

TESTIMONY BY MRS. JENNIFER DAVIS TO THE SUB-COMMITTEE ON AFRICA
OF THE HOUSE FOREIGN AFFAIRS COMMITTEE
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Mr. Chairman,

I would like to thank you for this opportunity of appearing here this afternoon. As a South African strongly opposed to the vicious system of racial oppression practiced in my country, I feel that your Committee is playing a vital role in setting out to assess actual U.S. policy in Southern Africa, and most important of all, to change that policy so that it ceases to support white supremacy and black oppression. I was born in South Africa, went to school and University there, have been involved in various ways in the struggle against the system now practiced there. I am an economist, and was teaching and doing research at the University of Witwatersrand on the nature of the South African economy when I left in 1966. I have continued to do such research in the U.S., and have also published some work on Portugal in Africa, including most recently an analysis of the links between the U.S. and Portugal called, "Allies in Empire." I work for the American Committee on Africa in New York.

I will concentrate this afternoon on the implications of the continued flow of strategic equipment such as light aircraft to South Africa and Portugal and comment briefly on a number of ways in which it appears that the U.S. is in fact providing significant support to these white supremacist regimes.

Before I plunge into that I would like just briefly to sketch the background of South Africa's own present thrust into the world as an increasingly dominant regional power. For economic, political and particularly strategic reasons South Africa is now engaged in a four-pronged attempt to extend its influence, win allies and make international friends.

Inside Africa one can see three distinct levels of operation. First there is the ex-

tension of almost complete control over the so-called captive states - e.g. Lesotho and Swaziland. Secondly there is the extended construction of a close knit alliance with the other two white supremacist governments in Africa - namely Portugal and Rhodesia, and the creation of a solid Southern Bloc. This involves tremendous economic co-operation, and even more important, a high degree of military co-operation. Thus top level security chiefs from the three countries meet regularly in planning sessions. South Africa has troops, equipment and bases far outside its borders in Angola, Mozambique and Rhodesia, and recognises that its own security would be badly shaken by the defeat of Portuguese colonialism.

Thirdly there is the attempt to neutralise the independent African states, via the blandishments associated with "Dialogue." Finally, outside Africa, South Africa is concerned to project a new image of increasing reasonableness and flexibility - thus providing the major powers of Europe and America with greater justification for a continued policy of "keeping the channels of communication open." At the same time trade and investment flourish, and potential military alliances - witness the British relaxation of the arms embargo - are secured.

I want to make it perfectly clear that I do not believe South Africa is changing in the one sense that matters - it will not end Apartheid, and it is incapable of giving the African and other Black people full rights - those rights are going to have to be taken. So any dialogue is simply a condonation of oppression, and for the African States possibly something more dangerous - there is an old African story about the fate of the sheep who lay down with a wolf. Recent South African and Portuguese pressure on Zambia indicate that the Southern Bloc poses a very real threat to any African country that adopts a strong principled opposition to Apartheid.

Turning now to U.S. relations with Southern Africa, I have heard Administration members claim that there has been no fundamental alteration in U.S. policy towards South Africa and that U.S. opposition to Apartheid is firm. This is certainly not the way the South Africans read the situation. The newspapers increasingly often carry comments such as this one from the Star of May 15: "Since President Nixon came to office, American policies have been reviewed and rationalized to the extent that observers believe Mr. Botha (new ambassador to Washington) will find opportunities to better relations that did not exist when he was last here." Secretary Newsom's American phrase for dialogue - "communication" - has been much in evidence, and the recent meeting between Vice-President Agnew and South African Minister of Information Mulder was banner headlined in South Africa, "Mulder in Historic Talks with Agnew" and has done much to confirm the South African belief that they now have a powerful friend. This was the highest level of contact between a South African Cabinet Minister and the American Government in the past decade - and the South Africans were happy to point out that it took place only a few hours after the "Black Caucus" in Congress had blasted President Nixon for rejecting the demand to isolate South Africa by cutting trade and diplomatic links.

There are other indications that the U.S. is increasingly willing to accommodate South African racism and Portuguese colonialism as unpleasant concomitants of otherwise useful, stable and reliable allies in an apparently volatile continent.

All administration spokesmen talking about Southern Africa begin their statements with a recital of U.S. abhorrence of Apartheid and racial oppression. It is customary then to cite the United States' firm adherence to an arms embargo on all arms or equipment of military significance both in relation to South Africa, and to Portugal south of the Tropic of Cancer (i.e. in respect of Portuguese territories

in Africa).

It is my purpose today to show that the broad nature of the definitions applied severely weakens the embargo and this in turn casts doubt on the reality of all U.S. opposition to the racist regimes of Southern Africa.

Mr. Chariman, I have with me an American Committee on Africa Fact Sheet prepared for release at the time of the N.A.T.O. meeting in Europe at the beginning of this month, which deals in some detail with the two issues of N.A.T.O. and United States' relationships with and support of Portugal in Africa. I would ask your permission Mr. Chairman to attach these to my testimony.

In the limited time available I will refer only very briefly to continued U.S. support for Portugal, both via N.A.T.O., and directly through the Military Assistance Program, under which the U.S. still maintains a 21-man Military Advisory Group in Lisbon whose function, according to General Goodpaster (Commander in Chief, U.S. European Command) "is designed to permit the training of key Portuguese military personnel." The U.S. also still provides training for Portuguese officers here in America. State Department figures indicate Portuguese armed forces trained in the U.S. as follows:

Fiscal Year 1968

107 (5 army, 95 navy, 7 airforce) Expenditure \$120,000

Fiscal Year 1970

33 (4 army, 26 navy, 3 airforce) Expenditure \$ 88,000

I have no way of knowing whether these are complete figures representing all training given in the U.S. nor do I have details about the nature of such training. Any concrete information on this which could be obtained by your Sub-Committee,

Mr. Chariman, would do much to lift the veil of silence that obscures the working relationship between the U.S. and the Portuguese military.

With your permission I would like to spend the rest of my time examining in some detail the extent of strategic support being provided to South Africa by the United States within the legal fiction of an arms embargo. I am not suggesting that the U.S. is in fact supplying guns and bombs to South Africa, but it is supplying a great deal of strategic equipment which does not technically fall under the terms of the Southern African arms embargo. I would like to draw your attention to an article which appeared in the New York Times of 11 June 1971. This dealt with the ending of the 21 year old embargo on trade with China. The New York Times says: "Officials here refused to speculate on what the lifting of the embargo would mean in dollar terms to American industry, but the list released at the White House set forth 47 categories of exportable, nonstrategic items and covered a wide variety of goods including farm products, household appliances, automobiles and basic metals, such as steel.

"The list carefully omitted several major items of possible strategic value, such as locomotives, trucks, high-grade computers, advanced telecommunications equipment, petroleum products and commercial aircraft. But the White House statement suggested that 'consistent with the requirements of U.S. national security' such items might well be granted special licenses on a case-by-case basis after review by the Department of Commerce and other agencies."

It seems strange to me that locomotives, trucks, computers, commercial aircraft are defined as items of possible strategic value in the context of China, yet are freely supplied to South Africa, in relation to whom the U.S. is supposed to be operating an arms embargo. I am not quibbling with the idea that these are strategic materials, indeed it is possible to add several items to that list - including four-wheel drive vehicles (jeeps), patents, technical information, herbicides, etc. One of the major

items of trade between South Africa and the U.S. is in fact an increasing number of so-called light commercial aircraft. I do not believe that we are being over-suspicious when we argue that ANY aircraft supplied to South Africa is a potential military weapon....but I would like to look at this argument a little more closely at this point.

The Johannesburg Star of April 17 carried the following report "South Africa Can Buy U.S. Training Planes." "The South African Defence Force can now buy light American aircraft for reconnaissance and training purposes with the sanction of the United States Government, according to Mrs. Olive Beech, head of the American Beechcraft Corporation, who arrived in Johannesburg this week." Enquiries to the State Department produced an answer from the Commerce Department on the 14th of May which said that Mrs. Beech had been misquoted and went on: "We continue to adhere strictly to that embargo, which, among other things, precludes the sale of any aircraft to South Africa for military purposes, including military training and reconnaissance. However, normal trade with South Africa in civilian-type goods for non-military purposes continues, and we are prepared to consider licensing for VIP transport purposes limited numbers of small unarmed executive civilian-type aircraft which will not strengthen South Africa's military or internal security capacity."

In fact this wording is confusing. The phrase "we are prepared to consider licensing" indicates that there has been no such licensing in the past. This repeats, almost word for word a statement made by Assistant Secretary of State Newsom in Chicago on September 17, 1970. He said then: "In accordance with the principles of the embargo we do not, for example, license military aircraft or large transport aircraft for military use, but would consider licenses for limited numbers of small unarmed executive civilian type aircraft." That too was a rather ambiguous statement, for the U.S. has in fact been supplying such jet aircraft to buyers in South

Africa at least since 1969, and probably before. In fact, the South Africans and reliable commentators in London interpreted the Newsom announcement as a policy departure because there had already been civilian sales in the past so that this announcement was seen as a precursor to deals with the South African Government and Defence Department. The London Times of April 16, commenting on the Mrs. Beech episode reports, "State Department officials wince slightly at reports that Mrs. Beech has said the United States has approved sales of light aircraft for training and reconnaissance. They insist that export licences will only be considered for aircraft to be used for "non-military" purposes - such as liason and the transport of generals - and then only in small numbers." It is difficult to see how transport of a General could be thought of as a non-military operation - but as the U.S. has supplied Boeings to the Portuguese for troop transport while claiming to adhere to the embargo, it is no doubt possible to supply aircraft to the South African military and then claim that this has no military implications. It would be extremely useful if the Sub-Committee could use its authority to obtain a clear and unequivocal statement of what aircraft the U.S. will allow to be sold to whom in South Africa, i.e. will any aircraft of any description be sold to the South African Government, Defence Force or the South African Police?

U.S. light plane manufacturers are eager to do business in South Africa which is the world's third biggest market for light planes after the U.S. and Australia. It has the world's highest percentage of owners per number of pilots, and this is encouraged by the special tax allowance system, which allows the cost to be written off within four years.

South Africa is a valuable customer for the major U.S. manufacturers of light aircraft, Beech has sold 25 planes in the last six months. By 1969 Cessna had already sold more than a thousand planes in its Southern Africa area.... which extended over

South Africa, South West Africa, Angola and Mozambique, and had sent a special six-man selling team to South Africa to launch three new models in October, 1970. Several executive jets had been sold by late 1969, and it is interesting to note that the technical report which appeared in the South African Financial Gazette stressed that the Lear-jet 24D (the model under review) can land and take off from nearly all air-strips in Southern Africa.

This sale of aircraft to South Africa raises two important questions: the possible willingness of the U.S. to supply equipment to the South African Government is a very serious development in Administration policy, but it seems even more important to recognise the fallacy of the licensing system under which aircraft are sold for "non-military purposes." This is little more than a polite legal fiction....any aircraft can be easily converted for military use....and in South Africa the existence of a para-military group such as the Air-Commandos makes it possible for the military to use civilian aircraft while maintaining the legal fiction.

It must be remembered that flying is an all-white sport in South Africa. The Air Commandos, established in 1964, can best be described as a flying militia. It is made up of volunteers who are not members of the regular military forces but who are paid by the Government when they fly as Commandos. These volunteer units are made up of private pilots and airplanes commissioned in times of emergency or war. The establishment of 12 squadrons was authorised in 1964. The Commandos attend an annual two-week training camp, during which all their expenses are paid. Their training entails radio co-operation with army and mobile police striking forces, reconnaissance, practice bombing with grenades, and general co-operation with the police in maintaining the internal security of both South Africa and South West Africa. Many of these Commando members fly U.S. light planes, such as Pipers and Cessnas.

It is difficult to get information about the operation of the air commandos. Some of the information we have comes from an individual who was himself a light plane pilot and whose identity cannot be revealed, particularly as the South African Official Secrets Amendment Act (1965) makes the provision of such information a criminal offence. We believe that several flying clubs in South Africa carry out primary flying training for the South African Airforce and South African Police (who possess a fleet of communications and spotter aircraft). Airforce and police personnel are trained during the week on the Club's Piper and Cessna aircraft, the same planes which are used by the club members over the weekend.

Thus, even if the licensing procedures are adhered to technically in the sense that no planes are sold to the military; such planes become available to the military, and, most important of all, form part of the "security planning" of the Government. Thus the Cape Times Defence Reporter filed the following report in 1969:

SAAF AT NEW PEAK TO TACKLE TERRORISTS

"The South African Air Force is being geared to a new peak of readiness to combat terrorists.

"This was made clear in the Assembly yesterday afternoon by the Minister of Defence, Mr. Botha.

"The two developments mentioned by Mr. Botha are these:

-South Africa's more recent orders for aircraft are for those types designed to play an important role in unconventional (or guerilla) warfare:

-The country's commando aircraft squadrons have now been transferred to the Air Force, and will number 240 pilots. The age limit of these pilots has been raised to 60.

"The Air Force is being given greater mobility and will be better prepared to wage war against terrorists.

"Mr. Botha did not give further details of the types of aircraft ordered, but according to the Defence White Paper, 'a number of medium helicopters are also being acquired.'

"This is the sort of aircraft which provides rapid troop mobility in bushveld or mountainous terrain, and can also be used for reconnaissance and spotting.

"The report also says that additional ground support aircraft are to be acquired. Light reconnaissance aircraft of the type which will patrol the coasts could in addition (though the report does not say this) be used profitably in the rough territory favoured by terrorists.

"Volunteer civilian pilots using their own aircraft for commando work will now receive R10 a flying hour instead of R6. The State will provide free fuel and oil for any flight authorized by the commando unit.

"Mr. Botha also declared that there were now five centres in South Africa where young men were being trained continually on a full-time basis to combat terrorism. The chief of these was the Commando Combat School at Kimberley.

"According to the White Paper, the accent is on flexibility with the Army capable of switching rapidly between conventional and unconventional roles.

"Mr. Botha said: 'We have our methods by which we remain informed of the most recent approach of the terrorist onslaughts in the world.'

Mr. Chairman, it is clear that it is simply not true that the provision of light aircraft to anyone in South Africa does not in anyway strengthen the military capacity of that country. This is so because of the very nature of the aircraft, and because mechanisms already exist, as we have shown above, for integrating these craft into the South African military force to be used against the freedom struggle of the people of South Africa.

Frank Harvey, in his book Air-War - Vietnam devotes a chapter, entitled "The Death Bringers" to the role of "light civilian type aircraft" like the Pipers, Beechcraft

and Cessnas now being sold in South Africa. He says, "The dominating figures in the Delta (and in fact all of South Viet Nam) are the forward air controllers. They fly around looking for signs of guerilla activity in the little single engined Cessna known as O-1 Bird Dogs. (These look and handle much like the Cessna 170, well known to civilian pilots)." Harvey found that the "forward air controller in his small low powered plane really runs the war. He has a terrifying fleet of planes and weapons at his beck and call." He also describes tests being done on a military version of the Cessna Super Skymaster, arming them with rockets and machine guns. These Skymasters are among the nine-model 1970 line of twin engined Cessna planes available in South Africa.

Mr. Chairman, I have gone into great detail about the case of civilian aircraft because I think it illustrates very vividly the myth of the Administration claim that it only allows the sale of planes and other equipment which does not increase South African military capability.

The pattern in relation to the sale of helicopters to South Africa is very similar. I do not think I need expand here on the crucial role of helicopters in anti-insurgency wars.....they are the ideal weapon for use against guerilla forces, and are recognised as such by the South Africans, who have used them in the past to transport troops to 'trouble spots' in the Transkei and other areas.

Sales by U.S. firms include an amphibious Sikorsky 62 Helicopter and Hughes 500 Helicopters - an "executive jet" type capable of flying 400 miles without refueling and used extensively by the U.S. army in Vietnam. The South African Financial Mail of October 10, 1970 carried a full page advertisement placed by Bell Helicopters, Fort Worth, Texas advertising the virtues of their 205A Copter, and explicitly mentioning that "the Military calls it HUEY...." Bell seems eager to expand its South African

market.

Once again the State Department assures us that there would not be licenses for export of "helicopters which have a military configuration or helicopters of any kind destined for use by the South African Military or other security forces," but the use of helicopters in South African military operations, including anti-guerilla training exercises set up for several thousand commando members, plus the expanding South African direct presence in Zimbabwe (Rhodesia), Angola, Mozambique, and Namibia indicate the potential use of any helicopters sold to South Africa.

Bell has also recently sold five helicopters to the Zambezi Development office - these were assembled in Beira, Mozambique and are to be used for "logistic support" connected with the Cabora Bassa Dam. This sale indicates that U.S. policy toward the Cabora Bassa dam is not symbolised by the recent Export-Import Bank refusal to finance a General Electric sale to the dam project.

In conclusion Mr. Chairman, I must thank you and your Sub-Committee for your attention this afternoon. There are several issues of great importance which I have not even touched on...including the continued supply of military spare parts and equipment sold to South Africa worth, according to the Defense Department, some \$3 million annually; the testing by the United States of the Cactus ground to air missile developed by the French specifically for the South Africans; continued U.S. technical co-operation on matters as various as atomic energy, outer space, electronic development and many others. Finally there is still the vast body of equipment, from four-wheel drive jeeps and radio transmitters to complex computers which now fall well outside the ambit of any arms embargo, but which can clearly play a strategic military role.

It seems essential that more information ought to be made available on the issues here raised and, above all, that the Sub-Committee, continuing its tradition of seeking to change policy, seek ways of ensuring that what is now an illusion become in fact a reality. There must be a full and total embargo of all equipment and technology which can in any way serve to assist the South African government in its war against the people of Southern Africa.

- 1) military patents and other military knowhow should not be transferred by government or private agencies.
- 2) foreign capital which goes into South Africa's armaments industry should be cut off.
- 3) skilled technicians should be discouraged from emigrating to South Africa.
- 4) special training should not be offered to military and police officers from Portugal and South Africa.
- 5) co-operation in the nuclear and space fields should be ended. (This would include removal of U.S. tracking stations from South Africa.)
- 6) spare parts and repairs should not be supplied to maintain equipment sent prior to the embargo.
- 7) all items suitable for both military and civilian use should be embargoed. In particular, motor vehicles and light aircraft should be included.



The Hughes 500 helicopter has just been introduced to the South African market. Its makers claim that it is "the world's fastest executive jet helicopter." It can fly for 300 to 400 miles at 150 m.p.h. without a refuel. Some 1 600 military models of the Hughes have been sold to the United States Army for use in Vietnam, and have between them clocked 1 000 000 flying hours. The Hughes retails at R80 000-plus — but Comair, the South African agent, think that they will be able to sell a large number.

DEFENCE



Volksblad
The Eastern Orange Free State has been the scene of large scale exercises in unconventional warfare. Wartime conditions were simulated and about 2 000 commando members participated. From their temporary headquarters near Dewetsdorp, helicopters from Squadron 18, Swartkops (Pretoria) reconnoitered the surrounding countryside to plan troop transports from one point to another. Here Lieut. Nico Valentgoed and technician Alwyn van Heerden, who have just landed, join some commando troops rushing to take up firing positions. The helicopters enabled participants in this exercise to cover considerable distances

from "South African Digest", April 2, 1971