

INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

VOLUME ONE

NUMBER ONE

21 NOVEMBER 1966

"SOUTH-WEST AFRICA: WE ROSE TO BE COUNTED"

The United States, Life magazine reported in an editorial Nov. 11, joined 113 other countries in a "watershed decision" in the United Nations: the General Assembly voted 114 to 2 to declare terminated the League of Nations mandate under which the Republic of South Africa is now ruling the former German colony of South-West Africa. "The mandatory nation, South Africa, has no intention of surrendering control and is therefore on a collision course with world opinion, the U.N. and also the U.S."

In reality, though, the "collision" contemplated by Life will probably be little more than symbolic. Black African nations have been trying for years to get South Africa to give up South-West Africa, where she is now exploiting the mineral resources and enforcing the widely condemned policy of apartheid, or separation of the races. On July 18 the International Court of Justice refused to rule on the merits of a case against the League of Nations mandate which had been brought before it by Ethiopia and Liberia. With the League of Nations now defunct, other African countries would like to have the mandate transferred to U.N. control; but South Africa can claim legal grounds for holding on to the mandate herself, and the U.N. Security Council will not sanction the use of force against her—presumably Britain would veto any such attempt.

Where does the United States stand in all this? Life gives the impression that the U.S. voted largely on moral grounds: "Why is the U.S. involved? Because a few weeks ago Ambassador Arthur Goldberg and the State Department decided we had to take sides..."

Judging from a report in the New York Times Oct. 28, though, the U.S. was at best a reluctant ally of the African and Asian sponsors of the resolution. According to this report Goldberg tried to amend the resolution, but Latin Americans opposed his attempt, and the Tanzanian representative charged that the big powers were resorting to "deceit" to "wreck our resolution." Goldberg then tried to mollify the Africans and Asians by "deleting words and phrases to which they objected."

The case of South-West Africa raises a difficult question: In what circumstances should one condone the use of force in resolving international problems? Great Britain failed to use force against the white Rhodesian leaders when they declared independence a year ago, and she has been roundly condemned for it by other African nations. Yet Britain, France, and Israel were willing to use force in 1956 when Egypt grabbed the Suez Canal. The United States will not support armed action against South Africa, according to Life, but it strongly favored the use of force by the U.N. in Korea in 1950 and in the Congo in the early '60's. In this case South Africa's diamond and gold production play a crucial role in world finance, and it is probably for this reason that no Western power is willing to move against her.

LE SUCCÈS DE M. JOHNSON / JOHNSON'S SUCCESS

"After this tour, the longest and grandest that a President of the United States has ever made abroad, how do things stand?

"On the question which dominates the international scene and the worries of humanity—how to bring peace back to Vietnam—the balance sheet is as negative as one might have expected before Mr. Johnson left on his voyage. We are still at the same point, which is to say that each side is still hoping the other will tire first.

"If people in Hanoi and Peking had any illusions about the length of time in which Washington might heed General de Gaulle's advice of withdrawal, these illusions must be dissipated. Before leaving Korea the American Chief Executive referred more clearly than ever to the previous confrontations between the West and the communist world to affirm his conviction that once again it is the latter who will give in, once it has realized that it cannot obtain anything by force of arms. Obviously this makes short shrift of the considerable differences between the Korean war, the result of open aggression, and the war in Vietnam, where a wavering power appealed for intervention from the outside to try to check a generalized guerrilla war. This is to say nothing of the fact that the time is past when Moscow could stop a conflict at any moment when it was beginning to go badly—and that it is now Hanoi alone that can decide where its interests lie, taking into account the contradictory counsels of the Kremlin and of Peking.

"Does this mean that all the commotion has been in vain? For President Johnson, certainly not. The acclamation of the crowds, notably in Australia and Korea, were far warmer than what one could have hoped to get during an election campaign in any American city. He returned home with irrefutable arguments to show that his policy is supported not only by the leaders of the allied countries of the United States in the Pacific area, but also by public opinion. On the eve of the Congressional election, this is a success he will not fail to use to his advantage.

"Doubtless this success will also permit him, for a time at least, to mask the fact that he did not receive the slightest assurance from the heads of state whom he met as to the enlargement of the contingents which certain of them have placed at the disposition of the American command in Vietnam. Finally, he is excused from taking a new step in escalation before the elections, as he might have been pushed to do by a notable part of public opinion had he only been able to present the sad account of an impotent immobility to come up with the right decision.

"These reflections show that in matters of domestic politics the President of the United States is still a man who can conceive the necessary parades at the right moment. But they also show that unlike his predecessor, he has less imagination in international politics. It remains to be seen whether in the end the latter will not rebound on the former, and how long his fellow-

citizens will allow President Johnson to pursue the war without really trying to end it either by negotiation or by extension."

(Editorial in the Paris newspaper Le Monde.

From Le Monde, Sélection hebdomadaire, Nov. 3-9, 1966)

VIETNAM: THE MEKONG DELTA?

The possibility of a U.S. occupation of the Mekong Delta in South Vietnam has been increasingly discussed in recent weeks. According to an article from Saigon in the Wall Street Journal Nov. 10, Washington is being urged to decide on "contingency" plans drawn up by General Westmoreland and his staff. The plans call for village-by-village "pacification" by South Vietnamese teams while U.S. forces ensure military control. These plans raise several issues:

① At a press conference before the recent elections, Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara announced that the rate of buildup of U.S. troops would diminish and that draft calls might be cut in half (San Francisco Examiner, Nov. 6). But military estimates of U.S. troops needed in Vietnam if the Delta is to be occupied range from 600,000 to 750,000, more than twice the present figure of 345,000, according to Hanson Baldwin in the New York Times, Nov. 12. Thus occupation of the Delta could upset McNamara's plans of decreased rates of troop buildup.

② President Johnson has often stated his desire for peace in Vietnam. Fighting in the Mekong Delta now consists largely of small skirmishes between South Vietnamese forces and guerrilla bands, but if the U.S. moved in on a large scale, reinforcements from the North Vietnamese army might be sent in to defend the area, according to the Wall Street Journal article. Thus escalation by the U.S. could lead to intensification of the war on both sides, not an approach to peace.

③ The "domino theory" maintains that if South Vietnam fell, so would other nations; that by holding South Vietnam the U.S. may hold other places too. But it is doubtful whether the "pacification" methods planned for the Mekong Delta could be extended very far into other countries. In sheer number of troops the United States could hardly occupy all the areas where guerrilla bands now operate (in the Philippines, Thailand, Laos, Venezuela, etc.) to win people's "allegiance." This being the case, it is difficult to see why the Delta should be used as an example of what many people in other countries will interpret as a big country forcing its way on others.

④ According to one specialist, destroying the political organization of the National Liberation Front could take as long as a generation, even with present troops doubled. The Administration has not yet taken the public into its confidence with regard to what would be a major commitment of American effort. Publicly it is still uncertain whether U.S. troops will be sent to the Mekong Delta, but the Army is now constructing a big base on a tributary of the Mekong River not far from Saigon. "When you build a base as big as this one, it is likely to be used," quoted the Wall Street Journal.

President Johnson was asked at his news conference Nov. 10 if he could comment on the possibility of an occupation of the Mekong Delta. He replied: "No. I don't have anything to speculate on about when, what, or where our forces might move."

EDITORIAL STATEMENT

Reading newspaper reports on a day-to-day basis, one often finds it difficult to place events in their perspective of international diplomacy. The purpose of this new weekly, INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS, is to provide analyses of events throughout the world in relation to United States foreign policy. The editors would like to raise questions such as the following:

How is U.S. foreign policy made?

What are the aspirations of other countries, where do they clash with American interests, and how can such conflicts best be resolved?

How do actions of the United States affect the destinies of nations elsewhere in the world?

INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS is being published by a group of students at Stanford University. Articles that fall within the scope of the journal will be welcomed, whether or not they coincide with the views of the editors.

INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS is financed by voluntary contributions. Each issue costs about \$40.00 to publish. The editors hope it will be possible to continue distributing the journal free.

For further information please contact:

Marilyn Dilworth (Roble; 326-2520 ext. 312)

Elizabeth Helfrick (Flo Mo; 326-1520 ext. 182)

Eric Prokosch (Box 5081, Stanford; 325-9514)

Editors and publishers: Marilyn Dilworth, Karen Loomis, Carrie Iverson, Elizabeth Helfrick, Richard Sack, Dianne Sattinger, Eric Prokosch

Faculty sponsors: Robert Finn, Jay Neugeboren, Charles Stein