SECURITY PROBLEMS: AN AFRICAN PREDICAMENT

by

His Excellency, Francis M. Deng

Sudan Ambassador to Canada

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HANS WOLFF
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Hans Wolff was born on April 6, 1920 in Mainz, Germany.
In 1934 his family went to Spain where he remained until
1937 when he immigrated to the United States. He attended
Queens College, New York from 1939-1941 and then transferred
to Indiana University. From 1942-1946 he served with the
Military Intelligence Corps. After the war he returned to
Indiana and in 1946 obtained the B.A. magna cum laude in
Linguistics. In 1947 he was awarded the M.A. in Linguistics
and in 1949 a double doctorate in Anthropology and Linguis-
tics (one of the first to be given by that department). In
1949 he was appointed to the faculty of the University of
Puerto Rico where he taught for eleven years. His early
work was in Amerindian languages, especially in Siouan
studies, and in the teaching of English as a second language.
While still at the University of Puerto Rico, he was invited
in 1953 to visit Nigeria, and from that time his interest in
Africa and African languages grew. He published widely on
the languages and language problems of Nigeria and at the
time of his death was one of the leading authorities on
Yoruba. In 1960 he accepted an appointment at Michigan
State University in the African Studies Center where he
taught for three years. While at Michigan State he helped
to found and to edit the Journal of African Languages. He
also assisted in the early development of the West African
Language Conference and for several years served as Chairman
of the African Linguistics Committee of the African Studies
Association. At the time of his death in September 1967,
he was Professor of Linguistics at Northwestern University.

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I. The Stand Point

    Before entering the subject matter of my address to this
very distinguished group of intellectuals and scholars, I
should perhaps clarify my standpoint. When I was appointed
to my first diplomatic post as Ambassador to the Scandinavian
countries, an academic friend advised me not to remain in
diplomacy for more than three years. I am afraid it has been
nearly 10 years since. And it was not to be long before I
was to have some idea of the time-limit he placed on my dip-
lomatic experience, for in Sweden I encountered an incident
which was by no means flattering to diplomacy. I had been
invited to give a talk to a society of intellectuals. As
we sat waiting for the meeting to start, my host apologized
for not having mentioned my diplomatic title in the invita-
tions and in the announcement, adding, "You see, most Swedes
think Ambassadors are very boring."

    Well, all I want to say is that I am not here to deliver
a scholarly message, but I would not want my talk to be taken
as a diplomatic speech either. I hope to be open and candid,
perhaps a little more than is conventional in diplomacy.

II. The Problem

    When I received the invitation to address this meeting,
I wondered what I should talk about and a wide variety of
subjects recommended themselves. I have only recently chosen
to talk on the security problem in Africa, partly because it
is increasingly a topic of discussion in African-American
circles and also because our part of Africa has very much
been in the news lately, a fact which might have driven me
into avoiding the topic, but which has added to my desire to
face the challenge.

    The security problem in Africa is a manifestation of
yet another critical phase in the political evolution of the
continent. During the fifties and sixties, the people of
Africa were united by their common struggle against foreign
domination. The overriding goal was total independence from

colonialism and the enemies were the foreign powers who were
seen as not only dominating the people of Africa, but also
exploiting the continent to their unfair advantage. While
the situation in Namibia and South Africa remains a pain-
ful thorn in the African flesh, the process of decoloniza-
tion is nearly complete and the challenges of nation building
are replacing the struggle for liberation. Unfortunately,
the issues of nation-building are less clear-cut: the goals
are not so well defined; the obstacles are less obvious;
the identities of the enemies are blurred; and the whole
process is a lot more intricate and complex.

Nkrumah had promised that once the political kingdom
was attained, the rest should flow. The leaders of inde-
pendent Africa soon saw their real enemies as ignorance,
poverty and disease. Some viewed the problem in economic
terms; others in cultural terms; and yet others blamed these
afflictions on neo-colonialism and the subtleties of remote
controls and continued foreign domination. While the rhet-
oric continued against foreign exploitation in one form or
another, there evolved an increasing realization that inter-
dependency was perhaps a more accurate way of describing post-
independence relations with the former colonial powers and
other nations and peoples of the world. Some form of cooper-
ation rather than confrontation became the theme. Efforts
in this direction continue and despite the increasing diffi-
culties in the North-South dialogue, the tone has been set.
Greater emphasis is increasingly being placed on defining
the mutuality of interests underlying international cooper-
ation.

Perhaps one of the most critical developments in this
process has been the extent to which internal differences,
tensions, and conflicts surfaced once the common bond of the
common struggle against a common enemy was loosened by the
achievement of independence. The assumption of political
power by the nationals was initially viewed in collective
terms, not dissimilar to economic statistics of gross national
product which do not specify who gets what from the produce.
Once the breakdown was made, inequities became apparent, and
just as gross-statistical affluence does not gratify the poor,
collective independence that gave power to a faction did not
end the liberation struggle; it only changed the identities

of the conflicting parties. It is then that internal diver-
sities and disparities began to manifest themselves and under-
mine the sense of unity, of national identity, and of a
common purpose in nation-building. Then follows an internal
strife, expressed at various levels, often resulting in fre-
quent changes of governments through revolutions, coups and
counter-coups. This may extend beyond the domestic confines
to generate tensions between nations, exploding in violence
and regional hostilities. The scope of these conflicts has
unfortunately gone beyond the continental scene, entailing
a new form of dependency on foreign powers, especially in the
critical field of military assistance. The bonds with foreign
powers may be ideological or purely pragmatic, the crucial
factor being the readiness to deliver the goods or having a
common enemy. The more foreign intervention has increased,
the greater the reaction of the African countries against
foreign intervention as a matter of principle. But the
reality remains a pervasive resort to foreign intervention.

It was at the OAU Summit at Libreville in 1977 that the
African Heads of State pronounced themselves against what they
viewed as the grave issue of foreign intervention. But since
then, far from abating, the problem has intensified as one
area after another has found itself in regional conflicts that
have attracted foreign intervention. The cycle between region-
al tension, conflict and intervention has been reinforced,
for these evils breed on one another.

III. The Root Causes

Events of this gravity and magnitude do not just occur
in a senseless way, for the consequences are too severe to
be taken lightly by all concerned. One must assume that there
is some explanation somewhere, however much we may disagree
on the soundness of the grounds. What are the root causes
of the tensions, the turmoil, and the conflicts that plague
the domestic and regional scene of independent Africa? What
are the motives of the conflicting parties? What compels
African nations to resort to foreign powers for military inter-
vention even at the risk of compromising, if not endangering,
their hard-won independence? And what moves foreign powers
to respond positively at the grave risk of getting themselves
engulfed in armed conflict away from their boundaries? And

if Africans reject dependency on foreign powers, how else
do they tackle the formidable problems that compel them
to resort to foreign powers?

Of course, I am not so presumptuous as to claim that
I have answers to these questions, but I would like to go
a little deeper into an angle which I believe is quite per-
tinent. I begin my analysis with the premise that issues of
peace and security are domestically rooted, but that the
domestic scene cannot be seen in isolation from regional and
international dynamics. A cursory look at the African scene
will reveal that complex trends have generated diversities
and disparities that provide fertile soil for confrontation
and conflict. Africa has experienced a process of fusion
and fission that many consider to be part of the colonial
designs of unite and divide and rule, but which the colonizers
themselves defend as recognition of existing realities and
protection of the weaker partners in the newly established
system of nation state. Boundaries between and within these
entities were artificially conceived and effected to sever
the ties of kith and kin. New identities were fostered that
maintained and even reinforced alienation and disintegration.
As a result of racial, cultural and religious manipulations,
a mutually hostile view was fanned and developed into a
sophisticated political stand. During the struggle for
independence, these differences were secondary and were over-
shadowed by the common cause, but the removal of the common
enemy soon elevated them to the front-line of divisive nation-
al issues.

Colonial experience and the advent of the modern nation
state also invaded the traditional African egalitarianism
with European concepts of political, social and economic
stratification. New educational, economic, social and cul-
tural opportunities were offered with striking consequences
that deepened the new concepts of stratification. These
diversities and disparities provided nursing grounds for
political factionalism and power struggle. As between
countries, the problems became manifest in the anomalies and
sensitivities of artificial boundary demarcations. The result
of these power struggles and border confrontations is actual
or potential hostility. To meet the challenge, the parties
concerned need weapons. Weapons need financial means and

expertise, often lacking or inadequate. So, the poor nations of Africa get into heavy debts and experts become essential parts of the weapons. Should the exigencies demand, troops are requested and flown in. Then African nations fall back into the intractable web of dependency.

The scene is further dramatized in political, economic and humanitarian terms by the great influx of refugees across the anomalous borders of neighboring countries, an influx which gives Africa by far the largest share of the refugee population of the world. Because of the humanitarian attitude implicit in African family and tribal values, and also because of the kinship ties which transcend the boundaries of the nation-states, these refugees are generally well received, treated with hospitality, and accepted into the social and economic fabric of the host countries. While this favours the African refugees over refugees in other parts of the world, it has also tended to conceal their tragedy and min- imized international response to their needs. Their inte- gration into the recipient countries, sharing the little there is, has added to the magnitude of the problems which these countries face. But in political terms, the influx of refugees across the borders often implies extending the domestic problems of one country into another, especially as some of the refugees continue to harbour political ambitions against their adversaries back home. The recipient countries may happen to share the political aspirations of the refugees or at least sympathize with them and lend a helping hand in promotion of their cause. The result is a vicious cycle of complications and aggravations.

The charter of the OAU and the principles governing the organization appear to be contradictory and offer everyone some ground for justifying their conduct. The principle of self-determination appears in conflict with the principle of maintaining inherited boundaries. Consequently, supporting the right of self-determination for a subject people implies interference in the affairs of others. And often, the prin- ciple of peaceful solutions to problems becomes only a slogan. Before the Sudan offered a workable alternative by reconciling these principles through a negotiated settlement and the grant- ing of autonomy to the South, the principle of maintaining the boundaries was considered so sacrosanct that even a genuine

grievance of a minority people was totally disregarded.
Internal suffering and subjugation were overshadowed by
the principles governing the boundaries and forbidding
interference in the domestic affairs of others.

While deploring foreign presence in Africa, the Organ-
ization of African Unity recognizes the right of any country
to invite any power, African or foreign, to intervene and
assist the inviting country with its security problems. This
is viewed as falling within the sovereign right of any state,
especially as foreign intervention is usually seen as a matter
of necessity or survival.

Of course, the subjectivities of the states concerned
are vital to their felt needs, but it would be wrong to
place the motivation of all the states on equal par. Some
are motivated by ideological missionary zeal; others have
territorial ambitions in disregard to the colonial boundaries
or the accepted principles of the OAU; yet others are moti-
vated by dreams of greater unity, which they believe would
be facilitated by overthrowing uncooperative regimes and
replacing them with more agreeable ones; and yet others are
primarily reacting to the threats and dangers they see in the
attitude of other states. Put in other words, some are more
agressive than others while others are defensive in their
reaction.

The motivations of the aiding foreign countries also
differ. Some are economically motivated to acquire or main-
tain access to Africa's raw materials, including the vast
resources still to be tapped and utilized; others are driven
by strategic imperatives and ideological rivalry; implicit
in the strategic or ideological race for military power is
the accumulation of weapons that become outmoded in rapid
succession and for which a purpose or a market must be found;
others combine all these motives with the strategic move to
fill a vacuum which they believe is created by the withdrawal
of colonial powers. This last point is of especial import-
ance and calls for deeper reflection.

When I was Ambassador to Washington, I attended a meeting
between the African Ambassadors and the then Secretary of State,
Henry Kissinger. The issue for discussion was U.S. African

policy. Dr. Kissinger found the meeting to be an opportunity
for voicing American unhappiness with the critical attitude of
the Africans against the United States and their contrasting
approving attitude towards the Soviet Union. According to
Kissinger, whatever the United States did was viewed as wrong
and whatever the Soviet Union did was accepted as right. In
his own words, "It is statistically impossible for the United
States to be always in the wrong." A similar complaint was
often voiced to me by Senators and Congressmen and I must say
that I was so sympathetic to the arguments that I have often
quoted them in my talks and discussions.

But I also offer my American friends an explanation which
at least, distributes the responsibility for this oversimplifi-
cation. There is no doubt that until recently the main pre-
occupation of Africa was liberation from colonialism and
although the United States has been a catalyst in the decolon-
ization process, the enemies of the liberation struggle were
allies whose interests were viewed as inherently bound together
with those of the United States. The U.S. found itself in some-
thing of a dilemma. On the one hand, the very foundation of
the United States stood out as a conspicuous symbol of the
Independence Movement, with all it implies of freedom, liberty
and equality. The motivations of the Africans' rise against
colonialism were not too different from those that drove the
Americans two hundred years ago to rise against Britain. This
fact presumably prompted the United States to initially champion
the world-wide move for independence, following the Second World
War. On the other hand, it was not easy for the Americans to
take sides with the adversaries of their allies and disregard
their mutual interests. The result of these paradoxes was an
ambivalent relationship with Black Africa. While not vocally
opposing, but indeed endorsing the African move for independence,
the United States did not show active support for the liberation
struggle, an attitude which the Africans identified with that of
the imperial powers.

In sharp contrast to the United States and her European
allies, the Soviet Union and other countries of the Communist
bloc took the obvious alternative, unequivocally identified
themselves with the colonized peoples of Africa, and worked
actively to support their struggle for independence.

This complicated the picture of African-American rela-
tions and made the struggling Africans appear communist-
inspired opponents of the United States. But as Africa began
to score victories and liberate itself, the political strategy
of the United States in the fifties and the sixties was to
strengthen those African regimes which they felt would assist
in their containment of communism. Cold war political objectives
and access to military facilities weighed heavily in the selec-
tion of recipient countries. But the more the United States
worked to strengthen regimes against communism with little or
no regard to the interests of the masses, the more these
regimes grew unpopular, the more the United States became
resented, and the more the vicious circle perpetuated itself.

In the face of these deeply rooted biases, many African
countries initially tended to be aligned towards the socialist
bloc even as they pronounced themselves dedicated to the prin-
ciples of non-alignment. This is the attitude Henry Kissinger
and congressional representatives complained about.

The picture has gradually begun to change. An increasing
number of African countries have come to realize that the weapons
needed for the war of liberation are not the same as the weapons
needed for peace-time reconstruction and nation-building. These
countries are unveiling the elements of foreign interference,
dependency, and even domination in the attitude of those powers
who initially appeared to have an altruistic desire to aid the
African liberation struggle. Some countries have gone as far
as realizing that these exposed self-seeking motives are perhaps
more dangerous in the long run than the over-stated interests
of the United States and the Western world against Communist
expansionism.

A sense of history and an explanation of past attitudes
remains necessary to facilitate a better understanding and
appreciation of one another and of the mutual interests at
stake in the face of a more subtle but perhaps more dangerous
threat from the opposing bloc. It does not help to be resentful
of the critical attitude of Africa without asking how such an
extreme prejudice has evolved. To understand is to appreciate
and hopefully to remedy the causes of the mutual prejudices.

IV. Sudan's Experience

Now, I would like to say a word about the experience of
the Sudan with respect to the issues I have raised.

Because of the domestic foundations of security problems
in Africa, it is often said with justification that the best
way for any government to ensure internal security is to put
its house in order, to serve the interests of its people to a
pacifying level of satisfaction, and to sustain a degree of
national consensus behind government policies, programmes and
actions. Sudan offers a good example of both the validity of
this argument and the limitations of domestic efforts in the
face of problems imposed from outside the country and the con-
tinent.

Sudan is typical of the problems of diversity and disparity
which characterize many countries of Africa. The complex
Afro-Arab realities of the country, which are true even of the
North alone, were molded and manipulated to the point where the
country was reduced to the simplistic labels of Arab North and
Negroid South. Here I must pause to tell a favorite story of
mine which illustrates this point. A Southern Sudanese came
to study in the United States. For a while, he lived somewhere
in the East Coast. But he had a burning desire to get into
New York and particularly to Harlem to see the American Blacks,
then called Negroes, about whom he had heard a great deal.
The family took him to New York and as they drove around the
streets of Harlem, he wondered where the Negroes were. His
hosts drew his attention to the many people all over the area.
"These!" remarked the Southerner. "But they are Arabs." And
indeed the American Black looks very similar to the Northern
Sudanese.

When the Sudan became independent, the South and North
were almost alien parts of one country, which only agreed on
getting rid of colonialism, but otherwise faced the dawn of
independence with a political crisis that erupted into civil
war. The example of the Sudan is striking not so much because
of the many problems it has in common with Africa, as it is
because of the remarkable model it offered Africa for the
solution of similar problems and the unfortunate way these
positive domestic achievements are being threatened by adverse
external involvement. After seventeen years of an acute civil
war that had devastated the country, crippled the economy, and

brought the constitutional developments to a standstill,
the government, under the leadership of President Nimeiry,
was able to achieve peace through negotiations and dialogue,
granting the South regional autonomy within the united Sudan.
With this remarkable achievement, many other positive develop-
ments came in rapid succession. Sudanese were at long last able
to agree on a permanent constitution. An ambitious programme
of social and economic development, aimed at bridging pre-
existing gaps between South and North and between rural centres
and urban centres, soon captured the imagination of the entire
country and became a constructive replacement to the psychology
of conflict. Development became an ideology or a strategy for
reinforcing and consolidating the achieved peace and unity.
Sudan's foreign policy and diplomacy were directed towards
serving domestic purposes: soliciting foreign assistance in the
monumental task of repatriating, resettling and rehabilitating
the million returnees and displaced people in the South, and
promoting international cooperation for the development of
Sudan's vast resources in the mutual interest of all. Tri-
lateral cooperation with Western technology and Arab financial
contributions was envisaged to turn the Sudan into the bread
basket of the Middle East.

In due course, the spirit of national reconciliation
was extended to welcome back and integrate into the institutions
of government those elements of the opposition abroad who had
only a year before staged a bloody and costly invasion of
Khartoum. Prisons were emptied of all political prisoners.
Peace, unity, reconciliation, and development became the catch
words. With the success of the Southern experience, Sudan
extended the principle of regional autonomy to all parts of
the country, thereby taking power to the people and involving
them in their own government and development.

Over the years, Sudan won regional and international
recognition as a country which had truly put its house in order.
Bilateral agreements were concluded and joint committees
established to ensure peaceful co-existence and cooperation
with the neighbors. Morally strengthened by its domestic
achievement, Sudan became a strong advocate of peaceful ways
of resolving disputes, taking or supporting regional or inter-
national initiatives towards that end, presenting its own
experience as a model which might be relevant to the solution

of similar problems in the region, and on the whole, hoping
that Sudan's domestic achievements might have positive ripples
across its extensive borders into the neighboring countries.

Unfortunately, that did not prove to be the case. As
tension and conflict pervaded the surrounding areas, as
refugees poured into the Sudan in unprecedented numbers, as
the borders became trouble spots, and as regional and inter-
national politics began to polarize countries, Sudan has
increasingly become a target to adversaries operating within
and abroad. The very size and composition of the country, the
dualism of its ethnic and cultural identity, the multiplicity
and diversity of its neighbors, and its overall geo-political
position reflect potentials for both exciting opportunities and
grave difficulties. I am reminded of a conversation I recently
had with a colleague from an island country. After outlining
the problems his country faces, he concluded with a positive
note: "At least we do not have the problem of neighbors."
One only has to glance at the trouble areas surrounding the
Sudan to realize the magnitude of the problems facing the
country. But the danger is more than potential for, at least
on two occasions, the Sudan suffered severely from coup attempts
that were inspired and supported by foreign powers. These past
experiences, and the looming threats which have recently been
the subject of wide international coverage, show the extent to
which it is not enough to put one's house in order to ensure
domestic security. The problem of security in Africa is local,
regional and global and should be approached as such.

The problems of the Sudan have been aggravated by the world
economic crisis, especially the balance of payment problems
resulting from the oil-bills and other imports from industrial
countries dictated by the immense development activity going on
in the country. The very achievements of the government:
autonomy in the South, ambitious development programmes, re-
structuring the country's political system, broadening national
reconciliation, and the more recent extension of autonomy to
the other parts of the country, all imply tremendous expenditure.
Even being both Arab and African, discharging the obligations of
that dual identity and the responsibilities of the international
community, is a costly exercise.

Some people have chosen recently to focus on the poverty

of the Sudan, wondering whether the slogans of the seventies
that promised to turn the country into the bread-basket of the
Middle East have vanished. The answer may not be simple.
But other questions can be posed: Do not the 200 million
acres of arable land and the vast animal wealth of some 60
million head on which the projections were based still exist
in the Sudan!? And what of the additional resources that are
increasingly beginning to surface, the oil reserves, the min-
eral wealth, and the untapped potentials of that vast land
in the heart of Africa!? Short term needs resulting from the
crisis situation and the impatience of financial institutions
should not overshadow long term potentialities; otherwise,
efforts to realize them might be undermined.

V.   New African Trends

     Despite some of the obstacles and external threats which
have confronted and continue to face the Sudan, the experience
of ending the dispute in the South has set a positive tone
towards mediation, arbitration, and conciliation which the
Organization of African Unity has recently moved to reinforce
and strengthen. Africans are increasingly realizing that
intra-African conflicts should be peacefully resolved through
the Organization or at least with efforts at mediation by
individual African leaders or groups of leaders. Committees
were set up to work at resolving conflicts between a number
of African countries and in some cases leaders took their
own independent initiatives while keeping the organization
informed, if not directly involved. Of course, the results
have not always been as gratifying as the efforts, but this
trend reflects the clear desire of Africa to minimize resort
to force. As a consequence of this new trend, the Organization
has recently been considering ways and means for revitalizing
the Commission of Mediation, Conciliation and Arbitration
provided for in the OAU Charter, but which has not been active
in the past.

     The emphasis on peaceful solutions to problems in today's
Africa also poses issues of a cross-cultural conflict between
the Western conceptions of power and diplomacy, which Africa
has adopted and assimilated, and those of traditional Africa.
It was Gunnar Jarring in a lecture delivered in Khartoum who
told an animal story, the specific details of which I now

forget, but the gist of which was to illustrate the prin-
ciples of diplomacy. As the strongest animal posed the
question of how they should share the prey before them,
one rushed into a recklessly greedy answer and was immediately
eliminated. The question was posed to the next. His answer
was generous and selfless. "From where did you acquire this
wisdom?" asked the master beast. The answer was: "I saw what
you did to the other!" Ambassador Jarring called that primitive
diplomacy.

Putting aside the precise meaning attached to the word
"primitive," I responded by saying that it sounded to me more
like what we faced in our modern world, orientated as we are
to concepts of power that are based on police force and mili-
tary might. This is the essence of the adversary and coercive
character of Western jurisprudence, which contrasts quite
sharply with the emphasis African concepts of law, and I
might add diplomacy, place on persuasion and the spirit of
mediation, conciliation and arbitration, far from any intimi-
dation or threat, for that would negate the value and meaning
of mediation and conciliation. It is therefore not by chance
that the founders of the Organization of African Unity estab-
lished a special commission to discharge these precise functions.
As the need has intensified, so has the call for reviewing,
adapting and activating this Commission to guarantee its
relevancy and effectiveness. Nor need the functions of mediation
and conciliation be viewed only in the context of inter-state
relations, as media for harmonization: they can be exercised
for the solution of domestic conflicts. Interference is the
unwelcome involvement of outsiders; mediation, conciliation
and arbitration signify positive cooperation.

VI. Conclusion

I should perhaps conclude with a few observations emanating
from what I have said in the preceding remarks. First, I would
like to underline the interrelationship of all levels of the
African security scene: the local, the national, the regional
and the international levels are all involved.

This being the case, while there is a great deal of truth
in the argument that putting one's house in order is the best
way of guaranteeing one's security, the involvement of others

whether within Africa or from outside the continent, should
not be taken lightly.

In considering the domestic, continental or international
dimensions of the problem, efforts at defusing crises or con-
flicts through peaceful methods of dispute settlement should
be the first priority and one that must be pursued with vigor
and intensity.

It is particularly important that the outside world,
and especially the powerful nations, view the cause of peace
in global and comprehensive terms. In most cases, people
hear of conflicts around the world as exciting news items,
forgetting that they mean death and disaster to those involved.
I recall in the sixties a prominent world religious leader
declaring, "Let there be no more wars." And Vietnam was flaming
with war. To some people, the world is at peace; to others,
it is at war. It is indeed telling that some of the tribes of
the Southern Sudan refer to the civil war days as the time when
the world was destroyed.

The global view of peace means that big powers should not
contend with negotiating matters of direct relevancy to the
maintenance of peace between them while permitting and even
inciting their confrontation through others on foreign soil.
Peace everywhere should be the objective of negotiations any-
where.

One last but most important thought concerns the intellectual
and scholastic tools of facilitating the cause of peace and secur-
ity in Africa. As Africans have become active participants on
the global scene, scholars can no longer afford to look on the
African scene as an isolated frontier for field research, bear-
ing little or no relevancy to the issues of global dimensions.
Even what may seem culturally remote and exotic might explain
the behavior patterns of African leaders or representatives who
feel part of the modern world with an input that should not be
ignored. Such slogans as Negritude, African Socialism, Authen-
ticity or Humanism, espoused by African leaders, are philosoph-
ical formulations seeking to give a sense of cultural identity
and substance to the aspirations of today's Africa. It is for
the intellectual and the scholar to give depth and flesh to such
skeleton conceptualizations in order to facilitate the realization

of some of the values subsumed under the slogans.

One of the most challenging intellectual and diplomatic tasks in Africa is how to reconcile principles that now appear to be in conflict. In particular, the principle of maintaining the inherited boundaries needs to be reconciled with the right of self-determination by balancing national unity with the aspirations of minority groups for recognition and effective participation in their own government. While it is not easy to achieve a satisfactory balance, I know it can be done because it has been done; all the same grafting a model in a different context is no mean task but a challenging one.

Finally, and having taken as long as I have, I would like to end with a story I heard only recently about a Cabinet Minister. He was said to be so busy that he not only had his speeches prepared for him, but hardly ever had time to go over them before delivery. One time, he told his speech writer that the speeches were far too long. He had to cut them down to a fraction of the size. When the next occasion came, the Minister found himself reading a speech that seemed even longer than the former speeches. When it was over, he came to his speech writer and said, fuming with anger, "Did I not tell you to drastically cut down the length of the speeches!?" "That is exactly what I did," said the speech writer, "but then you read the three copies I gave you."

I hope I have not over-stated my points, whether by the length or by repetition.

HANS WOLFF MEMORIAL LECTURES
1968 - Present

1968-69 David Dalby, University of London. United Kingdom.
         Linguistics. "Black through White: Patterns of
         Communication." (24 March 1969)
1969-70 Emile Snyder, University of Wisconsin. United States.
         African Literature. "Tradition and Modernism in
         African Literature." (4 March 1970)
1971-72 Wilfred H. Whiteley. University of London. United
         Kingdom. Linguistics and Anthropology. "To Plan
         is to Choose: The Rationale and Consequences of
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1972-73 Anthony H.M. Kirk-Greene, St. Antony's College,
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1973-74 A.E. Meeussen. University of Leiden and Royal Museum
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1974-75 Sembene, Ousmane. Senegal. Novelist and film-maker.
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1975-76 A. Teixeira DaMota. Centro de Estudos de Cartografia
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1976-77 Nathan M. Shamuyarira, University of Dar es Salaam.
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1977-78 Batourou Sekou Kouyate, National Ensemble of Republic
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1978-79 L. Adele Jinadu, University of Lagos. Nigeria. Political
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1979-80 Leo Kuper, University of California-Los Angeles. South
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1980-81 Ruth Finnegan. Open University, Milton Keynes. United

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1981-82   Francis M. Deng, Ambassador from Sudan to Canada.
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