statistics show that 19 states held 6,900 prisoners in county jails because of prison overcrowding.

About 58 percent of the jail inmates were white, 40 percent black, and 2 percent persons of other races. The most recent racial distribution of prison population (December 31, 1981) was 52 percent white, 46 percent black, 1 percent other races, and 1 percent not reported.

From a statistical viewpoint it is

apparent that our penal system is grossly overcrowded. The problems that result from prison overcrowding are not hard to visualize — an increase in the financial necessity for new prison construction, a breakdown in mental and rehabilitative treatment and service programs, a greater likelihood for violent disturbances and the general deterioration of a humane environment.

These problems are readily apparent, but the societal neglect that takes the form of overcrowding also breeds subtle silent germs that erode the souls of men confined. The desolate dislocation of desocialization, suppressed passion, homosexuality, brutality, and the age-old ghoul of racism are the diseases caused by these germs.

One has to ask how someone can return from such bleak conditions to become a productive contributor to society. The answer is most often negative — the grave that is prison holds its corpse and most prisoners are little more than socioeconomic vampires when they are returned to the community. There should be little wonder that recidivism exists, and that the petty thief becomes a murderer or rapist when there is no healing of the cancer called prison.

Recently black prisoners in the tradition of Ghandi and Dr. Martin

Luther King, staged a non-violent silent protest at Oregon State Penitentiary. They are concerned with the disproportionately high number of the prison population while the black state population is less than 2%. Oregon ranks second nationally in the incarceration of blacks, Indians and Hispanics per capita.

Other areas of concern for Oregon's prisoners of color are segregation in job placement, the need for a permanent Muslim Imam to service state institutions, racial harassment by prison guards, the need for a black psychologist to diagnose and treat black prisoners, the need for adequate black literature, the absence of ranking black prison guards, the cultural isolation caused by the limited television and radio media access (it is my understanding that this grievance is being addressed through the installation of a new antenna system), the lack of black cosmetics and cards at the prison commissary, and the inherent racist qualities of the parole matrix system.

It should be noted that the prison administration has agreed to meet all grievances it deems legitimate and a mediation process is under way. While this reporter commends the open attitude of the prison administration, it is necessary to stress the importance of a permanent resolution of these problems.

This reporter would also urge added community support for the brothers behind the walls. It is going to be a long hot summer. The overcrowding and the other aforementioned problems could produce a fire that might rage out of control. Let us not be caught reading headlines and shaking our heads in tears and shame because we didn't get involved in the problem solving. Let all concerned citizens, organizations and religious groups marshal their support for those who so desperately need it.

Remember that you can prevent prison fires and vampires do exist: contact Homer Cires, #43391, Uhuru Organization, 2605 State St., Salem, Or., 97310 (378-2446) or Mr. Ron Martin, Minority Affairs, 2605 State St., Salem, Or., 97310 (378-2443).

## Street Beat

by Lanita Duke and Richard Brown

Last week Sally Ride made history as the first American female astronaut. The Street Beat reflected on this event with, "Was it significant that Sally Ride was the first American female astronaut?"



Wendy Johnson  
Housewife

"I thought it was really neat. I never watched any of the space splash-downs until the one last week. I watched it all."



Binh NT Pham  
Associated Manager

"Yes, I think it was, just because she's a woman. I think because of her more women would develop an interest in the space program."



Gary Harshaw  
Plumber

"It really didn't mean that much to me. I'm glad she went up, but the fact that she is a woman didn't matter to me."



Sandra Arnold  
Unemployed

"No, I don't like listening to stuff about women being the first this and the first that. I really don't like them sending up men."



Phil Robinson  
Accountant

"No, it wasn't. I look upon her as I would look upon any other astronaut. The flight was a major event, but I didn't look at her as being a part of the major event."



Debra Teare  
L.P.N.

"No, it wasn't. I think it was for show. I don't think she played a specific part in the flight. I'm interested in the technology and the byproducts that come out of the space program rather than Sally Ride being the first woman in space."

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