

EQUITABLE PARTITION IN SOUTH AFRICA?

“TRANSKEI’S HALF LOAF (RACE SEPARATION IN SOUTH AFRICA)” by NEWELL M. STULTZ

(Published in South Africa by David Philip, in association with Yale University Press, New Haven and London.)

A Review by John Passmore

The blurb on the back cover of this book says that “Stultz’s conclusions are unlikely to please either anti-apartheid or dogmatic supporters of the South African government . . .”.

The reason for this is quite understandable. Stultz (a professor of political science at Brown University, U.S.A.) offers the relatively unexplored theory that Transkeian independence may be the first step towards a genuine and equitable partition of South Africa’s land and resources — a partition that would ensure the social and economic well-being of all South Africa’s people without leading to a “tyranny of the majority”.

Stultz’s book is an attempt to explore a middle-of-the-road approach as regards the Transkei. The liberal-left view is essentially a unitary state which must, (after the end of the Pretoria regime) to all intents and purposes, be treated as one.

The right-wing approach is to use the Transkei and its sister homelands as a device designed to strip blacks of their rights to full South African citizenship and at the same time maintain a massive reservoir of cheap labour for white industry and agriculture.

“Transkei’s Half Loaf” rejects both views; the latter for its explicit racism and exploitation; the former because it runs contrary to general African development. Africa, it must be remembered, is comprised of 50 states despite the fact that it constitutes only 22% of the world’s total land surface and 10% of its population. South Africa is a microcosm of these numerous and diverse ethno-economic African groupings.

Stultz, writing from a personal position he describes as “conservative, or at least on the conservative side of centre” believes that separation could lead to a reduction of race conflict in southern Africa. He bases his theory on three premises, viz. (1) that a “successful revolution”, while possible, is neither inevitable nor perhaps even likely, (2) that the response of the South African regime to pressures placed upon it will be “higher levels of official coercion” leading to measures “separatist in character”, and (3) that separatist measures could in time open the way for “lower levels of official coercion and more democracy in general”.

ECONOMIC VIABILITY

A partitioning of land based on tribal ethnicity, Stultz concedes, can only be justified if that state is “capable of subsisting without the aid of whites”. The alternative is a federation of states.

Stultz points out the obvious, viz. Transkei fulfils none of the long-term requirements as regards partition or federation. He realises that, in the first place, Matanzima has succeeded in gaining INTERNAL Transkeian majority support via a campaign which culminated in the effective neutralization of all serious opposition. Secondly, Transkei relies heavily on financial aid from Pretoria and the injection of private sector white capital has simply led to an entrenched and relatively wealthy elite of chiefs, bureaucrats and petty capitalists.

As regards federation — Matanzima has made some federal noises but his actions suggest a belief in a type of “independence” tailored to his own desires of semi-monarchial aggrandizement.

Despite the facts Stultz is strongly convinced that the West should not ignore the possibilities that have arisen as a consequence of Transkeian “independence”. He treats an extract from a Matanzima speech with sympathy—

“today the British Government and all its henchmen pretend to be protectors of the black people in South Africa, while they recognize the sovereignty of the minority of Whites over the Blacks in this country and while they are trading partners in South Africa.”

Stultz dismisses the idea that Matanzima is nothing but a puppet and indirectly cites this speech as an example. He regards Matanzima as an embattled black nationalist conservative fighting to resolve the meaninglessness of Transkeian independence by hedging to accept the white governments decree that all Transkeian orientated workers in South Africa are citizens of the “independent” homeland. Stultz clearly recognizes how badly Transkei’s independence falls short of a genuine partition with federalist possibilities— “it (Transkeian independence) does not lessen the reality of white privilege and the political supremacy of whites within the region. Nor does it introduce a radical departure from past practice in the allocation of resources in southern Africa . . .”.

STATE DEPARTMENT

However, despite these crippling disadvantages, Stultz envisages great possibilities arising from the independence of the Transkei —

“What if Transkei were to join with the neighbouring Ciskei, which is also Xhosa speaking, and the intervening port city, East London, and white farmlands were

to be included? Would not the resulting "Greater Xhosa-land" be a far more credible nation-state and thereby be more likely to elicit broader African interest and support?"

Such an occurrence would, in Stultz's opinion, lead to a situation whereby a powerful partitioned state could extract greater concessions from Pretoria.

Stultz's theory of partition based on partial acceptance of homeland independence poses a fascinating question. Is this type of thinking increasingly prevalent among officials of the United States State Department?

As Johnson points out in "How Long will South Africa survive" —

"South Africa is too important to the West (economically) . . . to be allowed to go the way of the Congo, Mozambique or Angola . . ."

Stultz's book clearly favours an equitable distribution of resources among a powerful grouping of middle class South African ethnic elites. Such a federal system would obviously ally itself with the conservative pro-capitalist West and prevent an economically powerful and strategically vital country from aligning itself to the Eastern bloc. Stultz's — and his fellow academic conservatives' — increasing pre-occupation with South Africa reflects the fact that the Third World (southern Africa in particular) is clearly moving to the top of the U.S. State Department's list of priorities — a trend clearly hinted at by ex-Secretary of State Cyrus Vance in his recent address to students at Harvard University. □

An organiser for Diakonia's Church and industry programme.

Diakonia, the Durban-based ecumenical organisation, is about to set up a *Church and Industry Programme* and is looking for a person to fill the post of Organiser in this field.

The new Programme arises out of the difficulties ministers of religion have in drawing workers into parish life, difficulties which arise in part from the uncertainties the priests themselves experience about how they should respond to the problems created by unemployment, shift work, poor wages and working conditions. Priests and ministers also need help in trying to clarify their responsibilities to management and the issues they face. The aim is eventually to set up small groups of adult workers

and separate groups of managers in each congregation, with a view to enlisting their active engagement in the task of transforming society in the direction of a Christian model of social relations.

The person Diakonia is looking for as its organiser in this field should be a committed Christian with experience in worker movements. The post will clearly be one of great challenge.

Anyone interested in further details should contact Paddy Kearney at P.O. Box 1879, Durban, 4000. □

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