

What was actually being conveyed is "neutrality" which, in classical usage, is a condition of a country at peace while others are at war. Neutrality in this sense refers to a body of international law which determines the relations that exist between belligerents and neutrals. A classical example of a neutral in recent history is Switzerland. Western scholars thus avoided "neutrality" for "neutrality" since it is known that Africans and Asians fought alongside the Allies in both World Wars.

3. George Liska, *Nations in Alliance: The Limits of Interdependence*. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1968, p. 207.
4. John Falkland, "The Non-Aligned Summit in Review," *Current History*, Vol. 5, N. 12, 1962, p. 1072.
5. This approach, dubbed the "Eurocentric" approach to Non-Alignment studies, stresses the military-geopolitical and Cold War factors and has been variably advanced in Liska (1968, 1972); Rothstein (1968); Martin (1966); Lyon (1963); Grabb, Jr., (1963).
6. J.W. Burton, (ed.), *Non-Alignment*, London: Oxford University Press, 1966, p. 12.
7. Abstracts of both the Myrdal and Prebisch arguments were adapted from Tamas Szentes in *The Political Economy of Underdevelopment*, Third Edition, Budapest: Akademiai Kiado, 1976, pp. 100-162.
8. G. Myrdal, *Economic Theory and Underdeveloped Countries*, London: Methuen University Paperbacks, 1965, p. 26.
9. *Ibid.*, p. 34.
10. *Ibid.*
11. Raul Prebisch, "Towards a New Trade Policy for Development," *Report by the Secretary-General of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development*, New York, 1964.
12. T. Szentes, *op. cit.*, p. 105.
13. *Ibid.*, p. 166.
14. *Ibid.*
15. Claude Ake, *Social Science as Imperialism: The Theory of Political Development*, Ibadan University Press, 1979, p. 99.
16. Part of an address to the Seventh Special Session of the General Assembly of the United Nations which unanimously produced a resolution on the "Development and International Economic Cooperation," *Africa*, No. 52, December 1975, p. 36.
17. *Ibid.*, p. 37.
18. *Ibid.*, p. 38.
19. These and other proposals formed the basis for negotiating the Lome Agreements between the E.E.C. and the 59 African, Caribbean and Pacific countries (ACP) in 1975. These proposals have also dominated proceedings in such international forums as the Lima Conference on Industrialization, the Rome Resolution on the World Food Conference, the various UNCTAD negotiations, the Vienna United Nations Conference on Science and Technology for Development (UNCSTD) and the recent UNIDO III held in New Delhi.
20. Part of the Speech delivered at the United Nations by President Castro of Cuba as President of the Movement of the Non-Aligned Countries in the 34th Session of General Assembly of the United Nations, *Ediciones Especiales*, Cuba, 1979, pp. 51-52.
21. Walter Rodney, *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa*, London: Bogle-L'Ouverture, 1972, p. 162.
22. *Newsweek*, February 10, 1975, p. 42.

The Politics of Multipolar Configuration in Africa: Changes for Today's Society

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... the critical question is how to move the contest ... from the shadow of mutual annihilation to the arena of constructive coexistence. ...

(Samuel Pisar)

I begin this study with a review of US-Soviet relations, before plunging into such new developments as the multipolar configuration in Africa, which is the central issue and basis of this study. It is important also to discuss the role of China, because we cannot evaluate Soviet-American relations without reference to it. They do, after all, evolve around a new juxtaposition, and one of the primary features of it is the multipolar configuration in Africa.

It is well known that both the Soviets and the Americans are captives of an arms race, which is out of control, a race which no one can win (because there are no sensible alternatives to a policy of deterrence in a war you can't win if you don't survive), a race in which increasingly exotic means of mutual and total destruction outrun diplomacy and can destroy the perspective and effectiveness of leadership in both nations.

While both Americans and Russians realize that the arms race could end in utter disaster for both nations, attitudes on how to bring this race under control, especially in Africa, are becoming increasingly multipolarized and rigid.

The Americans believe that their values, and their way of life, are the best for them and others. On the other hands, the Russians, and of course the Chinese, believe that their social system is the best for them and for others. Consequently, competition will continue between the super powers in the years ahead, since each system is being tested on the African continent and elsewhere. It is essential to keep this competition within the range of rationality to avoid ultimate irrationality - mutual self-destruction through an all-out exchange of nuclear weapons.

In terms of European thinking, therefore, the multipolar configuration in Africa serves to build a more constructive relationship, seeking, above all, to banish the threat of mutual destruction in a thermonuclear holocaust, serving also as the most hopeful development in the preservation of mutual economic and strategic interest in the South

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Atlantic.

In this paper, the author attempts to show that the most important issue to confront the African people during the next decade is about their response to this new international configuration in their continent, Africa.

Thus, the paper is designed to study the politics of multipolar configuration in Africa: and what the changes are for today's society. In this study, I have tried to accomplish four things:

- to discuss the new conceptual stratagem of East/West unholy co-operation in Africa.
- to discuss Africa and the emerging multipolar configuration,
- to discuss American/Soviet/Chinese role in the multipolar configuration in Africa.
- to draw some conclusions as to the nature of what the changes are for today's society.

CONCEPTUAL STRATEGEM OF EAST/WEST UNHOLY CO-OPERATION IN AFRICA

The balancing process can be carried on either by diminishing the weight of the heavier side or by increasing the weight of the lighter side.¹

The structure suggested here is one of forces in diametrical opposition. The process suggested for establishing and maintaining an equilibrium allows little, if any, room for alternatives. If the maneuverability of the weights is impaired, the rigid framework breaks down.

Since the congress of Vienna, analysts of international relations have applied balance of power concepts, parallel to that above, in gaining an understanding of the international system.² Also consistent with the model above, their considerations have been pre-conditioned by a two dimensional construct. The traditional approach, whether applied to 18th century Europe or to 20th century Soviet-American relations, concerns forces in contraposition struggling for increased spheres of influence. Regardless of the number of nations involved, each could be positioned on one of two sides of the scale.

The contemporary international order it experiencing a unique framework. No longer will two scales hold all the weight involved. It is incorrect to suggest merely adding a scale or two. What is emerging is a system which is multipolar in structure, yet characterized largely by a vast network of triangular and bilateral relationships. Far from the traditional displays of balance of power, the present model reflects major disparities among the relationships between the principal actors. Whereas the previous decades have encountered a stability founded upon the presence of absolute power and the threat of absolute destruction, the emerging configuration, featuring the United States, Soviet Union, and

China, aims at achieving and maintaining an equilibrium in Africa through efforts of co-operation as well as competition.

The description, so far, is oversimplistic. But before elaborating on the development of the system, it is necessary to examine more deeply its conceptual and structural framework. This brings me to the factor that is difficult to evaluate; 'balance.' Even this is not an accurate label since it is still in an embryonic stage. More appropriate, the term 'neutrality' would be better. A balance implies the employment of non-discriminating policies so as to support an equilibrium, it would be difficult to justify military agreements between the United States and the Soviet Union, and the United States and China. However, this is not to preclude the possibilities of establishing a workable balance in Africa. The foundations exist.

A structure of international relations based upon balance of power considerations without economic, cultural, and ideological underpinnings would remain unstable.³

The above points to the essence of the new configuration in Africa. Unlike previous balance of power models which provoked confrontation, the effort is to cross old divisions with the links of economic, political, and social interaction. This involvement will become the substance of equilibrium. It is, indeed, difficult to ensure the reality of this idea, for one may also state a case for a lack of interaction creating less channels for confrontation and thus, reducing the chances of conflict. However, one must consider that a nation assumes a higher degree of independence by exercising greater flexibility and maneuverability. It can be argued that increased interaction, in the long run, merely increases constraints and limitations. New channels for confrontation emerge. Here one should recall the fusebox analogy of Inis Claude, the essence of which suggests that from the inconvenience of temporary delay with the operation of the system (a minor confrontation) one is spared the greater dilemma of having the entire house catch fire (a full scale conflict). The noticeable fluidity which characterizes the system may possibly be interpreted as uncertainty and instability. More realistically, as opposed to a tightly rigid system disallowing any lateral movement, a structure enabling fluid interaction will be less prone to direct superpower military confrontation. By the use of constraints available through increased interaction, African localized conflicts will be prevented from drawing superpower intervention, thus reducing the possibility of a major war. It is evident that neutralization is, at least, a key feature in the contemporary African arena.

An additional issue which needs to be considered is the role of nuclear capabilities in establishing an African balance. For years, the primary factor in determining spheres of influence has been the ability of a nation to wield an 'absolute' threat. Clearly, the United States and Soviet Union are in, and will remain in, a distinct category of offensive and defensive capabilities. To date, China has demonstrated enough

nuclear capability to 'blackmail' a target nation (provided it is of lesser capacity). A comprehensive African neutralization does, however, present itself as a tenable doctrine. Through the use of 'other channels,' political, diplomatic, economic, cultural, and ideological; each nation in association with others, is able to produce a force strong enough, to warrant attention and create demands. The most consequential element here is that influence is levied without the backing of a threat of destruction. An eventual confrontation between nuclear forces should not be ruled out. However, it is encouraging to recognize that perhaps a cognizance of the limited influential pressures available through nuclear capabilities is leading to the establishment of more egalitarian relationships and to the possibility of peaceful co-existence.

It is good at this point to provide some framework for the theoretical discussions so far.

AFRICA AND THE EMERGING MULTIPOLAR CONFIGURATION

We can discuss the new multipolar configuration in Africa without discussing the underling synthesis. Apart from the economic and strategic importance of black Africa, probably the most significant single factor marking the emergence of this multipolar configuration in Africa is the fact that the Africans had been driven to acknowledge that without a willingness to kill and be killed, their demand for socio-politico-economic freedom would make no progress. The condition which lays the groundwork for this event offers a valuable tool in understanding the ensuing relationship and shall therefore be necessarily addressed.

The African continent has, in recent years, become the scene of bitter ideological struggle. Never before has there been such ferment in African minds as there is today. Developments of economic and strategic overtones in Africa have made Africa an important testing ground for the foreign policies of the Western nations, the Soviet Union and China.

The intensification of the armed struggle in the Portuguese colonies of Mozambique, Angola, and Guinea Bissau in the 1970s led to the overthrow, in 1974, of the Caetano Government in Metropolitan Portugal, and the new Army Regime accepted the principle for which the freedom movements had been fighting. So the fighting stopped. The independence of Guinea Bissau, already declared and operative in large parts of the country, was recognized. Frelimo agreed upon a transition period of ten months, and negotiated the details independence. In Angola, however, the damage of the Portuguese struggle to retain power could not be undone. The disunited nationalist forces came together only long enough to get an agreement on a date for independence, and then began fighting each other. Angola was to be the post-Vietnam testing ground of American will and power in the face of the global expansion of Soviet power. American direct strategic and economic interests have made Angola a global battlefield between U.S.A. and the Soviet Union.

While advocating support for the principle of self-determination, "Washington carefully eschewed taking actions that sped its sinister achievement in Angola, for fear of incurring the wrath of its NATO ally and its host for strategic air and naval facilities in the Azores Islands, Portugal."⁴

Above all, America insisted upon defining the Angolan Civil War in global terms to the exclusion of local and regional imperatives. The United States, as a rule, subordinated African concerns in Angola to overt and covert cooperation with South Africa. In the words of John Marcum: "the result, inevitably, has been to associate the United States even more closely with South Africa, in what seems to Africans to be a de facto alliance based on a shared global perspective superimposed upon Africa."⁵

As if Angola was not enough, then came the longstanding tensions in the Horn of Africa, which broke into open warfare between Ethiopia and Somalia. Ethiopia's former links with the USA had become increasingly strained since 1974 while Ethiopia-Soviet links grew closer - this open diplomatic and military showdown with the Soviet Union put the West, especially America, worse off in the Horn.

In this situation, the East/West military direction which clearly began to emerge in 1960 was clearly evident fifteen years later; Africa had become the scene of protracted struggle for East/West power hegemony, foreshadowing important shifts in the balance of world power between the two ideological blocs.

While African responses in the last OAU summit showed a clear and growing concern about East/West intervention in the continent, their acute awareness of the increasing extent to which they were becoming entangled in international rivalries for influence, and of their relative weakness to do much about it, Nigeria and Tanzania were sharply critical.

Furthermore, one thing the summit showed (just like the previous summit) was that Nigeria, under the present military leadership, emerged as the new champion of the hardliners against West (for more specifically American) maneuvers in Africa. The Governments of Murtala and General Obasanjo have been concerned to show at home that with the overthrow of Yakubu Gowon a new era has dawned in Nigeria. Previous Nigerian governments were associated with moderate and pro-western positions. Previous Nigerian governments had also adopted the line that, given African sensitivities, Nigeria, because of its wealth and population, should always assume a low profile when disagreements entered the realm of the OAU.

Recognition of the MPLA government was not only calculated to signal a new militant approach, but to also show that a new epoch was slowly developing in African affairs, in which Nigeria was to be seen as one of the giants of Africa.

Reflecting the views of that giant as clearly stated by Legun, Nigeria's

Head of State, General Obasanjo, took the position of unqualified condemnation of all foreign intervention in sovereign African nations. He saw the attempted mercenary-led attacks in Benin and the Comoro-Islands, and the intervention of Western powers in Zaire as foreign intervention, and rejected discussions among Western nations where to intervene in particular African situations. He stressed the fact that the only source of effective support to liberation movements came from the Eastern block and Cuba. However, he then went to warn the Soviets and their friends that Africa did not throw off one colonial yoke for another. Instead of domination, they should hasten the political, economic and military capability of their African friends (i.e., the Angolans and Ethiopians) to stand on their own, ... "and if the Soviets seek to maintain their presence indefinitely, they run the risk of being dubbed a new imperial power, as indeed they are already being called even by those with whom they have had long association."⁶

Beyond moral support, liberation movements were aided with whatever the economy of Nigeria could afford in the areas of financial and man-power assistance. As impressive as it appears, the practical application of this assistance programme failed to generate a massive emancipation of the oppressed nations of Africa. While the dogma remained, the kinetic foreign policy of Nigeria experienced and is still experiencing a tacit and passive tergiversation motivated by the realization that social stratification, and external intervention piled up enormous odds against the birth of a United Africa.

For example, like in Angola, only recently Nigeria mediated in the internal conflict in Chad. Nigeria correctly seized the initiative in African affairs, but she did not maintain it. She failed to canvass her position aggressively enough to swing the bulk of undecided opinion behind the course of action she represented. Worst of all, she also finds to her dismay and disgust, the overt style with which France, seeks to frustrate the impact of her mediatory role in Chad.

In this apparent dilemma, these characteristic features of what appear to be super power struggle in Africa are no longer the "hallmarks of contemporary International Relations. The new realities which Nigeria cannot ignore or gloss over, are the hegemonic forces of detente in East/West relations"⁷

The relative significance of what follows, which then marks the beginning of the multipolar configuration in Africa is the new and intensified Soviet approach to African crises especially those of the liberation struggle.

Borrowing the words of Legum; "the core of Soviet strategy is the development of a fighting front of progressive nationalist forces in close alliance with communist parties, with the latter given the familiar Marxist role as the vanguard of the armed struggle. The Soviet strategy corresponds to a significant development in progressive African thought - in the growing importance of the idea of 'superior weapons.' The military

strength of the "coalition of NATO and South Africa," it is argued, can be matched only by the Soviets. The value of "superior (Soviet) arms" was demonstrated in Angola and Ethiopia."⁸ In addition, Soviet constant attack on China, as allies of the imperialist conspiracy in Africa and collaborators of the NATO powers, further diminishes China's position in Africa.

At a loss as to how to counter the Soviets in Africa, and in line with her philosophy of 'if you can't fight him befriend him,' the United States, in collaboration with China and in consultation with the NATO allies, came up with the international configuration in Africa.

AMERICAN/SOVIET/CHINESE POLICY IN THE MULTIPOLAR CONFIGURATION IN AFRICA

In discussing American/Soviet/Chinese policy in the multipolar configuration in Africa, one may abstract at least three basic patterns of thought from the multiple variations which exist on this theme:

- The first of these supports the concept of de facto economic alliance in pursuance of a strategy of mutual specialization;
- The second theme is that of nuclear multipolarity; and
- The concept of caucasian economic survival.

Under the concept I have outlined above, the socio-political-economic dispositions of the super powers in Africa would not be an end in themselves but only the means to an end. And this end would not be the achievement of any total solution in the sense of a sudden removal of the political and ideological rivalry between the East and West in Africa. It would be the piecemeal removal, by negotiation and compromise, of the major sources of the military danger, particularly the abnormal strategic contention now prevailing around the Cape of Good Hope into the Indian Ocean from the South Atlantic, and the gradual achievement of a state of affairs in which the political, ideological and economic competition could take its course without the constant threat of a general war.

There is, however, one other related topic which must be treated here — that of the political and economic reasons which have prompted the super powers to seek closer unity. The importance of Africa as regards the East/West survival does not lie only in its strategic position for both, but also as a provider of essential strategic raw materials at a time of growing world shortage. This constituted a component part of East/West quest for South Atlantic and world hegemony, as well as an important disposition for realizing their global offensive strategy.

This has led to more secure and fruitful basis in East/West association. Indeed, its significance can be easily appraised. It has been a reaffirmation of the nationalistic principle of manifest destiny. Conceivably its long-term influence might operate in a contrary sense since it does, after all, involve an institutional recognition of the special political

bonds connecting the super powers. We should anticipate, in any case, that the creation of this multipolar configuration in Africa represents an attempt to find a new way of ordering the relations between states - going further than mere co-operation, and foreshadowing a true United Africa. But equally significant, is the fresh impulse which this new structure gives to South Atlantic unity by establishing in Africa a strong multipolar configuration.

In an attempt to better understand of instruments of multipolar configuration in Africa, let us now shift our attention to the separate roles of each super power.

(i) U.S.A.

First we must recognize that in this age of national independence and political subtlety, efforts by the United States to extend domination and control in Africa are no longer bluntly displayed. Alliances, close co-operation, and peaceful co-existence are the new labels for what are often very one-sided political and economic relationships.

Furthermore, the vigorous efforts of the United States and the Soviet Union to escape from three decades of the Cold War and to build a more constructive relationship, seeking above all to banish the threat of mutual destruction in a thermonuclear holocaust, constituted the most hopeful development in the multipolar configuration in Africa. Under this perceived common heritage, the international configuration would create a rubric that would shelter Westerners and Easterners alike.

In pursuance of this policy, the U.S. is accorded the dominant role and the obligation to underwrite the security of its Western allies by a nuclear and economic guarantee, while assigning to the latter the prevailing responsibility in Africa of a mutually symbiotic alliance that is the functional equivalent of the direct military, political and bureaucratic control structures of the older, colonialist versions of imperialism. Moreover, United States objectives are in harmony with the interests and aspirations of most Western European countries. In addition, Western Europe's fuller identification with America is the prime objective of a strategy for the West and an integral element in American multipolar strategy designed to build a more closely integrated Atlantic world. With this long-range strategic goal in mind it is appropriate to turn to an assessment of present-day United States interests - military, economic, and political - in Africa.

The United States has traditionally opposed the establishment of a hostile power within the Southern Hemisphere. The United States has based this upon the plausible assumption that the military presence of a hostile power in Africa could provide avenues of approach for launching offensive attacks upon other countries in the Western Hemisphere and could restrict or inhibit United States access to essential strategic materials, and limit command and control of important sea lanes along the coast of Africa.

These military-strategic considerations remain valid today. However,

modern technology and recent super power politics in Africa have modified traditional thought on where and how United States vital interests in Africa might best be defended. Some areas of Africa obviously have greater military and economic significance than others. The positioning of hostile forces in Angola or Ethiopia has always been considered a direct military threat to the United States. South Africa, together with Namibia, Mozambique and Zimbabwe, has long been considered of special importance to the security of the United States because of its strategic location with respect to the defence of the South Atlantic and the approaches to the Cape of Good Hope. Consequently, United States military interests in Africa remain strongly South African - oriented, with the notable exception of the Horn of Africa - important as a terminus for an air-sea link between Africa and the Middle East, as well as a base from which South Atlantic sea traffic might be controlled.

Communist penetration into Angola and Ethiopia (which are strategically and geographically more vital) has provided vivid emphasis of Africa's vulnerability to an indirect or unconventional attack. Perceived Communist subversion and wars of national liberation are no less menacing than overt military aggression.

Obviously, Africa's role in United States military-strategic planning depends on the nature of the conflict for which the American must prepare. Recent developments have demonstrated that the threat of nuclear warfare and the advent of intercontinental ballistic missiles have not rendered obsolete all conventional military considerations. The United States has long been engaged in military operations requiring conventional warfare capabilities. The existence of pro-communist regimes in Angola and Ethiopia, and the contingent possibility that other Angolans and Ethiopians may emerge in Africa especially Southern Africa give emphasis to the need for a multipolar military or economic posture in Africa.

In this situation, the tergiversation and juxtaposition of the United States multipolar interest in Africa are competitive with the Soviet Union rather than complementary. Both are integral parts of the broad strategy which has Western unity as its grand design. This broadened conception of Western unity gives a harmony of purpose to the newly existing triangular relationships of America, Russia and China. Consequently, the multipolar triangle concept is advanced, not with the hope of creating political stability in Africa, but rather in the belief that the common interests which link the three corners of the triangle provide a firm base for constructing a more acceptable African policy of the West and East.

To the United States, the multipolar configuration in Africa is a catalytic concept that suggests need for West/East closer co-ordination of power hegemony in Africa. The multipolar configuration in Africa lends itself well to the pluralistic organisational patterns of America and the West — patterns which preserve unity while permitting diversity. The multipolar concept is more than an ideal which depends upon a vague mystique for its sustenance. It is supported by the practical realities of

caucasian political and economic interests.

(ii) U.S.S.R.

Soviet policy towards Africa is characterized by the strategy of competitive co-existence. They are part and parcel of Soviet African economic relations. Soviet technical assistance, cultural and propaganda activities, and last but not least communist party policy.

Here I would like to make four very general points about Soviet politics and society. While the underling assumption here is based on Dr. Cohen's statement to a subcommittee of the House Committee on International Relations, these four general points also concern realities often obscured but which, I think, influence Soviet intentions and behaviour in Africa in important ways. First, the history of the Soviet Union provided many examples of internal change, and there is no reason to exclude the possibility of further change in the future. Secondly, the Soviet leadership today faces — as will its successor — an array of serious domestic and foreign problems; and while these problems should not be construed as crises that seriously enfeeble or endanger the system, neither should they be minimized. Thirdly, there is within both Soviet society and the establishment itself a great diversity of opinion, political outlook, and proposed solutions to these problems. Lastly, this diversity of opinion must nonetheless be understood in general context of a deep rooted political and social conservatism, which is widespread among Soviet officials and ordinary citizens alike.⁹

With this background of the intricacy of the domestic political system of the Soviet Union, it naturally became necessary from time to time to adjust the political ideology of Soviet Union to the local conditions prevailing in the various African countries on the one hand, and maintaining competitive cooperation with America and China on the other.

The fact that the Kremlin has decided, if possible, to avoid a military conflict with the USA has had the effect of bringing about a reduction of tension between East and West, except for China, as well as placing less emphasis on ideologies. In addition, the power struggle between Moscow and Peking, which is fought out more and more in the developing countries, especially Africa, has forced the Soviet theoreticians and tacticians to greater elasticity in their ideology. At the same time political and social development of the African states during the most recent period has shown trends which have impelled Soviet theoreticians to undertake revisions along a multipolar dimension. This concerns especially Moscow's orientation much more strongly towards Western objectives rather than to the postulate of world revolution — more of course in their recent action of multipolar configuration than in their public statements.

There seems to be a fairly clear trend in Soviet strategy in this period, e.g., to maintain a relationship with America and China, requiring a minimum amount of trust and cooperation, for the purpose of reducing tension and the risks of war while simultaneously improving the military situation, and at the same time exerting its own power hegemony in

Africa, so as to assure that the USSR was involved in the multipolar contention for Africa that had begun in the last decade.

One final political aspect ought to be mentioned about Soviet policy in this period. The middle power role of Nigeria in Africa has led to Soviet policy that economic relations would provide some key to the evolution of Nigeria-Soviet bilateral relations. In fact the Soviet approach held that economic relations should precede political settlements so as to soften the Nigerian attitude and to create an atmosphere in which political settlements could be negotiated.

(iii) China

While the struggle for the balance of forces was going on between the United States and the Soviet Union in Africa, China envisioned Africa as a convenient target for an intensive propaganda campaign. The image which was presented depicted African society as a vast, global countryside. The advanced capitalist Western world was depicted as a city. Much in the same manner, which had proven victorious for the Communists in the 1949 Chinese Revolution, the task was proclaimed to be that of using the countryside as the base from which to surround and ultimately seize the city.

In the world today, more and more small and medium-sized countries are rising against the doctrine of big-nation hegemony. Nations, big or small, should be equals without distinction. But one or two super-powers consider themselves entitled to order other nations about, bully them, and damage their interests. Who gave them this "right?" Why should big nations lie superior to others? By their overbearing and tyrannical actions, they made themselves the enemy of the people the world over. These are the harsh facts: Whoever wants to trample others underfoot, ride roughshod and lord it over them will meet with the concerted attack of the people of the whole world till his complete destruction.¹⁰

The Nixon Doctrine of 1969 had apparently convinced the Chinese that the Soviet Union was, indeed, their greatest enemy and their policies should be shifted accordingly. This lessened threat from the United States provided Peking the opportunity to direct its attention toward the fermenting Sino-Soviet border disputes. Furthermore, China seized the chance to play upon American public sentiment in pressing for a diminished United States - Soviet detente in Africa. If the United States could lessen Soviet African Atlantic influence, a void would be created which would be filled by expanded Chinese influence, and she would emerge as an even stronger competitor in the African arena.

The above signalled to the leadership in Peking that the time had arrived to adopt a more pragmatic foreign policy; one which would increase maneuverability along with providing a possible counterbalance against, and creating constraints upon, a Soviet threat. This placed the Soviet Union, a nuclear power of consequence, in a position "to take upon itself the major risks in confronting the United States on behalf of revolutionary comrades."¹¹ China, due to her severely fragile domestic situation, could not afford more than a "minimal-risk" foreign policy.

Recognizing the apparent shift in China's policies and Peking's new

susceptibility to rapprochement with the United States, President Carter made obvious his desire to break relations with Taipei and establish full diplomatic ties with Peking in the interest of "negotiating a structure of peace and justice." With NSA, Zibgnew, Brzezinski's trip, it became obvious that a United State-Soviet Union-Chinese power triangle had been established. The impact of the summit was that "it highlighted the need to adjust to the emerging pattern and create an atmosphere of fluidity, detente, accommodation ... and uncertainty."¹²

The idea here is not to provide a survey of United States - Sino relations. Rather it is hoped that one might better understand the significance of the newly established international configuration by becoming aware of the concepts upon which it was founded. The key to success for this Chinese policy entertaining a juxtaposition of realism and rhetoric is the participation of the United States in African South Atlantic affairs. That is, "in essence, the new Chinese policy relies upon a balance of power in which American strength is a central assumption."¹³ To normalize relations with the United States offered the Chinese (1) a means for the transfer of technology, (2) an alternation of already bad relations with the Soviet Union under conditions of maximum advantage, and (3) a secure recognition from other American allies who delayed such an act primarily out of a desire to avoid antagonizing Washington. All of these initiatives are predicated on a tacit American endorsement. More than enabling China to extend its influence, the foreign policy adopted by Peking reconfirmed an active United States participation in African circles, an involvement supposedly based upon political, economic, and cultural exchange rather than a military-strategic position.

In moving from a position of relative isolationism to one of significant international authority, China, one would expect, would have to undergo the most overt policy alternations. Apart from the basic shifts in policy, which were discussed earlier, what changes are currently taking place in Peking policies?

Unlike the policies adopted by the United States and Soviet Union during their emergence as superpowers, China has been forced to be preoccupied with the continuance of its own existence. It does not have the opportunity to allocate its time and resources for a massive campaign to extend its sphere of influence, at least in Africa. Rather, as has been mentioned, China must formulate its policies so as to actively counter a persistent Soviet Threat.

To gain a more accurate perspective of Chinese foreign policies, it is necessary to view both short-run and long-run objectives. Threats from the Soviet Union, as perceived by China, dictate that short-run Chinese foreign policy revolve around a deep hatred and fear of the Soviets. Survival thus becomes the order of the day. This is not to imply, though, that Chinese development is hindered by these anxieties. The existence of a threatening enemy (whether it be the Soviet Union or the United States) which occupied the role in preceding years enables (1) the inducement of

sacrifices demanded of the Chinese people and (2) the preservation of an elitist unity in the initial stages of nation-building. Thus, the position can be an asset to the Chinese government. The basis of the major shift in Chinese policy was to accommodate a role for the United States in actively countering the immediate short-run threat by the Soviet Union toward China. In this capacity a normalization of relations with the United States is quite convenient for the Chinese.

However, if one is to examine the broader, long run policy objectives of China, a clearly different picture comes into focus. Nationalism, emergence, and ideology "constitutes the spring from which all policies flow, the primordial sources giving to each policy its *raison d'être*."¹⁴ Each of these forces bears a degree of influence in determining the appropriate policy for any situation which may arise. Under consideration is whether an interaction is one of state-to-state, people-to-people, or comrade-to-comrade. Also subject to consideration is the degree to which these elements of political scene are involved: the super powers, the intermediate zone (i.e. Japan and Western Europe) or Africa and the Third World. Its foreign policy is then operationalized according to various levels of orientation, but the patterns remain consistent. All issues whether they be bilateral or multilateral in nature, are placed into "super power vesus the rest of the world" framework. The purpose is to promote an eventual, long-run African/Third World uprising to overcome their 'oppression.' For this purpose cold war rhetoric still abounds. "All coloured people must overthrow white (including Russian) supremacy." Charges of Soviet-American collusion appear frequently. "Socialism in words, imperialism in deeds"¹⁵ is directed at the Soviet Union to advance the suspicion of a big-power hegemony. The idea is not to stimulate an immediate violent revolution. As long as the United States will supply China the necessary backing to promote stability in Asia, and thus enhance China's development to the point of eventual self-sufficiency, the subtle effort of preparing Africa and the Third World for emergence and possible domination will continue. This may well be China's "ace in the hole." Is the United States holding the gun for China to reload?

An issue of importance pertaining to this question is the presence of an absolute force and the capacity of nuclear power. It is unlikely that China will achieve parity in the near future with the United States and the Soviet Union in thermonuclear weaponry. Why, then, would Peking place the burden of nuclear development on a disabled economy? The more nuclear the state, the less the threat of war? Concomitantly, recognizing that "total wars may be in accord with weapons of limited destructive capacity, but (that) they are incompatible with 'absolute weapon,'" develops a rather unassured sense of security.¹⁶ To offer this as an excuse reeks of non-realization. Considering the major African-Atlantic powers on a variety of economic, political, and ideological levels, it would be intimidating (to say the least) to be caught in a non-compromising position regarding strategic policies. Retaliation against a massive, pre-emptive strike is, and would more likely remain for the

future, an infeasibility. However, the psychological gains which resulted from the demonstration of Chinese nuclear capabilities provided an added impetus for Africa and Third World countries to strive toward greater development.

Within this context of international action and reaction, events since the beginning of this multipolar configuration in Africa has posed major obstacles to the formulation of a strategy for dealing with this configuration which is not only foreign but highly complex. Clearly, it complicated immensely the formation of cohesive national societies and impeded African regional integration. The imperturbable and almost reluctant OAU reactions to this multipolar threats has rendered obsolete an effective and timely response to it.

And what about the independent African States? Here, it is important to note the constraint on African leaders over sensitive issues. Yet, there is a very real sense in which it is possible for the leaders to discourage the super powers in Africa — their policies nevertheless have sufficient points of common interest over a sufficient number of crucial questions to constitute a continental approach to international affairs. It is naive to assume that knowledge of this multipolar connection is either completely available to the African heads of State or its discovery is not problematic.

The general attitude of the African States on this multipolar dimension is based more or less on a passive note - traditional kind of primordial experience; unless the aim of US/USSR/China is seen and known in both historical and contextual terms, then it only exists sensuously and abstractedly. Hence it doesn't warrant any collective resentment - the sort of transition from absence of tragedy to illusion of omnipotence to hubris, and therefore, to the widespread passivism developed in a straight logical and understandable line.

CONCLUSION

The general pattern of the international order emerging in Africa is one of dynamic equilibrium. Unlike the tense, bipolar situation of the past, the super powers are accorded the opportunity to exercise a greater independence through increased channels for interaction. As mentioned earlier, this fluidity may create a superficial instability and an image tainted with uncertainty. However, the underlying patterns of competition increasingly involve a rivalry which works to reduce tensions and improve relations at the expense of Africa. Contrary to the conflicts of the cold war era, these 'rivalries' involve an interaction based on economic, political, and cultural competition rather than just military-strategic confrontations.

The overall effect will probably be a noticeable reduction in super power conflicts. The actions of one actor will have policy implications extending to the other actors and, thus, warrant a response. The constraints

formed by increased interaction among nations will severely limit the extent to which any of the powers will be able to manipulate a situation to its complete advantage. This will reinforce the general equilibrium. But what does this suggest with regard to the propensity for African, localized conflicts? If one adheres to the doctrine that conflict is inevitable, it would appear that African conflicts shall never cease. With the major powers finding less opportunity (and hopefully less incentive) to intervene in the African conflicts, it is doubtful that any fire will have ample fuel to continue for any great length of time. It is unlikely, therefore, that these African conflicts would have a significant unbalancing effect upon the new multipolar configuration.

The prospects for peace and stability in Africa appear to be ill-founded. That is, an equilibrium can be maintained provided certain basic specific conditions remain constant. Deeper inspection of the structure housing the new order will disclose that it still reflects a confrontation of ideologies. Though an East-West front is now clearly defined, the perceptions which influence cold war actors remain implanted in the government elites currently involved. China is still under the control of first generation revolutionaries still adhering to outdated ideological conceptions through presently having attention drawn to their apparent overt pragmatism. The United States and Western Europe are still unnecessarily responsible to societies and mandating an unremitting defensive policy. This will remain the case regardless of the complexion of Sino-Soviet relations. The Communist world, as perceived by the West, remains a single threat. By the same token, does the convenience of a single threat, as perceived by the two Communist powers, exist in the Western World? Operating on the assumption that it does, to what extent would a dis-aligned United States, Western Europe and Japan work to cause a disequilibrium? If Western Europe and Japan should undertake to exercise an overwhelming independence it is likely that all nations would, again, reassess their foreign policies so as to construct an entirely different balance.

A shift in alignments is not the only alteration which could be further detrimental to African stability. As stated earlier, one aim of Chinese foreign policy is also to prevent any sweeping Soviet-American detente. It is in China's best interest to "keep 'detente as limited as possible and make it costly to other Soviet relationships, to put the super powers on the defensive vis-a-vis the rest of the world ... Happy is the nation for which, as a main theme of foreign policy, sentiment and Realpolitik coincide."¹⁷ The effects upon an African equilibrium could be destructive should China's policy regarding Soviet-American detente prove unsuccessful.

The possibilities of Sino-Soviet conflict remain somewhat remote as both countries surely recognize that the gains would not outweigh the costs. What may be desirable is a change in policies to accommodate restricted relations between China and the Soviet Union. This would entail neither a close alliance nor a direct confrontation. Certainly

a balance in Africa would best be served by this approach.

As has been the case for the past few decades, universal stability is predicated upon the continuance of a United States-Soviet strategic balance. Regardless of the external forces, if an imbalance occurs in those relationships, an African equilibrium will suffer catastrophic (and perhaps irreparable) damage. Unfortunately, this military parity must still be viewed as essential to world-wide balance.

The prospects for the competitive rivalries now characterizing African-Atlantic interactions developing into major confrontations must be carefully considered. Once the initial glamour of the emerging configuration wears off, anxieties may give rise to open confrontation. An active stability may be recognized as merely an unachievable dream.

In sum, the multipolar structure evolving in Africa casts a pessimistic light on the prospects for a tranquil future. In offering an assessment, one is inclined toward retrospect and to conclude that neither the international order founded on competition and co-operation between the super powers nor the tense bipolarity which offered little comfort to basic African interest is preferable. Surely the situation should not be viewed with complacency, as potential dangers are evident. However, the propensities for super power confrontation which could result in a universal disequilibrium are apparently being minimized.

The psychopolitical content of this multipolar configuration in Africa suggests a framework within which the super powers can discern the power contention at work in Africa, place them in perspective, and grasp their significance to their interests. The process provided a philosophical base upon which to build a naive sense of East/West consciousness, and yields an enlarged vision with which the contemporary East/West conflict of ideologies can be placed in perspective. Africa is well aware of the fact that this super power strategic overview does not meet universal approval.

The multipolar concept is advanced, not with the hope of creating a stable African political structure here and now, but rather in the belief that the common interests which link the three corners of the triangle provide a firm base for constructing a more closely integrated community of the West and East. Obviously, the implication extend beyond the borders of the major powers involved. Three areas continue to pose challenging problems to African-Atlantic stability, mainly; Azania (South Africa), Zimbabwe and Namibia. In confronting these issues, the major African-Atlantic powers display a competitive spirit over one of co-operation.

Concern over Azania and Namibia is an historical fact which has demanded considerable attention from the actors in the African theater. Past relations with both countries seem to dictate, to a certain extent, the present approaches taken by the major powers.

So far the discussion and the conclusions arrive at have focused upon the nature of the emerging international configuration in Africa and the

prevalent policies which constitute its underpinnings. It is now time to turn to the lesson for thought on the multipolar configuration.

For long, African thinking has been dominated by the amount of incomprehension concerning the socio-politico-economic-military problems confronting the continent. However, the Congo crisis, the Nigerian civil war, the Angolan civil war, the African border disputes, the wars of liberation, the recent multipolar infiltration, the super power hegemonic contention, maneuvers, conspiracies and coups, transformed the traditional African concept into a flexible approach to new and untested challenges. In the main, "like most third world countries, we became pathetically susceptible to all kinds of manipulations from abroad and, indeed, have all too readily fallen victims of the ubiquitous international adventurers."¹⁸

In this situation therefore, African leaders must cultivate the art of choosing the occasions, ceremonial or otherwise, which provide an opportunity to make clear the African position on important issues. One such issue centres on the multipolar configuration of USA/USSR/China and the degree to which they are responsive to African disinterest.

Politically, Africa must maintain continuing contact with every element of real power across the whole spectrum of capitalist/communist politics. However difficult, Africa must avoid drifting into allegiance patterns which identify its interests with this or that class or interest group, or limit its support to parties and personalities simply because they happen to be in power. Africa will be able to cope with the complexities of the multipolar configuration only by flexible response, signals to a potential enemy confrontation that is not bluff and the merging of all resources are essential factors in the pursuit of legitimate African objectives.

Finally, the earlier African attitude of clinging to obsolescence in meeting current and future emergencies should give way to a new vision of policy aims and objectives within a framework ranging from negotiation to settlements consonant with legitimate African interest.

FOOTNOTES

1. Hans Morganthau, *Politics Among Nations* (5th Ed.) New York, Alfred A. Knopf, 1973, p. 178.
2. In this context 'balance of power' refers to the principle of international relations involving equilibrium and disequilibrium. Further usage of this term may be in reference to a description of the 'Status quo,' or what may appear as the 'status quo,' depending upon the context.
3. Professor Ahira Iriye while discussing the failure of Yalta System in regard to a pacific quadrangle in *Sino-American-Detente*, ed. by Gene Hsiao (New York: Praeger Publ, 1974), p. xvii.
4. John Marcum, "Lessons of Angola," *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 54, No. 3, (April 1976), p. 416.
5. *Ibid.*, p. 422.
6. See Colin Legum, "The African Crisis," *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 57, No. 3 (1978),

- p. 640.
7. Mazi Ray Ofoegbu and Chibuzo S.A. Ogbuagu, "Towards A New Philosophy of Foreign Policy for Nigeria." Conference on Nigeria and the World, at the Nigerian Institute of International Affairs on January 27-30, 1976, p. 4.
 8. The quotation here is simply to serve our own purpose in the emerging multipolar configuration in Africa. For detailed analysis on Legum, see C. Legum, *op. cit.*, p. 650.
 9. Stephen F. Cohen, "Soviet Domestic Politics and Foreign Policy," *Common Sense in U.S. - Soviet Relations*, (April, 1978), p. 12.
 10. Editorial, Jen-Min Jih - Pao, January 23, 1971.
 11. Robert A. Scalapino, "China and the Balance of Power" *Foreign Affairs*, 52 (January, 1974), p. 354.
 12. A. Doak Barnett, "The Changing Strategic Balance in Asia," in *Sino-American Detente*, G. Hsiao, p. 28.
 13. Scalapino, "China and the Balance of Power," p. 357.
 14. *Ibid.*, p. 353.
 15. Chou En-Lai in his report to the Tenth Party Congress, August, 1973.
 16. John Spanier, *Games Nations Play*, (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1973), p. 119.
 17. Scalapino, *op. cit.*, p. 360.
 18. Isaac Aluko-Olokun, "The Lesson of the Encounter with Peking," *New Nigeria* (August 17th, 1979), p. 4.

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