

**THE ROLE PLAYED BY INTERNATIONAL PRINT  
MEDIA IN SHAPING ANGLO-ZIMBABWE  
RELATIONS (1999 – 2005)**

**BY**

**LEONARD MAKOMBE**

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## **DEDICATION**

This dissertation is dedicated to my family, particularly my parents and all those who encouraged me to undertake this study

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## **ABSTRACT**

This dissertation focuses on the role that international print media played in shaping Anglo-Zimbabwe relations between 1999 and 2005. International print media were accused of being imperialistic and giving a negative image about African countries in general and Zimbabwe in particular. It has been established that the relations between Britain and Zimbabwe deteriorated mainly over policy issues, especially the funding of the land reform programme in Zimbabwe. The international print media have focused on some of the negative developments in the country, for example, violent land seizures, violence during elections, corruption and allegations of human rights abuses in Zimbabwe and this contributed to the overall foreign policy decisions taken on Zimbabwe, by Britain and the European Union. However, the international media's focus on Zimbabwe was not anything new as the media is attracted to conflicts worldwide. Media focus on violence and human rights abuses is in line with the media's watchdog role. It has also been established that despite the intensive coverage from the print media in Australia, New Zealand, Norway and Africa, it cannot be concluded that this had a very direct influence on Britain's foreign policy on Zimbabwe. This dissertation has also established that despite claiming to be a victim of international print media, Zimbabwe has played into the hands of the media as it has made policy blunders, for example deporting journalists, violent land seizures, mass destruction of illegal settlements without adequate notice and alternative accommodation which attracted foreign media attention.

## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS**

BBC	British Broadcasting Corporation
CNN	Cable News Network
EU	European Union
SADC	Southern Africa Development Committee
UK	United Kingdom
UN (O)	United Nations (Organisation)
US	United States
USA	United States of America

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## INTRODUCTION

This dissertation seeks to establish the role that the international print media has played in shaping Anglo-Zimbabwe relations from 1999 to 2005. Media play an important part in shaping and influencing the foreign policy of most if not all countries across the world. Cohen (1963) captures the role that the media have in shaping the foreign policy of any country when he argued that many people's knowledge of what is happening globally is a result of what is contained in the mainstream media. Cohen (1963) concluded that the reporter and the editor have replaced the cartographer as they now make the map of the world.

Media influence in the foreign policy making process is located what is happening in the international system. As a way of setting a firm foundation, this dissertation starts by looking at the main theories of international relations highlighting the evolution that international relations theory has gone through during the twentieth century. This evolution has been dominated by three debates. International relations theory became a specialized area of study in the 1920s and it was then dominated by idealism. idealism made some normative assumptions, for example, that war can be eliminated through the formation of international bodies such as the League of Nations. American president Woodrow Wilson was one of the idealists and was instrumental in the formation of the League of Nations with the aim of eliminating war as one of its objectives. However the post-World War One peace lasted a mere nineteen years as the Second World War erupted in 1939.

The failure to eliminate war was a very serious challenge to idealism and alternative theories, for example realism, became more prominent as it challenged some of the normative assumptions of idealism. One of realism's strength was that it did not wish to change human nature as had been argued by idealists. Instead, realism interpreted interstate relations in the international system basing everything in power. Realists' main premise was that states struggle for power and domination in the international system. This simple examination of the international system was able to explain the post-Second World War international relations. This period, known as the Cold War was, dominated by the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics rivalry. The idealist versus realist debate was the first debate of

international relations. However, despite managing to explain the Cold War relations, there were other theories which became dominant in international relations.

After the idealism versus realism debate, there emerged the behaviourism versus positivism debate which is also referred to as the second debate in international relations. However, this debate also failed to eliminate war, oppression and hunger which international theorist had aimed to either eliminate or minimize. This failure by the second debate gave rise to post-positivism dominated by post-modernism and constructivism. These are regarded as liberating theories as they assume to give a voice to previously marginalized individuals. However, these theories have their own problems as they cannot be applied to international relations. For example, post-modernism assumes that there are many meanings to what happens in international relations and each event has to be reduced to a text. This presents some problems and it has been argued that post-modernists are talking to themselves as the theory cannot be used to critically examine international relations and assist in the elimination of war, poverty and conflict.

Chapter two of this dissertation examines the relations between Zimbabwe and Britain from 1980 to 2005. Despite seemingly cordial relations between the two countries from 1980 up to around 1997, it can be shown that there has always been a suspicion. As Ibbo Mandaza argues, there were fears that Zimbabwe may discard the pronouncements of the Lancaster House Agreement. The Lancaster House Agreement was reached in 1979 bringing an end to a liberation war and subsequently paving way for Zimbabwe's independence in 1980. Relations between Zimbabwe and Britain were strained by 1997 when the New Labour party took over power in Britain from the Conservatives. The conservatives had cordial relations with Zimbabwe and even assisted in land redistribution by availing "approximately £33 million (US\$44 million) during the 1980's for market land acquisition as well as for various resettlement inputs" (Moyo, 2005:7). The Labour party stated that it would not give funding for Zimbabwe's land reform programme. The President of Zimbabwe, Robert Mugabe, also showed the deteriorating diplomatic relations when he stated that his country would go ahead with the land reform programme with Britain compensating the affected farmers. By 2000, relations were evidently strained as the Britain cut aid by a third stopped military exports and withdrew its military instructors. Both Britain



and Zimbabwe started showing the growing bad relations at some of the international summits including UN sessions and the World Summit on Sustainable Development held in South Africa in 2002.

The role played by media in foreign policy is examined in Chapter 3. It is discussed that the media has become a powerful instrument in the foreign policy making process. Media reports and analyses influence policy makers during the foreign policy making process. Media reports on potential and actual human disasters prompt governments to take action even it is beyond the country's borders. One of the foreign policy scholars, Cohen (1963), has argued that the media has replaced the cartographer in providing the map of the world illustrating how powerful the media is. This has significantly changed the way that policy makers make decisions in relations to foreign policy.

Chapter 4 discusses at how the media in Britain, New Zealand and Australia, Norway and Africa have reported on the relations between Zimbabwe and Britain. British media has been dominant in reporting Anglo-Zimbabwe relations. British media has focused on a number of issues including the land reform where it portrayed the conflicts as black versus white with the whites being the victims. This strand of reporting was also picked up by the Norwegian and Oceania media which also took the conflict as bordering on ethnic cleansing. portraying the conflict as black versus white greatly shaped the way that the policy makers in those countries viewed Zimbabwe and how they decided on policies on Zimbabwe. However, in Africa, the media was divided into two with one section trying to defend the Government of Zimbabwe in all its policies and blamed Britain for causing problems while on the other hand there were media which attacked the policies adopted by Zimbabwe and exonerated Britain. The ways the media reported on Anglo-Zimbabwe relations have had different effects on the relations of the two countries.

## **Chapter 1**

### **Theoretical Framework and Literature Review**

#### **1.1 Introduction**

This chapter examines the theories of international relations which have a relevance to the study of the Anglo-Zimbabwe relations. International relations theory has gone through three distinct phases in the twentieth century. Scholars have termed the three phases as Three Great debates of international relations theory. These three great debates will be looked at in this chapter and five theories, covering the three great debates will also be looked at. The chapter concludes with a review of some of the works which have been written on the Britain Zimbabwe relations.

International relations became a specialised field of study in the early twentieth century and it was then dominated by idealists who laid the foundation for the study of the field. Idealism was characterised by what the theorists wished for (normative approach). Some of the leaders, like United States of America president, Woodrow Wilson, were heavily influenced by idealism to the extent that they believed that war among nations would be eradicated by the introduction of international bodies such as the League of Nations after the end of the First World War. However idealism completely failed to explain the causes of war and peace, as there was another great war twenty years after the end of the First World War. A failure to stop another great war led to the emergence of a new school of thought, influenced by realism. Realism was largely a response to the weaknesses of idealism and it sought to explain the causes of war and how peace would be achieved. Classical realist international relations theorists included Hans Morgenthau, Edward Hallet Carr (1939) and Kenneth Waltz (1979). Carr's (1939) *Twenty Years of Crisis* is a classic as it lays down the ground for the further development of realism. There is further collaboration of the realist theorist in other classics, such as Hans Morgenthau's (1973) *Politics Among Nations* and Kenneth Waltz's (1979) *The Power of Power Politics*.

Realism has been a major success in explaining world events after the end of the Second World War. This has largely been so because the theory itself is based on an

analysis of power politics between states. The post-Second World War era has been characterised by the East-West conflict under the Cold War. However, the end of the Cold War in the late 1980s and early 1990s literally rendered the realist theory irrelevant as it failed to explain some of the world events which followed the end of the Cold War. Realist theory failed to predict the end of the Cold War and as such could not explain global events in the post-Cold War era. Other theories also emerged even during the time when realism was at its peak, there were theories, such as interdependency and dependency which contested some of the assumptions of realism. Interdependency was first propounded by two scholars, namely Joseph Nye and Robert Keohane (1977). These theorists assumed that global politics was changed as more countries began to trade and integrate. Interdependency assumed that there were other issues, which needed attention on the global scene, apart from power and security. As such, interdependency theorists saw further integration of states as giving impetus to peace. Interdependency theorists argued that there were some issues such as migration and environment, which could not be explained in realist terms.

Western scholars, particularly British and American, were the ones who propounded the international relations theories discussed above. A new school of thought emerged in the 1950s from a group of Latin American scholars who provided a radical view to the nature of interstate relations. The radical school, referred to as dependency theory was first propounded by Raul Prebisch (1950) and was also popularised by Andre Gundar Frank (1966). Prebisch's (1950) initial explanation for the phenomenon was very straightforward: poor countries exported primary commodities to the rich countries that then manufactured products out of those commodities and sold them back to the poorer countries at a price much higher than that offered for the raw materials. Prebisch's theory was largely a liberal reformist which was developed further by Frank. Frank was a Marxist theorist and brought a Marxist slant to dependency theory as his analysis and explanation of the dependency nature took a long historical look at the lopsided relations between developed and less developed countries. In his analysis of international relations, Frank came up with the theory of underdevelopment, which he argues is a result of the continued exploitation of resources, which are exported at a very low price but charged exorbitantly when imported as finished products. Dependency theory gave a clear explanation as to the relations between the West and developing countries but was found wanting when

tasked to explain the interstate relations in both developed and developing countries. This theory predictably faced a number of challenges in the 1990s when the Cold War came to an end. This was largely so because the Marxist theory failed to explain the post-Cold War era when capitalism prevailed over socialism and communism.

International relations theory radically changed in the 1990s as the dominant schools of thought namely, interdependency and realism failed to explain international events gave rise to completely new theories such as constructivism and postmodernism. Postmodernism and constructivism constitute the third great debate and they are grouped under post-positivism. As Holsti (2001) argues, post-positivist theories are largely a response to the failures of the theories under the first two great debates to eradicate war, hunger, poverty and oppression from humankind. These theories would try and find a middle ground from all the theories and this has been their source of strength. However, the theoretical underpinnings of the third great debate, postmodernism for example, have been dismissed as attacking all the other theories without giving a clear explanation of global events.

## **1.2 The Origins of International Relations Theory (Realism versus Idealism)**

Realist Theory to a large extent dominated international relations between the end of Second World War and the late 1980s. Realism is premised on the analysis of power relations between states and this has been its major strength as it managed to explain power relations between the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics at the end of the Second World War. Realism was relevant to the analysis of power relations during the Cold War. The central premise of realist theory is that relations between states is dominated by "a struggle for power" (Morgenthau, 1971:27) and the power factor is dominant and is inescapable in the history of relations between states. Realist theory further states that the struggle for power is always the aim of states in any international system. This according to Olatunde, Orwa and Utete (1985:8) all governments in the international system are preoccupied with the struggle for power and would adjust their action to these power requirements.

Apart from its concentration on the struggle for power on the international system, realism is also concerned with trying to answer questions as to the causes of war and conditions for peace. As such realism regard the structure of the international system

as a necessary and almost always sufficient for many aspects of international relations. Realism assumes that there is structural anarchy, that is an absence of central authority to settle disputes and this is taken as an essential feature of the contemporary international system. This means that there is always a struggle for power among states and this would lead to a security dilemma. Each country is likely to increase its military capability as a natural progression of the struggle for power in the international system. An increase in the military capability of one country would mean that the next state would also follow suit and increase its military capability. Realists suggest that states, the vital units in the international system are then forced to concentrate on how to deal with the struggle for power as a result of the security dilemma. Scholars portrayed a gloomy state of affairs within the international system arguing that:

Efforts to deal this central element of the international system constitute the driving force behind the relations of units within this system. Those that fail would not survive. (Holsti, 2001:4)

The assertion by Kenneth J. Holsti suggests that the struggle for power is not only a struggle for dominance but it is also a struggle for survival. Thus each country, which is the basic unit of analysis according to the realist theory, has to struggle for its own survival and at the same time make sure that its interests are captured.

Realists also focus on geographically based groups as central actors in the international system. This is to suggest that state interaction on the international scene is the central theme of international relations. This assumption does not account for the significance of non-state actors such as terrorist groups for example Al-Qaeda, multinational corporations, international non-governmental organisations, pressure groups and individuals whose actions have an impact on global politics. A critique of this assumption would show that rapid globalisation eradicates some of the boundaries and this means that the argument that geographically based groups are the focal point in international relations falls away. The terrorist bombings of 11 September, 2001 have changed the course of international relations and this shows the significance of non-state actors in international relations. Zimbabwe's relations with Britain has not been conducted and influenced at the level of the state alone as there are other avenues, such as interest groups for example the Commercial Farmers Union

and international non-governmental organisations such as the International Bar Association which have also helped in shaping the relations.

Realism also assumes that states are unitary actors and thus state actions are primarily a response to external rather than domestic political forces. This assumption is supported by Steven Krasner who expands it to taking states as autonomous actors pursuing goals associated with power and the general interest of society. However, this assumption only holds water to a limited extent as there are state actions which are a result of internal processes. The American attack on Iraq in 2003 was not entirely a result of external forces as the domestic realities such as oil deficiency and a need to boost the support for George Bush Jr, have been proffered as some of the reasons why America went to war, thus exposing the weaknesses of the state-centric approach to international relations that is adopted by realist theorists. This assumption fails to identify other actors in the international system apart from states. Theories in the third great debate acknowledge the part played by non-state actors such as pressure groups, nationalist organisations such as the Palestine Liberation Organisation and international financial institutions such as the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank. Acknowledging the significance of these non-state actors has to a large extent managed to overcome the handicap that come with a concentration on the actions of the state.

Despite the weaknesses cited, realism has been able to explain the fall of the twenty years peace between 1919 and 1939. This is effectively covered in E.H. Carr's *The Twenty Years Crisis*. However, realism fails to explain some aspects of international relations especially when it comes to interstate relations outside the context of power. Realism may explain the relations between Zimbabwe and Britain in the context of power politics, but an analysis of this relationship would show that power politics only explains part of the relationship. Zimbabwe's relations with Britain can be seen to be political, economic and social and this shows that there is a deficit on the part of realism to fully explain the dynamics of the relationship.

### **1.3 Interdependency theory**

The failure by realism to explain interactions between states outside the struggle for power has given rise to alternative theories of international relations. One theory

which directly challenges realism is interdependency theory. Interdependency challenges the assumption that states always struggle for power and dominance. Kenneth Holsti (2001:23) argues that:

The most powerful states fail to cope or do so unilaterally or at acceptable levels of cost and risk with issues ranging from terrorism, trade, from migration to environment threats and from Aids to new strains of tuberculosis.

Health and security issues in the international system have forced countries to co-operate with each other on the globe as isolation would come at a cost which may threaten the survival of the state. This discounts the realist assumption that states are always struggling for power and domination.

Interdependency was largely a response to realist theory's claims that states are unitary actors and dominant in world politics. Inter theory also contests the claim that force is a usable and effective instrument in the relations between states. According to Robert Keohane and Joseph Nye (1977) interdependency assumes multiple channels of contact between societies, an absence of a hierarchy among issues and a minor role of the use of force. This is a direct contest on the basic assumption of the realist theory which acknowledges a hierarchy of issues whose order of priority is security, power and dominance and the use of force as a means to an end.

Keohane and Nye (1977:4) argue that their work was to provide a "means of distilling and joining the positions in both the modernist and traditionalist perspective by developing a theoretical framework for the political analysis of interdependence". Interdependency theory also assumes that there are multiple channels connecting societies, formal and informal links between government, elites, and transnational organisations. Interdependency recognises the importance of non-states actors in international relations. This theory assumes that non-state actors or interest groups have a bearing on events on the international scene. As Keohane and Nye (24) argue:

These actors are important not only because of their activities in pursuit of their own interests but also because they act as transmission belts, making government policies in various countries more sensitive to one another.

Multinational corporations such as Anglo-America, international financial institutions such as World Bank and trade unions have made decisions that transcend national

boundaries. The influence of the World Bank on individual countries illustrates the influence of non-state actors on how other countries and non-state actors would view a given country. A rating by the international financial institution such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund influences the way other global lenders and states view a country. Interdependency theorists contend that the domestic politics of different countries impinge on one another more and more. It can also be argued that the cumulative effects of decisions by less powerful actors, both state and non-state, may also have profound international effects. An example is how a decision by thousands of individuals, mutual funds, banks, pension funds and other financial institutions to sell securities on 19 October 1987 resulted in an unprecedented crash on the Wall Street. Within hours the consequences of the Wall Street crash were felt throughout the global financial system. Thus because of interdependence, there is now a contagion effect of what may be taking place in one country.

Interdependency attempts to give an explanation of what takes place in international relations. Its strength lies in its ability to take a multi-pronged approach, looking at all variables. As a response to assumption by realism, interdependency has largely been a success. However, there are some weak points in the theory itself. One of the major weaknesses of this theory is that it assumes that states would always see benefit in co-operation. An analysis of the international system shows that some of realism's assumptions, for example that states are inherently pursuing power, still dominate. The American war on Iraq in 2003 was largely a state-centric endeavour to promote interests of the USA, especially a need for a constant and reliable supply of oil.

Another weakness of the theory is that the assumption that smaller actors have a bearing on international relations falls away when applied to some war situations. An example is the failure of anti-war lobbyists to stop a United States attack on Iraq in March 2003, and a subsequent failure by the same lobbyists to influence policy and see a withdrawal of troops from Iraq. Interdependency has also been silent on the lopsided nature of international economic relations which feed into the international system. Interdependency assumes that states are 'equal' and they co-operate because each state cannot stand the challenges which come with globalisation, for example migration and fighting against diseases such as the bird flu. However, this assumption does not factor in the inherent inequalities among nations. The inequalities are a result



of historical exploitations as is argued by dependency theorists. Relations between Zimbabwe and Britain for example are not only shaped by the need to co-operate but also historical linkages where Zimbabwe provided raw materials for industries in Britain. Britain then processes the raw materials and export the finished products to Zimbabwe.

#### **1.4 Dependency theory**

Realism and interdependency theories have been advanced by Anglo-American scholars mostly. These two theories have to a very large extent explained the East-West relations that is the political, economic and social interactions between the countries in Europe, North America and parts of Asia. This has been done from the point of view of the Western scholars and they have to a large extent ignored the domination of the South by the West. Dependency theory is unique in that it was first propounded by a group of Latin American scholars who drew their ideological strength from liberalism and Marxist-Leninist theories. Dependency theory has elements of classical Marxist-Leninist writings on the nature and implication of monopoly capitalism and imperialism. Dependency theorists led by Prebisch and Frank reflect the more specific experience of new and less developed countries in an international system moulded by Western political and economic activities. In other words dependency theory, a product of political economy, shows the mechanism by which structural dominance of some groups is consolidated to the disadvantage of others.

Most of the dependency theorists are Latin Americans and the theory witnessed phenomenal growth in the 1950s. The popularity of theory was mainly because it could give explicit explanations as to what was happening in the international system. The decline of colonialism in Africa, from the late 1950s to the 1970s exposed the weaknesses of realism and the complex interdependency theories. Dependency theorists, with their political economy background sought to explain why Third World countries continued to be poor when other countries continued to prosper. Susanne Bodenheimer explains that dependency is a situation in which the economy of a certain group of countries is conditioned by the development and expansion of another economy to which their own economy is subjected. Bodenheimer (1971:27) argues that dependency is:

A historical condition which shapes a certain structure of the world economy such that it favours some countries to the detriment of others and limits the development possibility of subordinate economies.

Dependency theory explains the relations between Zimbabwe and Britain. The theory can, to a large extent, hold fort in explaining the relations between the two countries. As dependency theory assumes, the lopsided economic development between developed countries and developing countries evolves into a core and periphery relation. The core becomes the centre of technology, capital, manufacturing and technological expertise while the periphery exports raw materials to the core. What this means is that the periphery export primarily mineral and agricultural products in their raw form. These are then processed and then sold to Third World countries at prices by far higher than that of the original raw materials.

There have been problems as to the strength of the dependency theory after the end of the Cold War. As mentioned above, dependency theory drew its strength from orthodox Marxist-Leninist economic theory. The end of Cold War was a big challenge to Marxist theories. Marxist theories became problematic after the end of the Cold War as they could not explain how capitalism prevailed over socialism. However, the gap between rich and poor countries has become more acute with the end of Cold War. This has given dependency theory headway for further analysis of international affairs. Using dependency theory to explore Anglo-Zimbabwe relations would show all facets of lopsided economic, social and technological relations. Zimbabwe has been exporting agricultural and mineral produce to Britain. Britain would in turn export finished products to Zimbabwe. However, dependency theory fails to explain a changed pattern of trade by Zimbabwe especially after 2000. The 'Look East Policy' adopted by Zimbabwe is to some extent a process of de-linking with Britain and preference has now been given to trade with Asian countries.

### **1.5 Post-modernism**

A failure by the very first theories of international relations, that is realism and idealism, and the debated between traditionalism and behaviouralism to give a satisfactory explanation to what was happening in the international system gave rise to the third debate. This school of thought is characterised by post-positivism and the three major theories under the group are constructivism, postmodernism and

feminism. These three theories of international relations have been taken to be liberating, as they are said to be giving a voice to previously marginalised groups. This section looks at the assumptions and weaknesses of the postmodernist theory.

The intellectual foundations of postmodernism are largely in the humanities and they are a response to the limitations of realism and other theories. Although realism has been its prime target, all existing theories and methodologies "are in the cross hairs of postmodernism,"(Linklater; 1992:77). Additionally as Pauline Roseman (1992:54) notes:

Postmodernist critics soundly and swiftly dismiss international political economy, realism, regime theory, game theory, rational actors models, transnational approaches, world systems analysis and the liberal tradition in general.

Postmodernism drew its strength from pointing at the weaknesses of other theories and then improving on them. While postmodernism draws its strength from critiquing other theories, it can be seen that this contains the seeds for the theory's own weaknesses as it has no single firm theoretical underpinning. In its attack of the realist theory, postmodernism take issues such as evidence and truth as meaningless concepts. A dismissal of evidence and truth as meaningless gives problems to postmodern approach to international relations. Postmodern theorists argue that their task is to deconstruct texts and regard all issues in international relations to be texts to be de-constructed. Thus the relations between Zimbabwe and Britain can be taken as a text that needs to be deconstructed if one is to get the meaning. Postmodernists also argue that the other theories and approaches to international relations have failed to come up with viable solutions for mankind's most pressing problems including war, poverty and oppression. This theory seeks to give a voice to marginalized groups and in celebrating the diversity of voices, it refuses to offer an overarching theory such as that which constructivism, one of its contemporaries and rival in the post-positivism paradigm provides(Ashley, 1984:225 -226). However, a failure to be an overarching theory has been one of the major weaknesses of postmodernism as it has been criticised for its scattered nature. It has been highlighted that postmodernism lacks "congruity and therefore credibility"(Donnels, 1996:12).

Post-modernism's insistence on reducing everything to text has also been one of the theory's major weaknesses. Problem of application of post-modernism is also a major weakness of the theory for example questions have been asked about what a text has to do with, say the hungry people in Somalia or the landless peasants in Zimbabwe. As such, it has been said that post-modern theorists only speak to themselves as no one outside this theory would apply it to international relations and it would only remain an academic endeavour without being applied to real life issues.

### **1.6 The CNN effect, how media influence policy.**

A theory has been advanced to explain how international media, both print and electronic, influences the foreign policy of a given country. This theory, which has been improperly referred to as the Cable News Network Effect (CNN Effect), though relatively new, has been able to give an explanation as to what role print media play in influencing foreign policy. There are varying schools of thought with regard to the so-called CNN Effect. There are some scholars who argue that it is wrong to name such a theory after one media house, that is, the Cable News Network. It has been suggested that it would be proper to call it the Media Effect Theory. This chapter would also discuss how the changes in the operating environment, for example regional integration in Europe through the European Union, has affected the foreign policy making process in Britain. It is further discussed how the changes in the operating environment have also been influenced the international media where there is rampant sharing of news items between member countries.

### **1.7 Literature review**

There are a number of books and seminal papers which have been published showing the relations between Zimbabwe and Britain addressing the historical, economic and political relations since the 1890s. This section seeks to take a look at some of the books and papers which have been written on this subject matter. Ibbo Mandaza has given an explicit explanation as to the nature of the relationship between Britain in general and the international community. Mandaza's *Zimbabwe, the Political Economy of Transition: 1980 - 1986* provides a broad framework within which to understand post-independence relations between Zimbabwe and Britain. Mandaza (1986) points out that the government of Zimbabwe found itself increasingly having

to follow the broad guidelines of international finance capital. According to Mandaza (1986:61) Britain and United States have “tended to adopt pre-emptive and aggressive postures, all designed to ensure that the new state does not unlock itself from the grip that imperialism sought to reaffirm in the Lancaster House Agreement.”

In this regard, it can be argued that the assumptions of dependency theory were evident in the relations between Zimbabwe and Britain in the early 1980s. Mandaza goes on to argue that the British policy towards Zimbabwe after independency “reveals an acute suspicion that the country might degenerate into a kind of anarchy that the Lancaster House Agreement was designed to avoid,” (Horne, 2001:93). Mandaza’s (1986) analysis was made in 1986, six years after independence, and was proven to hold water with the passage of time. Anglo-Zimbabwe relations have to a large extent remained cordial with the upholding of the Lancaster House Agreement. However, Mandaza’s supposition that USA and Britain kept an eagle eye on Zimbabwe discounts the part played by Russia and lately China with regards to Zimbabwe’s foreign policy. Horne (2001) has shown the nature of the relationships between global capital and Zimbabwe with a particular focus on USA- Rhodesia. This gives an important insight as to how Zimbabwe relates to global capital after independence. Horne (2001) argues that the European minority in then Rhodesia were outnumbered 15 to 1<sup>1</sup> but could dominate the African majority.

The domination of the African majority was through what Gerald Horne (2001:93) called a “power and ideology”. Horne argues that soft power was instrumental on perpetuating domination. This laid the groundwork for the domination of the entire nation by European countries after independence. While Horne’s work is incisive in mapping the relationships between Zimbabwe and international capital, it has its own flaws when applied to specific Anglo-Zimbabwe relations. Horne focuses on the period 1965-1980 and thus is not sufficient in explaining the post 1980 era. There were many changes to the international system between 1980 and 1999, thus Horne’s work would not sufficiently cover Anglo-Zimbabwe relations from 1999. Some of the developments in the international system include the end of Cold war which completely changed relations between countries.

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<sup>1</sup> Other authorities give the ratio at 25:1

Most of the literature on Zimbabwe's relations with other states have been published after 1999 and they to some extent, exhaustively cover the topic. Paul Williams in a Workshop paper for the London school of Economics (June 2002) entitled *The Europeanisation of British Foreign Policy and the Crisis in Zimbabwe* covers Anglo-Zimbabwe relations in the post 1999 period. Williams (2002:7) argues that Britain's involvement in Zimbabwe after 1965 has to be understood within the context of "New Labour's efforts to promote its version of the third way in Sub-Sahara Africa by building peace, prosperity and democracy on the continents" Paul Williams (2002) acknowledges that the New Labour was not averse to using Zimbabwe's problems to score party political points by differentiating its approach from the Thatcher Government during the 1980s. Paul Williams traces the origins of the diplomatic stand-off between Zimbabwe and Britain and the paper has largely been successful in detailing the bilateral relations between Zimbabwe and Britain. However, his focus has been on identifying points of congruence between British foreign policy and the European Union Foreign Policy. Thus, the paper, does not address salient issues, such as the origins of Anglo-Zimbabwe relations, the part played by international capital and the issue of interest groups.

Margaret Lee (2003) looks at the historical origins of the Anglo-Zimbabwe impasse arguing that:

The current crisis in Zimbabwe, like all crises, has historical roots. The historical roots in Zimbabwe can be traced to the European (British) invasion of the country and the subsequent violent expropriation of land from the indigenous population. (Lee, 2003:17)

Margaret Lee further argues that pledges made in 1979 the Lancaster House Conference were not honoured especially support for Land reform in Zimbabwe. A failure to honour pledges saw the Zimbabwe government going on a fast-track land reform programme. There are some flaws in Lee's arguments. One major flaw as is the case in Margaret Williams is that the two focus on Zimbabwe and not entirely on the relations between Zimbabwe and Britain. The author, however, gives a comprehensive account of the successes and failures of UK policy on Zimbabwe. Margaret Lee looks at the issue of sanctions, diplomatic stand offs and shows that they have not been helpful in solving the problems.

## **1.8 Conclusion**

This chapter sought to give a theoretical framework of the major theories of international relations. It was observed that international relations has evolved through three stages which have been referred to as the Three Great Debates. Some of the major theories which have been looked at include idealism, realism, interdependence, dependency and post modernism. It was shown that these theories were propounded as a response to some of the weaknesses highlighted in other theories. Realism was more of a response to the major weaknesses of idealism while interdependency sought to discount the assumptions of realist theory. There was also a movement in the 1950's as scholars from newly independent countries sought to explain the structural domination of Third World Countries by the West. This gave rise to dependency theory. It was also highlighted above that another school of thought, postmodernism emerged in the 1990s and this theory sought to rope in a number of paradigms so that they would be used as analytical tools. A literature review established that Anglo-Zimbabwe relations were cordial from 1980 to 1997 when the New Labour government reneged on some of the promises that were made during the Lancaster House Conference.

## **Chapter 2**

### **Anglo-Zimbabwe Relations 1980 to 2005**

#### **2.1 Introduction**

This chapter focuses on the role played by the international print media in shaping Anglo-Zimbabwe relations from 1999 to 2005. It is also imperative that this chapter analyse the bilateral relations between Zimbabwe and Britain and briefly interrogate how they have changed between 1999 and 2005. An analysis of the historical relations between the two countries will lay the base for a study of the role that the media has played in influencing this relationship. Such relations would include economic, political, diplomatic, military and security co-operation. The chapter also discusses at media ownership in Zimbabwe, South Africa and Britain as a foundation for a study of the role that the international print media has played in shaping Anglo-Zimbabwe relations.

Relations between Zimbabwe and Britain date as far back to colonization in 1890. British companies, especially those in extractive industries, and mainly mining, have invested in Zimbabwe for more than hundred years and they have also been exploiting the resources. Zimbabwe has been importing some finished products which are manufactured in Britain. Zimbabwe is a primary producer and it exports raw agricultural and mineral products to Britain among other countries and these raw materials are value added and sold to developing countries at a higher price. A friction in Anglo-Zimbabwe relations translated to a fall in volumes of trade between the two countries. Zimbabwe's relations with Britain have largely been premised on the two countries' economic and political relations. Thus, a decline in political and economic relations has also seen a decline in diplomatic relations and vice versa. Diplomatic relations between Zimbabwe and Britain in 1980 enabled a smooth running of economic and other bilateral relations including military co-operation. A restoration of diplomatic relations in 1980 subsequently witnessed an increase in investment and direct aid from Britain to Zimbabwe. Britain started training the newly found Zimbabwe National Army. However, twenty years later, the relations between the two countries were strained and since then both countries have been using different



strategies to prevail over the other. Some of the strategies which have been used include megaphone diplomacy, quiet diplomacy and targeted sanctions. Britain has used the European Union, Commonwealth and the United Nations with varying degrees of success to make sure that it prevailed over Zimbabwe. Zimbabwe has tried to use its membership to the Non-Aligned Movement, Southern African Development Committee and African Union as a strategy to prevail diplomatically over Britain.

## **2.2 Anglo-Zimbabwe economic relations from 1980 to 2005**

Zimbabwe's economic relations with Britain in the post-independence era has largely been through aid and investment. Economic relations between Zimbabwe and Britain connected the two countries and these economic relations paved way for other relations for example diplomatic and military. Besides an increase in investment, there were large volumes of goods traded between the two countries. Britain made a number of pledges to give aid to Zimbabwe and at the same time there were a number of British companies which made investments into mining and agriculture. In 1981, the United Kingdom's aid to Zimbabwe was US\$177,633 million. This was the largest aid to Zimbabwe after the World Bank's US\$287,5 million made in the same year. British capital also poured into Zimbabwe. However, trade between Britain and Zimbabwe declined between 1999 and 2005. In 1999, Zimbabwe exported 105 million pounds worth of goods before the figure dropped to 84,8 million pounds in 2000. Zimbabwe's exports to Britain more than halved to 40 million pounds in 2003. In the first nine months of 2005, the total exports to UK were below twenty million pounds.<sup>2</sup> Zimbabwean beef always got a ready market in Britain but with the straining of relations, there were problems and this has significantly led to a fall in the volumes of exports from Zimbabwe to Britain. Declining export volumes to Britain is a reflection of the strained relations between the two countries.

Zimbabwe established full diplomatic relations with Britain in 1980. Historical linkages dating as far back as the nineteenth century, made it imperative for Britain and Zimbabwe to resume cordial relations because of the economic ties between the two as well as the fact that there were many of whites of British origin who were still resident in Zimbabwe at independency in 1980. The two countries established

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<sup>2</sup> Central Statistical Office. *Zimbabwe's Imports and Exports 1980-2005* Harare, 2005

economic, military and diplomatic relations. Despite establishing cordial relations in 1980, it can be seen that there were tense relations which were not in the public sphere. As Mandaza puts it, Britain and USA wanted to keep Zimbabwe under check as there was a likelihood that Zimbabwe may discard the 1979 Lancaster House Agreement, which had helped in ending the liberation, and possibly go against white interests which included land, factories and other properties. Mandaza further observes that both Britain and US tended to adopt pre-emptive and aggressive postures with regard to Zimbabwe. All this was designed to ensure “that the new state does not unlock itself from that imperialism sought to reaffirm in the Lancaster House Agreement”(Mandaza:63). Even though there were tense relations between the two countries, it can be argued that they did not disturb the diplomatic, economic and military relations which were established in 1980.

Relations between Zimbabwe, United Kingdom and United States of America were primarily aimed at protecting white interests in Zimbabwe. Britain and the United States of America made sure that Zimbabwe remains within the grip of imperialist interests and this was to make sure that global capital interests in Zimbabwe were protected. Mandaza (1986:66) highlighted on the entrenched suspicion and concluded that it was not possible to precisely determine six years after independency “whether the British Foreign Office’s policy on Zimbabwe is as sensational in its assessment as some of the British media."

Mandaza’s observation shows that despite the cordial relations evident on the surface, there were deep-rooted undercurrents of suspicion which were growing with the passage of time. Despite these suspicions, diplomatic relations between Zimbabwe and Britain remained rather cool in the first seventeen years of independence. This was mainly because of the fact that the Conservatives who had remained in power under Margaret Thatcher and John Major were prepared to maintain the relations with Zimbabwe. A maintenance of cordial relations between Zimbabwe and Britain was largely because the Conservatives were instrumental in the 1979 Lancaster House Agreement. Relations between Zimbabwe and Britain were strained when there was a change of government in the UK in 1997 when the New Labour came to power under Anthony Blair. The Government of Zimbabwe and the British government under New Labour party failed to agree on honouring some of the pronouncements of the

Lancaster House agreement especially financing land redistribution. Both governments started accusing the other of failing to play their promised part (Moyo, 1995:5). The Government of Zimbabwe was frustrated by the rate at which the land reform programme had been moving and the British government disowned the programme altogether. Statements by Robert Mugabe, the Zimbabwean president, became radical in relation to the land issue. For example in 1997 Mugabe stated that:

We are going to take the land and we are not going to pay for the soil. This is our set policy. Our land has never been bought and there is no way we could buy back the land. However, if Britain wants compensation, they should give us money and we will pass it to their children. (Chan, 2003:112)

This was a sign of failing diplomatic relations as leaders of the two countries began to use public forums to denigrate each other. An example is Tony Blair's response to Mugabe's radicalised speeches on land when he stated that Britain did not owe Zimbabwe any money for land reform because colonialism was not something that people of his generations had benefited from (Chan, 2003:111). The statement was a veiled reference to the need for the Conservatives' benefits from colonialism and the responsibilities which they were supposed to undertake.

These were the early signs of the strained relations and the issue of land reform reached boiling point in 2000 when some of the white commercial farms were occupied by the 'landless and war veterans'. The occupation of large commercial farms by the war veterans and the landless and the deteriorating diplomatic relations were evident in a row over a diplomatic bag. In defiance of the international conventions governing diplomatic contact, Zimbabwean authorities searched a diplomatic bag for the then British High Commission to Harare. UK had also defied international conventions as it lied on the contents of the bag. Subsequently, the then high commissioner Peter Longworth was recalled, which was a sign that relations between the host country, Zimbabwe and Britain had continued to deteriorate. This was the first time that the high commissioner was recalled and illustrates the strained relations between the two countries.

The row over the diplomatic bag was not the only sign of the strained relations between the two countries as Britain also reacted to what was happening in Zimbabwe by cutting military exports to Zimbabwe in May 2000. Britain also withdrew the

British Military Advisory Training Team in 2001 after the team had served in the country for almost twenty years (Mitchell 2003). A provision of four hundred and fifty Land Rovers to Zimbabwe Republic Police was also halted on the basis that the vehicles were being used for political repression. Aid to Zimbabwe was also cut by a third.

Efforts to mend relations between Zimbabwe and Britain were pursued at different intergovernmental organizations which include SADC, EU and Commonwealth. Britain insisted that they wanted dialogue with Zimbabwe, and Zimbabwe responded to this saying Britain's interest in the country was to see regime change, a reference to the British government's support for non-governmental organizations which were viewed by the Government of Zimbabwe as working with Britain to effect regime change. It was against this background that the two countries embarked on several strategies aimed at making sure that its position prevailed. Britain adopted a type of megaphone diplomacy and at the same time tried to re-establish the cordial relations which has existed and this did not yield the desired result. This strategy of dialogue failed to produce any concrete results and left Britain in the predicament of pursuing the type of megaphone diplomacy that played directly into Mugabe's hands. In recognition of the potentially negative consequences of megaphone diplomacy, the British Government concluded that the resolution of Zimbabwe's crisis was best pursued through private diplomacy (Laurence & Gamnet, 1997). Anglo-Zimbabwe relations have also been shaped by changes in the international system. While relations have largely been bi-lateral, it can also be argued that at another level, membership to regional bodies and economic blocs for example the European Union or the Southern African Development Committee also shaped the relations. It is in this context that the relations between Britain and Zimbabwe have affected the latter's membership to organisations such as the Commonwealth of Nations. Zimbabwe used public meetings, for example the World Summit on Sustainable Development, to publicly accuse Britain of imperialistic tendencies as it sought to effect a regime/policy change in the country. Britain has underlined the importance of its membership to intergovernmental organisations such as the Commonwealth as platforms from which it would pursue national policies. According to the British Government, membership to organizations such as the Commonwealth and EU represents a crucial mechanism through which the Britain could pursue its national

interests in promoting human rights worldwide, which also includes Zimbabwe. The membership to the EU gives Britain the leverage of greater political weight than it would have had it not internationalised the conflict, this is shown by the effect of targeted sanctions which have been adopted by all EU member countries (International Crisis Group Report 2004).

Baroness Amos' presentation to the foreign affairs committee confirmed that Britain was able to influence what is going on in Zimbabwe through its international partners because the government of Zimbabwe sought to portray the difficulties that it had with respect to human rights, harassing of the opposition, harassing of judiciary, as a bilateral issue between UK and Zimbabwe. The opportunities for the UK to influence what happened in Zimbabwe were very much through its work with the European Union partners, through contact with the United States and through its membership and control of the Commonwealth.<sup>3</sup> Statements by Baroness Amos confirm the British strategy to use its membership to international organisation and effect socio-political changes in Zimbabwe as a way of ending its impasse with Zimbabwe. Zimbabwe has in response used its membership to organisations such as the United Nations, African Union and NAM to counter the onslaught from Britain. This can be seen from the speeches by Robert Mugabe, President of Zimbabwe at various forums for example the World Summit on Sustainable Development in South Africa 2002 and UN. At one of the UN sessions, he acknowledged that there were problems with Britain and added that "Zimbabwe has also had to withstand unprovoked, declared and undeclared sanctions imposed by Britain and her allies."<sup>4</sup> Anglo-Zimbabwe relations have been strained especially after 1997 and either country mobilised support from allies as a way of trying to gain sympathy and prevail over the other. Britain has an advantage that its EU allies stand by it and imposed 'target sanctions' to top officials in Zimbabwe before the 2002 presidential elections and the US government also imposed travel sanctions on certain political leaders (International Crisis Group Report 2004).

### **2.3 International Media Ownership Patterns**

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<sup>3</sup> Baroness Amos evidence to Foreign Affairs Committee 14 May 2002

<sup>4</sup> President Mugabe speech Un session at the UN General Assembly 22 September 2005

International print media is controlled by a few owners. Establishing the international media ownership patterns is crucial to this study as ownership plays a part in influencing what is carried in the press. Media ownership patterns influence the way the media reports and analyses policy and its coverage of both domestic and foreign issues.

There is a lot of cross-ownership and concentration of the print media internationally. This means that the interests of the media owners will consistently be published and for example, the British press has been dominated by four companies. The newspapers published by these large groups always account for more than twenty-five percent of the market (Media Ownership in UK, 2005). What this means is that the large media houses control and shape public opinion. There are a number of media moguls who have used their publications to influence both domestic and foreign policy. An example is Rupert Murdoch who has used his newspaper empire to influence policy and campaigned against Labour from Margaret Thatcher's victory in 1979 to John Major's victory in 1992. However, Murdoch changed his support and was behind Labour in 1997 and partly contributed to its victory. In South Africa, where the media have also reported extensively on Zimbabwe, contributing to international opinion, the media ownership is also concentrated in very few hands. In September 2000, Natal Witness Publishing Company sold the conglomerate to *Nasionale Pers*. The sale reflected the dominance of the newspaper markets by a few companies with the necessary infrastructure and capital investment Zimbabwe's media is also concentrated under very few owners with Government of Zimbabwe controlling two of the country's three dailies.

## **2.4 Conclusion**

An analysis of the origins and extent of the impasse between Zimbabwe and Britain was made in this chapter. Whereas the impasse became very visible after 2000, it was argued, in this chapter, that the origins can be traced as far back as 1979 when the Lancaster House Agreement was signed. Both the British and the United States government were suspicious that the Government of Zimbabwe would renege on the promises made and disregard the agreement. This would have disturbed Western economic interests in the country and these include land, factories, mines and other properties. Relations between the two countries were rather warm between 1980 and

2000 and there were very few instances where they was diplomatic impasse. Relations changed completely in 2000 with the radical approach to the land reform programme.

A strain in the relations between the two countries saw a massive fall in the volumes of trade between the two countries. Apart from the reduction in the volumes of trade between the two countries, it was also discussed in this chapter that both countries have tried to use membership to international organisations as strategies for diplomatically prevailing over the other. Britain has succeeded in isolating Zimbabwe from its European partners and, Zimbabwe has adopted a 'Look East' policy as a result of the isolation it has suffered because of Britain's mobilization of its European partners. Britain has also taken some decisions outside the EU as a way of trying to make its policy on Zimbabwe succeed. This has included cutting its aid to Zimbabwe as a result of the impasse with Zimbabwe and ceasing military exports.

## **Chapter 3**

### **How the Media Influence Foreign Policy Making Process**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

There is a direct link between the foreign policy making process and international media coverage of global events. As discussed in Chapter 2, the editor and the journalist have replaced the cartographer, mapping the world. As such, the media play an important role in foreign policy making. The coverage of events by the print media has an effect on what foreign policies a country pursues. This chapter discusses how the international print media's coverage of events in a particular country would influence the foreign policy of a country in relation to the country that is being covered. After establishing the link between international media's coverage and analyses of events and foreign policy, this would then be linked to the nature of the relationship between Britain and Zimbabwe.

International print media is one of the factors which influences foreign policy. There are other internal and external factors which influence the foreign policy making process in any country. This chapter focuses on what role the international print media play in influencing the foreign policy of a given country. Foreign policy can be defined as a general framework guiding how a country relates with others. As realism assumes that the international system is characterized by a struggle for power, foreign policy can then be defined as the broad framework guiding how a country struggles for power or survival. The struggle for power or survival is evidenced by countries "sending diplomats, enunciating a doctrine or making an alliance..."<sup>5</sup> This means that foreign policy are actions by policy makers to solve a problem or promote some change in the international system. Given the power politics characterizing the international system, it can be argued that foreign policy is an instrument used by states to achieve certain objectives involving other actors beyond the state's own borders. Olatunde, Orwa and Utete (1985:42) collaborate this assertion stating that foreign policy is "Those actions that are undertaken by a state that are designed to

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<sup>5</sup>Utete, C et al *African International Relations*. Longman; Ibadan. 1985. p42



achieve particular objectives involving other actors beyond the state's own boundaries." This assertion confirms that foreign policies revolve around issues of power and survival in an environment that is characterised by struggle for power and survival.

Foreign policy is an aggregate of the influence of both domestic and external factors on the policymakers. Policymakers in any country come up with a list of objectives as a result of the aggregation of demands and obligations from both the internal and external environments. The foreign policymaking process in both Zimbabwe and Britain incorporates international events at the input level thus the ultimate result would have taken in some of the events on the international scene. While the media plays varying and critical role in the foreign policy making process it can also be argued that the foreign policy making process in Britain has significantly changed and this has been a result of internal and external factors.

Brian White (2001:121) argues that the foreign policies of European Union member states have been significantly changed if not transformed by participation over time and foreign policy making at European level. This process of change can be referred to as the Europeanization of national foreign policies. Paul Williams (2002:1) argues that the British foreign policy has become significantly Europeanized in relation to the political context of contemporary foreign policy, the mechanics of making foreign policy and the actual context of foreign policy. White (2001), however argues that the Europeanization of British foreign policy does not subsume British foreign policy, that is the increased integration of European states does not eliminate country specific foreign policy objectives.

Paul Williams argues that the case of the relations between Britain and Zimbabwe illustrate the point that the Europeanization of British foreign policy has not prevented the individual government from pursuing bilateral or alternative multilateral policies with regards to specific issues. It can be illustrated that in relation to Zimbabwe, the British government has drawn upon its increasingly close relationship with the EU to supplements its own bilateral and other multilateral efforts to achieve its foreign policy objectives.

The assertion by Paul Williams shows that the foreign policymaking process in Britain takes two paths, one is determined by the objectives of the European Union while the other part follows specific bilateral or multilateral objectives. Britain's foreign policy on Zimbabwe has largely been determined by bilateral efforts to achieve objectives which have largely been defined as a desire to have democracy, respect for human rights and rule of law in Zimbabwe. There were instances, though, when Britain would solicit the support of other members of the European Union to attain the same objectives in relation to Zimbabwe, showing the extent of the Europeanisation of British foreign policy making process.

Zimbabwe's foreign policy making process has not been hugely affected by its membership of continental or regional bodies. In most of the cases, Zimbabwe's foreign policy has been determined by the desire to attain its political and economic presence in Africa and the world. Zimbabwe's foreign policy making process is largely a response to world events for example Zimbabwe's 'Look East Policy', was largely a response to hostile relations in North America, Europe, Australia and New Zealand where the country had received warm receptions prior to 1999.

International print media plays an agenda setting role in global events which ultimately means that the international media largely creates the framework under which foreign policies are made. There are many instances in Western countries when foreign policies are a reflection of news content carried in major newspapers, television and radio stations over a period evoking the participation of citizens in debate of issues. This, however, is not to discount the role played by diplomacy which may also influence foreign policy. Policy makers react to the media coverage of international events, and this influences the foreign policy thrust of any country. However, this does not suggest that all foreign policy issues are generated by the media, but rather that priorities are re-ordered by the media. This is supported by Jessica Mathews (1994:19) who argues that "The process by which a particular human tragedy becomes a crisis demanding a response is less the result of a rational weighing of need or of what is remediable than it is of what gets on the news." Mathews' assertion confirms the point that media plays a catalytic role in foreign policy making process. What this means is that the international media's coverage of events determine the likely response from policymakers. By covering events which

may be of interest to the world audience in a particular way, international print media would be shaping the reaction of policy makers and so that (policymakers) are likely to respond in a way that the media would have highlighted or desired. It is usually the case that the media reports on those areas it feels the policy makers should make a decisive action, be it on domestic or international events.

It can be argued that the media has continued to shape international public opinion as it has always been in the fore front exposing human tragedies in different parts of the world. This coverage of tragedies has prompted governments to intervene in Somalia, Haiti and Bosnia. Michael Mandelbaun (1996:26) has referred to the British and American intervention in Somalia, Bosnia and Haiti as "The foreign policy of Mother Theresa or foreign policy as a branch of social work". This means that the interventions were largely out of the need to avert further humanitarian suffering as would have been shown by the media. A repeated focus on potential human tragedy 'forces' governments to take action even outside its own borders.

International print media, particularly the British, Scandinavian, Australian and New Zealand newspapers consistently reported on the events in Zimbabwe, especially the invasion of white owned farms by the landless, elections, food shortages, economic decline and the clean-up operation undertaken in May to June 2005. The way these events have been reported and analysed in international media has to a very large extent contributed to the world opinion on Zimbabwe. An opinion on Zimbabwe has a significant contribution to shaping the way a country formulates its foreign policy as there are likely to be demand for action by different interest groups.

The media play a critical role in the foreign policy making process in both Zimbabwe and Britain and at the same time media may serve as a watchdog, analysing how foreign policies are being implemented. Thus the media can set the agenda for foreign policy content. It is the media which bring to the attention of policy makers critical issues such as allegation of human rights abuse, genocides, corruption and political repression. Issues covered in the media are paramount when foreign policy makers in Britain pursue a bilateral issue on Zimbabwe, the issues they bring for address are those which are carried in the media and this contributes to some of the decisions which are taken. Generally policymakers would respond to the general demands from the public, whose opinion on events in other countries is shaped by what is contained

in the newspapers. Media reports and analysis bring to the attention of the public some of the critical issues at a time when the same issues are brought to the attention of policy makers. Ministers of Foreign Affairs in different countries follow media reports on public opinions and the media remain the public's chief source of information. Media reports also inform the public on what policy makers are doing to address a certain issue for example the threat of a genocide in a given country. . According to Richard Cohen (1963:12) the public's knowledge of events from other countries is shaped by the reporter and "For most of the foreign policy audience, the really effective political map of the world, that is to say, their operational map of the world is drawn by the reporter and editor not the cartographer." This shows that the media is very powerful in shaping world opinion on some of the international events. This shows that media has become very powerful and it draws its strength from the power to inform. Media consumers have journalists and editors to map to them what is taking place globally.

Apart from the powerful role that the media plays in foreign policy formulation, there is also need to analyse the media environment, that is, what are the characteristics of the international system and what impact does it have on the media. Following the dictates of the international system Britain's relations with Zimbabwe may have been influenced by the coverage of some of the events in either country. The international print media has extensively covered and reported on events in Zimbabwe, thus shaping public opinion in the countries where the reports were read, heard or viewed. There have been special reports on Zimbabwe and there were some permanent correspondents whose main assignments were to report on Zimbabwe and this has constantly kept a flow of news to the international audience. Most of the international media extensively covered events in Zimbabwe especially issues revolving around land redistribution and elections have been paramount importance in the international media.

Two scholars of communication and international politics, Edward Herman and Norman Chomsky developed a propaganda model where they argued that the media is biased in its reporting of events. Herman and Chomsky argue that media also lean heavily on government and major business firms as information sources and both efficiency and political considerations and frequently, overlapping interests, cause a

certain degree of solidarity to prevail among the government, major media and other corporate business.(9) Herman and Chomsky further argue that the media commonly frame news and allow debate only within the parameters of elite perspectives. This means that the media's coverage and analysis of events, selection of stories and frequency of stories and reportage have an effect on how the audience perceives an event.

Foreign policymakers in any country, being an audience of the mass media, can easily be influenced by what has been reported. Thus in the foreign policy making process in any country, the events frequently highlighted in the media are taken in as an input variable. It can be argued that the international print media has been divided into two over the coverage of events in Zimbabwe. Newspapers in the United Kingdom for example the *Guardian* and *The Telegraph* , those from Scandinavian countries, New Zealand and Australian newspapers have extensively reported on the humanitarian crisis in Zimbabwe following the violent land redistribution exercise. This prompted a response from Zimbabwe and other left leaning scholars who have viewed this coverage as racist and imperialist. On the other hand, there are some pan-African newspapers which have tried to cover the Zimbabwean story differently from the other media. Such newspapers and magazines include *The New African* and other socialist or left leaning newspapers across the world.

It is debatable whether some of the socialist magazines and newspapers, with a tiny circulation can also be termed as international media. For the purposes of this research, international print media has been taken to mean newspapers which cover global events be they political, economic, social or sports. This is the media with personnel spread across the world to cover all events that could be for an international audience. In the absence of personnel, international media always have contingency measures through which they would be able to cover the news items meant for an international audience. There are newspapers in Zimbabwe which fail to qualify as international print media because of their inability to cover international events even though they have covered Zimbabwe-Britain relations. Some of the Zimbabwe based newspapers have been included on the list of international print media on this basis because they have been able to make contingency measures to ensure that they cover international events.

### **3.2 Conclusion**

A discussion on the role of international media on influencing foreign policy showed that the media is powerful enough to encourage policymakers to undertake certain decisions. An analysis of the foreign policy making process was examined at the beginning of the chapter. It was mentioned that the foreign policy or policies of a country are dictated by both internal and external factors which make an input into the foreign policy making process. Some of the internal factors include demands by interest groups, the media and other factors. The international system determines the external factors. A foreign policy of a given country is an aggregation of demands from the public.

Additionally, it was also shown that despite the increased integration of European nations, referred to as Europeanisation of the foreign policies of EU member states, it was also argued that Britain has followed bilateral and multilateral policies outside the parametres of the EU. This has been the case with Zimbabwe and it has been on very few instances that Britain has appealed to the EU for a Europeanised policy. The few instances include the issue of target sanctions.

International print media play crucial roles in the foreign policy making processes in both Britain and Zimbabwe. The effect of the media on foreign policy was discussed under the CNN Effect, a theory which suggest that the media's coverage of international humanitarian disasters stimulates a different kind of foreign policy. Naming of this theory after one media organization is problematic as there are other media houses which have covered international events just like the CNN. An argument that some of the major foreign policy objectives pursued by Western countries are a mere reflection of the contents of some of the major newspapers was also advanced in this chapter. It was also argued in this chapter that there are inherent biases in the media as the media houses, government and businesses work in solidarity. Finally, it was also discussed in this chapter that there are two sides as to the coverage of issues in Zimbabwe. On the one hand there are newspapers which have concentrated on the human tragedy in the Zimbabwe. there are, however, some newspapers with a pan-African approach and have chosen to report on events in Zimbabwe claiming that the country was a victim of attempts by Western countries to

effect a regime/policy change. These newspapers are mainly pan-Africanist publications and left leaning magazines usually published by socialist organizations.

A discussion on which newspapers fit into the category of international print media was made in this chapter. This is a debatable issue since most of the newspapers find their way throughout the world. However for the purposes of this research it was stated that international print media are those newspapers with the capacity to cover international events be they social, political, economic or sport. This was made to refer to public press which automaticall exclude those journals or specialised magazines. The capacity to cover such events may mean that the newspaper has a representative or send one or has a capacity to get news items from a given area either through wires or appointing special correspondents.

## **Chapter 4**

### **Global print media coverage of Anglo-Zimbabwe relations 1999 - 2005**

#### **4.1 Introduction**

Media in Britain, Scandinavian countries, Southern Africa, Australia and New Zealand has influenced Anglo-Zimbabwe relations. It has been argued in Chapter Three that there is a direct link between the media's coverage of international events and the foreign making process. The foreign policy objectives and goals of most of the countries are a result of the priority that has been given to international events by the media.

This chapter investigates how international print media have focussed on developments in Zimbabwe and Britain and how these have affected relations between the two countries. An analysis will be made to ascertain how the coverage of events has influenced the British foreign policy on Zimbabwe or Zimbabwe's foreign policy on Britain. If the media played any role in influencing the relations between the two countries it would also be established whether the coverage was a reflection of what was happening in either Zimbabwe or Britain.

It has to be cited that the analysis of international media's coverage of international events is heavily influenced by or is reflective of North-South relations. This relationship can effectively be explained by the dependency theory explained in Chapter One. Flow of news, though taking a two way thrust are usually from Africa to the North. There are rare occasions when countries in the south would report events in Europe. For example, when African countries report on what is happening in the North, it is usually through news agencies such as Agence France Press, Reuters and Associated Press which originated from the North.

British media coverage of events in Zimbabwe was largely shaped by a historical link between the two countries and newspapers from the former for a long time had long term correspondents based in Zimbabwe by 2000. Newspapers such as the *Times*, *The Guardian* and *The Financial Times* and news agencies such as *Agence French Presse* (AFP), *Reuters* and *Associated Press* (AP) all had permanent correspondents in 2000.



As Wendy Williams (2004:92) argues, the presence of these correspondents shows that Zimbabwe occupied an important part in Britain's foreign policy. This was different from what happened in other countries where special correspondents could only be sent on special assignments as parachute journalists. The British press intensively covered events in Zimbabwe after 2000. According to Wendy Williams (2004:93) the British coverage of events in Zimbabwe took three broad categories namely ethnicisation, marginalization and personalization.

It can be argued that the ethnicisation of events in Zimbabwe especially the land issue greatly influenced the policy makers' perception of Zimbabwe as it was treated as a black against white issue. Some of the newspapers, for example *The Guardian* and *The Financial Times* have supported the idea of racial conflict by equating the violence on the farms to ethnic cleansing. Frequent portrayal of violence against white farmers stimulated an obvious response from Britain..

When violence continued and the media continued to portray the violence the British government took various decisions including recalling all military advisors who were in Zimbabwe and cancelling a donation of more than 500 Land Rovers to the Government of Zimbabwe. Additionally, as it stopped all military exports to Zimbabwe in May 2001. Apart from reducing support to Zimbabwe, Britain also cut aid to Zimbabwe by a third and initiated and subsequently pushed for target sanctions on select government officials. Britain was also behind Zimbabwe's suspension from the Commonwealth.

All these decisions can directly be linked to the media's portrayal of the situation in Zimbabwe especially in respect to the issue of respect of human rights and upholding the rule of law. Media reports and analysis can be attributed to some of the decisions for example Zimbabwe's suspension from the Commonwealth and stopping military exports to Zimbabwe. The intensity of the coverage of issues in Zimbabwe shows that *The Guardian* had 1 033 stories on Zimbabwe between 2000 and December 2005. Another leading paper, *The Telegraph* had 1 288 stories on the same subject during the same period of time while *The Financial Times* had 2 548 items

identified as top news on the same issue.<sup>6</sup> The sustained coverage of the violence and deteriorating political situation had a bearing on the British foreign policy as the issue was kept in the public area. As such, the British government had to take certain decisions as mentioned above to show its citizens that it was working to protect its interests in Zimbabwe. While the dominance of white commercial farmer as a victim of black violence in the British media has caused Britain to withdraw military and financial support to Zimbabwe, there was an entirely different reaction from the Zimbabwean government. Wendy Williams (2004:92) further argues that the dominance of white commercial farmers in the media assisted the Zimbabwe government in fixing the meaning of the crisis in Zimbabwe as a bilateral issue between Zimbabwe and Britain over land. the Zimbabwe government seized the opportunity to portray itself as a victim of international media which was being used by Britain to discredit Zimbabwe. As Wendy Williams (2004:95) further argues that:

The dichotomy that the British media used to frame the situation in Zimbabwe in terms of black and white was quickly appropriated by the Zimbabwe government to confirm their suspicion that Britain's main objective was to protect its colonial interests in Zimbabwe.

Zimbabwe then decided to either deport foreign correspondents resident in Zimbabwe or refuse to renew their work permits at expiry. This decision opened Zimbabwe to further allegations of human rights abuse which led to worldwide condemnation. This also served to further strain relations between Zimbabwe and Britain as for example, the British cricket team refused to come to Zimbabwe unless a ban on British Broadcasting Corporation reporters was lifted. Despite protests that the international print media was subjecting Zimbabwe to negative reports, it can be argued that there was nothing that was being done to improve the image of the country. It was up to the foreign policymakers in Zimbabwe to make sure that they respond to this intensive media nu correcting some of the mistakes. However, the response by the Government of Zimbabwe fuelled reportage on the country. Apart from the British media, there are other newspapers which have had a keen interest in developments in Zimbabwe including from Scandinavian countries. Zimbabwe has featured prominently in the Norwegian media between 2000 and 2004. Nkosinathi Ndlela points out that Zimbabwe appeared in 1 489 articles between January 2000 and December 2004.

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<sup>6</sup> These statistics were collected from the search engines found on the respective newspapers' websites. The search engines were used to find the number of stories on 'Zimbabwe Land reform'

Norway has a keen interest in Zimbabwe because of the development assistance it extended to Zimbabwe after independence. Just like the British media, the Norwegian media set the agenda and called for suspension of aid to Zimbabwe between 2000 and 2001. An example is an article in *Aftenposten* of 19 April 2000 titled 'Norwegian demands to Mugabe', where the author argues that since Norway has contributed significantly in terms of grant support, the Norwegian government should work with other donor countries with a view of taking strong actions against Zimbabwe. Media in Norway also framed the violent land acquisitions in Zimbabwe as black versus white. There were articles like "Swedish family hit by violence in Zimbabwe" in *VG* of April 17 2002. 'Norwegian farmer considers leaving Zimbabwe' in *VG* of April 19 2000. Both stories show sympathy for the white commercial farmer. Sympathizing with the white commercial farmer would show the Government of Zimbabwe as victimizing whites, thus furthering allegations of ethnic cleansing.

Nkosinathi Ndlela (2005:82) argues that the media coverage of events in Zimbabwe were brief "preferring instead to focus on isolated events" Articles included "One more farmer shot in Zimbabwe"<sup>7</sup> "Zimbabwe white enemies"<sup>8</sup>, "Whites are our enemies" in <sup>9</sup>and "Don't Travel to Zimbabwe"<sup>10</sup>. The Norwegian media extensively covered events in Zimbabwe and gave a portrayal of the conflict in Zimbabwe as that of white versus black. An analysis of the news coverage shows that in as much as the Scandinavian media covered events in Zimbabwe, it did not hugely influence Anglo-Zimbabwe relations at bilateral level. The coverage of events in Zimbabwe helped to feed into the European Union foreign policy and did little to influence Zimbabwe – Britain relations. It can also be argued that the Scandinavian media relies heavily on Reuters and AFP for news. Reuters and AFP, account for more than ninety three percent of worldwide news coverage (Ndlela, 2005:85). It can thus be concluded that the Scandinavian media, though extensively covering events in Zimbabwe, did little if any to influence Anglo-Zimbabwe relations.

In the Oceania, New Zealand and Australia, print media borrowed heavily from the British slant and it had no major bearing on the British foreign policy. New Zealand

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<sup>7</sup> *VG* April 18 2000,

<sup>8</sup> *VG* of April 19 2000

<sup>9</sup> *Dagbladet* of April 19 2000

<sup>10</sup> *VG* of April 21 2000

and Australia, however, had a bearing on the Zimbabwe–Britain relations in the Commonwealth. This means that the portrayal of the crisis in Zimbabwe as a white versus black conflict had direct input into the policymakers’ decisions or voting in the Commonwealth. The Government of Zimbabwe responded to the reports and analyses in Australia and New Zealand as imperialistic and branded them as part of the White Commonwealth which wanted regime change in Zimbabwe. Thus it can be concluded that New Zealand and Australia’s coverage of Anglo–Zimbabwe relations was heavily borrowed from the British media. As such most of the reports and analysis were a mere reprint of what was in the British press and news agencies such as Reuters. As such the media in these two countries, Australia and New Zealand, played an insignificant role in influencing Anglo–Zimbabwe relations.

It has to be pointed out that most of the print media in Africa only caters for a particular country or region and as such cannot be called international in the sense one refers to Reuters, *The Guardian* and *Telegraph*. However, there are some exceptions such as the *Mail and Guardian* which is published in South Africa and has a little regional thrust and the *New African* which has a pan-African outlook but it is published in Britain. It can however be shown that the pan-African oriented *New African* has ‘tried’ between 2000 and 2005 to give an alternative to the mainstream media in terms of reporting on Zimbabwe. In April 2005 the *New African* had a special issue on Zimbabwe, where it tried to put into perspective various issues surrounding the Anglo – Zimbabwe relations. In September 2005 for example, *The New African* had a report on Zimbabwe where it attempted to explain circumstances surrounding “Operation Clean Up” (Operation Murambatsvina) starting in May 2005.

Instead of explaining the report backfired as the international media and the academics took the explanation that the operation was to pre-empt an orange revolution in Zimbabwe to mean that the security situation in the country was shaky. The *New African* magazine does not play any role in influencing Anglo-Zimbabwe relations as in most cases it attempted to give explanations as to certain positions for example on land and Operation Murambatsvina. This also explains the role played by the Government of Zimbabwe controlled media whose role in the foreign policymaking process is very minimal. The South African based print media has also played a fringe role in influencing Anglo–Zimbabwe relations. Reports and analysis

carried in the South African press have tried to feed into their country's policy on Zimbabwe. The media in South Africa has tried to push President Thabo Mbeki from his "quiet diplomacy" stance to "megaphone diplomacy". As such the South African media has not played any significant role in shaping Anglo – Zimbabwe relations.

There are varying ways through which the international media have influenced Anglo-Zimbabwe relations after 1999. British media has played a significant role in shaping Anglo – Zimbabwe relations since 1999. It was shown in this chapter that media reports and analyses on the land issue in Zimbabwe have significantly fed into the British foreign policy making process as an input variable. The Government of Zimbabwe has deliberately married the media reports to the British government and called it an imperialist and racist media aimed at protecting white rights in Zimbabwe. Claims that international print media were aimed at protecting white rights to a very great extent heightened suspicion between Zimbabwe and Britain leading to a ban on all BBC reporters who wanted to come to Zimbabwe. This has raised the tension between the two countries as the political impasse has spread to sport where the British cricket team threatened to boycott Zimbabwe unless the ban on BBC reporters was lifted. Other international print media have played a somehow fringe role as they do not feed directly into either the Zimbabwe foreign policy making process or the British foreign policy making process.

## **Conclusion**

Media play a vital role in influencing foreign policies as, for example, an intensive coverage of an issue generates debate which forces foreign policymakers to make decisions based on what the local constituencies want. Foreign policy is an extension of domestic policy and foreign policymakers follow public opinion on certain issues and institute measures to address the citizens' concerns. Media play an important part in shaping the public opinion as well as communicating this public opinion to the policymakers. As such, media plays a pivotal role in shaping public opinion and influencing foreign policy.

This dissertation has explored the role that the international print media has played in influencing Anglo Zimbabwe relations. International media played a significant role in shaping Anglo-Zimbabwe relations. British media has played the greatest role, highlighting a number of issues pertaining to the land reform programme in Zimbabwe. This has fed into the foreign policy making process in Britain as shown by how the parliamentarians discussed the issue of ethnic cleansing pertaining to the white versus black violence that broke out during the land reform programme. Media reports and analysis have helped British foreign policy makers in coming up with a position on Zimbabwe. However, while the British media contributed to the foreign policy making process, the same cannot be said about other media in the Oceania, Norway and Africa. These media played a fringe role in the British or Zimbabwe foreign policy making process. Zimbabwe's foreign policy has largely been a response to what is happening globally and the international media has not contributed much.

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