PREFACE

The United States has considered itself the champion of the free world and the advocate of ideals like equality, liberty and democracy. The spirit and philosophy of these ideals were reflected not only in the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution or the Gettysburg Address, but also in the speeches and writings of most American leaders. The observance of these ideals was urged both in domestic political life as well as in the conduct of foreign relations. Moreover, in the eyes of Americans, these values had universal applicability and other nations were exhorted to adhere to them.

It is in this regard that South Africa posed a serious dilemma to the United States. Apartheid, the doctrine of racialism, which is based on the notion of the superiority of the white race, has been practised for decades in South Africa. The policy was devised by the White minority to ensure its survival and protect itself against unforeseen vicissitudes. Segregation and discrimination were observed in all walks of life and enforced by legislation. For the nonwhites who constituted the majority, its impact was disastrous and deprived them of any control over their lives.
Apartheid thus being undeniably the antithesis of American ideals, the United States was naturally expected to oppose it in unequivocal terms. However, the United States did not do so as it had significant tangible interests, specifically economic and strategic, in South Africa, which played a decisive role in shaping American policy. South Africa had the most developed economy in the entire African continent and was the repository of several important minerals. Its geographic and strategic location also was of much importance to the United States. Consequently, the whole issue has placed the United States in a predicament. On the one hand it had to adhere to its ideals while on the other it had to refrain from alienating the South African regime and damaging its interests. Whichever course it resorted to, there were repercussions.

It is in this context that a study of American responses -- of perceptions and policies towards South Africa assumes significance. There has been an intense debate over United States policy towards South Africa. A survey of the literature seems to indicate that many of the works examined in this regard have tended to be merely critical and often preoccupied with prescribing guidelines for future action. There is a lack of objectivity and in-depth analysis, and an inadequate discussion of the history of policy. Placing due emphasis
on these aspects, the study endeavours to examine United States policy towards South Africa in the broader context of American ideals and responses to apartheid.

The developments within South Africa were largely ignored by American administrations for a long time. However, during the nineteen fifties, with apartheid becoming an issue of international concern and the question being raised at the United Nations, the United States began displaying some interest in the racial crisis in South Africa. With the Sharpeville massacre of 1960, when about seventy Blacks were killed in police firing, American concern was suddenly kindled, but the following decade was witness to mere verbal interventionism rather than concrete actions on its part. At the United Nations, the United States supported mildly worded resolutions and half-measures, but continued its relations with South Africa unhindered. Maintaining cordial relations with South Africa notwithstanding the nature of the apartheid system was considered to be in the United States best interests. Thus by 1968 the failure of any sincere American effort to influence South Africa was evident.

In order to facilitate a thorough analysis, the focus of the study has been limited to the nineteen seventies, or more precisely from 1969 to 1980, covering a period of three administrations, those of Nixon, Ford and Carter.
This period was particularly significant for the United States both in the domestic and international sphere. The beginning of the decade witnessed an increasing interest and articulation on South African issues within the United States, particularly by Afro-Americans who had just achieved civil and voting rights. At the international level with the advent of detente and the relaxation of tensions, the United States could focus some attention on regional problems like that of apartheid in South Africa. By the end of the decade, however, Afro-Americans were preoccupied with efforts to resist attempts within their country to reverse the gains they had made in the political, economic and social spheres during the past one and a half decades. Although the beginning of the decade witnessed detente, by the mid-seventies the developments in Southern Africa exacerbated tensions between the United States and the Soviet Union. Towards the end of the decade the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan ushered in a renewal of the Cold War.

In this study apartheid refers not only to the racial laws but encompasses the entire system. The responses include the perceptions of American administrations on apartheid, the statements they made, the policies they formulated, and the manner in which the policies were implemented.
The study proceeds on the following assumptions. Firstly, the United States which has constantly highlighted the significance of ideals like equality and liberty, appears to have failed to adhere to them in the specific context of its relations with South Africa, despite the fact that apartheid was totally inconsistent with American ideals. Secondly, South Africa's economic and strategic importance especially in the context of United States conflict with the Soviet Union seems to have been a major factor which guided American policy towards South Africa. Thirdly, despite its apparent capability to influence South Africa to reform, the United States through its inaction and half-hearted measures indirectly assisted in the perpetuation of the apartheid system. Finally, the approaches of the administrations under study -- Nixon's policy of communication, Ford's efforts at promoting controlled change and Carter's advocacy of human rights and enlightened capitalism differed in style, but appeared to have been similar in substance. None of these approaches seemed to have any effect on the overall situation in South Africa.

The study is divided into seven chapters. Chapter I discusses some of the American ideals on which there is a broad consensus among Americans, the significance they have for the United States and other nations, the racial
issue in the United States where these ideals have become a domestic moral concern, the extent to which the United States can uphold them in the conduct of foreign policy, and finally on apartheid and how it contradicts American ideals.

Chapter II is devoted to the study of United States interests in South Africa. The discussion centres around the political dimensions of United States policy towards South Africa, South Africa's economic might, its mineral resources, strategic importance as well as American trade with, and investment in South Africa.

Chapter III is an overview of United States policy prior to 1969. It examines the beginnings of contact between the two countries and the nature of relations until then. American policy during the Eisenhower, Kennedy and Johnson administrations is briefly examined as constituting the immediate background to the period of the focus of this study.

The Nixon administration's policy of communication with South Africa is examined in Chapter IV. A brief look at the global context of American foreign policy is followed by a discussion of the efforts at formulating a Southern Africa policy, the policy options, the
operational examples of the policy and the issues confronted with.

The Ford administration's efforts to promote controlled change in Southern Africa in the background of the events in the region in the mid nineteen seventies, is analysed in Chapter V. Kissinger's attempts at cooperating with South Africa on a solution for Southern Rhodesia is discussed in detail. The United States position on apartheid at the United Nations, the internal problems of the administration, its reactions to Soweto and the "independence" of Transkei are also looked into.

The Carter administration's policy towards South Africa based on its human rights agenda is reviewed in Chapter VI. It examines the administration's efforts to change the American outlook towards the South African problem. The efforts to utilise economic leverage in bringing about change is discussed at length. The administration's concern over South Africa's internal repression, its nuclear programme as well as the significance of the Nigerian factor in United States-South African relations are examined.

The conclusions arrived at in this work constitute the last chapter. Appendices and an extensive bibliography have also been provided.
The methodology adopted in this work is historical-analytical. To strengthen the arguments made, tables showing the statistics of different aspects of United States - South African relations are also given. The data for this work as can be seen from the bibliography have been collected from primary as well as secondary sources. The primary sources include documents and statements of the United States government, Congressional hearings, documents of the United Nations, etc. Memoirs and accounts of individuals involved in policymaking have also been consulted. The secondary sources used in this study consist of books, articles from journals and magazines, and newspapers.

In writing this thesis I have received invaluable assistance from a large number of people and institutions to all of whom I am deeply grateful. I am indebted to Dr. C.V. Cheriyan, former Professor and Head, School of International Relations, Mahatma Gandhi University, under whose guidance this work was accomplished, for his valuable advice and constant encouragement. My colleagues at the School of International Relations, Mahatma Gandhi University were of much help to me in numerous ways. I am grateful to Prof. K. Raman Pillai, Prof. G.P. Ramachandra, Dr. K.M. Seethi, Mr. K.N. Harilal, Mr. A.K. Ramakrishnan, Dr. Raju K. Thadikkaran and Dr. H. Srikanth.
I owe a special word of gratitude to Prof. M.S. Venkataramani, Dr. M. Glenn Johnson, Dr. J.W. Bjorkman, Dr. John J. Carroll, Dr. M.T. Desai and Dr. Joseph L. Plakoottam for their invaluable comments and suggestions.

I must express my appreciation to the staff of various research institutions and libraries. They include the School of International Relations, Mahatma Gandhi University; Mahatma Gandhi University Library; American Studies Research Centre, Hyderabad; Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi; United Nations Library, New Delhi; United States Information Service Library, Madras; Kerala University Library, Trivandrum; Department of Politics, University of Kerala, Trivandrum; and Public Library, Kottayam.

I am particularly grateful to the American Studies Research Centre, Hyderabad for providing me with a Teacher Study Grant. The courses and seminars held there were of immense help in writing this thesis. A note of thanks also goes to TransAfrica, Washington DC, and Mr. Alan Begg of the South African Institute of International Affairs, Johannesburg.
A special word of appreciation to Mathew, Anil, Alice, Rekha, Shylaja, Sateesh, Mariamma and Annie P. John. Only limitations of space prevent me from mentioning names of others who assisted me in one way or the other.

My special thanks are due to M/s. LASER WRITE, Ettumanoor for the Word Processing and Photocopying of this work.

I would like to thank my parents and family for their unflagging support in this endeavour. My wife Teresa was a constant source of encouragement and inspiration through every stage of this work. It would not have been possible to accomplish this work without her support. And finally a word of appreciation to little Annie who would have preferred playing with her father rather than permitting him to engage in his academic pursuits.

A.M. THOMAS