

disappear. They will disappear, Afrikaners argue, when the African states collapse from economic failure and maladministration (a historical necessity on *Verkramppte* ("hardliner") assumptions about inherent Kaffir inferiority). Alternatively, the inevitable war between Communism and the West (which Afrikaners continue to see in the light of the 1940-1944 war at sea) makes them a necessary ally of the West. The second component is more constructive - to demonstrate that the policy of separate development (the "Bantustans") is a better answer to racial conflict than one-man-one-vote once.

Mr. Vorster's policy of *détente* failed to "normalize" relations with the black states or split their united opposition to South Africa, though it did open the way to co-operation with Kaunda over Rhodesia in 1975. It led back to the need to reassure black opinion about *apartheid*. In fact, all that has been done is to accelerate the "Bantustan" program and, in a minor way, alleviate "petty *apartheid*"; the structure of social segregation remains, and home security has been tightened up. The Group Areas Act is being implemented as if there were no need to conciliate either the Indian or the coloured populations.

Immediate hopes

It looks, in fact, as if South Africa's immediate hopes are concentrated on the impact of granting independence to the Transkei in October 1976, and on the emergence of some agreement about South West Africa (Namibia) from the long-drawn-out constitutional conference in Windhoek. So far as the broad philosophy of the Bantustans is concerned, this has now been repudiated by Chief Buthelezi, who has virtually adopted the program of direct African participation in Parliament and the dismantling of discriminatory laws and the rest of *apartheid*. The long dialogue with the Bantustan leaders other than Chief Matanzima has thus petered out. But the Transkei will challenge all Africa's opposition to the fragmentation of South Africa. In any comparison with Lesotho or even Botswana, Chief Matanzima has a powerful case. If it can be demonstrated in October that his government, and not Pretoria, rules in Umtata; if the Transkei shows it has direct links by air and sea with the outside world; if its nationality code breaches that of South Africa, and so on, the Transkei's hammering at the doors of the United Nations will divert attention from South Africa's failures elsewhere. At present, Transkei represen-

tatives are seeking friends, sponsors and financiers in the West; after October, they may also turn Eastward.

The outlook in Namibia is obscure. Mr. Vorster has said South Africa wishes to get out. The plan to turn it into eight Bantustans and one rich and controlling white state is crumbling. Opposition to the participation of SWAPO (the South West Africa People's Organization) has been ended, but SWAPO guerrillas based in Angola remain active and the Republic is more tied down in border security.

Disengagement

It has been South Africa's hope to disengage from Rhodesia. South Africa urged Smith to accept the successive British proposals. The ensuing quarrels culminated in the withdrawal of the South African police and the combined pressure with Kaunda that led to the release of Nkomo and Sithole, with other leaders, to make possible a more realistic negotiation of a settlement after the failure of the talks with Bishop Muzorewa. The whole course of events has confirmed that Smith's policy resembles South Africa's in that it is playing for time; but it is doing so against South African pressure to bring about a settlement in which a moderate black government (tinged perhaps with white) would take charge. Undoubtedly Pretoria put its hopes in Nkomo. Smith, in the ten weeks of talks up to March 1976, frustrated them. At the last moment he offered the excuse that he had had the assurance from Pretoria that any transition was to take not less than 15 years - on which condition alone he had agreed to talk. Since the minimum period that Nkomo could then hope to sell to his own supporters - themselves a minority of perhaps 30-35 per cent of black Rhodesians - was two years, the talks collapsed.

And since President Kaunda had persuaded Presidents Nyerere, Machel and Seretse Khama to give negotiations one more chance before resorting finally to military means in accordance with the Lusaka Manifesto, Smith's rejection was the signal for intensification of the guerrilla struggle with official backing from the black states. Smith subsequently brought four government-paid chiefs and four nominated Africans from Parliament into his government. This is said to have been well received in some tribal areas, but it convinces no one else.

The all-out official backing of the black governments has added a new twist to the war of attrition that has been going on since Harold Wilson said that sanctions would destroy the Smith regime in "weeks

*South Africa
pinned hope
on Nkomo*