THE CONGRESSIONAL BLACK CAUCUS AND AMERICAN POLICY TOWARD SOUTHERN AFRICA, 1970-1980

by

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(Under the Direction of William Stueck)

ABSTRACT

This paper is a response to the growing literature surrounding ethnic group influence on American diplomacy, as well as the call from those historians who have broken new ground with respect to African American influence on foreign policy. It does not, however, attempt to draw conclusions about the perceptions of the entire black community during this period. Instead, it focuses on the attitudes and perceptions of African American members of Congress during the 1960s and 1970s as they tried to reorient American policy toward Africa. The Congressional Black Caucus has been active on foreign policy issues since its founding in 1971, although its role in domestic affairs has been more widely publicized. Studying the organization's attempts to reorient American policy in Africa provides a unique opportunity to analyze the limits and possibilities of ethnic group influence on American diplomacy. As a national black organization, the CBC has been inextricably linked to the socioeconomic and political fortunes and the evolving policy priorities and preferences of the African American community. As a minority group within Congress, however, the caucus has had to rely on coalition-building and cooperation with other members to achieve its objectives. This has required a certain pragmatism and willingness to compromise not demanded of other African American interest groups.

INDEX WORDS: Congressional Black Caucus, Charles Diggs Jr., Andrew Young,

Southern Africa

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Introduction

In recent years it has become fashionable to suggest that ethnic interest groups play an important role in the formulation of American foreign policy. This has particularly been the case since the end of the Cold War and what were commonly referred to as the "convincing demons" that guided American foreign policy during that period. "It is doubtful that there has ever been a democratic society," commented Senator Charles Mathias Jr. on the rising influence of ethnic interest groups, "that lived untroubled by conflict between the preferences and aspirations of one group within the society and the requirements of the general good. If the problem has been more constant and intense in the United States than in other democracies it is because of the nature of American society – diverse and heterogeneous, a nation of nations, a melting pot in which the constituent groups are never fully melted – and because of the American constitutional system with its separated power and numerous points of access thereto."[1]

The depth of interest in the power of ethnicity in American diplomacy has been the result of a growing awareness among scholars that domestic politics are an integral part of foreign policymaking. Traditionally, literature concerning U.S. diplomacy has focused on the personalities, motivations, and ideologies of a small policymaking elite. This group of elites was narrowly defined as consisting of various administration officials and a few independently powerful nongovernmental figures. Therefore, it was common

[1] Charles McCurdy Mathias Jr., "Ethnic Groups and Foreign Policy," *Foreign Affairs* 59, 5 (Summer 1981): 975. The most recent and comprehensive discussion of ethnic group influence is found in Tony Smith, *Foreign Attachments: The Power of Ethnic Groups in the Making of American Foreign Policy* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard Press, 2000).

within policy circles, as well as among scholars, to dismiss the public sector – including Congress – as ignorant and disruptive actors in the decision-making process. Gradually, this perspective has fallen out of favor as historians have begun to assert a more prominent role for Congress and the public in the formulation of foreign policy. [2]

Expanding the scope of diplomatic history has usually involved efforts to stake out space for the flows and interactions between new kinds of agents beyond the nation-state. Many historians have come to realize that American diplomacy is the result of complex social, economic, cultural, and political interactions of foreign as well as domestic origin. Due to the fluidity between the public and the private sectors in the United States, such non-state actors as corporations, missionaries, and interest groups have not only influenced state policy but in some instances actually assumed the role of the state itself. Thus previous assumptions that foreign and domestic policymaking processes differ no longer hold. As Samuel Huntington has recently observed, "For an understanding of American foreign policy it is necessary to study not the interests of the American state in a world of competing states but rather the play of economic and ethnic interests in American domestic politics. At least in recent years, the latter has been a superb predictor of foreign policy stands. Foreign policy, in the sense of actions consciously designed to promote the interests of the United States as a collective entity in relation to similar collective entities, is slowly but steadily disappearing."[3]

Scholars who contend that ethnic interest groups play an integral role in American foreign policymaking generally separate this influence into three stages. The first, from

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[2] See Philip Brenner, *The Limits and Possibilities of Congress* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1983); Gary Orfield, *Congressional Power: Congress and Social Change* (New York: Harcourt Brace, 1975).
[3] Samuel Huntington: "The Erosion of American National Interests," *Foreign Affairs* 75, 1 (Sept/Oct 1997): 42.

roughly the beginning of the twentieth century until the 1930s, witnessed growing ethnic conflict in response to events in Europe. As the continent moved toward war after 1914, ethnic constituencies in the United States naturally divided, some favoring American involvement in the conflict and others (which were better organized) calling for a policy of neutrality. Americans of German, Scandinavian, and Irish descent tended to favor American neutrality in the war and isolationism in its aftermath, while those of British, Russian, Polish, Yugoslav, and Czechoslovak descent generally favored American participation in the war and involvement in world affairs after 1918. The former groups and the Irish in particular were central to America's reluctance to enter both the First and Second World Wars. Speaking about Great Britain's policy in Ireland, Woodrow Wilson told an advisor before World War I that, "there can never be any real comradeship between American and England until this issue is definitely settled and out of the way."[4] Nor did American Jews escape the rise of ethnic consciousness characteristic of so many other groups during this period, although their emergence as a strong political lobby was not completed until after World War II.[5]

The divisive impact of European affairs on American domestic politics changed completely after 1945. Historian Tony Smith has observed of the period, "Not simply the national unity created by the war, but even more importantly the struggle with the Soviet Union that broke out thereafter, served to blur distinctions between ethnic and national identity and to fuse the European Americans together in a common national identity…. Internationalism, not neutrality or isolationism, became the hallmark of this new stage of

[4] Mathias, "Ethnic Groups," 982.
[5] See Smith, *Foreign Attachments,* 48-54; also Elliot P. Skinner, "Ethnicity and Race as Factors in the Formation of United States Foreign Policy," reprinted in Michael P. Hamilton (ed), *American Character and Foreign Policy* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdsman Publishing Co., 1986), 89-119.

ethnic activism, providing a firm domestic underpinning to U.S. steadfastness in fighting Soviet communism."[6] For this reason, the Cold War period has commonly been viewed as one of relative consensus in American foreign policy. The dominant world view of this period, which many scholars have labeled conservative internationalism, centered around anti-communism, containment of the Soviet Union and military preparedness. Italian and German Americans worried about communist encroachment in their home countries, and Jewish Americans came to view the security of Israel as interconnected with America's desire for stability in the Middle East. Immigrants from Eastern Europe similarly found that their ethnic and their American identities coincided so far as the basic anti-Soviet thrust of their policy was concerned. Thus, the doctrine of containment managed to bring closer together Euro-American ethnicities in a common bond of anti-communism and American patriotism.[7]

Since the end of the Cold War, the influence of American ethnic groups on foreign policy is said to have entered a third stage. The Cold War fostered a common identity between the American people and the government. Many observers feared that its end would likely weaken or at least alter that identity. Samuel Huntington has remarked somewhat contemptuously that, "Without a sure sense of national identity, Americans have become unable to define their national interests and as a result sub-national commercial interests and transnational and non-national ethnic interests have come to dominate foreign policy."[8] During times of international peace and economic prosperity, the ability of domestic social forces to insulate themselves from interference

[6] Smith, *Foreign Attachments*, 54.
[7] Alexander DeConde, *Ethnicity, Race, and American Foreign Policy* (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1992), 152-180.
[8] Huntington, "Erosion of American National Interests," 29.

by the state grows. The displacement of national interests by commercial and ethnic interests reflects the rising importance of domestic factors on foreign policy. Therefore, one often hears the argument today that with the end of the Cold War and the robustness of the American economy, the Presidency is weakening relative to the Congress while the state is weakening relative to society. It remains to be seen whether the War on Terrorism will provide a suitable basis for policymakers and the public to once again reach a consensus regarding the direction of American foreign policy.

These stages, while helpful in organizing the discussion of ethnic group influence, remain artificial and somewhat deceptive. Most historians agree that the current decline of the nation-state relative to society did not begin in the 1990s with the end of the Cold War. Instead, it can be traced to the 1960s, as the political universe expanded exponentially and previously unheard voices – those of minorities and citizens groups – entered the fray. This was the critical moment from which social scientists have measured a strong and steady expansion of interest group activity in this country, a time when the nation was going through an unpopular war and was simultaneously experiencing serious social challenges. The Civil Rights and Anti-War Movements stood at the vanguard of this struggle, eventually emboldening women, Hispanics, homosexuals, and others to enter the political arena. So far had the process advanced by the mid-1970s – with Jews and Greeks exercising proven clout, blacks bringing increasing pressure to bear on American policy toward Africa, and Hispanics (including many illegals) looming as the next prospective major political force – that by 1975 it could be plausibly argued by Nathan Glazer and Daniel Patrick Moynihan that the immigration process could be considered "the single most important determinate of

American foreign policy." "Foreign policy," they wrote, "responds to other things as well, but probably first of all to the primal facts of ethnicity."[9]

Until recently, the prevailing view among scholars has been that African Americans were primarily preoccupied with domestic issues rather than international events, that they were largely uniformed or apathetic about foreign policy and, as a result, had little impact on American diplomacy. Newer works have identified a considerable and sustained African American group interest in the world beyond America's shores. In *Rising Wind: Black Americans and U.S. Foreign Affairs, 1935-1960,* historian Brenda Gayle Plummer has suggested that black perspectives on American diplomacy often began with basic disagreements about the national interest. After a survey of African American disillusionment with the Paris Peace Conference at the end of World War I, Plummer focused on Italy's invasion of Ethiopia as the first major foreign policy issue to generate deep and sustained interest among black Americans. Her account then follows African American efforts to link World War II and the Cold War with desegregation at home and utilize the United Nations as a means of pressuring the United States government to reform its policies. It was no accident then that the American Civil Rights Movement flowered during the Cold War and that it grew in strength from contact with the rise of African nationalism and the coming of decolonization to Africa, beginning with Ghana in 1957. Many black Americans came to view themselves as part of a larger African diaspora linking them to events in other parts of the world, as articulated by

[9] Nathan Glazer and Daniel Patrick Moynihan (eds), *Ethnicity, Theory and Experience* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1975), 23-24.

W.E.B. Dubois and Nigerian leader Kwame Nkrumah.[10] Their hopes for American foreign policy did not meld with the geopolitical thinking in Washington as easily as did the concerns of Jewish or Euro-Americans, however. For many blacks, the problem of racism and white rule in Africa outweighed concerns about the dangers of communism and Soviet expansion in that region – a perspective not shared by many others in Washington for whom the communist threat reigned supreme.[11]

This paper is a response to the growing literature surrounding ethnic group influence on American diplomacy, as well as the call from those historians who have broken new ground with respect to African American influence on foreign policy. It does not, however, attempt to draw conclusions about the perceptions of the entire black community during this period. Instead, it focuses on the attitudes and perceptions of African American members of Congress during the 1960s and 1970s as they tried to reorient American policy toward Africa.

For ethnic groups the surest way to have a voice in government is to have members of their community serving as lawmakers. Senator A. Paul Sarbanes (D-MD) and Represenatative John Brademas (D-IN) have been effective spokesmen for Greek

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[10] See for example Mary L. Dudziak, *Cold War Civil Rights: Race and the Image of American Democracy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000); see also Mary L. Dudziak, "Desegregation as a Cold War Imperative," *Stanford Law Review* 41 (November 1988), 61-120.

[11] For discussions on African Americans and foreign policy see, Brenda Gayle Plummer, *Rising Wind: Black Americans and U.S. Foreign Affairs, 1935-1960* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996), 6; also Brenda Gayle Plummer, "Below the Level of Men: African Americans, Race, and the History of United States Foreign Relations," *Diplomatic History* (Fall 1996); Penny Von Eshen, *Race Against Empire: Black Americans and Anticolonialism, 1937-1957* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1997); Michael Krenn, *Black Diplomacy: African Americans and the State Department, 1945-1969,* (Armonk: M.E. Sharpe, 1999); and Gerald Horne, "Race for the Planet: African Americans and US Foreign Policy Reconsidered," *Diplomatic History* 19, (Winter 1995), 159-160. These works contradict earlier studies that credited blacks with limited influence or interest in foreign affairs. The most well known of these early studies was Alfred O. Hero, "American Negroes and U.S. Foreign Policy, 1937-1967," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 13 (1969), 220-51; also Milton D. Morris "Black Americans and the Foreign Policy Process: The Case of Africa," *Western political Quarterly* 25 (1972), 451-63; and Jake C. Miller *The Black Presence in American Foreign Affairs* (Washington D.C.: University Press of America, 1978).

interests, while Senators Edward Kennedy (D-MA) and Daniel Patrick Moynihan (D-NY) have served a similar function for the Irish, and Representatives John Conyers (D-MI) and Charles Rangel (D-NY), among others, have been consistent advocates for African Americans. With respect to African issues, Charles C. Diggs (D-MI) was the foremost proponent of African independence and majority rule among his colleagues in Congress during the 1960s and 1970s. In 1969, Diggs became chairman of the House Subcommittee on Africa. Two years later he helped create the Congressional Black Caucus (CBC) along with his twelve African American colleagues in the House.[12]

The CBC has been active on foreign policy issues since its founding in 1971, although its role in domestic affairs has been more widely publicized. Studying the organization's attempts to reorient American policy in Africa provides a unique opportunity to analyze the limits and possibilities of ethnic group influence on American diplomacy. "Conceptually," points out political scientist Robert Singh, "the caucus occupies an intrinsically bifurcated location, simultaneously in the black community and Congress, with a distinct set of constituents and concerns as the former but with the same institutional environment as all other legislative subgroups in the latter guise."[13] As a national black organization, the CBC has been inextricably linked to the socioeconomic and political fortunes and the evolving policy priorities and preferences of the African American community. As a minority group within Congress, however, the caucus has had to rely on coalition-building and cooperation with other members to achieve its objectives. This has required a certain pragmatism and willingness to compromise not

[12] The original caucus had thirteen members. Walter Fauntroy (D-DC), as the delegate from the District of Columbia was a non-voting, but integral part of the CBC.
[13] Robert Singh, *The Congressional Black Caucus: Racial Politics in the U.S. Congress* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 1998), 3.

demanded of other African American interest groups. Despite strains, the caucus worked hard to maintain amicable relations with Hispanic and Jewish interest groups, who were often strong coalition partners. Each of these distinct environments inhabited by members of the CBC has informed and constrained their attempts to secure desired policy results.

The CBC's focus on race and racism has been the most consistent subject for critical examinations of the organization. Inevitably, race and the complexities of racial politics in the United States have powerfully affected the caucus' evolving values, legislative goals, and tactical alliances. The CBC's creation was met with derision by many who objected to the explicitly racial character of its politics. As late as 1975, scholars such as Daniel Boorstin still questioned the basis of the CBC's existence. "When before has it been respectable for American politicians to declare themselves the candidates of their race, for Americans to accept uncritically a racial caucus in the Congress of the nation," asked Boorstin? "In the past…American politicians have found it necessary at least to pretend to represent all their constituency equally."[14]

Such criticism went beyond the group's domestic message, however, with many observers attacking the organization for "balkanizing" American foreign policy by assuming that African-Americans had a special interest in African or Caribbean affairs. Other ethnic interest groups have similarly been accused of falling prey to the discriminatory belief that national policy towards the Balkans and Turkey should be the realm of Greek and Orthodox Americans, toward the Middle East of Muslims and Jews, toward the Caucasus of Armenian Americans, toward immigration of Hispanic Americans, toward Cuba of Cuban exiles, and toward Eastern Europe of immigrants from

those countries. There have been three basic objections to ethnic group influence on foreign policy: that such groups often ask the entire country to serve their purposes even when the desired policy outcomes may not serve the common good and indeed may endanger it; that ethnics may at times act at the behest of foreign movements or governments whose agendas they place over that of Washington; and finally, that the increased legitimacy of ethnic lobbying makes for incoherent and inconsistent policies.[15]

These objections, the last one in particular, have caused many observers to greet the rise of ethnic group influence with distrust and hostility. By 1977, famed diplomat George Kennan complained, "Our actions in the field of foreign affairs are the convulsive reactions of politicians to an internal political life dominated by vocal minorities."[16] More recently, historian Samuel Huntington has observed that "The ideologies of multiculturalism and diversity…deny the existence of a common culture in the United States, denounce assimilation, and promote the primacy of racial, ethnic, and other subnational cultural identities and groupings. They also question a central element in the American creed by substituting for the rights of the individual to the rights of groups, defined largely in terms of race, ethnicity, gender, and sexual preference."[17] This sentiment has been echoed by James Schlesinger who lamented that:

> The weakening, if not the disappearance of the time-honored concept of America as a melting pot has reinforced these tendencies (to disdain the idea of a national interest). The new fashion among the academics of multiculturalism and what is called "ethnic consciousness-raising" serves to legitimize further the demands of ethnic constituencies to have the world's leading power back their special agendas. But in terms of its impact on foreign policy, it is hard to find the benefit of multiculturalism…to sustain an effective and reasonably consistent foreign policy requires a national consensus, which in turn depends on a common purpose. The new

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[14] Boorstin quoted in Singh, *Congressional Black Caucus*, 56.
[15] Smith, *Foreign Attachments*, 44.
[16] George Kennan, *The Cloud of Danger: Current Realities in American Foreign Policy* (Boston: Little Brown and Company, 1977), 4
[17] Huntington, "Erosion of American National Interests," 29

> intellectual fashions weaken and, in a sense, delegitimize the search for that common purpose…. This is not the foundation on which the American democracy can sustain its role as world leader.[18]

Whether Huntington and Schlesinger overstated the perils of multiculturalism's affects on foreign policy, their criticisms offer a point of departure for a discussion on the CBC's role in foreign policy formulation. Throughout the Cold War, and particularly during the Nixon and Ford administrations of the late 1960s and 1970s, members of the CBC opposed America's containment oriented policy on the African continent, which aligned American interests with those of the racist white minority regimes of southern Africa. Despite increased Soviet and Cuban activity in the region during this period, CBC members opposed engagement with the avowedly anticommunist regimes in South Africa, Southern Rhodesia, and Portuguese Africa. By analyzing the lobbying efforts of black legislators along with their allies inside and outside of Congress, this paper seeks to explore the contribution of African American legislators to American policy in southern Africa. What did they hope to achieve? What means did they utilize to meet their goals? What effect if any did they have on the policy debate? Did they contribute to a more enlightened American policy abroad, or did they make the nation's policy appear fragmented and incoherent?

My discussion of the CBC's influence on policy toward southern Africa is divided into four sections. The first chapter explores the CBC's creation and the role that international affairs, and Africa in particular, played in the group's formation. Beginning with the reemergence of black legislators in the twentieth century, it goes on to discuss the conservative shift in American politics that helped Richard Nixon capture the White

[18] James Schlesinger, "Fragmentation and Hubris: A Shaky Basis for American Leadership," *National Interest* 49 (Fall 1997).

House in 1969. Catering as it did to the racist predilections of white southerners, Nixon's southern strategy provided a major impetus for black legislators to combine their efforts. Nixon's conservatism was not confined to domestic politics, however. For this reason, the chapter also briefly explores American policy toward Africa during the 1950s and 1960s. Of particular interest was the close relationship that developed between members of the State Department's Africa Bureau and black legislators during the 1960s as the Kennedy and Johnson administrations pursued a fairly enlightened policy toward the continent As Nixon's "southern strategy" of the late 1960s increasingly became a southern Africa strategy as well, black legislators led by Charles Diggs decided to form the CBC in an effort to regain legislative initiative on the foreign and domestic policy issues.

Indeed, Diggs figures prominently throughout this paper, acting as the voice on African affairs for his fellow members in the CBC. In many cases, Diggs' statements and activities are discussed and applied to the CBC as a whole. Certainly there is a danger of conflating the congressman's positions with those of other CBC members who may not have agreed with his evaluation of the situation in southern Africa. I am comfortable with this method of inquiry, however, since Diggs' focus on American policy toward Africa in many ways mirrored similar issue specialization among his black colleagues. At times, the CBC position was explicit. At other times, however, the CBC position was understood to be the position of a well recognized leader on a broad issue area, backed by general consensus – though perhaps not unanimous consent – from the other members. Reliance on experts among the members was partly a function of the small size of the caucus relative to the large number of issues, both domestic and foreign, that had to be

dealt with. As one CBC member observed: "The caucus normally has lots of eggs to fry. We have to divvy up the duties and responsibilities fairly broadly, not just because it makes it easier for us all to handle, but also because that way we can utilize each other's particular interests and expertise more efficiently and effectively."[19] Since caucus members lacked the time and resources to become experts on every issue, they accepted the leadership of those willing to focus on specific interest areas. At the same time, the leader/consensus approach meant that individual members did not have to take an explicit position on every issue, at least until it came up for a recorded vote.

Chapter Two focuses on the legislative wrangling surrounding sanctions against Rhodesia. It begins with the emergence of the Rhodesia Lobby in 1966 as a response to the Johnson administration's imposition of sanctions against the white government in Salisbury. A loose coalition of business interests, conservative legislators, and pro-Rhodesia organizations, the Rhodesia Lobby mounted an ambitious campaign, often couched in overtly racial terms, to end American compliance with United Nations sanctions against Rhodesia. Led by Senator Harry Byrd, these elements were finally successful under the Nixon administration, passing an amendment allowing for the importation of Rhodesian chrome along with seventy-two other commodities. The Byrd amendment was not only a defeat for pro-sanctions forces, it was also a setback for the CBC, and a personal humiliation for Congressman Diggs, who had envisaged the organization as a vehicle for defeating embarrassing legislation like Byrd. Over the next three years the CBC underwent a careful reassessment of its tactical and strategic lobbying capabilities. Similar processes were also underway with respect to the CBC's allies outside Congress. The result was a stronger, more effective lobbying apparatus that

[19] Singh, *Black Caucus,* 66.

successfully pushed repeal legislation through the Senate in 1973. Despite these improvements, however, the CBC was unable to gain sufficient support in the House during 1974 to win congressional approval for reinstituting sanctions against Rhodesia. The central question explored in this chapter is why, in spite of the lobbying improvements of the CBC and its allies, were they still unable to secure repeal of the Byrd amendment in 1974?

Chapter Three shifts from American policy toward Rhodesia and focuses on policymakers' reactions to the coup in Portugal in 1974. To orient the reader the chapter begins with a background of the CBC's efforts to end American complicity with the colonial aspirations of the Portuguese government. For members of the CBC, the coup in Portugal presented an opportunity to realistically achieve majority rule in several of the nations of southern Africa. Believing that the successful transition to majority rule in Guinea-Bissau, Mozambique, and Angola would pave the way for majority rule in South Africa and Rhodesia, members of the CBC spent much of this period encouraging the White House to support the various liberation movements of Portuguese Africa. Events in Angola during 1975 quickly undermined the CBC's position. As America's secret involvement in the Angolan civil war came to light late in the year, members of the CBC were confirmed in their conviction that they could not work constructively with the Republican administration.

Chapter Four discusses the African American community's role in Jimmy Carter's election in 1976 and CBC attempts to capitalize on the black contribution to the president's victory. The rise of African Americans such as Andrew Young and Donald McHenry to positions of prominence within the policymaking apparatus of the Carter

administration meant that the CBC's foreign policy platform would finally have advocates at the highest levels of government. The administration's attempts to reorient American policy, beginning with the repeal of the Byrd amendment in March 1977, convinced Diggs and his cohorts in the CBC that they had backed the right candidate. The honeymoon did not last long, however. While the administration pursued a settlement on majority rule in Rhodesia along lines favored by the CBC, its policies came under increasing attack from conservative elements in Congress and the public. By 1978 Carter was on the defensive and had already begun to retreat from some of his early reforms. As a result, the CBC's relationship with the president soured throughout 1979 and 1980 to the point that several members of the CBC were vocally opposed to the president's re-election in 1980. The failure of the Carter administration to implement many of the liberal foreign policies favored by members of the CBC raises a series of interesting questions. Why did liberal internationalism fail? Were its tenets incompatible with the hostile international situation that confronted the new administration, or were domestic forces the root cause of Carter's later shift rightward? More importantly, did Carter's inability to convince the public and Congress of the utility of his reforms indicate that the CBC's foreign policy positions were opposed by the majority of the American people?

In many ways this paper expands upon themes put forth in Raymond Copson's recent book *The Congressional Black Caucus and Foreign Policy 1971-2002.* Using just under ninety pages to discuss CBC support for African and the Caribbean issues over a thirty year period, Copson's work served as an effective outline of CBC initiatives concerning Rhodesia, South Africa, and increased American aid on the continent.

Copson's book raised more questions than it answered, however. His conclusion that the CBC was generally successful on African issues seemed to be based on the outcome in Rhodesia/Zimbabwe in 1980, the Reagan administration's decision to impose stricter sanctions against South Africa in 1986, and the fact that American aid to black Africa steadily increased during this period.[20]

The glaring weakness of Copson's book rests in its failure to place the actions of black legislators into the domestic and international context of the period. While he conceded that coalitions were imperative to the caucus' various successes, he mentioned only Stephen J. Solarz, chairman of the House Subcommittee on Africa during the early 1980s, when acknowledging such tactical alliances. Solarz, while important to caucus interests, became so only during the late 1970s and into the 1980s. Copson thus ignores the substantial contributions of countless individuals both inside and outside of government who helped the CBC develop its agenda during the early 1970s. In the same vein, Copson was vague about the opposition black legislators faced in their efforts to reorient American policy toward Africa. The Rhodesia Lobby was mentioned in passing and the motivations and aspirations of its members went largely unexplored. For this reason, Copson's work failed to recognize the subtle shift that accompanied the Rhodesia Lobby's statements regarding southern Africa. While racial themes were popular during the 1950s and into the 1960s, by the 1970s, they had been replaced with anticommunist dominated rhetoric.

The major shortcoming of Copson's work, however, was its failure to fit CBC efforts on the foreign policy front into the broader battles concerning American foreign

[20] Raymond W. Copson, *The Congressional Black Caucus and Foreign Policy 1971-2002* (New York: Novinka, 2003),

policy that raged during the 1970s. He thus breezed through the CBC's legislative efforts during the Carter administration without discussing the organization's complex relationship with a president that claimed to share its view on the future direction of American foreign policy. Despite the repeal of the Byrd amendment during Carter's first year in office and the successful settlement of the Rhodesia situation during his last, the deterioration of relations between the administration and the CBC merits greater discussion. Why were members of the CBC unable to accomplish more under a supposedly friendly administration?

I believe that this paper will bring greater clarity to American policy toward Africa during the 1960s and 1970s, as well as the larger discussion of ethnic group influence. This belief stems from the growing realization that major political events and crises are not solely the purview of an elite group of policymakers, but also include the input of ethnic and other domestic interest groups. Michael Hunt has argued, for example, that participants in international events must be thought of as the creators of narratives. "Viewed internationally," suggested Hunt, "a crisis is made up of narratives that seldom overlap, or for that matter, even converge in a way that puts all parties in the same narrative framework." Rather, the distinct narratives intertwine, and as they do, each narrator appropriates narrative fragments from the others, prompting in turn the revision or extension of the original narrative."[21] Thus, while it may be impossible to precisely measure the potency of ethnic group influence on the formulation of foreign policy, its role as a determinant or modifier of policy in given situations can certainly be examined.

[21] Michael Hunt, "Internationalizing U.S. Diplomatic History: A Practical Agenda," *Diplomatic History* 15 (Winter 1991), 6.

Chapter One
The Rise of the Congressional Black Caucus

The formation of the Congressional Black Caucus (CBC) in January 1971 was widely hailed as a critical development in African American political life. Although their role in domestic affairs has been more widely publicized, members of the CBC have been active on foreign policy issues as well. Throughout the 1960s and 1970s, several black legislators, most notably Congressman Charles Diggs, promoted a benign policy toward the developing world and were outspoken proponents of African self-determination. Led by Diggs, black legislators often tied progress on civil rights at home to the struggle for majority rule on the African continent. They found the situation in southern Africa particularly offensive as South African apartheid, Rhodesian racism, and Portuguese colonization continued to oppress black Africans with little comment from successive American administrations.

John F. Kennedy's professed support of African liberation in the early 1960s provided hope for those individuals, who, like Diggs, complained that Washington was indifferent to the plight of black Africans. After Kennedy's death, Lyndon Johnson continued his predecessor's support of African independence, albeit somewhat less enthusiastically. In the late 1960s, the situation worsened as Richard Nixon returned the White House to the Republican Party. The same conservative forces that swept Nixon into office on the promise that he would slow civil rights reform appeared poised to export their racist views across the Atlantic. Supporters of the various African liberation

movements expressed alarm as the new administration took steps to normalize relations with the minority white governments on the continent. As black legislators met to discuss the CBC's formation, they were thus keenly aware of the administration's desire for broader engagement with the white governments of southern Africa.

This chapter explores the reemergence of African American legislators in the twentieth century, and their eventual decision to create a formal caucus. Of key importance, are the motivating factors that led the thirteen black members of the House to form the Congressional Black Caucus. I am particularly interested in the evolution of the organization's platform on African affairs. For this reason, a brief background of the respective policies of the Eisenhower, Kennedy, and Johnson administrations is offered, with a specific focus on policy toward southern Africa. As the foremost advocate of African liberation among black legislators, Congressman Charles Diggs' lobby efforts are discussed at length. Because much of chapters two and three cover the congressional debate over the Byrd amendment, Rhodesian policy is covered in somewhat more detail than that of South Africa and Portugal. The chapter ends with the CBC's formation in 1971 and the organization's attempts to assume preeminent leadership of the black community.

The Rebirth of Black Legislators in the Modern Era

African American representation in Congress can be traced to the Reconstruction inspired legislation that followed the Civil War. Respectively, the Thirteenth, Fourteenth, and Fifteenth Amendments abolished slavery, naturalized all blacks born in the United States, and granted them the right to vote. In 1866, Congress passed the Civil Rights and Reconstruction Acts, which dissolved the governments of the former

Confederate states (excluding Tennessee) and divided the South into five military districts committed to protecting the rights of the newly freed slaves. As the majority population in many of these congressional districts, blacks were able, in coalition with pro-Union liberal whites, to win election to Congress. In 1870 Joseph Rainey (R-SC) became the first black member of the House of Representatives. By the end of the 19th century, nineteen African Americans had followed Rainey to the House, and two had won election to the Senate.[1]

The turn of the century witnessed the gradual recapture of the southern state legislatures by conservative white Democrats. Representative George H. White (R-NC) was the last of the Reconstruction era black members of Congress. On the 29th of January 1901 he took the House floor to bid a bitter farewell to his colleagues. "This, Mr. Chairman, is perhaps the Negroes' temporary farewell to the American Congress," he declared, "but let me say, Phoenix-like, he will rise up some day and come again."[2]

The election of Oscar DePriest (R-IL) in 1929 ended a twenty-eight year period during which blacks were denied electoral representation. In 1935, DePriest was defeated by Democrat Arthur W. Mitchell, beginning the twentieth century tradition of African American patronage of the Democratic Party. To this point, all the African American members of Congress had belonged to the Republican Party, the party of Lincoln and the Emancipation Proclamation. The changing partisan composition of the African American delegation was a direct result of the New Deal policies of President Franklin Roosevelt, which precipitated a major realignment of black voting loyalties. By

[1] Katherine Tate, *Black Faces in the Mirror: African Americans and their Representatives in Congress* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2003), 25-51

[2] House, Representative White of North Carolina speaking about his departure from Capital Hill,, 57th Congress, 1st sess., *Congressional Record,* (29 January 1901), 35 pt. 2: 1638.

bringing material benefits to black and urban centers, the New Deal lured blacks from their traditional GOP base and made them a core political constituency of the Democratic Party. Over the next sixty-two years, from 1934 to 1996, all but four blacks elected to the House were Democrats. [3]

Refusing re-nomination in 1943, Mitchell's seat was assumed by William Dawson (D-IL), a former first lieutenant during the First World War. Joining Dawson in the House two years later was the flamboyant Adam Clayton Powell Jr. (D-NY), whose work as a minister, journalist, instructor, member of New York City council, and cofounder of the National Negro Congress had already made him a prominent figure in the African American community. While civil rights issues occupied the majority of Powell's time, he was also the first black legislator with a sustained interest in African issues. During the lead up to the Afro-Asian Bandung Conference of 1955, for example, Powell encouraged the Eisenhower administration to send an official American delegation. Eisenhower, however, on the advice of Secretary of State John Foster Dulles, decided against an official American presence. Undeterred, Powell attended the Conference in an unofficial capacity. "Bandung was a pilgrimage to a new Mecca," he later reminisced. "I was one of the pilgrims and I went because I had to…I went to

[3] Edward G. Carmines and James Stimson, *Issue Evolution: Race and the Transformation of American Politics* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1989); 150. See also Nancy Weiss, *Farewell to the Party of Lincoln: Black Politics in the Age of FDR* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1983.) The realignment of the entire black electorate was a gradual process. Carmines and Stimson point to the election of 1964 as an obvious landmark, with Barry Goldwater's position on the issue of civil rights staked out fairly clearly. The Johnson administration's "War on Poverty" followed helping solidify support among the black community for the Democratic Party. During the sixties, party activists – the visible embodiment of the party in neighborhoods and communities across the country – sorted themselves out along racial and ideological lines. Thus, regardless of what Party candidates were saying or not saying they belonged to, the less attentive public only had to look around to see what ideology each party represented.

Bandung knowing it could be one of the most important events of the twentieth century. I left Bandung knowing that it had been."[4]

Entering Congress in 1955, Charles C. Diggs Jr. (D-MI) exceeded Powell's commitment to international affairs. A member of the Michigan State Senate from 1951-54, Diggs was elected to the 84th Congress at the age of thirty two, becoming one of the youngest members of the House of Representatives.[5] Like Congressman Powell, Diggs was sympathetic to the calls for independence and equality from the colored peoples of the developing world. He was particularly sensitive to American policy toward Africa, believing that "a very special relationship exists between the African and American Negro, that there is a skin color affinity which creates an unusual bond of warmth and draws the two together."[6]

In 1957, Diggs joined then Vice-President Richard Nixon on a tour of Africa that concluded with the delegation's attendance of the celebration of Ghana's newly gained independence. The trip, Diggs' first to Africa, created a minimal strain in his relationship with Representative Powell. Always a fan of pomp and ceremony, Powell had lobbied tirelessly to be on the official U.S. delegation. The State Department informed Powell that, unfortunately, majority leader Sam Rayburn preferred Diggs, and was opposed to Powell's inclusion on the trip in any capacity. Rayburn's position was viewed by most as retribution for Powell's bipartisan support of President Eisenhower during the election of

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[4] Adam Clayton Powell Jr., *Adam by Adam: The Autobiography of Adam Clayton Powell, Jr,* (New York: Dial Press, 1971), 103-104.
[5] Charles C. Diggs, "Biographical Sketch of the Congressman," undated, *CDC MSRC* Box 191, Folder 21.
[6] House, Congressman Diggs of Michigan speaking about the American Negro's key role in Africa, 87th Congress, 2nd sess., *Congressional Record* (8 March 1962), 108, pt. 22: A1809. See also Raymond W. Copson, *The Congressional Black Caucus and Foreign Policy 1971-2002* (New York: Novinka, 2003), 6. Copson suggests that the congressman's lifelong interest in Africa arose in part from the fact that his grandfather had worked as a missionary in Liberia and brought back ideas about the continent's importance.

1956. Powell succeeded in attending the celebration anyway; but as a member of Martin Luther King's entourage, not the official American delegation.[7]

Robert C. Nix (D-PA) was elected from the 2nd District of Pennsylvania, a predominantly black chunk of Philadelphia, in 1958. Nix's election was less attributable to his credentials within the black community than his supporting role as a political functionary in the Philadelphia Democratic Party. Having served in various low-level administrative positions, including assistant attorney general of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania from 1934-1938, and delegate to the Democratic National Convention in 1956, Nix was rewarded by the party with a seat in the 85th Congress. With his victory, he became the state's first black legislator.[8]

During the early 1960s, Augustus F. Hawkins (D-CA) and John Conyers, Jr. (D-MI) increased the number of black representatives to six. Hawkins, a twenty-eight year veteran of California state politics, was elected in 1963 from the 29th District of California. The 29th district, where blacks constituted fifty nine percent of the voters, had one of the highest unemployment rates in the country. Supported by the Kennedy administration, Hawkins won on a pledge to provide jobs for low income areas and equal opportunity in employment. Hawkins continued this pursuit into the 1970s, co-authoring House Resolution 50, the Full Employment Growth Act of 1977. Re-elected thirteen times by his constituents, Hawkins remained a fixture in the House until 1990.[9]

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[7] Charles V. Hamilton, *Adam C. Powell: The Political Biography of An American Dilemma* (New York: Atheneum, 1991), 281-284.
[8] Marguerite Ross Barnett, "Have You Heard From Your Congressman Lately? A Critical Look at the Congressional Black Caucus," *Black Enterprise*, January, 1978, 25.
[9] Barnett, "Have You Heard?" 25.

For his part, Conyers was well known in Michigan political circles. From 1958-1961 he worked on the staff of Representative John Dingell (D-MI). He also served as the general council for three labor locals and participated on the executive boards of both the American Civil Liberties Union and the NAACP in the Detroit area. In 1964, Conyers decided to try his hand at national politics, entering the race for the seat in the 1st congressional district of Detroit. Detroit had a black majority voting population, but there were pockets of all-white territory, particularly in the Polish neighborhoods of the 1st district. The district's blacks were generally among the city's most affluent and better educated. The majority were homeowners and were far more likely than their poorer counterparts to vote. Conyers was elected to the 89th Congress with eighty-eight percent of the vote and took his seat in January of 1965.[10]

Steadily increasing in numbers throughout the 1950s and 1960s, the activities of the various black legislators remained largely uncoordinated during this period. Diggs' election to the House in 1954 marked the first concerted effort to encourage greater legislative solidarity. On discovering that little contact existed between Congressmen Dawson and Powell, Diggs promoted increased communication, particularly with regard to racial issues, among the three. Politically left of Dawson and right of Powell, he got along well with both men, and formed an effective bridge between them.[11] As black Congressional representation increased with the elections of Nix in 1957, Hawkins in 1962, and Conyers in 1964, informal discussions developed among the six legislators.

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[10] Ibid., 24. See also Maurine Christopher, *Black Americans in Congress* (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company, 1976), 239-242.

[11] Marguerite Ross Barnett, "The Congressional Black Caucus: Illusions and Realities of Power," reprinted in Michael Preston, Lenneal J. Henderson Jr., and Paul Puryear (eds), *The New Black Politics: the search for political power* (New York: Longman, 1987), 31.

Nevertheless, no efforts were made to institutionalize ties among the black members of the House.[12]

Several developments intensified the impetus for greater cooperation among black legislators and led to the CBC's establishment in 1971. Foremost among these was the conservative backlash that propelled Richard Nixon into the White House in 1968 on the promise that he would slow civil rights reform. Of similar importance was the black delegation's growth in the late 1960s and early 1970s. Partially as the result of the Voting Rights Act of 1965, which sought to bring state governments in stricter compliance with the anti-discrimination laws of the Fifteenth Amendment, black representation in the House increased from six in 1965 to twelve by 1971. These new members brought with them a political acumen primarily oriented in the civil rights struggle. With this encouragement, black legislators decided to make a bid to fill the growing leadership void which had become apparent within the black community by the early 1970s.

Richard Nixon and the Resurgence of Conservative America

The need for a formally organized caucus supported by a professional staff was reinforced among black legislators by the rhetoric of the Republican administration that entered the White House in 1968. Assessing the political landscape in the lead-up to the

[12] See William L. Clay, *Just Permanent Interests: Black Americans in Congress, 1870- 1991* (New York: Amistad, 1992), 90-1.Dawson and Nix were the most reluctant about forming a voting bloc with their colleagues. Both were dependent on local political machines and were thus reluctant to associate themselves too closely with the often outspoken and flamboyant personalities of Powell, Diggs, and Conyers. By the time the CBC had formed in 1971, Dawson had retired removing one of the chief impediments to legislative unity. Nix remained the most conservative of his African American colleagues. He was often accused of practicing ward politics as opposed to promoting the national black agenda. As a result Nix faced strong opposition from black Democratic opponents beginning in 1972. In 1976, he faced a strong challenge from William H. Gray who had considerable support from the area's business leaders. While Nix successfully defeated Gray in 1976, he would not be so fortunate two years later, as voters finally decided to remove the conservatively oriented Nix.

presidential election, Richard Nixon and his political strategists recognized the growing frustration among white southerners with respect to the previous ten years of civil rights progress. In the spring of 1968, during a meeting with Senator Strom Thurmond (R-SC) and other leading segregationists, Nixon struck a deal with conservative southern leaders. The essential bargain was this: if they supported Nixon's bid for president, he would find a way to ease the federal enforcement of school desegregation – or any other kind of desegregation. Whatever the exact words or phrasing, this was how Nixon's statements were interpreted by Thurmond and his associates.[13]

As a result, Thurmond campaigned for Nixon in the South, doing all he could to undercut George Wallace's third-party candidacy. Wallace simply could not win, Thurmond insisted, as attractive as his segregationist views might be. Besides, Nixon really held views close to those of Wallace, Thurmond informed Southern crowds. Harry Dent, the GOP chairman for South Carolina, assured a reporter for the *South Carolina State* that he and Senator Thurmond had met privately with the candidate to express concern over the pace of desegregation. Dent reported that Nixon gave "a favorable response," including an unequivocal statement that he did not favor busing schoolchildren for desegregation purposes. Then, came a curious and indirect statement in the article: "Presumably, Nixon may endorse the 'freedom of choice' approach to school desegregation." Though the statement was not ascribed to Dent, readers were left with the impression that he was hinting at a new reprieve from desegregation plans if Nixon were elected.[14]

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[13] Reg Murphy and Hal Gulliver. *Southern Strategy* (New York: Scribner, 1971), 2-3.
[14] Murphy and Gulliver, *Southern Strategy,* see also Leon Panetta and Peter Gall, *Bring Us Together: the Nixon team and the civil rights retreat* (Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1971), 233.

By catering to the racist predilections of the white South and the "Silent Majority," Nixon succeeded in supplanting the Democrats as the dominant party south of the Mason-Dixon Line, thereby capturing the White House in 1968. The incoming administration tended to deny that any such strategy had existed during the election; yet, the new president and his conservative cadre marched into Washington carrying what they believed was a mandate from the voters to repeal all of Lyndon Johnson's Great Society programs. Low-income housing, school lunches, child nutrition programs, the Job Corps, and college loans and grants were all slated for revision or elimination. At the same time, the administration began publicly seeking conservative southern candidates to fill vacancies on the Supreme Court, the favorites being Clement Haynsworth from South Carolina and Harold Carswell from Florida. The administration's attacks on Great Society programs were not couched in anti-black, racist rhetoric, but the end result was the same. Blacks had benefited tremendously from these government programs and the new administration stringently opposed their continuation. In the eyes of black legislators, the Republicans were poised to reverse more than twenty years of steady civil rights progress.[15]

Still, Nixon's "southern strategy" was not entirely successful in establishing Republican political dominance in 1968. In the months leading up to the presidential and congressional elections of that year, political commentators, sensing a conservative shift in the American mood, predicted a Republican coup. In the House of Representatives this was to translate into the Republican capture of a substantial majority of seats. As for

[15] Robert Singh, *The Congressional Black Caucus: Racial Politics in the U.S. Congress* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 1998), 66-67.

the Senate, although present Democratic majorities made the loss of Democratic control unlikely, Republicans were expected to improve their position in that body as well.[16]

In the election's aftermath, while Nixon was swept into office by the "silent majority," Republican candidates for the House and Senate were less triumphant. In the House, the Democrats suffered a net loss of only four seats, far less than anyone had expected. Republican inroads in the Senate were similarly slight. In many ways, Nixon was culpable in the party's limited gains. His support of Southern Democrats like Senator Harry Byrd (D-VA), whose conservatism was proven and appreciated by the administration, stymied Republican candidates. The tension created by these conflicting loyalties were particularly apparent in Virginia, where Nixon supported Byrd despite protests from Republican governor Linwood Holton who wanted to remove the Democratic one-party hold over the state.[17]

Emboldened by their successful defense of seemingly embattled House and Senate seats, Democrats prepared their counterattack for the new Republican administration. John W. McCormack (D-MA) argued that the congressional elections had been a mandate from the American people to continue the programs and legislation enacted by the previous two Democratic presidents. In this respect, he promised that the Democrats would be active in their oversight of any and all Republican attempts to dismantle Great Society programs.[18] The National Committee for an Effective Congress, echoed McCormack's claim, concluding in a published report that the 91st Congress had

[16] Statement by Aaron Wildovsky, chairman, political science department, University of California Berkeley, "Notables and Quotables," *Wall Street Journal*, October 9, 1968.
[17] Murphy and Gulliver, *Southern Strategy,* 233.
[18] "McCormack Calls Vote a Mandate: Says People Want Congress to Continue Party Policy," *New York Times*, November 9, 1968.

an opportunity to become the most influential branch of government. This was primarily the case, reasoned the authors, because Nixon did not enjoy the support of 60% of the people. This was coupled with the fact that the Democrats continued to control Congress and had many influential leaders there.[19]

Within the Democratic Party, blacks were similarly heartened by the results of the 1968 congressional elections. The arrival of three new African American representatives in January of 1969 encouraged the growing militancy of black legislators Shirley Chisholm (D-NY), Louis Stokes (D-OH), and William Clay (D-MO) arrived in Washington committed to better articulating the demands of the black community. Coming at the end of the tumultuous sixties, their simultaneous elections seemed to encapsulate the rising black interest in electoral politics. The 92nd Congress convened in 1969 with the largest black delegation of any twentieth-century Congress (nine), offering an unprecedented opportunity to advance national black politics. The results of the 1968 congressional elections convinced black legislators that, if organized effectively, they could constitute a powerful base within the House.[20]

Longtime CBC observer Marguerite Ross Barnett has observed that the arrival of Clay, Stokes, and Chisholm on Capitol Hill in 1969 was more psychologically than numerically important. Unlike most of their colleagues, their political socialization was grounded in grassroots civil rights agitation. They were part of a new generation of militant, proud young blacks who questioned the ability of well respected and venerable older leaders like Roy Wilkins of the NAACP and Whitney Young, Jr., of the Urban

[19] "Major Opportunity for Congress Seen," *New York Times*, December 23, 1968.
[20] Barnett, "Illusions and Realities," 11.

League, to deal with the issues of the day.[21] This younger and more militant wing of the civil rights movement was not content with the meager accomplishments in racial progress up to that point and refused to support liberal whites who promoted policies of racial gradualism. "The pent up feelings under which we as black Americans have lived for so many years can no longer be tolerated," argued Clay. "We no longer feel compelled to nurture these frustrations in silent obedience or to accept this unjust state of affairs."[22]

Sensing an opportunity to rekindle the idea of a coalition, Diggs, by then the most senior active black legislator (Dawson and Powell were often absent – both were ill, and Powell had been stripped of his seniority), called a meeting of the nine black members of the House and proposed the formation of the Democratic Select Committee (DSC). The purpose of the DSC according to Diggs was to facilitate communication among black Representatives and between them and the House leadership. The DSC operated informally, however, with no elections being held, and no official officers being selected. The organization had no autonomous staff, budget, or facilities for long-range planning. Instead, most of the activities were social in nature, designed to encourage discussion among black legislators, but not necessarily to mobilize the group for collective action.[23]

The DSC was not inactive though. Under Diggs' leadership, black legislators collectively opposed the new Nixon administration on several issues, including the Supreme Court nominations of Judges Haynsworth and Carswell, social welfare programs, civil rights, policy related to Africa. In February 1970, the group sent a

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[21] Ibid., 11.
[22] House, Representative Clay of Missouri speaking on the emerging new black politics, 92nd Congress, 1st sess., *Congressional Record* (19 February 1971) 117 pt. 2: 3352.
[23] Singh, "Black Caucus," 55-56.

pointed letter to the White House accusing Nixon of ignoring black concerns and demanding a meeting with the president. When the Nixon administration finally acquiesced to a meeting a year later, it was confronted not by the DSC, but by the more formally organized Congressional Black Caucus.[24]

For Diggs, the prospect of coalition was particularly enticing. He had spent much of the sixties trying to coordinate the activities of his black colleagues, especially on civil rights and Africa-related issues, recognizing that black representatives could constitute a formidable legislative bloc if effectively coordinated. As a member, and later the chairman, of the House Subcommittee on Africa, Diggs was a leading proponent of African liberation and majority rule on the continent throughout the Eisenhower, Kennedy and Johnson administrations. By 1970, recognizing a growing opposition to African independence movements within the Nixon administration, Diggs came to believe that American foreign relations had become an extension of racist domestic policies. Convinced that Nixon's "southern strategy" had simultaneously become a "southern Africa strategy," Diggs concluded that "those who are opposed to the economic and social buildup of African nations are the same forces that have exploited blacks in this country."[25] Facing assaults from conservatives (both Republican and Democrat) on the domestic and foreign policy fronts, Diggs was enthusiastic about creating a strong lobbying nucleus to help him regain the legislative initiative.

Charles Diggs and the Battle for African Liberation

Among his colleagues, Charles Diggs was the most vocal proponent of the development of a strong Black Diaspora composed of Africans on the continent, and

[24] Ibid., 56.
[25] "U.S. Foreign Policy: Racism Charged," undated, *Milwaukee Journal*, *CDC MSRC* box 191, folder 21.

those displaced in the Americas and Caribbean.[26] Having visited over forty of the independent and minority ruled governments on the continent, Diggs felt that he understood the plight of black Africans better than most his colleagues, both black and white. Conducting numerous study missions to the continent in his role as chairman of the Africa subcommittee, he consulted with heads of state, various cabinet members, private citizens, American diplomats, and Peace Corps volunteers. He also prided himself on traveling deep into the bush in order to talk to impoverished natives, whose voices were generally ignored by those claiming to work in their best interest (namely, officials in the U.S. and the white minority governments of southern Africa). It was through these discussions that Diggs gained a firsthand account of the systems of oppression and degradation that had consolidated, and continued to solidify the respective political dominance of the white minorities of South Africa, Rhodesia, and Portugal's Africa colonies.[27]

Throughout the 1950s and 1960s, Congressman Diggs, along with allies inside and outside the government, warned that support of the minority regimes of southern Africa endangered American relations with independent black Africa. The problem of minority rule in southern Africa was especially pertinent, he argued, because of the larger issues it presented. Beyond human rights, economic interests, and politics, it touched on perhaps the most sensitive subject of the twentieth century: namely the relations of the

[26] Charles C. Diggs, "Statement of the Honorable Charles C. Diggs, Jr., Chairman of the Subcommittee on Africa, Foreign Affairs Committee, U.S. House of Representatives, Submitted to the Sixth Pan-African Congress, Dar Es Salaam, Tanzania," (19-27 June 1974), *CDC MSRC* box 226, folder 31: 1-2
[27] Charles Diggs, "Transcript from the the House of Diggs Radio Program," (7 September 1969), *CDC MSRC* box 191, folder 21.

darker and the lighter peoples of the developing and Western world. The racist white minorities were, according to Diggs, "on a collision course with the natural and rising aspirations of the black majority for equality and self-determination."[28]

Despite Diggs' lobbying, the Eisenhower administration attempted to avoid the delicate issue of race relations in southern Africa, choosing instead to focus on strategic and economic interests in the region. The administration was thus reluctant to press its NATO ally in Lisbon to liberate its African colonies. Although Portugal's military and economic contributions to NATO were slight, American policymakers still regarded the country as a strategically important ally. This stemmed primarily from their desire to continue America's unfettered access to military bases in the Portuguese controlled Azores islands. As a strategic outpost in the war on communism, many policymakers believed the Azores could not be replaced. The base was not merely a convenient station in the Atlantic for aircraft staging and refueling; it also served as a center for antisubmarine warfare and ocean surveillance. It was further reported that the base employed top secret sensor devices and wide ranging spotter aircraft that monitored the movements of all Soviet ships traveling on the Atlantic. With the American lease on the Azores base officially due to expire in 1962, Eisenhower and his advisors were reluctant to push the Portuguese too hard, lest they imperil the strategic alliance between the two countries.[29]

A similar policy was being developing for South Africa. Constituting the greatest concentration of whites in southern Africa, the Afrikaners appeared to be more equipped

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[28] House, Congressman Diggs of Michigan speaking against South African apartheid, 91st Congress, 2nd sess., *Congressional Record* (20 January 1970), 116, pt.1: 697.
[29] Senate, Statement by Senator Helms of North Carolina concerning the future of Portugal and the Azores, 94th Congress, 1st sess., *Congressional Record* (May 15, 1973), 121, pt.11: 14518.

than other white settler groups to contain African nationalism. They also showed no signs of relinquishing their administration of the occupied territory of Namibia, despite protestations from the United Nations.[30] Meanwhile, the white government in Pretoria provided the United States with access to the vast mineral deposits scattered about the country; it also served as strong buffer against communist influence in the region. In this respect, the white government was particularly successful in suppressing dissident black voices, like Nelson Mandela, who declared American imperialism a new danger, "which must be fought and decisively beaten down if the people of Asia and Africa are to preserve the vital gains they have won in their struggle against subjugation."[31] Mandela's avowed association with communists only fueled the American desire to remove or at least marginalize the black nationalist presence in the country.[32]

With regard to the Rhodesians, Eisenhower's assumption of the Presidency in January 1953 nearly coincided with the creation of the Rhodesia Federation in July of that same year. In the years leading up to World War II, the white Rhodesian government in Salisbury had toyed with the idea of an amalgamation of Northern Rhodesia (later Zambia) and Southern Rhodesia (Zimbabwe) into a unitary state. By the early 1950s, as Cold War alliances began to solidify, the British hinted that federation would be acceptable. In 1952, London and Salisbury finalized plans for the Federation's

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[30] George Ball, *The Discipline of Power* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1968), 252. Nor did the Afrikaners regard South Africa as belonging to the black population. They had settled South Africa around 1630 encountering only a few Hottentots and Bushmen along the way, of whom no more than 55,000 still remained in the country. Only when Afrikaners made the Great Trek to the Transvaal in 1835 did they come in contact with Bantus, the black population that comprised most of the country to this point. The Afrikaners argued that the land belonged to them and that it was the Bantus who were the foreigners.
[31] Nelson Mandela, "A New Menace in Africa," (March 1958), reprinted in Nelson Mandela, *The Struggle is My Life* (New York: Pathfinder Press: 1986), 74.
[32] For a discussion of Mandela's relationship with communist elements, see Mandela, "New Menace," 77, also Nelson Mandela, "The Rivonia Trial, 1963-64: Second Court Statement,reprinted in Mandela, *The Struggle,* 174-175.

creation at the Lancaster House Conference.[33] Leaders of the various fledgling nationalist movements in the region, such as Joshua Nkomo, Kenneth Kaunda and Dr. Hastings Banda, who had been excluded from the Lancaster talks, expressed pessimism about the coming Federation. They viewed it as a method through which Salisbury would spread its policy of racial discrimination into Northern Rhodesia. The whites would at the same time benefit economically from access to Northern Rhodesia's copper mines.[34]

Southern Rhodesia was not alone in its desire to access the copper deposits of its northern neighbor. British support for the federation had revolved around the potential economic benefits as well. Greater stability in Southern Rhodesia promised more investment and immigration into the area. The Eisenhower administration similarly focused on economic interests, hoping to avoid the more problematic racial conflict while taking advantage of the region's abundant mineral deposits. John Hoover, the U.S. Consul General in Rhodesia, rated minerals the number one American interest in the region.[35] The Central Intelligence Agency similarly emphasized the area's importance as a source of strategic raw materials. CIA analysts acknowledged that Salisbury's discriminatory policies "complicated political development and aggravated labor and racial tensions;" yet, they did not find this a compelling reason to decrease American

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[33] Edward Clegg, *Race and Politics: Partnership in the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1960), 128. See also T.R.M Creighton, *Southern Rhodesia and the Central African Federation: The Anatomy of Partnership* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1960), 40-48.
[34] See Clegg, *Race and Politics,* 171-175. Also Joshua Nkomo, *The Story of My Life* (London: Methuen London Ltd, 1984), 48-49.
[35] The Consul General at Salisbury (Hoover) to the Department of State, (8 May 1953), *Foreign Relations of the United States XI: Africa and South Asia 1952-1954* (Washington D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1983), 318-326. Promoting racial equality finished a distant fourth behind the Federation's potential as a safety valve for Europe's surplus population, and its potential military contribution to the defense of the free world.

investment in the Federation.[36] Throughout Eisenhower's eight years in office, the primary American objective in the region continued to be access to the copper deposits in Northern Rhodesia and chromium ore deposits in Southern Rhodesia.

Pressure for greater American support of African self-determination came almost entirely from outside the administration during this period. In 1959, Congressman Diggs returned to Ghana to attend the All Africa Peoples Conference hosted by President Kwame Nkrumah. Present in an unofficial capacity, Diggs joined over 300 delegates from various organizations who were also interested in discussing the struggle for African independence. The AFL-CIO and Associated Negro Press sent representatives. George Houser, a longtime ally of Representative Diggs on African affairs, led a group from the fledgling American Committee on Africa (ACOA). The organization was established in 1953 in Manhattan by Houser and other civil rights activists, including James Farmer. Houser, a prototypical white, sixties radical, sought to give active, tangible support to the liberation of Africa from colonialism, racism, and other social and political diseases. "In America," said Houser, "individuals and organizations are being compelled by the march of events to pay heed for the first time to a vast new portion of the world…the ACOA is being organized to help bridge this gap between Africans and Americans.[37] By the late 1950s, the ACOA enjoyed support from such well-known black leaders as A. Phillip Randolph and Martin Luther King, Jr. Diggs kept in close contact with the organization, becoming an official member of the ACOA National Committee.

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[36] "National Intelligence Estimate-83: Conditions and Trends in Tropical Africa," (22 December 1953), *Foreign Relations of the United States XI: Africa and South Asia 1952-1954* (Washington: US Government Printing Office, 1983), 82.
[37] Quoted in George Houser, *No One Can Stop the Rain* (New York: Pilgrim Press, 1989), 63

Under the Eisenhower administration, however, the ACOA continued to experience growing pains and had little influence on American policy in Africa.[38]

The conference provided an excellent opportunity for Diggs and members of the ACOA to meet and converse with leaders of the various African nationalist movements. Diggs and Houser met Joshua Nkomo for the first time in Ghana. The ACOA provided Nkomo with valuable support, beginning that same year when he visited the United States. The organization continued to support the nationalist leader into the 1960s and 1970s. Discussions with Nkomo convinced Diggs and other opponents of Southern Rhodesia that the Federation would inevitably collapse, and that American policy needed to adjust to this reality.

Diggs and his allies hoped the newly elected John F. Kennedy would make good on his campaign rhetoric and assign Africa a higher priority than his predecessor. In a nod to this constituency, Kennedy's first appointment was G. Mennen Williams to the post of Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs. The former Governor of Michigan, Williams, known as "Soapy" by his friends, was well known among supporters of African independence. Speaking to members of the ACOA in April, 1959, he had expressed his opinion that "every day, with every move of life in Africa, the new spirit is imparted to more and more Africans, spreading deeper and deeper into the bush, until soon no African will be without this new spirit – this surge of contagious expectation and enthusiasm." The push for independence would intensify as this new consciousness took hold, he concluded.[39]

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[38] Andrew DeRoche, *Black, White, and Chrome: The United States and Zimbabwe 1953-1998* (Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press, 2001), 69.
[39] House, Congressman Diggs of Michigan speaking about Africa Freedom Day, 86th Congress, 1st sess., *Congressional Record* (20 May 1959),105, pt. 7: 8693

Kennedy surrounded Williams with several like-minded liberal Democrats. Veteran politician Adlai Stevenson was chosen to head the American delegation at the United Nations and Wayne Fredericks was wooed away from the Ford Foundation to serve as Williams' deputy. Chester Bowles was selected as the Undersecretary of State. Like Williams, Bowles held deeply rooted anti-colonialist, nationalist beliefs. He was an early advocate of American acceptance of non-aligned countries, heralding the Bandung Conference in 1955, and joining Representative Adam Clayton Powell in urging the U.S. to send an official delegation. Throughout the 1950s Bowles warned American policymakers not to overreact to agreements between developing nations and the communist world. Along with Williams and Fredericks, Bowles set out to clarify United States support for African self-determination. [40]

Like Diggs, Williams believed the federation's breakup was imminent. Intelligence estimates produced within the State Department and CIA supported these predictions. Officials in the Department of State criticized Salisbury's pace of social and political reform, and blamed the Federation's problems on the whites' virulent racism. Within five years, they predicted, Nyasaland would split from the Federation and Northern Rhodesia would follow shortly thereafter.[41] The CIA had gradually come to the same conclusion. In April, 1961, the agency issued a report entitled "Probable Developments in Colonial Africa." With regard to the Federation's future, the authors predicted that "over the next three years, virtually all the remaining British dependent territories in Africa… will almost certainly become independent." Agency officials

[40] Howard B. Schaffer, *Chester Bowles: New Dealer in the Cold War* (Harvard U Press, 1993), 193-195.
[41] "National Intelligence Estimate 76-59: The Outlook in East, Central, and South Africa," (20 October 1959), *Foreign Relations of the United States XIV: Africa 1958-1960* (Washington, US Government Printing Office, 1992), 59-60.

further contended that "the areas containing sizable European populations (notably Kenya, the Rhodesias, Angola, and Mozambique) are the principal danger points for racial strife."[42]

Kennedy hoped to steer a moderate approach, refraining from any major initiatives toward the Federation. Unfortunately, it soon became apparent that it would be impossible for the American policymakers to placate black Africa without inflaming the white minorities on the continent. In May of 1961, Kennedy hosted Dr. Hastings Banda, President of the Malawi Congress Party of Nyasaland. Banda complained that the Federation had been formed as a vehicle to prevent states like Nyasaland from moving toward eventual independence. President Kennedy promised the doctor that he could count on the President's continuing personal interest in developments in Nyasaland.[43] Meanwhile, G. Mennen Williams took the administration's message directly to black Africa, pledging greater American support of the liberation movements on the continent. Speaking to a crowd in Nairobi, Kenya, Williams assured his audience that American policy was now based on the belief that "Africa is for the Africans."[44]

The administration's public support of African nationalism aroused anxiety among the white population of southern Africa. On a trip to Northern Rhodesia in August, 1961, Williams discovered personally how emotional the situation had become. Preparing to depart from the airport in Lusaka, Zambia, the American official was accosted by a white Rhodesian, Stuart Finley-Bissett. Recognizing Williams, Findley-

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[42] "National Intelligence Estimate 60/70-61: Probable Developments in Colonial Africa," (11 April 1961), *Foreign Relations of the United States, XXI: Africa 1961-1963* (Washington DC: US Government Printing Office, 1994): 284-285.
[43] "Memorandum of Conversation between President Kennedy and Dr. Hastings Banda," (2 May 1961), *Foreign Relations of the United States XXI: Africa 1961-1963,* 508-509.
[44] Quoted in Thomas J. Noer, *The Cold War and Black Liberation: The United States and White Rule in Africa, 1948-1968* (Columbia, MO: University of Missouri Press, 1985), 69.

Bissett calmly walked up and punched the assistant secretary in the nose. Trying to avoid embarrassment, the State Department decided not to press charges, leaving the case to the Rhodesian legal system, which imposed a minimal fine for the assault and released the accused.[45]

Finley-Bissett was representative of a growing discontent among white Rhodesians who believed that the young American president was coddling pro-communist revolutionary movements in Africa. They were not alone in this outlook. Rhodesia, along with the other two minority regimes in the region, enjoyed support from prominent individuals, most notably, the former Secretary of State Dean Acheson. Acheson was vocal in his contempt for the emerging nonwhite states of the developing world. One biographer attributed these misgivings to Acheson's paternalistic stance toward nonwhites and his constant fear of Soviet subversion. Moreover, "to his last breath, Dean Acheson was an unrepentant, unreconstructed colonialist where black Africa was concerned." He detested the "international orphan asylum, the United Nations," and looked upon the Afro-Asian bloc with contempt.[46] Thus, for the former secretary of state, Southern Rhodesia was "a beacon of European light in a dark continent being overrun by anarchy, Marxism, and demonic black-power propaganda."[47]

Acheson was openly critical of the foreign policy team assembled by Kennedy. His concerns were echoed by veteran African Affairs official Joseph Satterthwaite who constantly butted heads with Williams over the latter's incessant promotion of African nationalism. Acheson argued that the progressive forces within the new administration –

[45] DeRoche, *Chrome,* 54-55.
[46] Douglas Brinkley, *Dean Acheson: the Cold War Years 1953-1971* (New Haven CT: Yale University Press, 1992), 327, 304
[47] Brinkley, *Acheson,* 316

including Williams, Chester Bowles, Wayne Fredericks, and Adlai Stevenson – were unprepared to deal with the realities of international affairs. They were overly altruistic "woolyheaded liberals," he asserted, "whose only real asset was their political clout." He attributed their blind support for communist dominated nationalist movements to the group's diplomatic inexperience.[48]

In the early months of the administration, Acheson persisted in his attacks against Bowles and promoted the rise of Undersecretary for Economic Affairs, George Ball. Partially as the result of Acheson's lobbying efforts, Ball replaced Bowles as Undersecretary of State in December, 1961. Like Acheson and Satterthwaite, Ball questioned the wisdom of supporting the liberation movements in southern Africa. Instead, he favored closer ties with the staunchly anticommunist minority regimes of southern Africa. He joined Secretary of State Dean Rusk, Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara, and National Security Advisor McGeorge Bundy in downplaying the importance of nationalist movements. They argued that often, as in the case of Vietnam, it was more important for the United States to oppose communism than decolonization since many of the independence movements were supported by Moscow.[49]

Working in concert with Williams and Fredericks, Congressman Diggs sought to dispel the notion that the white regimes of southern Africa were engaged in a struggle against communist inspired revolutionaries. They worried that communism was being used by the minority regimes to obscure the horrors of their respective internal policies from American policymakers. For twenty years, they complained, the motor generator of U.S. foreign policy had been anti-Communism. This was the force that mobilized the

[48] Ibid., 304
[49] Ball, *Discipline,* 252-253

great bulk of U.S. foreign economic and military aid. Many Americans had practically come to identify foreign affairs with anticommunism. Portuguese colonialism and Rhodesian and South African apartheid were an abomination, but those countries continued to use "the bogey of communism" to involve the United States in their internal problems. The continued equivocation of the Johnson and Nixon administrations encouraged a growing body of pseudo-scholars, reactionary politicians, and ambitious bureaucrats willing to temporize with the apartheid regimes.[50]

The bureaucratic infighting over Africa policy continued after President Kennedy's assassination. During Lyndon Johnson's administration, Williams and other leading Africanists were largely marginalized. In his book, *The Great Powers in Africa,* Waldemar Nielson suggests that within the bureaucracy, the pro-African viewpoint was often inadequately defended. In Nielson's opinion, "Assistant Secretary Williams, who swung an effective broad-sword in the area of general salesmanship and political speechmaking, had neither the taste nor the talent…required in day to day internal staff debate."[51] Wayne Fredericks, Williams' deputy, was a more persistent advocate of the pro-African viewpoint. Anthony Lake, National Security Advisor under Jimmy Carter, suggested that Fredericks was also unsuccessful, however, because "he was often too obviously an advocate to be effective in a bureaucracy which prefers the passive to the active voice and prizes the illusion of objectivity when approaching foreign policy problems."[52] It is interesting to note that Williams' ineffectiveness allegedly stemmed

[50] House Committee on Foreign Affairs, *Policy Toward Africa for the Seventies: Hearings before the Subcommittee on Africa,* 91st Congress, 2nd sess., (17 March 1970), 5, 84-86.
[51] Waldemar Neilson, *The Great Powers and Africa* (New York: Praeger, 1969), 267.
[52] Anthony Lake, *The Tar Baby Option: American Policy Towards Southern Rhodesia* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1976), 65

from a lack of aggressiveness, while Fredericks suffered from too vocal a stance. Whatever their shortcomings, within the government they came to be opposed by virtually the entire old-line Foreign Service establishment led by Dean Acheson, and their influence steadily declined. Outside the administration, they became the target of a sustained barrage of criticism from Republicans in Congress, much of the press, and certain influential and conservative Democrats.

Lyndon Johnson and Rhodesian Independence

Throughout 1962 and 1963 Nyasaland moved ever closer to independence under the black majority, with Northern Rhodesia close behind. Southern Rhodesia continued to provide a great deal of anxiety for American policymakers, though. After failing to achieve a settlement with Joshua Nkomo's newly formed Zimbabwe African People's Union Party (ZAPU) during 1962, Prime Minister Edgar Whitehead was replaced by Winston Field, a right-wing candidate from the extremist Rhodesian Front Party.[53] Meeting with the new Prime Minister in February, 1963, Williams was alarmed by Field's insistence that Southern Rhodesia be granted independence from the Commonwealth if that was to be the fate of Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland. The official policy of London and Washington was that independence in Southern Rhodesia would not be granted until the white government extended equality of political and economic opportunity to its majority African population. It was possible, however that the Rhodesians would unilaterally declare independence in the face of British opposition.

[53] Kenneth Young, *Rhodesia,* 67, 72-86

Williams feared such an occurrence would exacerbate tensions in the area. He urged administration officials to pressure the British into "executing a more forthcoming Southern Rhodesian program."[54]

On January 1, 1964, the Rhodesian Federation officially came to an end. The situation became more complex in April when the Rhodesian Front, dissatisfied with Field's progress toward independence, replaced him in favor of the relatively obscure Ian Duncan Smith. Members of the State Department knew enough about Smith to be concerned about his selection to the position of Prime Minister. He was a firm advocate of white domination and appeared unafraid of the implications of a unilateral declaration of independence. Undersecretary of State Ball considered Smith's victory a death knell for any hope of a negotiated settlement. He alerted U.S. ambassadors throughout Africa that a unilateral declaration of independence was likely and the United States could do little to stop it.[55]

As expected, Smith immediately set out to make good on Field's earlier pledge to purge the black African threat. Infighting had already reduced ZAPU's effectiveness during the previous year. Dissatisfied with Nkomo's leadership, some of ZAPU's membership, led by Robert Mugabe and Ndabaningi Sithole, had broken away to create their own nationalist party. Mugabe and Sithole formed the Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU) in August of 1963. What followed was a massive outbreak of black on black violence as the two organizations vied for preeminence. Taking advantage of the disorder within the nationalist movement, Smith began imprisoning its members. Nkomo was incarcerated in April of 1964 and remained in Rhodesian custody for ten years.

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[54] Williams quoted in DeRoche, *Chrome,* 79.
[55] Noer, *Black Liberation*, 190.

Sithole and Mugabe followed their former ally into jail shortly thereafter. With its leaders imprisoned, the threat from the nationalists subsided dramatically. The Zimbabwe liberation movement did not recover until well into the 1970s.[56]

Having removed the nationalist threat, Smith next turned to British and American responses to Rhodesian independence. In October, 1964 the British Labor Party took control of Parliament, inserting Harold Wilson as the new Prime Minister. Wilson immediately declared that Great Britain would not accept Salisbury's independence from the British Commonwealth without a guarantee that majority rule would be implemented. He warned Smith that a unilateral declaration of independence would only spell isolation and economic disaster for the Rhodesians. American officials, unsure that Smith was receiving the often mixed signals being sent by London, also decided to intervene. In a letter to Smith, George Ball reiterated American support for the British position and threatened economic repercussions should independence be declared unilaterally. According to Ball, "it would be a grievous error to assume the United States could in any way condone an attempt of the Government of Southern Rhodesia by unilateral action to deal with such important issues as are involved in the discussions which concern the future of your country."[57] In October, the United Nations General Assembly sought to solidify world opposition against Salisbury, voting 107 to 2 to support British denial of Rhodesian independence.[58]

Threats from the United Nations and British and American officials went largely unheeded, however. Campaigning for re-election in the spring of 1965, Smith promised

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[56] Young, *Rhodesia,* 118.
[57] DeRoche, *Chrome,* 101
[58] House, Congressman Derwinski of Illinois speaking about a significant vote in the United Nations, 89th Congress, 1st seess., *Congressional Record* (14 October 1965), 111, p. 29: A5819

white Rhodesians that he would bring them independence with or without British consent. He reassured the white community that Rhodesia would survive even in the event of British and American sanctions. Re-elected by a wide margin in May, Smith's mandate seemed clear. Recognizing that Rhodesian independence was imminent, Donald Fraser admitted to his colleagues, "the probabilities are…that the whites in Southern Rhodesia…will proceed in defiance of the British." If this were the case, mused Fraser, it was imperative that the United States use its position of world leadership to remove the illegal regime by all necessary means, including the use of force.[59] On November 11, 1965, Salisbury lived up to expectations and officially declared independence from the British Commonwealth. In the aftermath of Smith's declaration others picked up on Fraser's message. James Farmer suggested that the United States needed to move ahead of the British on the issue and impose full sanctions against Salisbury. Representative Adam Clayton Powell agreed, favoring a worldwide economic boycott.[60]

Faced with mounting pressure from the nations of black Africa which called for a forceful response, Britain and the United States hoped to move quickly enough to forestall African escalation. Choosing a "quick kill" approach as opposed to a strategy of slower economic strangulation, London requested that other nations join it in imposing voluntary economic sanctions on Southern Rhodesia.[61] The Johnson administration generously cooperated by recalling the U.S. Consul General from Salisbury, immediately imposing a comprehensive embargo on all arms and military equipment to Rhodesia, and

[59] House, Congressman Fraser of Minnesota speaking in opposition to policy in Southern Rhodesia, 89th Congress, 1st sess., *Congressional Record* (22 October 1965), 111, pt. 21: 28477.
[60] DeRoche, *Chrome,* 115
[61] Komer expresses doubts that slow strangulation could be successful. See "Komer to Bundy," (6 Dec 1965), *Foreign Relations of the United States XXIV: Africa 1964-1968* (Washington D.C.: United States Government Printing Office, 1999), 855

prohibiting all exports of petroleum and petroleum products to Salisbury, under the provisions of the Export Control Act of 1949. The White House also convinced the American business community to respect the British ban on chrome imports, which most companies did at considerable cost to themselves.[62]

By early 1965, Johnson had recognized that it might be politically advantageous to take a stand against the white minority in Rhodesia. Worried that American prestige on the continent was declining, Robert Komer, Deputy Special Assistant for National Security Affairs, suggested that the Johnson administration could resuscitate its image with a stronger stand against racism in Africa. South Africa seemed the most obvious target, but its white-settler movement was far too entrenched. Its economic and strategic importance to the West also made policymakers reluctant to impose harsh sanctions against Pretoria. Southern Rhodesia on the other hand was not crucial to American interest. As Komer admitted, "Rhodesia itself isn't very important to us…the point is it is critical to all the other Africans. They see it as a straight anti-colonialist issue and all their anti-white instincts are aroused, so our stance on this issue will greatly affect our influence throughout Africa."[63]

Members of the Johnson administration believed this position would be popular among African Americans as well. Many civil rights leaders -- including Whitney Young, Roy Wilkins, and Martin Luther King, Jr. -- advocated economic sanctions against Salisbury. The benefits gained from black support, destined to become more important with the passage of the Voting Rights Act, appeared to outweigh any

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[62] House, Congressman Ashbrook of Ohio speaking against Rhodesian Sanctions, 89th Congress, 2nd sess., *Congressional Record* (23 March 1966), 112, pt. 5: 6615.
[63] "Komer to Bundy," *Foreign Relations of the United States XXIV: Africa 1964-1968,* (6 Dec 1965), 854-855

disadvantages. Komer, argued, for example, that the policy was "a cheap way" to "keep the civil rights constituency quiet on at least one issue."[64] White House predictions seemed well-founded as the administration's policy earned wide praise from the civil rights community.

G. Mennen Williams, on his way out at the State Department, supported the administration's policy, asserting that "American reaction to the illegal seizure of power by the Smith regime was immediate and positive…we have given many concrete evidences of our support of the British program of economic, political, and psychological countermeasures." Furthermore, Williams was "pleased to acknowledge the widespread support our actions have received in the U.S. press, in American business circles, and from the general public."[65] Diggs, although slightly disappointed that Johnson had ruled out direct military intervention, was still forced to admit to associates his belief that "Leadership in U.S. foreign policy is today stronger than it has been for many years."[66]

Richard Nixon and Africa

Despite the influence of conservative elements in steering Nixon into the White House in 1968, Congressman Diggs was cautiously optimistic that the new administration would be sensitive to African self-determination. He had been part of Nixon's delegation to Ghana in 1957 and was impressed by the then Vice President's speech during the independence ceremony. Upon his return to the United States, Nixon championed the creation of the African Bureau of the State Department, asserting that "there must be a

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[64] Ibid., 854

[65] G. Mennen Williams, "Address Before the International Relations Council, South Bend, Indiana," reprinted in House, Representative Brademas of Indiana speaking in support of Rhodesian sanctions, 89th Congress, 2nd sess., *Congressional Record (*16 February 1966), 112, pt. : A788.

[66] House, Congressman Diggs of Michigan speaking about strong foreign policy leadership under President Johnson," 90th Congress, 1st sess., *Congressional Record* (18 July 1967), 113, pt. 37: A3595.

corresponding realization throughout the Executive Branches of Government, throughout the Congress and throughout the nation of the growing importance of Africa to the future of the United States and the Free World and the necessity of assigning higher priority to our relations with that area."[67] Diggs was thus hopeful that the new president recognized the need to pursue an enlightened policy on the continent.

Early statements suggested that Diggs' patience might be rewarded. Testifying before the Subcommittee on Africa, David Newsom, Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs, declared that "we (the U.S.) want diplomatic relations under conditions of mutual respect with all the African nations. We seek an Africa which has no cold war rivalry – we desire no military alliance or spheres of influence."[68] With respect to the minority governments of southern Africa, Nixon also articulated a policy that seemed to mesh with caucus interests. "Clearly there is no question of the U.S. condoning, or acquiescing in, the racial policies of the white-ruled regimes," declared the new President. "For moral as well as historical reasons, the U.S. stands firmly for the principles of racial equality and self-determination."[69] On the surface, it seemed that Nixon's trip to the continent while vice-president had convinced him of the increasing geopolitical importance of independent black Africa. It soon became apparent, however, that Nixon and his advisors were unable to keep the struggle with the Soviets from intruding into their deliberations regarding American policy toward Africa.

In reality, Nixon had never viewed Africa outside of a Cold War context, despite assertions to the contrary. Returning from Ghana in March 1957, Nixon, indeed, produced a comprehensive report, stressing Africa's importance. In it, he recommended

[67] House Committee on Foreign Affairs, *Policy Toward Africa*, 79.
[68] Ibid., 157.

that the State Department take immediate steps to strengthen its representation in Africa, "both quantitatively and qualitatively."[70] These steps would also include the creation of a separate Bureau for African Affairs within the State Department. Nixon was instrumental in the formation of the new Bureau in August of 1958, convincing Congress that it was necessary since Africa was destined to become an important Cold War battleground. He warned that the administration needed to be sensitive to the fact that newly independent states were rapidly emerging from among the dependent territories of Africa. "We should begin to lay our plans for conducting direct relations with those states and for assuring that when they emerge into independent status, we have laid the best possible foundation for a close relationship with the United States," argued the vice president.[71]

Nixon's report was widely acclaimed as "a milestone in the development of American policy toward Africa," helping to bring African affairs out of bureaucratic limbo.[72] Yet, Nixon's report indicated that Africa was not important for ideological or altruistic reasons; instead, he argued, it provided a new arena where the containment doctrine could be applied and the anticommunist struggle waged. During a meeting of the National Security Council, Nixon alerted his colleagues to a tendency to underestimate the communist threat in Africa "After all, we do not have to count only card bearing Communists as a measure of the Communist threat," Nixon reminded those present. In Africa, the Vice President predicted, "the Communists will clothe themselves in Islamic,

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[69] Ibid., 157.
[70] "Report to the President on the Vice President's Visit to Africa," *Foreign Relations of the United States of America XVIII: Africa 1955-1957* (Washington: US Government Printing Office, 1989), 65.
[71] "Report on Vice President's Visit," *Foreign Relations of the United States: Africa 1955-1957,* 65.
[72] Neilson, *The Great Powers*, 267

racist, anti-racist, or nationalist clothing." The potential danger of Communist penetration was great, "because the Communists were always in a position to support and take advantage of extremist elements, where the United States could not do so."[73]

In his eight years out of public office, little changed in terms of Nixon's overall foreign policy outlook. He did recognize, however, that the international scene had changed drastically since the late fifties. In a speech before members of the Bohemian Club in San Francisco shortly before entering the White House, Nixon observed that after months of travel to several countries, he was left with one striking impression: "We live in a new world." Nixon advised his audience to look at the example of Africa. Only ten years before, Ethiopia and Liberia had been the only independent countries in Black Africa. "Today there are thirty independent countries," declared Nixon. "Fifteen of these countries have populations less than the State of Maryland, and each has a vote in the United Nations Assembly equal to that of the United States," he continued.[74]

A changing world required new strategies. Failure to recognize that old policies were no longer sufficient risked further Soviet penetration of the developing world. Immediately upon entering the White House, Nixon promised a comprehensive review of American foreign policy. The task fell to Nixon's National Security Advisor Henry Kissinger. Beginning as early as February, 1969, Kissinger ordered his staff to draw up a series of country and region specific evaluations with the intention of addressing the administration's long-term policy objectives. With regard to southern Africa, the task fell

[73] "Memorandum of Discussion at the 335th Meeting of the National Security Council," (August 22, 1957) *Foreign Relations of the United States: Africa 1955-1957*, 73.
[74] Richard Nixon, "Address to the Bohemian Club of San Francisco," (29 July 1967), *Foreign Relations of the United States: Foundations of Foreign Policy, 1969-1972* (Washington D.C.: United States Government Printing Office, 2003), 3-4.

to Roger Morris, who was responsible for African affairs on the National Security Council. Kissinger, worried that the State Department exercised too much control over the formulation of African related policy, ordered Morris to draw up a report detailing American policy options in southern Africa.[75]

The Africa Bureau within the State Department, led by Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs David Newsom, continued to argue that gradual disengagement with the white regimes was the most effective strategy. They pointed out that the national security study produced in the closing months of the Johnson administration was a preferable blueprint for dealing with the minority regimes. The paper advised a policy of sanctions and disengagement until the whites recognized that majority rule was inevitable.[76] The White House and members of the National Security Council remained dissatisfied with the Africa Bureau's conclusions, however. Kissinger and Morris argued that the State Department's position was entirely theoretical and failed to recognize that coercion in the past had only stiffened the unity and purpose of the besieged white minority, with little political return.[77]

Morris presented his final report to the National Security Council in December, 1969. As a result, the Nixon administration adopted a tentative policy of constructive engagement under which the U.S. would quietly improve official relations with the minority regimes of southern Africa. This was to include a partial relaxation of the arms embargo against South Africa as well as an avoidance of the Afrikaner's illegal

[75] For a thorough discussion of the bureaucratic wrangling surrounding the proposal see Lake, *Tar Baby*, 123-157.
[76] Ibid.,124-127.
[77] Roger Morris, *Uncertain Greatness: Henry Kissinger and American Foreign Policy* (New York: Quartet Books, 1977), 112.

administration of Namibia. It also precluded direct pressure on the Portuguese and Rhodesians, and advocated moderation of American rhetoric against the white governments. To balance its new emphasis on constructive engagement with the white minorities, the administration also decided to increase aid to black Africa [78]

The policy shift was reflective of a growing recognition among diplomats and academics that economic sanctions had thus far been an ineffective means of promoting reform. One scholar observed during the early 1970s that in analyzing the relationship between the United Nations and Southern Africa, "one must concede that the deterrent and coercive force of sanctions is weak on every account."[79] Another was even less optimistic, concluding: "The general picture is that economic sanctions have been unsuccessful as a means of influence in the international system."[80] In his reflections on government service published in 1968, George Ball agreed, observing that where military power was not employed and the enforcement of an embargo depended entirely on the agreement of nations, the result was more likely to be annoyance than hardship. Ball believed that "the psychology of the besieged is too perverse and complex to make such sanctions more than a blunt instrument."[81]

White House officials preferred that the particulars of NSC 39 be kept secret since it was to be a quiet and long-term relaxation of American relations with the minority regimes. Despite opposition to the new strategy, members of the State Department were happy to comply. If the policy were to become public, they feared it might endanger

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[78] National Security Council, "National Security Study Memorandum 39," reprinted in Kenneth Mokoena (ed), *South Africa and the United States: The Declassified History* (New York: New Press, 1993), 211.
[79] Margaret Doxey, "International Sanctions: A Framework for the Analysis with Special Reference to the U.N. and Southern Africa," *International Organization* 26(3), (Summer 1972), 547.
[80] Klaus E. Knorr, quoted in Chistopher Coker, *The United States and South Africa: 1968-1985* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1986), 29.
[81] Ball, *Discipline,* 245-254.

American relations with black Africa, as well as African Americans. Thus, in his testimony before the Subcommittee on Africa almost three months later, Newsom was still suggesting that "both the President and Secretary of State have demonstrated by word and action the importance they give to our relations with Africa." Secretary of State William Rogers had recently returned from a visit to the continent, and Newsom assured the subcommittee that in the months to come the administration would demonstrate its commitment to racial equality and self-determination. "We have reiterated our abhorrence of apartheid and have reaffirmed our intention to maintain our arms embargo on South Africa," stated Newsom.[82] Diggs remained skeptical. The congressman had come to believe that Africa policy was increasingly the domain of White House and National Security Council officials who were unsympathetic to African liberation movements. Events during Nixon's first year in office convinced Diggs that the administration sought to normalize relations with the white regimes of southern Africa.

Most disturbing was the White House's steadfast refusal to revisit the controversial decision reached by the Civil Aeronautics Board, authorizing South African Airlines to begin service in the United States. On March 25, 1969 South African Airlines celebrated its inaugural flight between Johannesburg and New York. In a fiery speech on the floor of the House, Diggs declared: "we oppose this extension of the South African apartheid system to this country…this new relationship with South Africa is inconsistent with our relationship with the black, independent states of Africa."[83] He further

[82] Committee on Foreign Relations, *Policy Toward Africa*, 157.
[83] House, Congressman Diggs of Michigan speaking against inaugural flight of South African Airlines, 91st Congress, 1st sess., *Congressional Record* (26 March 1969), 115, pt.6: 7790.

complained that because the South African government exercised a controlling interest in the airline, the action by the Civil Aeronautics Board was in direct defiance of the United Nations resolution passed by General Assembly in 1962, which specified member states should "refuse landing and passage facilities to all aircrafts belonging to the Government of South Africa and companies registered under South African law."[84]

Representative John Conyers suggested that the flights heralded "a dreadful day for America, especially black America as it marks a beginning of a tie between our country and one which stands against everything which we believe."[85] He commended Diggs, believing that "black Americans across the country greatly appreciate his action in bringing this very serious matter to the floor of the House of Representatives."[86] Like Diggs, he was disturbed by rumors that the board's decision had been reached after hearings restricted to airline executives and others, with a direct financial interest in the extension of services. He expressed solidarity with Diggs and George Houser from the ACOA, who had requested that the board reopen hearings on the issue. As a member of the ACOA's National Committee, Diggs was instrumental in helping Houser structure a response to the Board's decision.[87] He offered further assistance on the floor of the House, threatening to use his influence as chairman of the Subcommittee on Africa to instigate his own investigation into the issue. New hearings seemed appropriate argued Diggs, since, along with the ACOA, the National Student Association, the United Auto

[84] "Diggs against South African Airlines," *Congressional Record,* 7790
[85] House, Congressman Conyers of Michigan speaking against inaugural flight of South African Airlines, 91st Congress, 1st sess., *Congressional Record* (26 March 1969), 115, pt. : 7792.
[86] "Conyers against South African Airlines," *Congressional Record,* 7792
[87] Letter from George Houser to Charles C. Diggs, (23 January 1969), *CDC MSRC,* box 191, folder 4

Workers, and the Board of Christian Social Concerns of the United Methodist Church, wanted an opportunity to testify before the Civil Aeronautic Board.[88]

Despite Diggs' protests the Civil Aeronautics Board refused to suspend South African Airlines' landing permit; nor would it grant the Congressman's request to reopen hearings into the Board's decision. In a letter to Diggs, the board denied that the process had been secretive or corrupt, pointing out that notice of the pre-hearing conference had been published in the Federal Register on August 27, 1968. Under the board's rules of procedure, any person or group wishing to testify was required to file a petition for intervention before the pre-hearing conference. At the pre-hearing conference, testimony was heard from anyone who has filed such a petition. "In the South Africa Airways Case," said the letter, "no persons espousing the position set out in your letter indicated any interest in the case at that time by filing petitions for intervention." The letter implied that it had been the negligence of the ACOA and other groups which kept them from formally expressing their displeasure before the board. Unfortunately, their window appeared to have closed as the board did not believe it within the purview of the Nixon administration to reopen the case. Their conclusion was supported by "the general rule applicable to Board proceedings that the grant of a foreign air carrier permit cannot be recalled after the time for reconsideration of the action has expired and the authorization has become effective." The official time for seeking reconsideration had passed on November 29, 1968, once again without any petitions for reconsideration having been filed by Diggs or his supporters.[89]

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[88] "Diggs against South African Airlines," *Congressional Record,* 7792

[89] Letter from John Dregge Director, Community and Congressional Relations Civil Aeronautics Board to Charles Diggs, (1 April 1969), *CDC MSRC,* box 191, folder 21.

Still, the congressman was intent on providing a public forum where opponents of the administration's policy could voice their objections. Utilizing his position as chairman of the Subcommittee on Africa, Diggs held a series of hearings throughout late 1969 and into 1970 designed to highlight the risks involved in further engagement with minority governments of southern Africa. Listening to testimony from ACOA officials, scholars, members of the diplomatic community, and administration officials, the hearings solidified Diggs' sense that American policies were instrumental in propping up the minority regimes.[90] Armed with this knowledge, Diggs raised the specter that the United States might face a new Vietnam in southern Africa if the administration continued on its present course. According to Diggs, "Despite repression or denials, there are active freedom movements in the Portuguese colonies of Angola and Mozambique, Rhodesia, South-West Africa (Namibia), and even the Republic of South Africa." Soon, he predicted, these counties would explode in open warfare. There was no question in Diggs' mind that the liberation movements would succeed. It was merely of matter of time, a question of when, not if. When they were victorious, Diggs warned, they were going to remember who their true friends had been.[91]

Dissatisfied with the pace of the Nixon administration's disengagement from the white regimes of southern Africa, Diggs joined Representative Jonathan Bingham (D-NY) in drafting a sharply worded letter to the president demanding changes in the administration's policy toward Africa. In the letter, Bingham and Diggs requested that the United States more vigorously enforce the United Nations' sanctions against

[90] House Committee on Foreign Affairs, *Policy Toward Africa,* 86.
[91] Saul Friedman, "Diggs Says U.S. is Headed for New Vietnam in Africa," *Detroit Free Press* September 15, 1971

Rhodesia as well as urge Portugal to decolonize Mozambique and Angola. Most importantly, the United States needed to discourage investment and trade with the South African government and force it to relinquish administrative rights over Namibia.[92]

Diggs warned that the American relationship with the leaders of black Africa such as Kenneth Kaunda of Zambia and Julius Nyerere of Tanzania was in serious peril. Having recently signed the "Lusaka Manifesto," rejecting racialism within their own countries and declaring that "men have the right and duty to participate, as equal members…in their own government," Nyerere and Kaunda refused to accept the proposition that any individual or group had the right to govern any group of sane adults, without their consent.[93] These leaders were most concerned with the white regimes of southern Africa where there was an open and continued denial of the principles of human equality and national self-determination. To emphasize his point, Diggs shared with his colleagues conversations he had engaged in with Zambian President Kenneth Kaunda during a visit to Lusaka in August, 1969. Assessing Kaunda's statements and demeanor, Diggs concluded that the patience of independent Africa with the equivocal nature of U.S. policy had worn thin.[94] "It is difficult for Africans to understand that free enterprise permits companies to invest in Africa independent of American policies," explained Diggs. "Our policy of not encouraging or discouraging investment in South Africa and Rhodesia is not understood."

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[92] "Statement issued by Congressmen Charles C. Diggs and Jonathan Bingham," (9 March 1970), *CDC MSRC* box 191, folder 3

[93] House Committee on Foreign Affairs, *Report of Special Study Missions to Africa: The Faces of Africa, Diversity and Progress; Repression and Struggle,* 92nd Congress, 2nd sess, (August 1970): Appendix 4.

[94] "Congressmen Reid and Diggs meet with President Kaunda" *Associated Press,* August 20, 1969.

The Birth of the CBC

Loosely organized as the Democratic Select Committee, the nine African American members of the House opposed the Nixon administration on a range of issues, including desegregation, welfare reform, employment rights, and African self-determination. Unfortunately, the administration's apparent lack of concern with respect to black issues was highlighted by the president's refusal to schedule a meeting with black members of the House during his first eighteen months in office. On advice from Republican legislative leaders, and John Erlichman, the White House chief of staff, the president refused to discuss the plight of African Americans with the black representatives in Congress. Erlichmann accused them of attempting to use the presidency as a grandstand. "That group has been going around with Adam Clayton Powell, holding hearings and taking extremist positions. This looked to me like a setup," Erlichmann was quoted as saying.[95]

During an impassioned speech on the floor of Congress, Representative William Clay lambasted the president suggesting, "there is no question where Mr. Nixon has placed his priorities. He has traveled more than 35,000 miles in foreign countries. He has entertained hundreds of foreign diplomats but refuses to meet with the elected representatives of the black 'nation' within this country. It is pathetic that in all of the President's travels, he has not seen the suffering and deprivation of Watts, Hough, Harlem, Fillmore, or any of the other ghettos." Since assuming office, Nixon had traveled to all corners of the world pledging American support, and yet, he had not gone to black America. Race relations had not improved. Instead, they had advanced to a

[95] House, Congressman Clay of Missouri speaking on the president's refusal to reply to black demands, 91st Congress, 2nd sess., *Congressional Record* (27 July 1970), 116, pt. 12: 25966.

more critical state. The alienation between the black populace and the president was becoming as deep as it was dangerous, warned Clay. [96]

The relative inability of black legislators to gain an audience with the president was indicative of the decline of advocacy groups that had leaned toward the Democratic Party in 1968. After failing to win the White House, liberal groups like the DSC pledged to remain active on social issues. Almost a year after the election, the *New York Times* reported that these activists were learning the hard way "that survival is a difficult and often frustrating task."[97] Fearing the DSC would similarly languish in obscurity, Representative Clay began expressing dissatisfaction with the limited nature of the group. He and Congressman Stokes complained that the DSC did not reflect the rising capability of black legislators to constitute a power bloc deserving respect within Congress. The president's snub only highlighted the group's relative ineffectiveness as a legislative body.

The election of five new black candidates in the November elections – Charles Rangel (D-NY), Ralph Metcalfe (D-IL), Parren J. Mitchell (D-MD), George W. Collins (D-IL); and Ronald Dellums (D-CA) – further encouraged the idea of forming a formal coalition. Rangel and Metcalfe were set to replace Representatives Powell and Dawson respectfully, but the three others defeated white incumbents, raising the number of black congressional representatives to twelve. On New Year's Eve 1970, Clay drafted a memo warning that, "without adequate programming and planning, we (the DSC) might well degenerate into a Kongressional Koffee Klatch Klub." The memo called for the election

[96] House, Congressman Clay of Missouri speaking on the president's snub of black legislators , 91st Congress, 2nd sess., *Congressional Record* (18 May 1970), 116, pt. 12: 15836.
[97] Steven V. Roberts, "For Former Supporters of McCarthy and Kennedy, New Politics is a Many Splintered Thing," *New York Times*, October 5, 1969.

of officers, the establishment of an executive committee with authority to act on behalf of the entire group, and the formation of subcommittees in areas specific to black needs.[98] Clay's proposals immediately found support among his colleagues, old and new. All, excluding Nix, who remained resistant, found the prospects of forming a caucus attractive. Given the complexity of the legislative process, the ability of individual politicians to ensure that initiatives were on the congressional agenda, passed into law, and implemented, was modest. It was logical then, that black legislators would find their position enhanced if they formally organized themselves. A caucus would constitute a more powerful, symbolic expression of black representation than could an individual legislator. Furthermore, it would provide a more effective vehicle of agenda-setting and policy enactment, given its ability to aggregate priorities, introduce proposals, and act as a power broker in legislative bargaining.[99]

There were other incentives to caucus membership as well. Caucuses served as readily identifiable interest lobbies and provided access points in Congress for outside groups and individuals. Members could more easily hold informal hearings to supply information to Congress and to interested segments of the public. Finally, it would allow individuals' opportunities for issue specialization and enhance black legislators' relations with constituents and congressional colleagues.[100] Commenting on his support of Clay's proposal, Diggs remarked that the timing had been right: "People were raising serious questions about using confrontation techniques. We had the strength and the know-how to use them," observed Diggs.[101]

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[98] Clay, *Permanent Interests*, 116-117
[99] Barnett, "Illusions and Realities of Power," 39.
[100] Singh, *Black Caucus*, 23.
[101] Paul R. Hathaway, "The Black Caucus," *Essence*, October, 1971, 40.

With Dawson's retirement and Powell's electoral defeat, Charles Diggs officially became the senior African American member of the House of Representatives. The increased number of black House members led Diggs to call a meeting in the early weeks of 1971, to consider Clay's recommendations. In addition to authorizing formal elections of officers, naming an executive committee, and establishing subcommittees, the black legislators also discussed an appropriate name for the group. Proposed designations included "The Congressional Committee on Minority Rights," "The Congressional Committee on Minority Interests," and "The Congressional Committee for the Protection of Minority Rights." Some wanted a kind of all inclusive nomenclature so that at a future time Chicano, Puerto Rican, and Jewish members could join. In the end, members of the DSC decided that the new organization would be composed of black legislators exclusively, and that the word "black" should appear in the name. Rangel's suggestion that the group call itself the Congressional Black Caucus found unanimous consent because the name seemed to adequately describe the organization's mission. Protecting black interests was, after all, the primary reason most of the African American representatives had been sent to Capitol Hill. The name suggested a distinctive focus and met Clay's requirement that it be nonpartisan, a strategy aimed at inducing Senator Edward Brooke (R-MA) to join, along with any other black Republicans that might enter the House or Senate.[102]

In an effort to bring attention to the unfortunate lack of communication between black legislators and the administration, members of the newly formed Congressional Black Caucus also decided to boycott President Nixon's State of the Union Address in

[102] Singh, *Black Caucus,* 55-56.

January 1971. It was a technique that some of the younger blacks knew well. Rep. Clay got his political start by staging a sit-in at a bank in Missouri. Rep. Ronald Dellums was renowned for such political theater and was reputed to have "the showmanship of a Billy Sunday." These men, less reserved than the others, attempted to set the tone for the new black bloc. Yet, Clay and Dellums, as two of the most militant of the group, believed the boycott would be much more effective if the black members walked out on Nixon's address instead of announcing their absence in advance. Diggs and other senior members questioned the wisdom of this approach, recognizing that it would be dangerous to so blatantly disrespect both the president and the Congress of the United States. In the end, discussions between the twelve members led to an official announcement of their intended absence during the president's address.[103]

Critics complained that the boycott was merely "a piece of political theater by actors more eager to shock than to enlarge the public's warmth for their cause."[104] The script had obviously not been written for white America. There were those, both black and white, who felt the snub was irresponsible and disrespectful. Columnist Howard Woods of the *St. Louis Sentinel* complained about the newly formed CBC, and specifically Rep. Clay: while they had an opportunity in their elected positions to "rise to statesmanship," they continually missed the opportunity. He claimed that black legislators were somewhat disingenuous in their complaints. Negotiations had been underway to schedule a meeting between the two groups, despite the fact that the black

[103] Howard Woods, "The Boycott of the President," *St. Louis Sentinel*, February 6, 1971.
[104] Charles Bartlett, "Black Bloc Emerges as New Challenge to Nixon," *Chicago Sun,* January 27, 1971

bloc was entirely composed of Democrats, and there was no tradition requiring the president to sit down with a militant band of his opponents.[105]

Yet the boycott, while rude and offensive to some, clearly struck a responsive chord in black communities. *The Chicago Sun* reported that telephone checks around the country indicated that educated African Americans usually averse to such tactics were in favor of this one. They widely hailed the strategy as a proper utilization of the media to register the widespread disillusionment of the black community with the Nixon administration. It was ominous, reported the *Chicago Sun,* that the White House, trying to get some significant blacks to speak out against this discourtesy to the President, could find no one. Whitney Young, highly controversial since he had met with President Nixon, offered private criticism. But entrepreneurs, like the Reverend Leon Sullivan of Philadelphia, beneficiaries of the black capitalism program, remained silent.[106]

Under attack from blacks and whites on both sides of the aisle, Nixon relented and agreed to schedule a meeting with black legislators. The impasse was finally broken by Senator Edward Brooke, a black Republican from Massachusetts. Brooke had curried disfavor with his counterparts in the House by ignoring their boycott of Nixon's address. Explaining his presence, Brooke argued that he respected "the office of president and the man who holds that office…It is my duty as a United States senator to be present, to listen and consider his recommendations."[107] Senator Brooke's political situation was somewhat different than his counterparts in the House. Not only was he the only black Republican in either body, but his constituency was predominantly white. With regard to

[105] Woods, "Boycott," Jan. 27, 1971
[106] Bartlett, "Black Bloc," Jan. 27, 1971
[107] Edward Brooke quoted Clay, *Permanent Interests,* 143

Brooke's situation, Rep. Augustus Hawkins conceded that "Senator Brooke's problems are somewhat different from ours. We represent ghettos. Our problems are the problems of the ghetto. He represents a state, and a state with a small black population."[108] Nonetheless, he still spoke out in his own way, and members of the fledgling Black Caucus considered him an important, albeit at times reluctant, ally in the Senate.

Meeting with Nixon in late March, the twelve black members of the House reaffirmed their opinion that "our concerns and obligations as members of Congress do not stop at the boundaries of our districts; our concerns are national and international in scope. We are petitioned daily by citizens living hundreds of miles from our districts who look on us as Congressmen-at-large for black people and poor people in the United States." "We think it of singular significance," they continued, "that the leaders of national and local civil rights and human rights organizations, and hundreds of private citizens from all walks of life, have asked us to express their general and specific concerns."[109] They would be remiss, members of the CBC informed the president, if they were not honest and forthright in presenting the view of the black community. "That view is that the representatives of this administration, by word and deed, have at crucial points retreated from the national commitment to make Americans of all races and cultures equal in the eyes of their government – to make equal the poor as well as the rich, urban and rural dwellers as well as those who live in the suburbs." They warned White House officials that blacks were no longer asking for equality as a rhetorical

[108] Augustus Hawkins quoted in Ibid., 143.
[109] House, Congressional Black Caucus' Recommendations to President Nixon, 92nd Congress, 1st sess., *Congressional Record* (30 March 1971), 117, pt. 7:8710.

promise. They were demanding from the national administration, and from elected officials without regard to party affiliation, the only kind of equality that ultimately had any real meaning – equality of results.[110]

As a concrete manifestation of these demands, the CBC presented the president with over fifty recommendations designed to address the concerns of the black community. The majority of the CBC proposals dealt with domestic issues including welfare reform, employment rights, poverty programming, housing and urban development, and civil rights. Furthermore, they urged Nixon to reverse the conservative trends of his first two years in office by instructing the attorney general to investigate and correct the growing disenfranchisement of blacks and other minorities in the South and Southwest, especially Mississippi. In an effort to combat the discrimination and oppression that was re-entrenching itself in American society, the CBC requested that the president appoint more black federal judges and fill high level federal legal positions with blacks as well.[111]

As the CBC's leading expert on international policy, Diggs outlined the groups' foreign policy platform. First, they called for a rapid disengagement from Southeast Asia. Next, they favored a drastic reduction in military expenditures and the redistribution of those funds to finance much needed domestic programs. Turning to Africa, Diggs informed Nixon that American relations with the countries of southern Africa were in need of a major overhaul. The United States needed to take the lead in isolating the Republic of South Africa, the world's most racist state. Disincentives should be developed to discourage further private American investment there. Similar

[110] CBC Recommendations, *Congressional Record,* (30 Mar. 1971): 8710.
[111] Ibid, 8712.

policies were to be applied to the minority government of Rhodesia and the Portuguese colonial authority in Mozambique and Angola. On the other hand, private and government investment should be encouraged in independent Africa to examine the potential for profitable relations with the majority-ruled nations on the continent. Finally, in an effort to promote a greater voice for African Americans in foreign affairs, Diggs urged the president to give blacks and other minorities a larger role in foreign policy formulation. He encouraged the administration to increase its recruitment of minority Americans for foreign policy positions, and improve the promotion rate of minorities within the State Department and related agencies.[112]

The meeting of CBC and White House officials ended on seemingly positive terms. The president and his representatives called the meeting "fruitful and worthwhile." Nixon promised to form a committee of five White House staffers to look over the CBC's recommendations.[113] Despite almost two years of acrimony between the two parties, members of the CBC expressed a similar desire that the two sides could work together in a statement following the meeting. "We look forward to the opportunity to work cooperatively with you [Nixon] and with other representatives of your Administration on the issues we have laid before you today and on others which we hope to consider with you in the future." Diggs, for one, believed that the country was better off because Nixon had realized "that there is a group in Congress that is uniquely sensitive to a very large section of this country."[114]

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[112] Ibid., 8713-8714.
[113] Special Assistant Clark MacGregor, legal counselor Robert Finch , assistant Donald Rumsfeld, special council Leonard Garment and special assistant Robert Brown were later assigned to the task).
[114] Ibid., 8714.

At a press conference held the following day, however, the tone of the CBC hardened considerably. Rep. Augustus Hawkins attacked the administration on equal employment and manpower training needs. Congressman Parren Mitchell complained that the administration still refused to use its authority to end segregated housing patterns. Ronald Dellums demanded a complete withdrawal of American troops from Southeast Asia. Representative Clay expressed cautious optimism about Nixon: "He listened, but we don't know if he heard. If he did not hear, he and the country will suffer." Diggs concluded the group's remarks by issuing a May 17 deadline by which time he expected the White House to have developed an appropriate response to their concerns.

Conclusion

The meeting attracted widespread publicity and boosted the CBC's leadership credentials. By the early 1970s, members of the media were preoccupied with racial incidents, and they began publicizing the responses of individual CBC members to them. The black media had already shown interest in the fledgling organization, but now they were the focus of the white media as well. Newsworthy before the CBC's creation, black legislators received heightened attention after the formation of the caucus. Throughout the first year of the organization's existence, CBC members were regularly invited to appear on national talk shows and were featured in several in-depth newspaper stories. Encouraged, black legislators immediately sought to translate their newfound celebrity into a more prominent position within the black community.

Writing in the *Washington Post*, William Raspberry articulated the concerns of many blacks when he suggested that "since the death of Martin Luther King Jr, there has been no nationally recognized black leader…." As a result, he concluded that "there is a pervasive feeling that nothing is happening." The assassinations of Medgar Evers and

Malcolm X; the jailing and persecution of H. Rap Brown, Stokely Carmichael, and Eldridge Cleaver; the plot to annihilate the Black Panthers; and the scheme to embarrass and disgrace Martin Luther King, Jr., before he too was finally murdered, were persistent reminders of the deterioration of the black leadership ranks. The death of Whitney Young during the early months of 1971 underscored the continuing decline of capable and charismatic black leaders. Within the civil rights community, his death was viewed as more than a loss for the National Urban League; rather, suggested one observer, "it was the loss of the last central charismatic leader who could be assured of gaining national attention." Young's death led many of his associates to ask what would become of black leadership.[115]

Raspberry, for one, believed that black legislators were the most qualified to fill the leadership void. Caucus members boasted impressive credentials he argued: "Knowledge from being where most of the action is; political savvy reflected in the fact of their election to Congress; influence that comes from having well-known names; sensitivity to the needs of black people (insensitive politicians do not win elections); and ability, through access to the legislative process and to the press to generate publicity for their ideas."[116] Generally, individuals and groups making contact with the caucus viewed it as a body capable of providing a functional unity for divergent black interests and also capable of giving vast numbers of blacks some access to government. There was also a feeling among many observers that the new bloc would be able to influence the national Democratic Party and particularly the aspirants for the presidential nomination the

[115] Robert C. Maynard, "Rights Movement: A Cause in Search of a Leader," *Washington Post*, March 22, 1971
[116] William Raspberry, "Black Leaders Emerge," *Washington Post*, November 12, 1971

following year. For their part, members of the CBC encouraged this perception. "There is a stability in the congressional group that you don't find in other segments of the black community," Diggs alleged.[117]

Raspberry was representative of a growing feeling in the early months of 1971that the caucus represented a new form of black leadership by committee. Members of the CBC did not fit into the traditional molds ascribed to black leaders. The organization seemed resistant to the provincialism that tended to cripple individual leaders such as Dr. King, Mr. Young, Stokley Carmichael, and Roy Wilkins. Since its members did not come from a single geographic area, the caucus was in a good position to formulate generalized plans and approaches. Nor did they generally owe their elections in any large measure to liberal, labor, or business groups. They were not beholden to them for any financial support. They were truly uninhibited and free to decide their own issues, formulate their own policies, and advance their own programs.

Thus, in identifying the organization's goals, members of the CBC laid out an ambitious agenda "to set up a national system of communications with the black community to allow us to touch base with black businesses, the black press and all other black organizations." Speaking on WNBC's "Open Circuit," Charles Rangel reassured black America that "Black people throughout the country, whether they have a black congressman or not, now have a body to deal with. Not a black, a Puerto Rican, a brown or yellow man can now say he doesn't have a friend in Congress."[118] Nor did black legislators mean for this promise to end at the water's edge, as they consistently spoke out in support of the colored peoples of the developing world.

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[117] Maynard, "Rights Movement," Mar. 22, 1971
[118] "Blacks in House Seeking Negro Leadership Nationally," *New York Times*, March 29, 1971

Chapter Two
The Rhodesia Lobby, the CBC, and the Byrd Amendment

The CBC's meeting with administration officials in March, 1971 demonstrated the organization's ability to aggregate black priorities; subsequent hearings and investigations were scheduled to further develop these functions and, simultaneously, to increase popular black endorsement of the group's claims to national leadership. Between July, 1971 and September, 1972, the CBC sponsored seven national conferences (on black health, the communications industry, the media, black business, education, national priorities, and black politics) and held three public hearings (on racism in the military, "government lawlessness," and Africa policy) in cities across the country. With respect to American policy towards Africa, Congressman Diggs used his subcommittee as a forum where advocates of the various African liberation movements, academics, and current and former diplomats could meet to discuss the situation in southern Africa. He viewed these early hearings as a way to fill the public's knowledge deficiency with respect to African issues, and build public support for the liberation movements on the continent.

Congressman Diggs supported the CBC's formation, in part, because he believed a coalition with his black colleagues would assist him in pushing his agenda in Africa. During the group's first year in existence, however, the administration's policy of constructive engagement with the white governments of southern Africa became more pronounced. The lavish reception afforded the South African Ambassador Johan Samuel Frederick Botha in September, 1971, was but one example of the administration's close

relationship with the Afrikaner government. Toasting his American hosts, Botha declared that "South Africa cherishes its historic association with the United States, an association which has its origins in the common heritage we share." "These ties have been further forged in many fields," continued Botha. "Our countrymen have fought shoulder to shoulder in defense of international security. Our scientists and technicians have collaborated fruitfully in a number of major projects for our mutual benefit and that of mankind as a whole."[1] Nixon echoed the ambassador's sentiment, stating that "the U.S., too, values its long association with South Africa. The many similar attributes of both countries – historical, cultural, geographical – facilitate our mutual exchange of ideas and discussion of issues."[2]

As disturbing as these statements were, by 1971 Pretoria had ceased to be the CBC's dominant concern in southern Africa. This chapter explores the congressional debate regarding Rhodesian sanctions from 1966 through 1974. It begins with the emergence of the Rhodesia lobby – a coalition of conservative members of Congress, pro-Salisbury organizations, and business officials, who opposed Johnson's decision to impose sanctions against Salisbury – exploring the racial politics that were a major factor in the group's early success. Led by Senator Strom J. Thurmond, the Rhodesia Lobby was made up of the same reactionary elements that opposed domestic civil rights reform. The "southern strategy" utilized by Richard Nixon to win the presidency quickly escalated into a "southern Africa strategy" as well, with conservative elements pushing for greater engagement with the white governments in southern Africa. Sensing

[1] Johan Samuel Frederick Botha, "Remarks by the Newly Appointed Ambassador From South Africa," (21 September 1971), *CDC MSRC* box 191, folder 1
[2] Richard Nixon, "The President's Reply to the new South African Ambassador," (21 September 1971) *CDC MSRC* box 191, folder 1.

receptivity on the part of the administration, members of the Rhodesia Lobby led by Senator Harry Byrd (D-VA) succeeded in passing the Byrd amendment, which removed the import restrictions against seventy-two commodities imported from Rhodesia, including chrome ore.

In many ways, the evolution of the CBC followed that of other pro-sanctions groups, which, shocked by their lobbying ineffectiveness, embarked on massive restructuring campaigns throughout 1972 and 1973. Better organization, a stronger lobbying apparatus, and a focus on the strategic and economic benefits of support for African liberation movements were not enough to defeat the Byrd amendment, however. A major issue to be explored is why, despite significant improvements in the CBC's lobbying capability, the organization and its allies were no more successful in their attempts to repeal the Byrd amendment in 1974 than they had been in 1971 and 1972? To answer this question it will be necessary to explore the evolving debate surrounding American's relationship with white elements in Rhodesia during the late sixties and into the seventies. It is not surprising that this relationship was often couched in racial terms on both sides – with Euro-Americans generally supporting the white government and African Americans supporting ZANU and ZAPU rebels. Thus the situation in Rhodesia reflected the racial tensions simmering within the United States where conservatives wished to halt the advance of civil rights reform.

The Birth of the Rhodesia Lobby

While Lyndon Johnson's decision to impose economic sanctions against Rhodesia received approval from black leaders and State Department officials, public reaction was not entirely positive. In the Deep South, African aspirations for independence were met with indifference, if not outright contempt. By the mid-1960s, a growing backlash had

begun to develop against the civil rights movement. Many whites were uncomfortable with the unrestrained social intercourse that desegregation had wrought. They rarely had to look outside their own communities to see what they viewed as the deleterious impact of integration and black enfranchisement. These individuals believed that Rhodesia was upholding standards that the United States had foolishly abandoned, and appreciated Salisbury's efforts to keep the blacks in check. Many Americans felt a spiritual kinship with the whites in Rhodesia, looking upon them as an example of why the racial status quo did not have to change.[3]

Historian Gerald Horne has observed that just as Africans and particularly African Americans often spoke of Pan-Africanism and the Black Diaspora, many white Americans similarly envisaged a Pan-Europeanism that linked Anglo-whites around the world. As a result, Horne contended, the United States helped nurture constructions of "whiteness," in Rhodesia and vice versa. The United States was far more instrumental in this respect than the South Africans. The fiercely nationalistic Afrikaners resisted dissolving their distinct identity in a sea of whiteness, especially one defined by their old British antagonist in Rhodesia. The Afrikaners were also ambivalent about the diplomatic repercussions of Rhodesia unilaterally declaring independence. While South Africa would find it difficult to allow the complete dissolution of the Smith government, American officials had long recognized that the South Africans would "much prefer that the Rhodesian problem quietly go away." As Horne points out, "ironically, apartheid South Africa confounded the forging of white supremacy in Rhodesia, while those who hailed from the ostensibly antiracist United States were instrumental in fortifying

[3] See for example, K.W. Howlett to Senator Harry Byrd, (January 1967), quoted in Gerald Horne, *From the Barrel of a Gun: The United States and the War Against Zimbabwe, 1965-1980* (Chapel Hill, NC:

this…ideology."[4] Rhodesians often recognized the link with their Anglo brothers across the Atlantic and expressed gratitude for the support from their American cousins.[5]

On both sides of the Atlantic, there was a decided fear that black social and political equality threatened to dismantle the structures of white supremacy. For this reason, Salisbury quickly found support among conservative members of Congress who, by a fortunate coincidence, had already organized themselves to lend support to Moshe Tshombe's successionist movement in the Congo during the early 1960s. The American African Affairs Association (AAAA), established in 1965, was made up primarily of the leaders of the former right-wing American Committee for Aid to the Katanga Freedom Fighters, which was extremely popular among conservative legislators on Capitol Hill. In January, 1966, the AAAA, seeking to shift its focus to Salisbury, sponsored a fact-finding mission to Rhodesia led by Congressman John Ashbrook (R-OH). Upon his return, Ashbrook informed his colleagues that Rhodesia was easily, "one of the finest countries I have ever visited." According to Ashbrook, "Its people are of the very highest quality, their motives are good, their outlook is humanitarian, and above all, there is an effort to make an improvement." He found the stories of racial discrimination greatly exaggerated. Far from espousing the tenets of white supremacy, the regime in Salisbury was "a model nation for peace, stability, and racial harmony with…increasing rather than decreasing efforts toward understanding between the races."[6]

University of North Carolina Press, 2001), 83.
[4] Horne, *From the Barrel of a Gun*, 75-83
[5] See for example, Letter from Carolyn Nelson to Rep. Joe Waggonner, reprinted in House, Congressman Waggonner of Louisiana speaking in opposition to sanctions against Rhodesia, 89th Congress, 2nd sess., *Congressional Record* (4 May 1966), 112, pt. 26: A2129.
[6] House, Representative Ashbrook of Ohio opposing sanctions against Rhodesia, 89th Congress, 2nd sess., *Congressional Record* (8 March 1966), 112, pt. 4: 5339

Ashbrook blamed popular misconceptions about Salisbury's racial situation on the deliberate misinformation campaign mounted by Representative Charles Diggs, G. Mennen Williams, and liberals in the State Department. It was no secret, he complained, that the former assistant secretary for African affairs "has used what influence remains at his disposal in Washington to discourage on-site inspections by responsible legislators and newspaper correspondents." To rescue the nation from the myopia of Williams and his allies, "we need the piercing light of public and congressional inquiry, not the paper curtain of the State Department with its handed down press releases and positions," declared Ashbrook.[7]

Conservative congressional representatives with crudely provincial views on race had long sought to exert influence on American foreign policy, as a complement to their own domestic agendas. One notable example was Senator Allen Ellender of Louisiana, a firm segregationist, who, in the early 1960s, caused a firestorm of protest when he asserted that he had "yet to meet any Africans who have the capability to run their own affairs."[8] By 1966, Ellender had been joined by a chorus of conservative voices, including Ashbrook, Congressman Joe Waggonner, and Senator Strom J. Thurmond. They complained that American policy, both foreign and domestic, had come to be based, "on racism in reverse and a determination that, no matter what he wants, the Negro shall have it."[9] Congressman H.R.Gross (R-IA) agreed, complaining that while State Department officials admitted that mail from American citizens favoring the Smith regime numbered in the thousands, "they haughtily discharge these letters by pointing out

[7] House, Representative Ashbrook of Ohio speaking in opposition to sanctions against Rhodesia, 89th Congress, 2nd sess., *Congressional Record* (10 February 1966), 112, pt. 4: 2830.
[8] Ellender quoted in Horne, *From the Barrel of a Gun,* 139.

that one letter from a civil rights leader represents more weight." The Rhodesian's greatest sin, it appeared, was being white, it appeared it was a sin that "this Government cannot forgive them."[10]

Senator Thurmond and his allies argued that liberals had unwisely lowered the standards of responsible government by advocating African self-determination. They challenged Salisbury's detractors to compare that country's record with the indiscriminate and barbarous liquidation of political rivals that had taken place in other parts of the continent. The record of governments like Nigeria, Tanzania, Chad, and the Congo was evidence of the failure of an American policy predicated on blind support for African independence. Between 1965 and 1966, no less than eight governments of newly independent black Africa were violently overthrown. These coups were in most cases accompanied by tribal retribution, atrocity, and murder – "the excepted African way of changing political control," according to members of the Rhodesia Lobby.[11] "A fiction has been created," argued Ashbrook, "that a nation is independent when it has 90 percent illiteracy, little or no capital for international trade and credit and little or no democratic self-government instinct."[12]

Rhodesian Prime Minister Ian Smith played upon these prejudices. He reminded American whites that wherever black Africans had been granted independence, "inevitably there follows corruption, injustice, inefficiency, rapine, murder, dictatorship, suppression of any kind of political opposition, and last but not least the incessant clamor

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[9] House, Representative Waggoner of Louisiana speaking in opposition to sanctions against Rhodesia, 89th Congress, 2nd sess., *Congressional Record* (5 April 1966), 112, pt. 6: 7716.
[10] Senate, Senator Eastland opposing policies of Zambian government, 89th Congress, 2nd sess., *Congressional Record* (25 July 1966), 112, pt. 13: 16930.
[11] Fred Buechner, "We Fight Rhodesian Independence, But Bless Black Dictatorships," reprinted in House, Congressman Younger speaking in opposition to sanctions against Rhodesia, 89th Congress, 2nd sess., *Congressional Record* (29 June 1966), 112, pt. 27:A3493.

for millions of pounds of aid, which is dissipated into trivialities and disappears like water into the sands of the Sahara."[13] Recognizing the growing support within American circles, Salisbury established the Rhodesian Information Office (RIO) in Washington in early 1966. Led by Henry J.C. Hooper and Kenneth Towsey, the RIO's objective was to create a strong pro-Rhodesian constituency in the United States. RIO officials conducted various activities. They distributed publications, went on speaking tours, attended congressional committee hearings, and engaged congressman, senators, members of the news media, and diplomats in meetings to discuss different aspects of the Rhodesian problem. They were also instrumental in organizing tours of Rhodesia for sympathetic American officials.[14]

Together with organizations like the Friends of Rhodesian Independence (FOR), the American Southern African Council, and the AAAA, the RIO was a major force behind the growing public criticism of the sanctions program. Most active Salisbury supporters belonged to local chapters of the Friends of Rhodesia. FOR boasted 122 branches with over 25,000 members throughout the country by 1967.[15] Members of the organization provided the vast majority of the mail to Washington demanding an end to sanctions. In one such letter, the Rucker brothers from Albany, Georgia expressed frustration that the United States had turned its back on one of the three most stable regimes in Africa (the other two being South Africa and the Portugal's colonies). "Recently," they observed, "our Undersecretary of State, George Ball said 'we cannot

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[12] Rep. Ashbrook in opposition to sanctions, *Congressional Record,* (8 March 1966):5340
[13] Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, *Hearing before the Senate Subcommittee on Africa regarding the Rhodesian sanctions issue*, 89th Congress, 2nd sess., *Congressional Record* (22 March 1966), 112, pt. 5: 6503.
[14] Anthony Lake, *The Tar Baby Option: American Policy Towards Southern Rhodesia* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1976), 105.
[15] Horne, *Barrel of a Gun,* 110-112

interfere with the internal affairs of South Vietnam'…. What do they think we are doing to the internal affairs of Portugal…and Rhodesia?" Why had these countries been isolated while South Vietnam was not? The answer was obvious to the brothers from Georgia. The American government harassed Salisbury "just to look good to the nonwhite beggar peoples of the world," they stated with contempt.[16]

Rancor within the Congress and from conservative elements of the American public reached a fevered pitch in the early months of 1966 in response to the continuing push for mandatory sanctions against Rhodesia in the United Nations. African nations demanded that Salisbury be declared a threat to international peace, and that sanctions be officially imposed until the whites relinquished political control to the majority black population. Dean Acheson was perhaps the most outspoken critic of the Rhodesian sanctions during this period. In a letter to the *Washington Post*, he questioned the administration's support of sanctions on legal grounds. Pointing to Article 2, Paragraph 7 of the United Nations Charter, Acheson complained that members of the United Nations had no right to intervene in matters which were essentially within the domestic jurisdiction of a sovereign state. The only threat to international peace, he suggested, was from African members of the United Nations who promoted violence against Salisbury and the other white governments of southern Africa. In their immaturity the nations of the developing world threatened to defy the first commandment of the United Nations that all members should refrain "in their international relations from the use of force against the territorial integrity of or political independence of any state."[17]

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[16] Letter from H.W. and C.N. Rucker to Representative Maston O'Neal, reprinted in House, Congressman O'Neal of Georgia speaking in opposition to sanctions against Rhodesia, 89th Congress, 2nd sess., *Congressional Record* (25 April 1966), 112, pt. 25: A2211

[17] Dean Acheson, "Acheson on Rhodesia," *Washington Post,* December 11, 1966.

Charles Burton Marshall, a former State Department colleague of Acheson's, was similarly skeptical of the administration's policy. The argument that Rhodesia represented a threat to international peace needed greater clarification, he believed. The State Department's position appeared to be based on the possibility that Rhodesia's domestic affairs might incite less law abiding nations to use force, or the threat of force, in their international relations. Marshall declared that a threat could not merely be "an inferred possibility of an occurrence which might conceivably take place under hypothetical conditions. It must be articulated as a demonstrable probability."[18] This was the early problem with the pro-sanctions argument. Their policy appeared out of tune with strategic considerations and the realities on the ground, and seemed, instead, to be the result of intellectual hand-wringing and liberal guilt.

Fortunately, officials in the Johnson administration were successful in holding off the Rhodesia Lobby. The objections of Acheson and conservative members of Congress had little impact on White House support for British policy towards Rhodesia. On December 16, 1966 the United Nations Security Council passed Resolution 232 officially declaring Rhodesia a threat to international peace and stability. Voluntary sanctions were replaced by a mandatory boycott of Rhodesian goods, including sugar, tobacco, and chrome. The administration also forbad the selling of weapons and oil, among other commodities, to Salisbury. Several weeks later, the president issued an executive order requiring private citizens and corporations to adhere to the sanctions. The following year, Johnson issued a second executive order, barring all imports from, and exports to,

[18] Charles Burton Marshall, Crisis *over Rhodesia a Skeptical View* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1967), 64-67.

Rhodesia.[19] It remained to be seen whether Johnson's successor, Democrat or Republican, would be willing, or able, to battle the business interests and conservative forces that coalesced into the Rhodesia Lobby.

Richard Nixon and the "Southern Africa Strategy"

The election of Richard Nixon in November of 1968 was reportedly greeted with champagne toasts throughout the Rhodesian capital of Salisbury. Not only did Nixon win the White House, Barry Goldwater (R-AZ) was returned to the Senate. Goldwater had visited Salisbury in 1967 and admitted to being a great admirer of Prime Minister Ian Smith. Many Rhodesians felt Goldwater and other conservative southern politicians like Strom Thurmond would keep up the pressure in the Senate to keep Rhodesia and the rest of southern Africa white. The new administration, it was hoped, would be more receptive to the aspirations of the white community.[20]

The American business community was similarly hopeful about the prospects for reconciliation under the Nixon administration. The companies most affected by the sanctions program were Union Carbide and Foote Mineral. In May, 1966, Union Carbide purchased 150,000 tons of chrome from Rhodesia. The imposition of mandatory sanctions against Salisbury made delivery of the materials impossible shortly thereafter. Foote Mineral desired the importation into the United States of 57,000 tons of chrome ore that had been mined from its operations in Southern Rhodesia in the period after sanctions were imposed by the Johnson administration. In early 1968, representatives from both companies approached Nixon's campaign advisors with complaints that the government's refusal to approve their import applications had increased financial losses

[19] Senate, Senator Byrd of Virginia speaking about the folly of Rhodesian sanctions, 92nd Congress, 1st sess., *Congressional Record* (12 March 1971), 117, pt. 5: 6432.

to their respective companies. They were assured that their applications would receive consideration in the event that Nixon won.[21]

Upon Nixon's election, business leaders immediately discontinued their grudging support of the British inspired sanctions program. Executives at Union Carbide and Foote Mineral immediately appealed to the new administration for hardship exemptions that would allow them to import their respective chrome shipments. They were confident that the exemptions would be granted and thought it possible that the new president might overturn the sanctions policy altogether. Alarmed by the declining support from business leaders, Congressman Diggs moved to re-energize his pro-sanctions base. Contacting G. Mennen Williams, Diggs inquired as to whether his friend would chair or co-chair a conference dedicated to the growing crisis in southern Africa. Diggs complained that a lack of strong public pressure had hampered his efforts to promote stronger sanctions against the minority governments of southern Africa. He envisioned holding a national conference attended by civil rights and labor activists, academics, members of Congress, and former diplomats. Diggs shared with Williams his hope that these diverse elements could be mobilized into "an effective constituency the government and private interest could not ignore."[22] Unfortunately, the conference never got off the ground. A lack of funding ended discussions before they ever really began.

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[20] Horne, *Barrel of a Gun,* 149.
[21] F. Chidozie Ogene, *Interest Groups and the Shaping of Foreign Policy* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1983), 108-116
[22] Letter from Charles Diggs to G. Mennen Williams, (24 September, 1969), *CDC MSRC* box 191, folder 21.

Instead, Diggs used his position as chairman of the subcommittee on Africa to convene numerous hearings concerning America's approach to southern Africa.[23]

The need to clarify American policy in the region became more pressing in March, 1970, when Rhodesia officially declared itself a republic, no longer subject to the directives of the United Kingdom. In response, the British requested that Washington close its consulate in Salisbury. Sensing hesitation on the president's part, Diggs joined Congressman Jonathon Bingham (D-NY) in distributing letters to other members the House urging them to support the consulate's shutdown. They explained that any short term advantages of keeping the consulate open were outweighed by the negative effect it would have on relations with black Africa.[24] A similar letter was then sent to the president along with the signatures of thirty-two members of Congress. Among the signatories were a number of black legislators, including John Conyers, Robert Nix, Louis Stokes, and Shirley Chisholm. Several days later, the White House announced it would close the consulate in Salisbury. The British were also instrumental in the decision, threatening to revoke the consulate's legal status if Washington refused to shut it down. Faced with such an embarrassing eventuality, as well as mounting criticism on the domestic front, Nixon finally conceded the issue.[25]

Diggs found it difficult to regard the consulate closing as a victory, however. The Nixon administration had stalled for a full year after the British pulled out, removing the consulate only after a great amount of pressure. As Frank Williams, the former

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[23] See for example, House Committee on Foreign Affairs, *Policy Toward Africa for the Seventies: Hearings before the Subcommittee on Africa*, (March 1970) 91st Congress, 2nd sess., (Washington D.C: U.S. Governement Printing Office,1971)
[24] Open letter from Congressmen Charles Diggs and Jonathan Bingham to members of the House of Representatives, "Congressmen Urge Closing of U.S. Consulate in Rhodesia," (4 March 1970), *CDC MSRC* box 191, folder 3.
[25] DeRoche, *Chrome,* 165.

ambassador to Ghana, testified before the African subcommittee, "I am more disturbed than pleased when I think that we came so close to recognizing this piffling little oligarchy, that at one time the White House actually announced it was going to keep open our consulate in Salisbury. It is both pathetic and frightening if we have reached a stage where we must enthuse over this country's eventual refusal – after much shuffling of feet – to acquiesce entirely in the subjugation of 4 million people by 200,000."[26] The administration's decision to grant Union Carbide's hardship exemption later that year confirmed Diggs' fear that the White House favored closer contacts with Salisbury. The White House justified the decision by producing receipts proving the company had made the purchase before mandatory sanctions were imposed. Since Foote Mineral could not provide similar evidence, its application was denied. National Security Advisor Henry Kissinger objected to the exemption for Union Carbide, arguing that it would be viewed as a breach of sanctions, and would create problems for the United States in the international community. Still, in August, 1970, Nixon approved the exemption to the delight of Dean Acheson and other opponents of the sanctions program.[27]

By February, 1971, Nixon was openly supporting a policy of constructive engagement with the white minorities of southern Africa. He warned members of Congress that violence would only stiffen white resolve. It was his belief that the United States could use its influence to promote change in southern Africa. Said Nixon: "We shall do what we can to foster equal opportunity and free political expression…we shall do so on moral and practical grounds, for in our view there is no other solution. We intend…to do what we can to encourage the white regimes to adopt more generous and

[26] Committee on Foreign Affairs, *Policy Toward Africa,* (17 March 1970), 4
[27] See DeRoche, *Chrome,* 160.

more realistic policies towards the needs and aspirations of their black citizens." Such lofty ambitions would require a closer relationship with Salisbury and the other minority governments of the region. Only in this manner would the United States be in a position to effect meaningful change. "We do not, therefore, believe the isolation of the white regimes serves African interests, or our own, or that of ultimate justice. A combination of contact and moral pressure serves all three."[28]

The administration's policy in southern Africa stemmed from Nixon's overall Cold War outlook. He was in the process of pursuing a similar policy of constructive engagement with the Soviet Union and China. It was theorized that, through intimate contact, the United States might spark peaceful change in these countries. Senator Harry Byrd argued that Nixon's desire for détente nullified the logic behind American support of sanctions against Rhodesia. While he conceded that the whites were a minority of the population, Byrd contended that "in the Soviet Union the members of the Communist Party, comprising about 1 percent of the population, and acting through a few leaders, control the other 99 percent of the people of that nation of nearly 200 million." China, with nearly 700 million people, similarly lived under the domination of a small minority of communists.[29]

The Byrd Amendment

Seeking to address the apparent hypocrisy of American policy, Senator Byrd introduced Senate Resolution 1404 in late March, 1971. The resolution called for an amendment to the United Nation Participation Act of 1945 "to prevent the imposition…

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[28] Richard Nixon, "Second Annual Report to the Congress on U.S. Foreign Policy," (25 February 1971), *Public Papers of the Presidents of the United* States*, Richard Nixon, 1,* (Washington D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office,1972), 122

[29] Senate, Statement by Senator Harry Byrd of Virginia in opposition to sanctions against Rhodesia, 92nd Congress, 1st sess., *Congressional Record* (4 March 1971), 117, pt. 4: 5108.

of any prohibition on the importation into the United States of any strategic or critical material from any free world country for so long as the importation of the like material from any Communist country is not prohibited under the law."[30] Byrd's measure did not call for all sanctions against Salisbury to be ended, although he admitted that this was his preference. The amendment only allowed the importation of materials obtained from the Soviet Union and other communist countries. A vote on the amendment, Byrd suggested, would offer Congress an opportunity to let its voice be heard on an issue decided unilaterally by the Johnson administration.[31]

Joining members of the business community, Byrd and his supporters complained that sanctions posed a threat to America's national security. Business leaders had been warning since 1969 that if sanctions against Rhodesia were continued, chrome imports would not be able to meet industrial demand. By mid-1971 it seemed that these forecasts were correct. Senator Howard Cannon (D-NV), chairman of the Senate Subcommittee on the National Stockpile and Naval Petroleum Reserves, reported that his subcommittee had under consideration several requests to release minerals from the national and supplemental stockpiles. Of these he informed his colleagues, Senate Resolution 773, if approved, "would permit the disposal of 1,313,600 short tons of metallurgical grade chromium – chrome ore equivalent – from the government stockpiles." This constituted about thirty percent of the chrome reserves, which were supposed to be used only in the event of a national emergency.[32] Senator Byrd responded angrily to administration attempts to raid the chromium ore stockpile, arguing that the

[30] Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, "U.S. Dependence Upon the Soviet Union for Chrome Ore: Hearings Before the Subcommittee on Africa," 92nd Congress, 1st sess., *Congressional Record* (14 July 1971),117, pt. 19: 25193.

"release of chrome ore from the stockpile is not the appropriate remedy for the United States."[33] Dr. Wayne T. Barrett, president of Foote Mineral, concurred, suggesting that the primary problem with American foreign policy was "that we do not have a long-range national minerals policy." According to Barrett, the domestic ferroalloy industry regarded 1971 as the "year of decision" on the issue of Rhodesian chrome. The following year, he observed, "there will be the political campaigns and few national politicians… will risk the possible loss of black votes by taking a stand which could be even remotely regarded as pro-Rhodesian." By 1973, he warned, it would be too late, and the chrome ore crisis would have reached emergency levels.[34]

Testifying before Congress, E.F. Andrews, the vice-president of Allegheny Ludlum Steel Corporation, reiterated the importance of chrome ore to the American economy and national defense. As major producers of stainless and specialty steels, officials at Alleghany were as sensitive to the boycott of Rhodesian chrome as their counterparts at Union Carbide and Foote Minerals. Andrews reminded members of the Senate that specialty steels derived from chromium ore made possible the nation's aerospace program, its advanced communications, its improved power generation and distribution, and its growing chemical industry. Not to mention, they provided greater comfort and efficiency at home and at work. Thus, concluded Andrews, "when we speak of alloying elements – and chrome of course is an important one of these – we are talking about no ordinary commodity. It goes to the root of our industrial society…In other words broadly speaking there is no substitute for chromium insofar as corrosion resistant

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[31] Senate, Senator Byrd of Virginia speaking in support of S.R. 1404, 92nd Congress, 1st sess., *Congressional Record* (22 July 1971), 117, pt. 20: 26828

[32] Hearings before the Senate Subcommittee on Africa, *Congressional Record,* (14 July 1971): 25202

stainless steel is concerned." Andrews suggested that those who doubted the importance of the material should read "Inside the Third Reich," by Albert Speer, to gain a better understanding of the mineral's importance. Speer, the architect of Hitler's industrial empire, had argued that Germany would have lost World War II by January, 1946, regardless of Allied advances because the country was running out of its supply of chrome ore.[35]

Nearly seventy percent of the world's known chrome ore deposits were found in Rhodesia. Prior to 1966, Rhodesian furnished the United States with approximately eighty-five percent of the chrome imports coming into the country. Due to sanctions, American industry was thus forced to turn to other sources to offset the loss of the Rhodesian market. South Africa, the Soviet Union, and Turkey became the chief suppliers of chrome ore to the United States after sanctions were implemented. South Africa was home to about twenty-two percent of the world's supply, the Soviet Union provided a little over five percent, and Turkey had just over one percent. Behind Rhodesia, the Soviet Union had long been a major contributor to America's domestic chrome stockpile. With the Rhodesians out of the picture, business leaders complained that the Soviets had begun to behave like veteran capitalists. The Russians increased the price of their ore by more than one hundred percent after 1966. Whereas American firms had once paid around $25 per ton for Rhodesian or Soviet ore, the Soviets were now charging $72 per ton.[36] Thus, the Soviets continued to import chrome from Rhodesia at

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[33] Senator Byrd speaking in opposition to Rhodesian sanctions, *Congressional Record*, (4 March 1971): 5108
[34] Ibid., 5110.
[35] Hearings before the Senate Subcommittee on Africa, *Congressional Record*, (14 July 1971): 25199.
[36] Ibid., 25199. Members of the business community disputed assertions that such cost increases were in line with worldwide inflation. Using the Wholesale Price Index for Metals and Metal Products, they

a cheap price, while selling their own chrome in the United States at much higher rates. The frustration felt by the American corporations was heightened when rumors began circulating that the Soviets were reselling the United States chrome purchased from Rhodesia at a significant markup.[37]

Senator Byrd denounced a policy that made the United States dependent on its sworn enemy. "It is just not logical," he declared, "that we should spend billions and billions of dollars of tax-funds taken from the pockets of the hard-working wage earners of our nation and spend those tax-funds against the threat from Communist Russia, and yet, at the same time, be dependent on Russia for a strategic material."[38] In essence, the United States had announced its unilateral disarmament, he fretted, allowing the Soviets a stranglehold over a material vital to national security. Rhodesia's supporters expressed concern that the United States now had to depend upon Russian goodwill, a commodity that was not at all dependable.[39]

Appearing before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee in July, Dean Acheson urged lawmakers to recommend the resolution for a floor vote.[40] The sanctions against Rhodesia, opined Acheson, were an act of "barefaced aggression, unprovoked and unjustified by any legal principle." After five years the British were no closer to forcing the Rhodesians into a negotiated settlement. Salisbury's stubbornness conformed to Acheson's belief that "economic sanctions cannot be expected to force a people to an

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asserted that only $2.20/ton could be attributed to normal inflation. The rest of the increase resulted from Soviet recognition of increased market demand.

[37] Senator Byrd speaking in opposition to Rhodesian sanctions, *Congressional Record*, (4 March 1971): 5108

[38] Senate, Senator Byrd of Virginia speaking against unjustified embargo on Rhodesian chrome, 92nd Congress, 1st sess., *Congressional Record* 117, pt. 26, (6 October 1971): 33577.

[39] Walter Biscup, "The Rhodesian Puzzle," reprinted in Congress, Senate, Senator Harry Byrd of Virginia speaking in support of S.R. 1404, 92nd Congress, 1st sess., *Congressional Record* (2 August 1971), 117, pt. 22: 28948.

action which they believe contrary to their vital interests."[41] Yet American policy was not only ineffective, it was reckless as well. "The State Department has succeeded in putting the country's head in the bear's mouth and it seems to think nothing of it," Acheson complained.[42] Senator Byrd echoed Acheson's accusations that sanctions had been largely unsuccessful in the effort to cripple Rhodesia's economy. In 1969 alone, the special committee formed to enforce the sanctions had disclosed that sixty violations had been reported. Since then, additional complaints had taken the total well over one hundred. Many of the countries protesting American chrome imports from Rhodesia were themselves engaged in trade with the Rhodesians. Indeed, the special committee was forced to acknowledge the sanctions "have not been fully effective and have not had the desired results."[43]

Despite the punitive measures levied against Salisbury, the Smith government had not only survived, it had prospered. This was because thirty-one nations, of which twenty-seven were members of the United Nations, had routinely ignored the trade restrictions. This was one of the major concerns of business leaders when they had approached Nixon in 1969. They complained that foreign competitors had repeatedly breached the sanctions and had thus gained an unfair advantage over American business. E.G. Bliss cautioned policymakers that "from a strategic standpoint, we are making a grievous error if we permit ourselves to lose access to the world's largest reserves of high grade chrome – the demand for which, worldwide can only be expected to increase."[44]

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[40] Hearings before Senate Subcommittee on Africa, *Congressional Record*, (14 July 1971): 25196.
[41] Ibid., 25193
[42] Ibid., 25199.
[43] Senator Byrd speaking in support of S.R. 1404, *Congressional Record*, (22 July 1971): 26828. Zambia, for example, had recently announced it would import 1.5 million bags of corn from its neighbor, a direct breach of United Nations sanctions.
[44] Hearings before Senate Subcommittee on Africa, *Congressional Record,* (14 July 1971): 25197.

Despite the Rhodesia Lobby's emphasis on national security, the Byrd amendment was not immediately successful. The bill was originally referred to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee under Chairman William J. Fulbright (D-AR). In early August, Fulbright and Senator Gale McGee (D-WY), chairman of the Senate Subcommittee on Africa, postponed further action on the amendment in an attempt to keep the motion off the Senate floor. Undaunted, Byrd turned to his allies on the Senate Armed Services Committee – including Senators Margaret Chase Smith (R-ME), John Tower (D-TX), Barry Goldwater (R-AZ), and Peter Dominick (R-CO) – who pledged to support the amendment. The Armed Services Committee was in the process of considering the Military Procurement Act of 1972. Waiting for a point in the debate when liberal members were absent, Byrd proposed an amendment to the bill. Focusing on the national security and anticommunist elements of the proposal, the committee approved the motion as section 503 to the Military Procurement Act, and the Byrd Amendment cleared its first legislative obstacle.[45]

In a desperate attempt to quash the proposal, Congressman Diggs reached out to members of the Senate impressing upon them the danger the Byrd amendment posed for American relations in black Africa, and urging them to speak out against section 503.[46] In late September, Senator McGee responded, proposing an amendment that would negate the amendment. He alerted members of the Senate to concerns raised by the British who were locked in negotiations with Salisbury. London feared the actions of the American Congress would encourage Smith and make him even more intransigent at the

[45] See DeRoche, *Chrome,* 173-174.
[46] Letter from Charles Diggs to Members of the Senate, (29 September 1971), *CDC MSRC* box 25, folder 4.

bargaining table.[47] Speaking in favor of McGee's amendment, Senator Edward Brooke (R-MA) asserted that the Byrd amendment was "a clear attempt to lend vital economic support and political recognition to the government of Ian Smith, a blatantly authoritarian and racist government."[48]

Despite the warnings of pro-sanctions advocates, the Senate voted 46 to 36 to sustain the action of the Armed Services Committee. Shortly thereafter, Senator Fulbright offered a similar amendment recommending that the president be allowed to disregard section 503 if it was determined that the national interest or a treaty obligation might be affected. Fulbright had long advocated greater autonomy for the Senate, so his support of a measure that would place more power in the hands of the executive raised eyebrows among his colleagues. Mocking Fulbright's apparent flip-flop, Byrd commented that he had "been under the impression that the distinguished Senator from Arkansas was perhaps the foremost advocate of the Senate retrieving some of the power it had given to the executive branch in years gone by." The Senate had made great strides in reasserting itself on foreign policy issues, he argued. Fulbright's proposal threatened to reverse this trend by "leaving the determination in the hands of the president at the expense of the Senate. Byrd assured his colleagues, that he was still "one of those Senators who feel that, through the years, the Senate and Congress have given too much power to the Chief Executive."[49]

Despite Byrd's attacks, Fulbright's amendment initially passed 45 to 43. What happened next was indicative of the lobbying failures that plagued the pro-sanctions

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[47] Senate, Senator McGee speaking in opposition to S.R. 1404, 92nd Congress, 1st sess., *Congressional Record* (17 November 1971), 117, pt. 32: 41699.
[48] Senate, Statement by Senator Brooke of Massachusetts in opposition to S.R. 1404, 92nd Congress, 1st sess., *Congressional Record* (17 September 1971), 117, pt. 24: 32351.

group throughout 1971. Believing their business to have finished for the day, several of Fulbright's supporters left the Hill. In their absence, Byrd and his allies voted to reconsider Fulbright's amendment 40 to 36. Fulbright accused John Stennis, chairman of the Armed Services Committee, of devious practices and managed to postpone a second roll-call vote until the following week.[50]

Days before the Senate vote, Congressman Diggs attended a luncheon with Secretary of State William Rogers and Ould Baddah from the OAU. Rogers guaranteed Diggs and Baddah that the administration was opposed to the Byrd Amendment and would work to defeat it in the Senate. Unconvinced, the Congressional Black Caucus sent a sternly worded message to the president and his secretary of state demanding that they publicly acknowledge their opposition to the Byrd amendment.

Meanwhile, at the White House, members of the National Security Council debated how the administration would respond to the congressional debate. Marshall Wright, the new Africa expert, warned Henry Kissinger that Congressman Diggs was misrepresenting the president's position on the issue, telling senators that Nixon was strongly opposed to the amendment. Apparently this was not the case since Clark Macgregor in the Office of Congressional Relations, and Peter Flanigan from the Council on International Economic Policy informed members of the State Department that they would not approve of any official opposition to the Byrd amendment. Byrd was a strong supporter of the president in the Senate, and he and MacGregor had developed a close

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[49] Senate, Senator Byrd of Virginia speaking in opposition to the Fulbright amendment, 92nd Congress, 1st sess., *Congressional Record* (30 September 1971), 117, pt. 26: 34247-34248.
[50] Senate, Senator Fulbright of Arkansas speaking in support of the Fulbright Amendment to section 503 of Military procurement Bill, 92nd Congress, 1st sess., *Congressional Record* (30 September 1971),117, pt. 26: 34245.

relationship over the years.[51] Days before the vote, Senator Robert Dole (R-KS) checked with the White House for guidance on the issue. Dole was informed that the White House was "sitting this one out," and concluded that the president was neutral on the subject. Dole informed other Republicans of Nixon's neutrality and advised them that they were free to vote anyway they liked.[52]

Despite a last minute attempt to delete section 503 by Diggs and Fraser, the House approved the amended bill 251 to 100, relying heavily on southern Democrats. Senator Byrd gloated, however, that support for the amendment was not limited to the conservative South. In a bipartisan effort, representatives in all sections of the country had expressed their opposition to the sanctions program. The Senate followed the House's lead the next day and passed the amended bill 65 to 19.[53]

One of the most characteristic features of the congressional debate over the Byrd Amendment was the contrast in the performance of the Rhodesia Lobby and pro-sanctions groups. As political scientist F. Chidozie Ogene has remarked, "coalition tactics, superior organization, excellent use of contacts, adroit lobbying and perseverance contributed to the success of the anti-sanctions groups."[54] By February 1971, conservative members of Congress, business interests, and pro-Salisbury groups were working consistently and cooperatively with one another. In the words of an official at the RIO, "all those involved in the campaign to end sanctions were in touch with each other. Each of us knew what the other was doing."[55]

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[51] Ogene, *Interest Groups,* 116-117.
[52] Ibid., 117.
[53] Senate, Senator Byrd of Virginia praising the efforts of supporters of section 503 to the Military Procurement Act, 92nd Congress, 1st sess., *Congressional Record* (22 November 1971), 117, pt. 33: 42825.
[54] Ogene, *Interest Groups,* 132.
[55] Ibid., 126.

The same could hardly be said for the pro-sanctions group. Reviewing the battle over the Byrd Amendment, McGee and Diggs complained that liberals had underestimated the power of Byrd's argument based as it was on national security and anticommunist themes.[56] Nor had Diggs found his membership in the CBC particularly helpful in combating the amendment. As the organization neared the end of its first year in existence, its members manifested little in the way of tangible achievements. The public visibility accumulated by the organization from hearings held throughout 1971 had initially boosted its leadership credentials among African Americans; still, the CBC as an organization, as well as its members individually, could claim no major legislative victories. Follow-up activity after hearings and investigations consisted mainly of the publication of their recommendations, while legislative initiatives were largely ignored. Howard Robinson, the CBC's executive director, admitted in retrospect that most of the group's energies during this first year were devoted to developing facts and recommendations, convening hearings, and dealing with outside black professional groups, not grooming sorely needed relationships within Congress.[57]

The First Repeal Attempt

Frustrated by the administration's unwillingness to speak out against the Byrd amendment, Diggs resigned his position on the American delegation to the 26th General Assembly in December 1971.[58] Along with Senator McGee, he complained that the amendment damaged American credibility and, more tangibly, hampered British negotiations with the Smith government over constitutional reforms. "The moment the

[56] Senator Gale McGee, "The U.S. Congress and the Rhodesian Chrome Issue," undated, *CDC MSRC* box 191, folder 3.
[57] Nat Sheppard, "The CBC In Search of a Role, *Race Relation Reporter* (March 1973), 17

Senate took the action it did," said McGee, "the vote was transmitted to Rhodesia at which point we have the testimony of both governments that it froze and hardened the Rhodesian government's negotiating position." The resulting settlement between British Prime Minister Heath and Ian Smith was completely unacceptable to black Rhodesians. What this meant in very blunt terms, the senator fumed, "is that the Senate of the United States…contributed to the sabotage of efforts to negotiate an equitable compromise between Rhodesia and Her Majesty's government in London."

In February 1972, members of the CBC met with Rhodesian nationalist leader Bishop Abel Muzorewa of the African National Congress. With Ndabaningi Sithole and Robert Mugabe of ZANU and their former compatriot Joshua Nkomo of ZAPU still imprisoned by Rhodesian authorities, Muzorewa, an American educated Protestant minister, emerged as the main leader of the opposition to the Heath/Smith proposal. During the meeting, the Bishop reiterated his support for sanctions against Rhodesia and expressed concern over the passage of the Byrd amendment. According to the minister, Zimbabweans were willing to accept the sanctions as the price for freedom. "Do not for a moment withhold the sanctions on the pretext of helping us," he declared.[59] Muzorewa also requested that black legislators press the president to actively oppose the new constitution. Congressman Diggs responded, urging the Nixon administration to "recognize that the Heath/Smith 'Proposals for Settlement,' do not secure to the people of Zimbabwe majority rule or self-determination…."[60]

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[58] Diggs also cited the administration's recent decision to authorize a massive aid package of over $400 million to Portugal and its refusal to sanction South Africa in the General Assembly as reasons why he walked out on the American delegation.

[59] House, Congressman Diggs of Michigan speaking about recent visit by Bishop Muzorewa, 92nd Congress, 2nd sess., *Congressional Record* (7 March 1971), 118, pt. 5: 7369

[60] House, Congressman Diggs of Michigan speaking about recent trip to Africa, 92nd Congress, 2nd sess., *Congressional Record,* (January 1970), 118, pt. 1: 108.

By March it was fairly clear that black Rhodesians would not accept the settlement. Observers reported that it was impossible to find one black in over fifty public meetings who would endorse the new constitution. Members of the CBC joined their congressional allies and outside lobby organizations such as the World Council of Churches in requesting that the White House encourage the British to reject the constitution. Nixon was reluctant to speak out on the sanctions, however. The British had dispatched an official delegation led by Lord Edward Pearce and the president preferred to await the commission's report.[61]

Despite the president's silence on the Heath/Smith agreement, the administration began to show positive signs that it would support the Byrd amendment's repeal. John Irwin II, the acting secretary of state, offered the administration's strongest public opposition to the congressional action in early March. "In Africa," said Irwin, "where our position on Rhodesia has heretofore been seen as a test of our commitment to majority to self-determination and racial equality, our credibility has suffered. Repeal now would serve to make us less vulnerable to unfavorable international reaction," he concluded.[62] Encouraged by such statements, Senator McGee moved to repeal the Byrd amendment in late April. Approaching Senator Fulbright, McGee succeeded in adding section 503 – a provision that would end Rhodesian chrome imports – to the Foreign Relations Authorization Act of 1972. The CBC, ACOA, and various other church and community organizations lobbied on McGee's behalf. Their main contention was that the strategic and national security arguments of the Rhodesia Lobby had been overstated.

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[61] House, Congressman Diggs of Michigan speaking about the activities of the Committee of Blacks Against Oppression on Rhodesian Chrome, 92nd Congress, 2nd sess., *Congressional Record* (16 March 1972), 118 pt. 7: 8813. See also DeRoche, *Chrome,* 198-200.

One representative of Union Carbide admitted as much explaining that "the strategic label was simply camouflage to get Congress to authorize U.S. firms to break the U.N. regulations."[63]

Faced by the same specialty steel lobby that had helped pushed the Byrd amendment through Congress the previous year, however, McGee was unable to secure enough votes to keep section 503 in the Foreign Relations Authorization Act. Senator Byrd proposed a motion to delete the amendment, which passed 40 to 36 at the end of May. Recounting the events leading up to the vote, McGee placed the fault with the president. "After all the high sounding rhetoric," the senator alleged, "the White House alone must bear the burden and the responsibility for the failure of legislative efforts to turn this country around on the issue of sanctions in Rhodesia."[64] In the days leading up to the May 31st vote, the senator and his allies in the Congressional Black Caucus had appealed to the White House for public support. He and Diggs had personally requested that the president make five or six telephone calls to Republican senators who had made it known that a call from the Nixon was all they needed to change their vote. As it turned out, only two calls would have been necessary to swing the vote McGee's way. Yet, not one call had been made. In response, McGee called upon congressional and non-governmental organizations to apply more pressure on the White House, and seek new avenues to challenge United States policy in Rhodesia. [65]

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[62] Senator Gale McGee "Testimony before the International Organizations and Movements Subcommittee," 19 June 1972), *CDC MSRC* box 191, folder 2: 1-2.
[63] Bruce Oudes, "Rhodesia Ore: Here's to Thee, Oh Club 503," *Washington Post,* 19 March 1972.
[64] Senate, Senator McGee speaking about the failure of Byrd's repeal, 92nd Congress, 2nd sess., *Congressional Record* (31 May 1972), 118, pt. 15: 19319.
[65] McGee, "Testimony before International Organizations and Movements Subcommittee," (19 June 1972): 3.

Heeding the senator's call, members of the CBC, led by Charles Diggs and Shirley Chisholm, challenged the legality of the Byrd amendment in court. Taking their case to the United States District Court for the District of Columbia, Diggs and Chisholm argued that the Byrd amendment violated treaty obligations to the United Nations.[66] In June, Judge Aubrey Robinson, an African American, rejected their case on the grounds that Congress was legally within its authority to abrogate treaties, and that the judicial branch was not qualified to rule on issues of foreign policy. That Judge Robinson was black was particularly newsworthy in Salisbury, where headlines triumphantly read: "Negro Judge Turns Down Chrome Move." The CBC next took the case to the U.S. Court of Appeals, but it too ruled against them. The case finally fell apart the following spring when the Supreme Court refused to hear the CBC's appeal.[67]

Congressman Diggs voiced his contempt for the administration's policy toward Africa during the Democratic national convention in June. Speaking to his fellow Democrats, Diggs suggested that "the actions of this administration with respect to the liberation of the areas of Africa remaining under colonial and white rule have impelled the conclusion at home and abroad that the United States stands for the maintenance of the status quo and minority rule in Africa." He reminded them that Rhodesia was not the only African nation to import important materials to the United States. The minerals and products of independent Africa were also essential to American industrial society. "It is clear the U.S. has vital interests in Africa," declared Diggs. "U.S. self-interest in itself

[66] United States District Court for the District of Columbia, Civil Action No. 773-72, "Charles Coles Diggs, Shirley Anita Chisholm, et. al., Plaintiffs v. John B. Connaly, Secretary of the Treasury of the United States, et al., Defendants*,"* (19 June 1972), *CDC MSRC* box 25, folder 12. See also letter from Charles Diggs to Shirley Chisholm, (4 March 1973) *CDC MSRC* box 226, folder 73,.
[67] "Black Caucus Sues Against Rhodesia Ore," *Washington Post,* April 20, 1972; also DeRoche, *Chrome,* 203.

dictates an enlightened policy…. And yet, the policy of which the present administration has been pursuing towards Africa can only be characterized as one of disaster."[68]

The CBC Reforms

By the end of 1972, there were few prospects for any breakthrough on the chrome issue. In August, a proposal co-sponsored by Congressmen Diggs and Donald Fraser fizzled in the House. Pro-sanctions groups predicted that "the chrome issue will be hard to revive. Don Fraser in the House is willing but not enthusiastic about losing again. McGee has had his fingers burned and will be reluctant unless pushed."[69] In mid-December, members of the CBC sent a strongly worded message to the president criticizing his lack of support for the pro-sanctions contingency in Congress, but nothing happened.[70]

The setbacks suffered by pro-sanctions groups in 1971 and 1972 shocked them into a careful reassessment of their strengths and weaknesses. This was particularly true of members of the CBC, who, since the organization's founding, had wandered through the political wilderness in search of purpose and direction. Throughout 1972, Diggs' leadership as chairman increasingly came into question. Many argued that he was not discerning enough, involving the caucus on too many fronts. Emblematic of this was Diggs' unilateral decision to throw CBC support behind the national black political convention to be held in Gary, Indiana for the purpose of developing a national black agenda and crystallizing a national black strategy for the 1972 elections and beyond. When the CBC finally met to discuss the matter, a majority, unhappy that they had not

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[68] Charles C. Diggs, "Speech before Democratic National Convention," (22 June 1972), *CDC MSRC* box 226, folder 11.
[69] Quoted in F. Chidozie Ogene, *Interest Groups and the Shaping of Foreign Policy* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1983), 136.

been consulted, voted to withdraw official CBC backing of the convention. Some caucus members were afraid it would leave the CBC with a large debt; others feared the gathering would get out of hand and lead to bad publicity. Nevertheless, almost all the caucus members attended the convention, and a few individuals played prominent roles. Diggs acted as an official convener of the National Black Political Convention along with Mayor Richard Hatcher of Gary, Indiana, and Imamu Baraka. Delegate Walter Fauntroy, the CBC's non-voting member, served as chairman the platform committee, and Howard Robinson played an important role in organizing and orchestrating convention activities.[71]

Although the caucus was not the official sponsor of the convention, the CBC's name was publicly tied to it as a result of Diggs' support, the prominent involvement of several of its members, and the organization's recent visibility. The CBC thus became linked with two controversial resolutions passed in Gary concerning busing and the state of Israel. These issues specifically, and the convention's dedication to separatism more broadly, offended traditional civil rights, Jewish, and labor interests, which constituted the core financial support for most of the black legislator's election campaigns and contributed heavily to the CBC itself. There was therefore substantial pressure on individual members to disassociate themselves from Gary, and from any other future attempts to create a new, more autonomous black politics. Dissatisfied with repeated individual disclaimers, the CBC finally issued several press releases, distancing the caucus from the Gary resolutions. Whatever their individual feelings, many CBC

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[70] Chairman Louis Stokes, and Members of the Congressional Black Caucus to Nixon, (13 December 1972), *CDC MSRC* box 25 folder 2.

members perceived the cost of maintaining identification with the black political convention as high and the benefits as uncertain, distant, and possibly minimal.[72]

The most severe CBC conflict in 1972, however, was internal. In the run-up to the presidential election of 1972, Shirley Chisholm announced her intention to make a bid for the Democratic Party presidential nomination. Surprisingly, Chisholm, the first black woman to make such an attempt, only attracted the support of CBC members Ronald Dellums and Parren Mitchell.[73] Reflecting the growing disunity of the group, some members supported George McGovern (Diggs, Clay, Fauntroy), while others rejected the idea of a black candidate outright (Hawkins, Nix). Conyers toyed with the idea of entering the race as a third-party candidate but also found little support. Pressing ahead, Chisholm encountered an unenthusiastic and hostile response from her black counterparts. At the Democratic Convention in Miami, several CBC members sought to undermine her candidacy. Dellums and Mitchell, submitting to local pressures, finally abandoned Chisholm as well. The rebuff created a rift in the CBC that threatened to destroy the organization only two years after its creation.[74]

By mid-1972, the idea that the CBC could be a united voice for black America had been largely discredited. The deep divisions that surfaced within the CBC throughout the year illustrated the obstacles to united action confronting the organization that derived from its members' distinct constituencies, political imperatives, and electoral

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[71] Marguerite Ross Barnett, "The Congressional Black Caucus: Illusions and Realities of Power," in *The New Black Politics*, edited by Michael Preston, Lenneal J. Henderson Jr., and Paul Puryear (New York: Longman, 1982), 35.
[72] See also Robert Singh, *The Congressional Black Caucus: Racial Poltics in the U.S. Congress* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 1998), 76-77.
[73] "Mrs. Chisholm Chides Black Caucus," *New York Times,* November 20, 1971
[74] Robert C. Maynard, "Blacks Eye Chisholm bid in '72," *Washington* Post, September 26, 1971; see also William L. Clay, *Just Permanent Interests: Black Americans in Congress, 1870- 1991* (New York: Amistad, 1992), 218-224.

incentives. Never actually a monolith, even the myths of unity were punctured by the events surrounding the Gary convention and the 1972 Democratic convention. Unlike many black activists and organizations, the independence of individual CBC members was limited by their electoral accountability to specific jurisdictions at prescribed intervals. The caucus' potential to assume a credible role as a national leadership organ in extra-congressional activities was therefore circumscribed.[75]

As Diggs' tenure as chairman came to an end, younger, more militant members of the caucus like William Clay, Ronald Dellums, and Louis Stokes argued against continuing the tradition of selecting the group's leader by seniority alone. Thus, Augustus Hawkins was passed over as the group's next chairman and the position went to Louis Stokes instead.[76] With Stokes' replacement of Diggs as CBC chairman in late 1972, the organization underwent an extensive revision of staff and direction. Stokes also convened several hearings to review past CBC activity and recommend new strategies. He conceded that "initially there were a number of misconceptions as to the roles and responsibilities of the CBC." Some felt that the caucus was trying to replace traditional civil rights groups. Still others felt that the caucus was trying to become a national forum or clearinghouse for a host of problems and issues confronting black Americans. After much debate and analysis, black legislators reached the conclusion, according to Stokes, that "if we are going to make a meaningful contribution to minority citizens and this country, then it must be as legislators."[77] Thus, as the Congressional

[75] Norman C. Miller, "Black Democrats Find Unity Elusive," *Wall Street* Journal March 10, 1972); also Marguerite Ross Barnett, "The CBC Ten Years Later: An Analysis," *Crisis* (April 1981), 120
[76] Sheppard, "In Search of a Role," 19
[77] Barnett, "The CBC Ten Years Later," 122

Black Caucus entered its third year, its' members turned their attention to urgent congressional battles.

The organization's legislative focus under Stokes was particularly popular among its newest members. In January, 1973, Barbara Jordan (D-TX), Andrew Young (D-GA), and Yvonne Braithwaite Burke (D-CA) increased black representation in the House to sixteen. In February, Cardiss Collins (D-IL) became the fourth black female member of the CBC after winning a special election to fill the seat of her recently deceased husband, George Collins. Upon assuming her seat in the House, Jordan reminded her fellow CBC members that "as members of Congress, we are legislators, and we ought to remember that is our role." The CBC could not try to be the Urban League, the NAACP, the Urban Coalition, and the Afro-Americans for black Unity all rolled into one, she warned. "We have a commonality of issue – blackness – but we cannot do what the other organizations have been designed to do through the years." Bills were continually proposed that threatened black people directly, and it was Jordan's contention that the CBC ought to be seeking out these pieces of legislation and seeing to it that amendments were offered to negate any negative affects on the African American community.[78]

The CBC's first major act under its new chairman was the drafting of a rebuttal to the president's State of the Union Message in January, 1973. Issues touched upon by members of the CBC ranged from the courts and corrections, to healthcare and welfare reform, to racism in the military and foreign policy. Charles Diggs and Ronald Dellums, who sat on the CBC Subcommittee on Foreign Affairs, outlined the CBC's positions with regard to this latter issue. Diggs reminded members of the House that "just as our concerns do not stop at the boundaries of our congressional districts, they do not cease at

our national borders." Black legislators remained anxious about the situation of the oppressed throughout the world, particularly on the African continent and in Southeast Asia. Advocating a complete reassessment of the nation's foreign policy commitments, they opposed the administration's dual practices of colonialism and imperialism in Southeast Asia, and its support of similar efforts in southern Africa. The administration's quiet acquiescence to Byrd's passage cemented America's alliance with the South Africans and the Portuguese as the only open violators of the sanctions against Rhodesia. Since the passage of the Byrd amendment, over twenty-five ships had entered U.S. ports carrying materials from Rhodesia. "We deplore this Government's sympathy with the white minority in Africa and we intend to resist all Presidential and congressional efforts to aid the Portuguese, the Rhodesians, and the South Africans in their practices and their wars of oppression," Diggs informed the president.[79]

The Second Repeal Attempt

During February and March, 1973, Diggs' subcommittee held joint hearings with Congressman Donald Fraser's Subcommittee on International Organizations and Movements regarding the future direction of American policy toward Rhodesia. As the hearings progressed, it became increasingly clear that sanctions were more successful than members of the Rhodesia Lobby wished to admit. An article in the *Johannesburg Star* reported that: "Rhodesia moves into 1973 with a deep sense of uncertainty, uneasiness and frustration born of continued isolation and the inability to shape her own destiny free from the fetters of powerful outside influences…. White Rhodesia may put up a brave and defiant face, but it is clear that the years of economic warfare and isolation

[78] Mary Beth Rogers, *Barbara Jordan: American Hero* (New York: Bantum Books, 1998), 177.

are taking their toll." Some observers believed they were witnessing the gradual breakdown of white unity. Influential Rhodesians began to display a lack of confidence in the Smith government and its inability to deal with the economic, diplomatic, and military pressures being applied by other countries. One leading businessman, the president of his local chamber of commerce, wondered, "for how long can we accept decisions without knowing the true and full facts on which those decisions are based? The Rhodesian way of life, or the ideal of it, is friendly and easy-going. This lifestyle is reaching a crisis point – for good or for bad, we cannot ignore the pressure of the outside world." [80]

Sensing dissention within Salisbury's white community, Diggs and Fraser believed that repealing the Byrd amendment would further weaken white resolve in the region. In April, Diggs requested that members of his staff compile a list of swing congressman whose vote would be crucial if the amendment was to be repealed. The tactic was an extension of the caucus' new legislative focus. Initially utilized by Delegate Walter Fauntroy (D-DC) to secure passage of the of the D.C. Home Rule Bill in early 1973, the "Fauntroy strategy" hinged on singling out southern congressional districts with twenty five percent or more black populations and mailing letters to black elected officials in the districts requesting they lobby their congressperson in favor of the bill.[81] With respect to the chrome issue, the likelihood that an individual might switch allegiance to the pro-sanctions side was judged by several criteria. These included district characteristics with a breakdown of the percentage of blacks in the area; the relative importance of the

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[79] House, Congressional Black Caucus State of the Union Message, 93rd Congress, 1st sess., *Congressional Record* (31 January 1973), 119 pt. 2: 2830, 2840-2841.
[80] Memo from Goler T. Butcher to Charles Diggs, "The State of the Rhodesian Regime, 1973," (April 1973) *CDC MSRC* box 226, folder 75: 2-4.

individual within the House (where they a senior member, what committees did they serve on, etc); their major influences, be they within the Congress or in outside business, labor, or church interests; and the congressman's voting record on issues important to the CBC and its allies.[82]

The list was completed at the end of April and included several individuals who had been staunch advocates of the Byrd amendment. One such legislator was Representative Wayne Hays (D-OH) who had supported the Byrd amendment in 1971 and vocally opposed Fraser's amendment during the debates in August of the previous year. Hays' interest in Rhodesian chrome was tied to the presence of a Foote Mineral ferrochrome processing plant in Steubenville, Ohio. Members of the Rhodesia Lobby convinced Hays that ending the sanctions against Rhodesia would mean more jobs for the Steubenville Plant. When the first shipment of Rhodesian chrome arrived in the United States it had already been earmarked for the plant, so it appeared that the promise would be kept. Yet, less than a year later, Foote Mineral announced that it planned to close the Steubenville processing plant.[83]

The true harm to American business, argued Diggs, lay in the export of the ferrochrome market overseas. Many supporters of chrome imports inadvertently equated chrome ore with ferrochrome, explained Diggs; it was "a constant source of confusion in

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[81] Nadine Codohas, "Black House Members Striving for Influence," *Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report* 43 (April 15, 1985): 676.

[82] House Subcommittee on Africa, "Swing Congressman on Repeal of the Byrd Amendment," (16 April 1973), box 226, folder 56. The votes referenced by Butcher and the rest of Diggs' staff were the two previous votes on Rhodesian chrome, and the 1971 vote on the South African sugar quota. The sugar issue had come up during the same period as the original debate over the Byrd amendment. Diggs joined many of the same individuals supporting sanctions against Rhodesia in calling for the termination of the South African sugar quota. Their proposal was narrowly defeated in late July 1971 47 to 45 in another setback to the CBC and its allies. See Congress, House, Hearings on Sugar Act Amendments of 1971, 92nd Congress, 1st sess., *Congressional Record* 117, pt. 21, (28 July 1971): 27585- 27593.

[83] House Subcommittee on Africa, "Swing Congressmen," (April 1973)

the discussion of the pending legislation on Rhodesian mineral imports."[84] Ferrochrome was produced by processing chrome and was an essential commodity in the production of steel. In a report for the Carnegie Endowment of Peace, Diane Polan observed that "this industry, which recently consisted of four major and two minor producers, has been in decline since the early 1960s – *before UDI and before sanctions against Southern Rhodesia* (emphasis added). It has been hit by imports, rising labor and power costs, as well as requirements to install costly pollution control devices to meet stiff new Federal air quality standards."[85]

The report went on to say that by 1965 the number of companies producing ferrochrome in the United States dropped to six from the eleven that had existed in 1961. This was paralleled by an increase in imports, specifically from South Africa and Rhodesia. Throughout the 1960s, difficulties in the domestic ferroalloy industry were constantly blamed on rising imports. Not until 1969 was inaccessibility to chrome in their Rhodesian mines cited as a major difficulty. Supporters of the sanctions program pointed out that workers in the ferrochrome industry and their representatives in Congress had been deceived by business officials pursuing an alternative agenda. The Byrd amendment not only allowed the importation of raw chrome ore, but also processed ferrochrome. Both Union Carbide and Foote Mineral owned ferrochrome processing facilities in Rhodesia. This was more cost effective because the ore did not have to travel as far to be processed; the transportation of alloys was cheaper than the transportation of

[84] Letter from Charles Diggs to Henry Ford II, (18 April 1974) *CDC MSRC* box 226, folder 35
[85] House, Congressman Diggs of Michigan introduces statement of Anthony Mazzocchi, Citizaenship-Legislative Director, Oil, Chemical, and Atomic Workers International Union before the Subcommittee on International Organizations and Movements, 93rd Congress, 1st sess., *Congressional Record* (25 October 1973), 119, pt. 27: 35023.

ore; pollution controls in the United States raised costs in that country; and production costs, including labor, were cheaper in Rhodesia and South Africa.[86]

Encouraged by the course of events, pro-sanctions advocates led by Senator Hubert Humphrey introduced Senate Resolution 1868 in late May. S.R. 1868 sought to amend the United Nations Participation Act of 1945 to halt the importation of Rhodesian chrome. "Many developing nations question whether the West has really given up white supremacy," Humphrey informed his colleagues. "We have a constantly growing interest in keeping the trust of these nations…To us issues like racial oppression in Rhodesia may be peripheral. To them they are indications of how serious the United States – and the West as a whole – are in our claim that we will respect and support self-determination throughout the world."[87] In the House, Representative Fraser announced that he had already accumulated the signatures of fifty-seven cosponsors, including the entire membership of the CBC, in support of a similar measure. He focused much of his criticism on the harm chrome imports had done to the American economy. He also complained that the Byrd amendment offered psychological as well as economic assistance to the Rhodesians at a time when their economy was in decline.[88]

On May 25, only three days after amendments were introduced in the House and Senate, meetings were held among the various pro-sanctions groups to discuss strategy. About thirty-seven organizations were represented, including the United Steelworkers of America, the AFL-CIO, the United Auto Workers, the NAACP, the Urban League, and various other black and church groups. Also in attendance were members from

[86] Diggs introduces statement of Anthony Mazzocchi, *Congressional Record,* (25 Oct. 1973): 35023.
[87] Senate, Senator Humphrey speaking in favor of S.R. 1868, 93rd Congress, 1st sess., *Congressional Record* (22 May 1973), 119 pt. 13: 16397

Humphrey and Diggs' staffs. Talking points were distributed on the Rhodesian question, confirming suspicions that the arguments of the Rhodesian Lobby were grossly over-stated. By early June, Butcher reported to Diggs that the repeal effort was moving along splendidly. At present count, Diggs and Fraser had introduced a number of identical bills with a total of eighty-five sponsors aimed at negating the Byrd Amendment. On the Senate side there were now twenty-three co-sponsors. She warned the congressman, however, that the business community would not concede the issue without a fight.[89]

Members of the United Steelworkers, for example, continued to complain that executives at Alleghany Ludlum continued to spread propaganda that chrome imports were imperative to ensure national security. Similarly misleading statements were made by executives of Rolled Alloys, Inc, a ferroalloy processing company located in Diggs' own district in Michigan. In response, Diggs sent sharply worded letters to both companies expressing displeasure with the fact that "you should be spreading misinformation about the question of U.S. need for Rhodesian chrome…." The chairman demanded that they write to all the members of Congress to whom the original statements had been circulated, and set the record straight about the supposed "imperative" need for Rhodesian chrome. He notified them that "as a result of your letter, and one or two similar companies involved in the steel industry – whose efforts appear to have been centrally coordinated – I am taking up the matter of the lobbying by U.S. business interests on this question, and their tendency to mislead Congress over facts.[90] True to his word, Diggs contacted Senator Franck Church, chairman of the Senate Foreign

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[88] House, Congressman Fraser of Minnesota introduces a bill to negate the Byrd Amendment, 93rd Congress, 1st sess., *Congressional Record* (22May 1973), 119, pt. 13: 16587

[89] Memo from Goler T. Butcher to Charles Diggs, "Urgent Items on the Agenda," (5 June 1973), *CDC MSRC* box 226, folder 66

Relations Committee and complained about business leaders who were "grossly exaggerating the need for Rhodesian commodities and misleading members of Congress by alleging national security interest in Rhodesian chromium." The congressman hoped that Church would consider a committee investigation of these companies and their relationship with the Rhodesia Lobby and other conservative elements in Congress.[91]

On September 18, the Foreign Relations Committee passed Humphrey's provision, and a Senate vote was scheduled for November. In the period leading up to the vote, members of the CBC sought to solidify support behind the repeal effort. Contacting various church and community leaders, Diggs shared with each organization his desire to repeal the Byrd amendment. He also provided them with transcripts of the Subcommittee on Africa's hearings on the issue, as well as a list of Senators and Congressmen who needed to be lobbied to secure victory.[92] In early September, Representative Fraser announced that twenty-eight more organizations had endorsed a statement calling for American compliance with U.N. sanctions.

During his confirmation hearings before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Secretary of State designate Henry Kissinger also threw his support behind the repeal effort. Kissinger testified that he was now convinced "that the Byrd provision is not necessary for our national security, brings us no real economic advantage and is

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[90] Letter from Charles Diggs to Paul Goetcheus, Chairman of the Board, Rolled Alloy Inc., (15 August 1973), *CDC MSRC* box 226, folder 55.

[91] Letter from Charles Diggs to Senator Frank Church, Chairman, Senate Foreign Relations Committee, (15 August 1973), *CDC MSRC* box 226, folder 55

[92] See for example Letter from Charles Diggs to Archbishop Joseph Bernardin, (23 October 1973), *CDC MSRC* box 226, folder 50; Letter from Diggs to W. Sterling Cary, President of the National Council of the Churches of Christ (25 October 1973), *CDC MSRC* box 226, folder 50; Letter from Diggs to Herman Will, Associate General Secretary of the World Peace Board of Church and Society, (12 September 1973), *CDC MSRC* box 226, folder 55; Letter from Diggs to Rev. Issac Bivens, Assistant General Secretary for African Affairs on the Board of Global Ministries of the United Methodist Church, (12 September 1973), *CDC MSRC* box 226, folder 55.

detrimental to the conduct of foreign relations."[93] Support from administration officials did not end with Kissinger. In mid-June, John Scali, the new American ambassador to the United Nations, had observed that "the evidence is mounting that this amendment not only damages America's image and reputation as a law-abiding nation, but it also has net economic disadvantages as well."[94] Scali and Kissinger's statements seemed to spell the end of Washington's silent acquiescence to the Byrd amendment. The *Rhodesian Financial Gazette* admitted that "it is the withdrawal of this White House support which is worrying the Rhodesian government."[95]

In early October, Diggs convened the Subcommittee on Africa and emphasized Kissinger's position that "the Byrd provision has impaired our ability to obtain the understanding and support of many countries including such important African nations as Nigeria, a significant source of petroleum and a country where we have investments of nearly $1 billion."[96] By the end of October, pro-sanctions forces believed they had thirty-four hard votes in the Senate. They were concerned, however, by rumors that Senators Harry Byrd and Strom Thurmond were planning a filibuster to keep the motion off the floor.[97]

The threat of filibuster kept Humphrey from introducing the amendment throughout late October and into November. Finally, Senate Majority Leader Mike Mansfield (D-MT) broke the deadlock and decided debate would begin on November 20.

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[93] Quoted in Ogene, *Interest Groups,* 140.
[94] Senate, Senator Byrd of Virginia rejecting the remarks by American Ambassador John Scali, 93rd Congress, 1st sess., *Congressional Record* (9 June 1973), 119, pt. 13: 19432.
[95] Len Horne, "Washington to Change its Mind? – Sale of Chrome is in Jeopardy," *Rhodesian Financial Gazette* reprinted in House, Congressman Fraser of Minnesota speaking about the impact of sanctions violations on Rhodesia, 93rd Congress, 1st sess., *Congressional Record* (11 September 1973), 119, pt. 23: 29306.
[96] Letter from Secretary of State Kissinger to Charles Diggs, (3 October 1973), *CDC MSRC* box 226, folder 52.

In defending his amendment, Byrd received support from powerful minority Whip Robert C. Byrd (D-WV). Byrd refused to set a time limit on the debate, thus requiring a cloture motion approved by two-thirds of the Senate. Humphrey tried to get the required vote throughout November and December, but failed. With the assistance of McGee and White House officials, Humphrey finally succeeded on December 18 and S.R. 1868 passed the Senate by a vote of 63 to 26.

The Repeal Effort Moves to the House

In January, 1974, Congressman Charles Rangel succeeded Louis Stokes as chairman of the CBC. Upon assuming the position, Rangel remarked that for nearly three years the CBC had provided the nation with the image of psychological black unity. As a result, the organization had relied on a very heavy media focus that projected a perception of its being all things to all people. Rangel argued that this posture was unrealistic. Outlining a new direction for the group, Rangel reiterated that "the CBC must gather the resources available to it, develop a system for effectively using those resources in a manner complementing CBC strengths – thereby creating the base for developing both real political power and effective leadership for many Americans seeking a betterment of existing conditions." Rangel went on to suggest that the CBC "must now attract and utilize a broad involvement of technical resource persons – universities, businesses, institutions, and social action organizations – building also upon leadership and relationships developed through the civil rights movement."[98]

Under Rangel's leadership, the first formal legislative agenda establishing the major priorities of CBC members was developed. Attorney Barbara Williams, a former

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[97] Memo from Goler Butcher to Charles Diggs, (25 October 1973), *CDC MSRC* box 226, folder 50
[98] Rangel quoted in Clay, *Permanent Interests,* 187.

aide of Rep. Dellums, was hired as staff director and commissioned to coordinate the effort and organize outside support groups. Led by Delegate Walter Fauntroy, members of the CBC created a national legislative interest network with "centers of influence" in about 100 congressional districts where blacks constituted fifteen percent or more of the voting age population. These efforts allowed the CBC to wield considerable political influence far beyond their individual district boundaries, and were a major factor in allowing Congressman Diggs to garner support for the repeal of the Byrd amendment. Throughout 1974, Diggs and his staff utilized these "centers of influence," corresponding with over 1,000 civil rights, labor, and church organizations across the country to end American non-compliance with the United Nation's sanction program.[99]

In late February, 1974, Diggs called a press conference to laud the organizations and individuals who had worked diligently to win the Senate battle during 1973. Together, they had demonstrated that "citizen pressure can be effective in the enactment of legislation and change of national policy towards Africa." But their work was not finished warned Diggs. In the 1970s the struggle for liberation in southern Africa represented the last major campaign in the heroic historical process of African self-government. "We have gathered here to express the determination of the united black community that the Byrd amendment be repealed…. The black campaign against the Byrd amendment reflects the continuing Afro-American commitment to total African liberation," Diggs continued.[100]

Pro-sanctions forces, by and large, reinforced the same arguments they had put forth the previous year. Diggs expressed contempt for the deception practiced by

[99] Ibid., 257.

members of the Rhodesia Lobby. "I have carefully examined every one of the myriad arguments used by the special interests in their lobby for the Byrd amendment," he stated. "In every instance I have found exaggeration, misconception or outright falsity."[101] This was particularly true with regard to the group's national security arguments. Pointing to statements by the secretary of defense, who had admitted that "the Defense requirement for metallurgical grade chromite is relatively small," Diggs asserted that the stockpile alone would provide enough ore to for American defense needs to be met for the next forty years. The national security argument, believed Diggs, was the same as all of the others put forward by the Rhodesia Lobby. "They lacked real substance."[102]

The true threat to American security, believed Diggs, was the administration's increasing willingness to accommodate the minority regimes of southern Africa. This tendency had been crystallized in the administration's failure to support Byrd's repeal in 1971 and 1972. American prestige in black Africa eroded as a result, as African leaders began to question the administration's commitment to majority rule. According to David Newsom, the former assistant secretary of state for African Affairs, "in my four years as Assistant Secretary the exemption on Rhodesian sanctions has been the most serious blow to the credibility of our African policy…the impact is greatest in countries where we have various specific interests, such as Nigeria and Kenya, and is greatest among youth who are the coming generation in Africa."[103] Given the large U.S. investment and trade with the countries of black Africa – including a $1 billion American investment in Nigeria and significant oil imports from that country – full enforcement of the Rhodesian

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[100] Charles Diggs, "Statement regarding the importance of enacting S. 1868," (27 February 1974) *CDC MSRC* box 192, folder 8.
[101] Diggs, "Statement regarding S. 1868," (27 Feb 1974).
[102] Ibid.

sanctions was in the best interests of the country, Diggs argued. "As a nation dependent upon raw materials for the functioning of out industrial economy, the United States cannot afford to be insensitive to the legitimate concerns of our raw material suppliers…."[104]

In early March, the congressman called a meeting of the groups supporting H.R. 8005 to discuss strategy. He warned against complacency and advised those assembled that the repeal of the Byrd amendment would take a vigorous collective effort.[105] Of particular concern, thought Diggs, was the reticence of business interests to abandon their support for the importation of Rhodesian chrome. Corporations like Union Carbide and Allegheny Ludlum continued to lead the charge against the repeal effort. They were joined by Ford Motor Company, whose president, Henry Ford II, explained to Diggs that he needed large quantities of high quality chrome to produce catalytic converters. More stringent environmental laws had necessitated these new features, increasing the automobile industry's consumption of chrome. Ford was joined by approximately fifty small businesses that utilized stainless steel and expressed their opposition to repeal because the Byrd amendment kept prices down.[106]

Writing to Ford, Diggs argued that, contrary to the assertions of the Rhodesia Lobby, there was no direct corollary between repeal of the Byrd amendment and an increase in the price of chrome.[107] He based his analysis on statements by the assistant secretary of state for Economic and Business Affairs, who remarked, "…general market and economic conditions govern chrome prices rather then the Rhodesian embargo.

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[103] Butcher, "Talking Points," (Jan. 1974): 5.
[104] Diggs, "Statement regarding S. 1868," (27 Feb 1974).
[105] Memorandum from Leslie Yates to Charles Diggs, (7 March 1974), *CDC MSRC* box 226, folder 41.
[106] Letter from Henry Ford II to Charles Diggs, (4 January 1974) *CDC MSRC* box 226, folder 43.

Whatever may be the disruptions followed from the re-imposition of the embargo by the United States, we believe they can be accommodated."[108] Unsuccessful in his attempt to sway Henry Ford II and other members of the business community, Diggs refocused his energy on securing his base. In early June, only weeks before H.R. 8005 was to be considered by the Committee on Foreign Affairs, Diggs sat down to coffee with Olufemi Ani, economic counselor at the Nigerian Embassy. The congressman questioned Ani extensively on black Africa's reaction to the Byrd amendment. Diggs further suggested that Ani contact administration officials and members of Congress and express how American credibility had been damaged by the Byrd amendment.[109] The congressman also contacted Roy Wilkins and Clarence Mitchell of the NAACP, suggesting that the three men meet to discuss ways in which that organization could more effectively stimulate interest in African affairs in the black community.[110]

Diggs' efforts bore fruit in June when the Committee on Foreign Affairs voted 25 to 9 to report S.R. 1868 to the House floor. Congressman Diggs applauded the vote, but recognized that winning the floor vote would not be so easy. A poll of 166 representatives in late July showed 104 opposed to repeal, 30 in favor, and 32 undecided. Members of Diggs' staff warned that the vote would be close. They suggested that Diggs speak to Andy Biemiller of the AFL-CIO, and encourage him to apply more pressure to labor Democrats in Congress. It was also recommended that the congressman contact African ambassadors for their support, particularly those of Nigeria and Kenya.[111]

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[107] Letter from Diggs to Ford II, (18 April 1974).
[108] Butcher, "Talking Points," (Jan. 1974): 7.
[109] Letter from Charles Diggs to Olufemi Ani, (12 June 1974), *CDC MSRC* box 226, folder 29.
[110] Letter from Charles Diggs to Clarence Mitchell, (14 August 1974), *CDC MSRC* box 226, folder 1
[111] Memorandum from Leslie Yates to Charles Diggs, "Chrome Issue," (29 July 1974), *CDC MSRC* box 226, folder 24

Unwilling to risk a House vote with the outcome still in doubt, members of the CBC appealed for more public support. In an open letter to members of the House, Congressman Andrew Young (D-GA) again laid out the arguments in favor of repeal. Diggs meanwhile went to work on undecided members of the House, finally gaining the support of Speaker of the House Carl Albert (D-OK). Diggs also contacted several African ambassadors, including Leonard Oliver Kibinge (Kenya), Edward Peal (Liberia), Siteke-G Mwale (Zambia), John Garba (Nigeria), and Henri Raharijaona (Madagascar), and requested that each provide a detailed outline of their respective countries raw mineral exports to the United States. He also provided them with a list of undecided members of the House who should be contacted.[112]

Meanwhile, President Nixon's resignation in early August brought Gerald Ford into the White House. Shortly thereafter, Charles Rangel and Donald Fraser requested that the new president back the repeal effort. Diggs also contacted Stanley Scott, a special assistant to President Ford, and stressed the importance of continued State Department support. Vigorous lobbying on the part of the White House would be necessary if the Byrd Amendment was to be repealed, Diggs advised.[113] In late August, administration officials announced that the White House still favored repeal of the Byrd amendment.[114]

By early September, the fortunes of the pro-sanctions group had improved on other fronts as well. Throughout the summer, Diggs remained in contact with Wayne Fredericks, his old ally in the State Department, and the current Executive Director of

[112] See letters from Charles Diggs to Leonard Oliver Kibinge, Edward Peal, Siteke-G. Mwale, John Garba, and Henri Raharijaoria, (14 August 1974), *CDC MSRC* box 226, folder 1.
[113] Letter from Charles Diggs to Stanley Scott, (14 August 1974), *CDC MSRC* box 226, folder 1.
[114] DeRoche, *Chrome,* 224.

International Governmental Affairs for Ford Motor Company. As a result of Diggs' persistence, Fredericks recommended a reevaluation of Ford Motor Company's position regarding adherence to Rhodesian sanctions. Reversing his earlier position, Henry Ford II now stated that "although we continue to be concerned about the availability of sufficient quantities of ferrochrome to meet vehicle emissions requirements in the U.S., we have concluded that other national and international considerations must take place precedence at this time and our policy now is to support S. 1868."[115] With the United Auto Workers and AFL-CIO already lobbying on behalf of the amendment, Diggs was pleased with the addition of Ford Motor Credit to the list of supporters.

Support for the retention of the Byrd amendment remained formidable throughout the fall, however. Four times, the CBC and its congressional allies scheduled a vote, but, fearful of defeat they backed down at the last minute each time. During November, members of the CBC held meetings with their colleagues in the House whose positions on repeal remained uncertain.[116] Diggs followed up these meetings by circulating a memorandum to the other members of Congress stressing the importance of enacting H.R. 8005. "The progress towards independence and majority rule in southern Africa has been so swift," observed Diggs, "that the question is no longer if, but when, Southern Rhodesia will finally have a majority ruled government."[117]

In early December, the Black Caucus and its allies decided S.R. 1868 lacked the prerequisite support to pass the House and decided to shelve the proposal until the following year. Despite close cooperation between the CBC and various organizations,

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[115] Letter from Charles Diggs to Wayne Fredericks, (22 August 1974), *CDC MSRC* Box 226, Folder 2.
[116] Congressional Black Caucus, "Itinerary for Breakfast Meetings on Rhodesian sanctions bill," (November 1974), *CDC MSRC* box 192, folder 8.

and extensive lobbying efforts inside and outside Congress, the repeal effort had once again stalled. Events in Rhodesia were somewhat responsible for the hesitance among House members to end the importation of Rhodesian chrome. In December, Ian Smith released nationalist leaders Joshua Nkomo, Ndabaningi Sithole, and Robert Mugabe from prison. The Rhodesia Lobby argued that their freedom indicated that a settlement was near. It would be foolish, they argued, for American companies to terminate their agreements with Rhodesia only to have to renegotiate them after a settlement.

Conclusion

The failure of the CBC and its allies to push H.R. 8005 through the House in 1974 belied the substantial organizational and structural improvements made by the group since its creation in 1971. With respect to the CBC, Charles Diggs' replacement as the group's chairman by Louis Stokes at the end of 1972 ushered in a new phase of CBC strategy. On the whole, members of the CBC turned away from the turbulence of visible national collective leadership to define themselves as "just legislators;" that is to say, as primarily the representatives of individual constituencies, albeit with many common interests. During this period, the CBC undertook two major initiatives on the domestic front: extension of programs under the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964 and countering fund impoundment by President Nixon. These efforts contributed to CBC institutionalization and helped initiate extensive relationships with key national black, liberal, and labor organizations. It also offered the CBC greater visibility and stability. [118]

As has been noted throughout this chapter, members of Congress recognized the importance of White House support in securing the repeal of the Byrd amendment.

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[117] Letter from Charles Diggs to Members of Congress, "Importance of enacting S. 1868," (8 November 1974), *CDC MSRC* box 192, folder 8.

Material and symbolic interests could be found on both sides of the debate. Generally speaking, material or tangible arguments and considerations carried more weight with policymakers as they formulated American foreign policy. The Rhodesian chrome issue was no different. Throughout the late 1960s and into the 1970s, the Rhodesia Lobby was successful because it emphasized the economic and strategic implications of the sanctions program. Pro-sanctions forces on the other hand generally relied on moral arguments, suggesting that any threat to the nation's economic development or national security was worth the symbolic value of supporting sanctions against Salisbury. Old line diplomats like Dean Acheson and George Kennan found these arguments naïve, as well as strategically unsound. Kennan had visited South Africa and Namibia, and had left with a favorable impression. Like Acheson, he came to believe that the South African and Rhodesians were the most reliable bulwarks against communism on the continent.[119]

Throughout 1973 and 1974, Diggs and his allies focused on making it clear to administration officials that the tangible advantages of violating Rhodesian sanctions were less rewarding than the tangible advantages to be gained from reinstituting the restrictions. Growing dissatisfaction among the leaders of black Africa forces reinforced Diggs' contention that independent Africa viewed American policy with contempt. Speaking before the United Nations General Assembly, General Yakubu Gowan, commander-in-chief of the Nigerian armed forces, complained, for example, that "thirteen years after the adoption of U.N. Resolution 1514 on the granting of independence to colonial countries and peoples, more than 30 million Africans… continue to be denied their human rights, exploited and subjugated under minority, racist

[118] Barnett, "Illusions and Realities of Power," 37

and colonialist regimes." Nigeria had grown increasingly important to American interests in 1973 when the country continued to provide the United States with petroleum despite restrictions imposed by the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC). The growing importance of Nigerian oil was indicative wealth of raw materials provided by black Africa. By 1974, administration officials realized that access to these commodities was threatened by their failure to support African liberation.

The success of the CBC and its allies during the congressional debates concerning Rhodesian chrome was largely attributable to the increasing efficacy of their lobbying apparatus. As opposed to their disparate statements and efforts in earlier debates, by 1973, the various groups had coordinated an organized attack. Political scientist F. Chidozie Ogene has argued that outside interest groups played the most important role in the changing nature of the debate over Rhodesian chrome. In terms of the Rhodesia Lobby, little objection can be raised to this assertion. It was, after all, the complaints of Foote Mineral and Union Carbide that initially sparked interest in the issue for many conservative politicians. Indeed, business interests enjoyed a long history of involvement on issues of international diplomacy. They were also significant contributors to the political campaigns of both Democrats and Republicans, ensuring their interests would always be protected.

The experience of the pro-sanctions constituency was somewhat different, however. Pro-sanctions groups like the ACOA and the Washington Office of Africa did not enjoy a similar proximity to leading policymakers. It would be members of the CBC and their allies in Congress who would help bring the disparate elements opposed to the Byrd amendment together to form an effective lobby group. In this respect, they

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[119] Horne, *Barrel of a Gun,*

organized meetings, sent out letters, and provided information for organizations interested in assisting the repeal effort, yet unsure how they could help. Perhaps the most important contribution of members of the CBC was tailoring a message that would cause the White House to pay greater attention to the issue.

Despite improvements in organization and argument, however, the CBC and its pro-sanctions allies were still unable to repeal Byrd in 1974. Their failure speaks to the reality of the executive branch's continued hegemony over foreign policy issues. The decline in executive dominance over foreign policy had begun before 1974 – largely in response to the quagmire in Vietnam and Nixon's impeachment – but was still incomplete during the mid-1970s. A brief review of the chrome debate provides evidence that the disposition of administration officials was the crucial factor in levying sanctions, allowing the Byrd amendment to pass, and, finally, blocking the amendment's repeal. Johnson had been fairly indifferent to African issues, but had generally followed the advice of State Department officials. The presence of predominantly pro-African and pro-United Nations individuals within the State Department meant business interests and conservative elements were largely blocked from the development of Africa policy. Thus, the Johnson administration twice refused to allow Foote Mineral and Union Carbide to import chrome it claimed had been purchased before sanctions were imposed. It is interesting to note, however, that in the interagency debates that raged between the members of the Africa Bureau, and those who simply supported the British position, the latter were far more successful. Thus, while the United States supported British economic and political measures, it strongly opposed calls from African countries for more extreme and forceful action.

President Nixon was no less indifferent to African affairs than Johnson had been, but he chose to take his advice from the National Security Council, rather than officials in the State Department. These individuals generally favored engaging the minority regimes of southern Africa. During the chrome sanctions battle in Congress, Nixon did little, if anything, to support the efforts of Congressman Diggs and Senators Fulbright and McGee. On the contrary, administration officials let it be known through third-parties like Senator Bob Dole that the administration was neutral on the issue, and Senators were free to vote as they liked. Republicans such Gerald Ford (R-MI), the House minority leader and Leslie Arends (R-IL), the party whip, therefore, supported the Byrd amendment.[120]

Throughout 1973 and 1974, it appeared that the administration had recognized its error, and had recommitted itself to assisting in Byrd's repeal. Statements emanating from the State Department and the White House suggested that policymakers were seriously reassessing America's relationship with Salisbury. Senator Humphrey was thus able, in coalition with White House officials, to pass Senate Resolution 1868 to end chrome imports. As the chrome debate moved into the House, Diggs and his allies expected administration support to continue. The Portuguese coup in April 1974, however, dramatically altered the geopolitical situation in southern Africa. Nixon's resignation in August of that same year complicated the matter further. Untested on foreign policy issues, Gerald Ford was hesitant to involve himself in such a divisive debate, particularly since he had voted in favor of the measure while still a member of Congress. As the year came to a close, support from the White House dwindled, fracturing the tentative alliance that had been formed between the administration and pro-

[120] Ogene, *Interest Groups,* 132.

sanctions groups. Entering 1975, members of the CBC were thus somewhat disillusioned. Their bid to assume leadership of the black community had fallen short and the black electorate remained fragmented, having yet to assert itself as a strong voting bloc on the national stage. Failure to cultivate relationships with the Nixon and Ford administrations meant that black legislators remained on the outside of policymaking circles on both foreign and domestic issues.

Chapter Three
The CBC and Portuguese Africa

As it had for the previous three years, repealing the Byrd amendment dominated the Congressional Black Caucus' Rhodesia platform in 1975. During this period, however, the situation in Rhodesia was largely eclipsed by developments in the Portuguese colonies of southern Africa. Led by General Antonio de Spinola, the Portuguese military successfully deposed the civilian government of Marcello Caetano in April, 1974. Prior to 1974, the status quo in southern Africa appeared to have stalled the advance of African nationalism. The coup appeared to have accelerated the timetable for independence in that country's African colonies. Diggs believed that it "marked the beginning of the second phase of the African decolonization process which began in the flood of independence at the beginning of the 1960s."[1] Believing that the successes in Guinea-Bissau, Mozambique, and Angola would pave the way for majority rule in South Africa and Rhodesia, members of the CBC spent much of this period encouraging the White House to support the various liberation movements of Portuguese Africa.

This chapter traces black legislators' attempts to combat the policy of constructive engagement adopted by both the Nixon and Ford administrations with respect to Portugal. It begins with a brief discussion of the legislative disputes regarding America's policy toward Portugal in the period before the coup. After the collapse of Caetano's government, members of the CBC encouraged President Ford to align the United States behind the liberation movements in Guinea-Bissau, Mozambique, and Angola. Primarily,

though, they pleaded with the administration not to extend the big power rivalry of the Cold War onto the African continent.

Events in Angola during 1975 quickly undermined the CBC's position. As America's secret involvement in the Angolan civil war came to light late in the year, members of the CBC became convinced that they could no longer work constructively with the Republican administration. By 1976, black legislators realized that to have any hope of influencing the policies of the next president, they would have to play a prominent role in his election. What followed, therefore, was a massive effort to mobilize black voters behind the Democratic Party's presidential candidate in the election of 1976. Members of the CBC believed that if African Americans could prove themselves a viable voting bloc, they might successfully reverse the "southern strategy" that had dominated American politics during the late 1960s and early 1970s.

The Third Attempt to Repeal the Byrd Amendment

As the CBC entered 1975, there was an impression among many of the black legislators and their supporters that, despite the individual capability of some caucus members, the CBC as a whole was ineffectual and foundering. Whether accurate or not, these criticisms led to a series of retreats and self-evaluation sessions during late 1974 and into 1975. These retreats were to become the basis for the CBC's strategy and self-perception in the late 1970s.[2]

Two major strategies emerged from this self-evaluation. The first, initially utilized by Congressman Parren Mitchell, called for an expansion of the network of black

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[1] Charles Diggs, Address at the National War College: "Southern Africa: The Climax of Colonialism," (1 April 1976), *CDC MSRC* box 220, folder 12: 1

[2] Marguerite Ross Barnett, "The Congressional Black Caucus: Illusions and Realities of Power," in Michael Preston, Lenneal J. Henderson Jr., and Paul Puryear (eds), *The New Black Politics: the search for political power* (New York: Longman, 1987), 31.

professionals and academic advisors. Beginning in 1973, Mitchell gathered three hundred black advisors to discuss public policy issues and congressional legislation. As adapted for the CBC as a whole, the "Mitchell model" meant the creation of large "brain trusts," comprised of black professionals with relevant expertise or interests. Their function was to advise and assist black legislators on the development of legislative proposals to bring before Congress.[3]

The second strategy involved renewed efforts to get more favorable committee assignments for CBC members. During the late 1960s, black legislators generally lobbied for seats on the House Education and Labor Committee, because it was the most clearly identified with social legislation. They soon realized, however, that to have an influence on policy, they would have to be active on a variety of key committees. By 1977, all twenty-two of the standing committees of the House of Representatives had at least one CBC member. Ten of the black legislators chaired subcommittees. Of the six that did not, five had excellent committee assignments, including Harold Ford (D-TN), the newest black member of the House. The "Big Three" committees of the House all had black members – Rules (Shirley Chisholm and Andrew Young), Ways and Means (Charles Rangel and Harold Ford) and Appropriations (Louis Stokes and Yvonne Burke). Charles Diggs and Robert Nix each chaired full committees as well, the District of Columbia and the Post Office and Civil Service, respectively.[4]

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[3] Raymond W. Copson, *The Congressional Black Caucus and Foreign Policy 1971-2002* (New York: Novinka, 2003), 2. See also Robert Singh, *The Congressional Black Caucus: Racial Politics in the U.S. Congress,* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 1998), 64. The CBC's "Foreign Affairs Brain Trust," for instance, was headed by Charles Diggs due to his seat on the House Foreign Affairs Committee. During the 1970s, Congressman Diggs was the recognized leader on foreign policy issues, particularly those pertaining to Africa. This role was later taken up by Representatives Ronald Dellums and William Gray in the 1980s.

[4] Marguerite Ross Barnett, "Have You Heard From Your Congressman Lately," *Black Enterprise* (January 1978): 22

Better committee assignments were the result of intense negotiations between the CBC and the Democratic House leadership. In 1974, for example, when black legislators sought to place one of their own on the Armed Services Committee, they recommended Ronald Dellums (D-CA). Speaker of the House Carl Albert (D-OK) and Wilbur D. Mills (D-AK), chairman of the Ways and Means Committee, agreed to appoint a black legislator, but preferred someone other than Dellums, who was an outspoken opponent of increased military spending. Outraged, Congressman Stokes reminded Albert and Mills that "this is 1974 – and in 1974, white people do not tell black people who their leaders are." Dellums was appointed to the Armed Services Committee shortly thereafter. Similarly, when Stokes sought a seat on the Appropriations Committee, it was approved over the strenuous objections of conservative members of the House. [5]

CBC efforts to secure important committee and subcommittee positions were not always successful, though. In February, 1975, the House Subcommittee on Africa, chaired by Charles Diggs, was officially dissolved. Led by Congressman Thomas E. Morgan (D-PA), chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, House Democrats voted unanimously to reorganize the subcommittee structure. The principal change involved the assignment of subcommittees according to functional topics related to major international affairs questions, rather than designating some subcommittees on a geographic basis, as in the past. "The Committee's new structure is designed to help us deal more effectively with the major international problems which are increasingly global in nature – such as energy and food shortages and international trade," said Morgan.[6] Touring Africa when the vote took place, Diggs found himself the lone opponent of the

[5] Nadine Codohas, "Black House Members Striving for Influence," *Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report* 43 (April 15, 1985): 676.

planned reorganization. He argued that the action "re-enforces a trend in the Administration to consider foreign affairs in terms of strategies and worldwide economic relationships based on anti-communism as the primary consideration."[7]

Despite his opposition, the subcommittee restructuring process went into effect immediately. Diggs became the chairman of the Subcommittee on International Resources, Food, and Energy. Fellow CBC member Robert Nix was now to head the Subcommittee on International Economic Policy. Longtime caucus ally Jonathan Bingham (D-NY) became chairman of the Subcommittee on International Trade and Commerce while Donald Fraser (D-MN) remained chairman of the Subcommittee on International Organizations. In retrospect, the positioning of CBC allies on congressional subcommittees relating to international economic and humanitarian concerns put Diggs and his associates in a strong position to influence American aid to Africa. Yet, the possible benefits of the new subcommittee structure were lost on members of the CBC. "Anyone who has followed the debates on U.S. policy toward the white regimes in southern Africa is aware of the gold mine of information and exposure which Chairman Diggs and his Subcommittee on Africa has provided through a process of hearings during the last five years," they complained. "It is difficult to see how Mr. Diggs will be able to continue this kind of congressional focus on U.S. policy in Africa."[8] Still, Diggs tried to keep his focus on African affairs in this new position, holding hearing on such issues as

[6] Letter from Thomas Morgan to Charles Diggs, (26 March 1975) *CDC MSRC* box 220, folder 6
[7] Letter from Charles Diggs to Thomas Morgan, (25 March 1975) *CDC MSRC* box 220, folder 6
[8] CBC Press Release, (2 April 1975) *CDC MSRC* box 220, folder 7.

disaster assistance in Angola and the future implications of raw material imports from Rhodesian and Namibia for American foreign policy.[9]

In February, hampered by the loss of the House Subcommittee on Africa, Congressmen Diggs and Fraser renewed their battle to repeal the Byrd amendment, introducing House Resolution 1287. Unlike the previous attempts to terminate chrome imports from Rhodesia, this time, Fraser added a unique provision. Instead of merely banning the importation of raw chrome ore, he called for the boycott of all finished products containing any amount of processed Rhodesian chrome. Fraser's amendment was intended to assist the struggling domestic ferrochrome industry by eliminating competitors who purchased cheap Rhodesian chrome and then undercut the prices of American specialty steel producers. This problem would only intensify if American companies were expected to abide by U.N. sanctions and resume buying only higher priced Soviet ore.[10]

Diggs, for his part, reminded his colleagues of the detrimental effect the Byrd amendment had on American credibility in Africa. In early May, he and other CBC members met with nationalist leaders Bishop Abel Muzorewa of the ANC and Reverend Ndabangini Sithole of ZANU. The two men were clear about the position of nationalist leaders in Rhodesia. "In a few months or even a few years the government of Rhodesia will be black. We will remember those who understood and helped us in our fight for freedom. We will not forget those who…in complicity with the fascist regime of Mr.

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[9] See for example, House, Committee on International Relations, *Disaster Assistance and Angola: Hearings before the Subcommittee on International Resources, Food, and Energy*, 94th Congress, 1st sess., November 1975-March 1976, (Washington D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1976); also House, Committee on International Relations, *Resources in Namibia, Implications for U.S. Policy: Hearings before the Subcommittee on International Resources, Food, and Energy*, 94th Congress, 1st sess., June 1975-May 1976, (Washington D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1977).

Smith took our minerals, bestowing wealth to the white minority, and sentencing the black majority to poverty and physical depravity."[11] Pro-sanctions advocates argued that unless the Byrd amendment was repealed, America's future standing with the independent, black government of Zimbabwe would be in peril. Agreeing, the House Committee on International Relations recommended the bill for a floor vote, 17 to 8, in July.[12]

As the third attempt to repeal the Byrd amendment staggered towards a floor vote, most legislators paid the issue little attention. In late September, the House rejected Fraser's amendment 209 to 187.[13] Diggs complained that the White House still refused to flex its muscles against elements within the country opposed to the developing world. "Despite lip-service to U.N. sanctions, and rhetorical commitments to repealing the Byrd Amendment allowing importation of Rhodesian chrome, the Ford Administration – like the Nixon administration – has never gone all out to get Congress to repeal this embarrassing piece of legislation," observed Diggs. Once again, repeal had failed. Thus, on the only major issue involving Rhodesia in 1975, the United States once again found itself on the side of the minority government in Salisbury. By 1975, however, the situation in Rhodesia had ceased to dominate the CBC's agenda in southern Africa. Realizing that the Portuguese coup dramatically altered the geopolitical situation in southern Africa, Diggs and his allies focused their efforts on securing the independence

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[10] House, Congressman Fraser of Minnesota speaking in support of H.R. 1287, 94th Congress, 1st sess., *Congressional Record* (23 January 1975), 121 pt. 1: 1194.
[11] House, Congressman Diggs of Michigan speaking about a recent meeting with black Zimbabwean leaders, 94th Congress, 1st sess., *Congressional Record* (16 May 1975), 121, pt. 12: 16166.
[12] House, Congressman Ashbrook of Ohio speaking in opposition to H.R. 1287, 94th Congress, 1st sess., *Congressional Record* (10 July 1975), 121, pt. 16: 22261.
[13] House, House Vote on H.R. 1287, 94th Congress, 1st sess., *Congressional Record* (25 September 1975), 121, pt. 23: 30235.

of Portugal's former colonies and realigning the United States with African aspirations for majority rule.

Background: The Nixon Administration and Portugal

Returning from a trip to Africa in August, 1969, Congressman Diggs expressed the opinion that insurgents in the Portuguese territories were among the most successful in southern Africa. "It seems likely that the overthrow of the present governments in southern Africa, if and when it occurs, will be the result of a domino effect," believed Diggs. Thus, "not only would success in the Portuguese territories help psychologically, but it would also provide the necessary geographic bases from which to launch operations against the established regimes of Rhodesia, South Africa and Namibia."[14] Waldemar Neilson, President of the African American Institute, shared the congressman's optimism. According to Neilson, "as far as a major area of new initiative that could produce some results in the southern complex, it seems to me Portugal is the point at which we ought to focus our efforts and energies at this particular time."[15]

Both men recognized, however, that Portugal would be reluctant to relinquish its colonial possessions. Its territories on the African continent were viewed with an immense sense of pride among members of the Portuguese ruling establishment. "With its Africa colonies, Portugal is a world power," one diplomat commented. "Without them it is only the poor man of Europe."[16] The Portuguese also considered themselves experienced in dealing with Africans and remained unimpressed by outside calls for

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[14] House Committee on Foreign Affairs, "The Forgotten Revolution," *Report of Special Study Mission to Southern Africa by members of Subcommittee on Africa*," (10-30 August 1969) *CDC MSRC* box 25, folder 7: 8.

[15] House, Committee on Foreign Affairs, *Policy Toward Africa for the Seventies: Hearings before the Subcommittee on Africa,* 91st Congress, 2nd sess., 17 March 1970, (Washington D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1970), 23-24.

[16] "Portugal and Gulf Oil Company: Allies in Colonialism," (July 1972) *CDC MSRC* box 220, folder 2: 2.

reform. Portugal's foreign minister informed Diggs that most resolutions passed by the United Nations' General Assembly were "irresponsible and unrealistic," and that no country had yet implemented any resolution contrary to its own vital interests. He maintained that Lisbon's policies in Africa were not determined by other countries and were followed because Portuguese officials genuinely believed such policies served the national interest. He argued that economic development did not always move as rapidly as one would like; there were, after all, time and human factors that came into play. Thus it was almost impossible to set a timetable that would accurately predict when Africans might be prepared to handle their own affairs, he concluded.[17]

Entering the White House in 1969, the Nixon administration had no desire to impose an arbitrary timetable on its NATO ally, fearing such a position might endanger American access to its bases in the Azores Islands. National Security Advisor Henry Kissinger admitted that Portugal provided a unique problem for the incoming administration. The American approach to the situation was influenced by countervailing factors, he observed. "On the one hand, Portugal is a NATO ally to which we currently supply about one million dollars in military assistance and whose islands, the Azores, we find important for use as a naval and air base." On the other hand, said Kissinger, "we sympathize with the aspirations of the Angolans and Mozambicans for self-determination."[18] In line with their strategy for the rest of southern Africa, administration officials believed that the best course of action would be to constructively engage the Portuguese government. Operationally, this meant the United States would continue to publicly ban arms shipments to Portugal, while providing more liberal treatment to

[17] "Forgotten Revolution," *Special Study Mission,* 27-28.

exports of equipment that could be used for military or civilian purposes. American policymakers also encouraged greater trade and investment in the African territories. At the same time, they believed it was imperative that the various liberation movements be made to understand that their aspirations for self-determination were not attainable through violence. The architects of NSC 39 hoped such measures would reduce a major irritant in American relations with Portugal and afford the Caetano government greater opportunities for liberalization.[19]

By 1971, Diggs had begun to question the wisdom of American policy toward Lisbon. Returning from a visit to the Portuguese territories in September, the congressman commented that "a conscientious effort to deal with the problem of continued colonial rule in the Portuguese territories of Angola, Mozambique, and Guinea-Bissau demands that policy pronouncements be supported by firm actions." Diggs reported that Portuguese rule was especially tenuous in Guinea-Bissau and predicted that the colony would achieve independence in the near future. "Guinea-Bissau is an armed camp and the Portuguese are indeed beleaguered," observed Diggs. He was impressed by the efforts of the African Party for Independence of Guinea and Cape Verde (PAIGC), led by Amil Cabral. The PAIGC had not only liberated a large percentage of the territory, they also instituted housing, educational, and health-care facilities to improve the lives of Africans in those areas.[20]

Despite the increasing success of the PAIGC and the nationalist movements in Angola and Mozambique, Diggs expressed concern that American policy continued to act

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[18] National Security Council, "National Security Study Memorandum 39," reprinted in Kenneth Mokoena, *South Africa and the United States: The Declassified History,* (New York: New Press, 1993), 206.
[19] Ibid., 212.

as a psychological and fiscal lifebuoy to the Portuguese government. While the United States supported resolutions urging self-determination for the Portuguese colonies, Washington continued to provide economic and military assistance to Lisbon. Reports continually surfaced alleging that liberation groups were being suppressed by weapons of American origin. Diggs offered evidence, for example, that the administration approved the sale of two Boeing 707's to the Portuguese government under the pretense that they were to be used by the Portuguese Directorate General of Civil Aviation. The reality, Diggs uncovered, was that both planes had been used to transport troops to and from the territories of Portuguese Africa. He feared that the sale represented a significant relaxation of the United States embargo of equipment to Portugal that could be used in a military capacity.[21]

The administration's decision to grant Portugal an immense aid package in December, 1971 confirmed Diggs' misgivings. In exchange for a two year extension on American rights to bases in the Azores, Portugal was promised approximately $30 million in agricultural commodities to be repaid at a low 1 ½ % interest; $1 million for educational assistance programs; $5 million in drawing rights for nonmilitary Pentagon excess equipment, a figure that could be exceeded if necessary; the loan of a hydrographic vessel at no cost; and finally, $400 million in EXIM loans and guarantees for development projects.[22]

Diggs and his allies complained that the funds projected for Portugal were out of proportion with all previous developmental commitments entered into by the United

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[20] House, Congressman Diggs of Michigan speaking on the failure of U.S. policy towards Africa, 92nd Congress, 2nd sess., *Congressional Record* (18 January 1972), 118, pt. 1: 108.

States government and the Export-Import bank. Total loans to Africa in the whole period from 1946-1970 was less than $358 million. Loans to Europe during this period were only $753 million. Portugal had received less than $50 million in the same twenty-five year period. The Nixon administration was offering four times that amount in the next two years alone. For Diggs, the question remained, "why a small nation of 8.6 million people should receive such extraordinary special treatment." This question seemed particularly relevant at a time when America was experiencing the worst deficit in its history, and rising unemployment threatened the economic future of the African American community.[23]

As a result of the proposed loan to Portugal, Diggs resigned his position on the United States delegation to the United Nations. He also cited the administration's refusal to support sanctions against South Africa in the United Nations and its complacency on the Byrd amendment in Congress as reasons for his resignation. At a press conference the following day, however, Diggs let it be known that the deal with Portugal was the primary reason he stepped down. He denounced the agreement as "an open alliance with Portugal," which "would use the money to wage war against the black peoples in its African territories." He charged that the Azores pact amounted to American partnership in the subjugation of the African people. "Many people at the mission, including the Ambassador (George H.W. Bush) have been frustrated in their desires for a more enlightened policy because of the instructions that have come down. They have fought for a more enlightened position and have lost." Diggs' statements served to inflame the

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[21] House, Committee on Foreign Affairs, *Report of Special Study Missions to Africa: The Faces of Africa, Diversity and Progress; Repression and Struggle,* 92nd Congress, 2nd sess., August 1972, (Washington D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1973): 5.
[22] Committee on Foreign Affairs, *Special Study Mission*, 109.

tensions that had been simmering between the CBC and the White House since the two groups had met in March. "It is regrettable," responded United Nations Ambassador Bush, "that a delegate should use his position to hold a press conference in order to publicly disavow United States Government policy."[24]

Congress and the Azores Agreement

Diggs was not alone in opposing the massive aid package unilaterally earmarked for Portugal by the administration. In late January, 1972, Senator Clifford Case (R-NJ) introduced Senate Resolution 214, calling on the White House to submit its recent executive agreements with Portugal and Bahrain to Congress as treaties. Testifying in support of the Case resolution before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Diggs contended that the new Azores agreement, along with the recently passed Byrd amendment, were viewed as the crux of American hypocrisy on African issues. Having visited Lusaka, Zambia earlier in the month to attend a conference between African and African American officials, Diggs reported that American policy was viewed in Africa as "a forthright announcement of U.S. support for the white minority regimes and as a U.S. decision to jettison U.S. interests throughout Africa in favor of the minority ruled countries of southern Africa."[25]

Many of these African leaders had expressed fear that the loans would help Portugal combat the rising insurgency in its African colonies. At this point, liberation forces controlled large areas of Angola in the east and south. In Mozambique nationalists controlled several provinces and roamed freely south of the Zambezi River. PAIGC forces in Guinea-Bissau and Cape Verde had forced the Portuguese out of the countryside

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[23] Ibid., 190-191.
[24] "Representative Diggs resigns as United Nations Ambassador," *New York Times* (18 December 1971)

into the well-fortified urban areas and a few scattered military bases. Without the infusion of American funds, the Portuguese stood little chance of maintaining their hold on these areas. The obvious effect of the Azores agreement would be to enable the Portuguese to continue waging their wars in Africa with the hope of reversing nationalist gains.[26]

In early March, the Senate voted overwhelmingly in favor of the Case amendment. The Nixon administration, however, ignored the congressional call to submit the Azores agreement to the Senate for ratification. The White House continued to argue that the arrangements made with Portugal and Bahrain were appropriately negotiated executive agreements.[27] In response to White House non-compliance, Case introduced a new resolution, S.R. 3447, calling for the Senate to cut off all funds for Portugal. He argued that such action was well within the Senate's purview, and was the only way the body could uphold its vote in favor of S.R. 214.[28] It is interesting to note that Senators Harry Byrd (D-VA) and Howard Cannon (D-NV) initially sided with Case and Diggs on S.R. 214, particularly since both men had become staunch adversaries of the CBC during debates surrounding the Rhodesian chrome issue. It seemed that both men were attracted to Case's argument in favor of greater congressional oversight. Indeed, Diggs had cloaked his early support for the resolution in these terms, complimenting Case "for continuing to insist on a return to normal relationships between the Congress and the Executive on foreign policy, and specifically to the unique

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[25] Congressman Charles Diggs, "Testimony before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee in support of S.R. 214," (3 February 1973) *CDC MSRC* box 220, folder 4: 9
[26] Committee on Foreign Affairs, *Special Study Mission*, (Aug 1972): 191-192.
[27] Senate, Senator Case of New Jersey introduces S.R. 3447, 92nd Congress, 2nd sess., *Congressional Record* (4 April 1972), 118, pt. 9: 11447.
[28] Senator Case introduces S.R. 3447, *Congressional Record,* 11447.

constitutional role of the Senate in ratifying treaties."[29] Whatever Byrd and Cannon's reasons, their support did not last. In early April they co-sponsored a motion to delete S. R. 3447. The motion failed and by late August the Case resolution had passed the Senate and moved into the House.

Opponents of the measure in the House stressed the strategic importance of the Azores and Portugal's reliability as a NATO ally. They pointed out that similar executive agreements had been negotiated with other NATO signatories without similar objections being raised, and suggested that the double standard being applied to Portugal was unfair. Jonathan Bingham (D-NY) countered that the new agreement was a blatant attempt to bribe the Portuguese for continued access to the Azores. Ronald Dellums agreed, and asserted that if the Azores base was strategically important to the security of the free world, then it was in Portugal's best interest to allow U.S. forces to stay there, rent free.[30] It was not as if the base was a drain on the Portuguese economy. On the contrary, Diggs estimated the annual economic benefit of the base was well over $4 million. "Without the American presence, the economy of the islands would collapse," Diggs believed.[31]

In the end, no compromise could be reached and the proposal died in Senate/House Conference in late 1972. In mid-January, 1973, Case reintroduced a similar amendment to cut off funds from the Azores agreement as resolution S.R. 445. He further proposed S.R. 446 requiring that all agreements with foreign governments for American military bases be submitted for Senate review. Because the Constitution

[29] Diggs, "Statement supporting S.R. 214," 1
[30] Congress, House, *Hearings before House Committee on Foreign Affairs concerning American assistance to Portugal*, 92nd Congress, 2nd sess., *Congressional Record* (9 August 1972), 118, pt. 2: 27574.
[31] Diggs, , "Statement supporting S. 214," 8-9.

required Senate approval of all treaties and nowhere mentioned executive agreements concerning foreign military bases, Case believed that "it should not be necessary to introduce legislation reaffirming this right of Congress." Under the previous six presidents, however, it had become common to enter into agreements with foreign governments by way of executive agreements. Case warned his colleagues that "if the Senate does not insist on carrying out its constitutional responsibility, we will only have ourselves to blame for our own impotence."[32]

It should be noted that many of the individuals who favored the Case amendment did so because they believed they were supporting greater congressional oversight, a theme that was gaining in popularity as the situation in Vietnam grew increasingly bleak. Senator Claiborne Pell (D-RI), for example, believed that by supporting the Case resolution he was "voting to support the authority and the responsibility given to the Senate by the Constitution to give its advice and consent to agreements between the United States and other nations."[33] Such an argument ran counter, however, to CBC arguments in opposition to the Byrd amendment. In that instance, opponents of the minority regimes of southern Africa were arguing for greater executive prerogative in deciding issues of foreign policy. Pro-sanctions forces wished to extend the president's extraordinary powers to overrule congressional action deemed harmful to national security. They had expressed concern that Congress, and especially the Senate, could not be trusted to decide delicate issues of foreign policy. It was this apparent flip-flop that had caused Senator Byrd to mock William Fulbright (D-AL) for his position on the

[32] Senate, Senator Case of New Jersey introduces resolutions S.R. 445 and S.R 446, 93rd Congress, 1st sess., *Congressional Record* (18 January 1973), 119, pt. 2: 1424.
[33] Senate, Statement by Senator Pell of Rhode Island supporting Case resolution, 93rd Congress, 1st sess., *Congressional Record* (13 June 1973), 119, pt. 15: 19496.

chrome issue. Yet, now it would be Byrd and the conservative members of Congress who would become proponents of executive privilege in international affairs.

Senator Barry Goldwater (R-AZ) found it strange to consider that the Founding Fathers would have wanted the Senate to exercise such unique discretion over foreign affairs. "The framers recognized clearly," said Goldwater, "that the Senate… was created as the chamber of representation for the State legislatures, while it was the President who was conceived of as the representative of the entire people—the guardian of his country." Other opponents of the amendment pointed to the landmark case of the *United States v. Belmont 301 US 324* in 1937. The court had ruled unequivocally in that case that "the recognition of, establishment of diplomatic relations with, and the terms which should govern dealings with, a foreign government are exclusively within the Presidents control over foreign relations."[34]

The debate over the Azores agreement raged throughout 1973. Members of the CBC lobbied in support of the Case resolution arguing that the Nixon administration had unilaterally aligned the United States with the repressive Portuguese colonial government. "The United States government has long been accused of hypocrisy," proclaimed Diggs, "but the situation is no longer in doubt. Under this administration's southern strategy as applied to Africa, the U.S. has sold its anti-colonial soul." The CBC implored the black community to become more actively involved. Blacks could not flinch from the task that lay in front of them since it was their duty to ensure that American foreign policy stopped underwriting colonialism in Africa. The Caucus faced a big task in Congress if American policy was to be corrected and Diggs informed the

[34] Senate, Senator Goldwater of Arizona speaking in opposition to the Case resolution, 93rd Congress, 1st sess., *Congressional Record* (11 June 1973), 119, pt. 15: 19014.

African American community that "we rely on an increasing level of awareness among our constituents in order to bring pressure to bear on the many members of Congress who depend to some extent on African American votes and support… we can achieve an influence on American foreign policy which will far outstrip that of any other minority group in the United States."[35]

In August, the Case amendment finally fizzled out in the Senate. Almost immediately, Senator John Tunney (D-CA) offered a similar amendment to the Foreign Assistance Act of 1974. Cosponsored by Senators Brooke and McGee, the Tunney amendment sought to enact into law strict prohibitions against the use of American assistance and American materials to support the military actions used by Portugal to maintain the subjugation of more than fourteen million people in its African territories. Whereas American policy had once been clear with regard to opposing the policies of the minority regimes of southern Africa, "there are disturbing signs that it has retrogressed under the Nixon administration," believed Tunney. He informed members of the Senate that the House of Representatives, led by Donald Fraser and Charles Diggs, had already added an identical provision to its foreign aid bill.[36]

Lobbying in favor of Tunney's proposal in early September, Diggs argued that the Portuguese hold on its African territories was slipping. In Guinea Bissau, for example, PAIGC forces had made tremendous progress militarily and politically throughout 1973, and currently exercised control over two thirds of the country. A United Nations delegation traveling to the area in September confirmed that the rebels had established

[35] Charles Diggs, "Speech at Lincoln University Ceremony Celebrating Nationalist Leader Amil Cabral," (15 October 1972) *CDC MSRC* box 220, folder 4: 2, 7.
[36] Congress, Senate, Statement by Senator Tunney of California opposing Azores agreement, 93rd Congress, 1st sess., *Congressional Record* (21 September 1973), 119, pt. 24: 30900.

medical, educational, and agricultural services in most of the liberated areas.[37] They had accomplished all of this despite the assassination of their charismatic leader, Amil Cabral, earlier in the year. Only months before Cabral's death, Diggs had presented the nationalist leader with an honorary degree from Lincoln University, famous for having graduated Kwame Nkrumah, one of the first crusaders for Pan-African unity. Diggs saluted Cabral for his leadership, determination, and skill and thanked him for "uniting the disparate elements of the whole population under the banner of the PAIGC, in their long exhausting struggle for independence."[38]

On September 24, 1973, PAIGC officially declared its independence from Portugal. Perhaps inspired by the nationalist victory in Guinea-Bissau, the Senate approved Tunney's amendment in early October. Section 659 of the Foreign Assistance Act officially declared that "it is the policy of the United States that no military or economic assistance furnished by the United States, nor any items of equipment sold by or exported from the United States, shall be used to maintain the present status of the African territories of Portugal." The bill demanded that the president supply Congress with an itemized list of the equipment to be loaned or sold to the Portuguese and detailed descriptions of how Portugal intended to use it.[39]

The Coup in Portugal

Encouraged by the passage of the Tunney amendment, Congressman Diggs began to pressure White House officials to justify the renewal of the Azores agreement in 1974. Having visited Brussels the previous year to discuss the significance of the Azores

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[37] House, Statement by Congressman Rangel of New York supporting American recognition of Guinea-Bissau, 93rd Congress, 1st sess., *Congressional Record* (13 October 1973), 118, pt. 26: 34134.
[38] Diggs, "Speech at Lincoln University," 1.
[39] Senate, Committee on Foreign Relations, "Debate on the Foreign Assistance Act of 1974," 93rd Congress, 1st sess., *Congressional Record* (2 October 1973), 118, pt. 25: 32601-32602.

agreement and its importance to the NATO alliance, the congressman was shocked to discover that there was no direct NATO interest in the agreement. He had been advised that there had been no consultation with NATO on the matter, as it was purely a matter affecting American interests in the islands.[40] In March, Diggs began seeking out witnesses, including members of the State Department and outside lobby organizations like the ACOA to testify before the Subcommittee on Africa on the issue. From April 11-13, he conducted a special study mission to the Lajes base in the Azores to assess the strategic importance of the base firsthand.[41]

Later that month, the situation took a dramatic turn as the Portuguese military, led by General Antonio de Spinola, successfully deposed the Caetano government in Portugal. Senator Ted Kennedy (D-MA) found the events in Portugal predictable "for those who insisted that the 13-year campaign in Africa was not only a drain upon the resources and economy of metropolitan Portugal, but was also… an immoral and unjust assault on the homelands of 15 million African people."[42] Congressman Diggs agreed, observing that the coup "came about in large part as a result of the success of wars of liberation fought in Portugal's African colonies."[43] Recognizing that the coup drastically altered the geopolitical situation in southern Africa, Diggs requested that the State Department conduct an extensive reevaluation of American policy in the region. It was particularly important that the United States refrain from any actions that might hamper the attainment of independence for Portugal's African colonies. Failure to fully support

[40] Diggs, "Statement supporting S.R. 214," 1
[41] Letter from William J. Fulbight, Chairman, Committee on Foreign Relations to Secretary of Defense James R. Schlesinger, (3 April 1973) *CDC MSRC* box 226, folder 37
[42] Senate, Senator Kennedy of Massachusetts speaking about the coup in Portugal, 93rd Congress, 2nd sess., *Congressional Record* (30 April 1974), 119, pt. 9: 12331.
[43] Charles Diggs, "Statement by Charles Diggs urging independence for Portugal's African territories, (15 May 1974) *CDC MSRC* box 226, folder 32, 3

majority rule would place the United States in the highly untenable position of "supporting the last vestiges of colonialism in Africa, while ignoring the inevitability of popularly-based, independent governments in Angola, Mozambique, Cape Verde, and Guinea-Bissau."[44]

South Africa and Rhodesia were particularly unnerved by the pace of events. It was now a distinct possibility that both governments would be completely surrounded by unfriendly nationalist-oriented regimes that had long plotted the demise of the white community in southern Africa. Mozambique's southern boundary bordered South Africa and Angola similarly bordered Namibia. Rhodesia's only route to the sea was through Mozambique. Any effort on the part of the minority governments to impede the liberation of Portugal's colonies to protect their own security was a threat to international peace, warned Diggs. It was imperative that American officials warn Pretoria and Salisbury that such activity would not be condoned by the United States.[45]

The problem, however, was that when it came to geopolitics the White House seemed unwilling to deviate from Cold War-oriented policies. Diggs was especially worried about accusations that the administration had created contingency plans for the protection of South Africa in the event that nationalist groups came to power in Angola and Mozambique. According to Tad Szulc of the *Washington Post*, "As long as a year ago, when it became obvious that the rebels were gaining in strength in Mozambique, the U.S. and NATO began to draw up secret contingency plans for air and naval defense of South Africa."[46] In June 1973, NATO's Defense Planning Committee issued a classified

[44] Diggs, "Statement urging independence for Portugal's African territories," 3
[45] Ibid., 2
[46] Tad Szulc quoted in Charles Diggs, "Questions for State Department Briefing RE Portugal," (6 May 1974) *CDC MSRC* box 226, folder 32

instruction authorizing the Supreme Allied Commander in the Atlantic Region (SACLANT), Admiral Ralph Cousins, to draw up plans for an allied air/naval task force to stand ready to assist South Africa in case the need arose. Cousins primary concern was that NATO lacked sufficient forces in the area to protect the shipping route between the Persian Gulf and Europe used to transport much of the West's oil.[47]

High level meetings between South African officials and members of the Ford administration added to Diggs' anxiety. Admiral Hugo Biermann, head of South Africa's defense forces, had recently visited the United States, as had Connie Mulder, the South African Interior and Information Minister. Although State Department officials assured Diggs that Biermann would not be making official contacts of any kind, it was known that he had visited with Acting Secretary of the Navy J. William Middendorft, as well as Admiral Thomas Moorer, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Mulder also met with several high level individuals including Vice Admiral Ray Peet, deputy assistant secretary of defense for International Security Affairs. In light of these meetings, coinciding as they did with the changing situation in Portugal, Diggs believed that the administration was determined to obstruct black rule.[48]

Crisis in Angola

Between September 1974 and November 1976, Mozambique, Angola, Cape Verde, Sao Tome, and Principe joined Guinea-Bissau in declaring their independence from Portugal. Angola quickly emerged as the most likely place where American and Soviet aspirations in southern Africa would be tested. Unlike the PAIGC in Guinea-Bissau or the Mozambique Liberation Front (FRELIMO), no group emerged as the

[47] Michael Berlin, "NATO to Aid White Africa?" *New York Post*, May 10, 1974).
[48] Diggs, "Statement urging independence," (15 May 1973), 4

dominant liberation movement in Angola. The FNLA was strong in the north because its leader, Holden Roberto, was supported by his brother-in-law, President Joseph Mobuto of Zaire. In the South, the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA), headed by Jonas Savimbi, held sway. The Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA), led by Agostinho Neto, was strongest in the capital city of Luanda and its surrounding areas. At the end of August, Zambia helped organize a sit down between the three factions in Brazzaville, Republic of Congo aimed at negotiating a satisfactory resolution. The resulting Brazzaville declaration called for a unity government. Another meeting was scheduled for September 29, and it was hoped that if the Angolans could create a unified liberation movement there would be a transitional government and free elections before independence.[49]

On January 10, 1975, the three Angolan factions met with Portuguese officials in Alvor, Portugal. An accord was reached providing for the withdrawal of Portuguese troops by April 30, to be replaced by an integrated armed force drawn from all three groups, which would also form a transitional government. An editorial in the *New York Times* hailed the Alvor agreement as a precedent "certain to have profound impact on developments in Rhodesia and South Africa."[50] Members of the CBC were similarly enthusiastic. Mozambique was scheduled for independence in late July, and now it appeared that Angola would also achieve independence in 1975. Others remained wary of the situation, however. One such observer, who had seen Roberto, Neto, and Savimbi

[49] Charles Diggs, "Notes from Meetings at the United Nations: Ambassador Banda and Foreign Minister Mwanga of Zambia," (23 September 1974) *CDC MSRC* box 226, folder 5: 2-4.
[50] Editorial, "Sunrise for Angola?," *New York Times*, January 17, 1975.

together, recalled wondering to himself "who among them would be alive a year from now."[51]

As the three factions jockeyed for predominance over Angolan politics, the administration eyed the Marxist-oriented MPLA with suspicion. The CIA had been supporting Holden Roberto with a stipend of $100,000 a year in the hopes that he would defeat Neto's forces. In the aftermath of the Alvor accords, Henry Kissinger warned President Ford that the situation in Angola was precarious and that the CIA needed additional funds to support Roberto and the FNLA. Rumors circulated that the Soviets planned a major escalation of arms and equipment to MPLA forces. It was also known that Cubans had been training MPLA guerillas for several years. In response, in late January, the president approved a $300,000 loan to FNLA forces.[52] Fighting between MPLA and FNLA forces began in February. By March, the FNLA had assaulted MPLA headquarters in Luanda and the battle began in earnest. Members of the CBC were distressed by events in Angola, but hoped the United States would stay out of what they believed was a local dispute. Diggs warned that if the United States was to regain its standing in black Africa under Ford's administration, it would have to reaffirm its commitment to keeping big power rivalry off of the continent.[53]

The administration was receiving much different signals from the leaders of black Africa, however. Meeting with the president and secretary of state, Zambian President Kenneth Kaunda requested that the United States intervene in the impending civil war. Claiming to speak on behalf of Joseph Mobuto of Zaire, Julius Nyerere of Tanzania, Samuel Machel of Mozambique, and Portuguese Foreign Minister Colonel Ernesto

[51] Henry Giniger, "For Independent Angola, A Great Threat of Strife," *New York Times,* January 16, 1974
[52] Henry Kissinger, *Years of Renewal* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1999), 795.

Augusto de Melo Antunes, Kaunda argued that the conflict in Angola was no longer purely indigenous. The MPLA was not simply a Marxist group like FREMLIMO in Mozambique. It was financed and controlled by Moscow, he argued. Kaunda urged the White House to support Jonas Savimbi as head of the emerging Angolan state since he doubted that Neto would recognize Roberto as president and vice versa. In response to Kaunda's request, the CIA funneled $300,000 to UNITA forces.[54]

From May through July there was an arms buildup on both sides of the struggle, with FNLA and UNITA forces receiving support from the United States and France and MPLA forces receiving backing from the Soviet Union and Cuba. By early spring Soviet support appeared to be turning the tide in favor of the MPLA. With the Soviets advancing in Angola, Kissinger believed that greater American intervention in southern Africa was necessary. In a conversation with Ford in mid-July, the secretary of state advised the president that he favored action. "If the U.S. does nothing when the Soviet-supported group gains dominance, I think all the movements will draw the conclusion that they must accommodate to the Soviet Union and China," Kissinger warned.[55] In July, following a CIA request the previous month for a major operation in Angola, the CIA approved $30 million for covert assistance, $14 million of which would go directly to the FNLA and UNITA. The balance was to be channeled through Zaire and Zambia.[56]

Shortly thereafter, South Africa entered the fray against the MPLA. About 500 mercenaries and 1,000 to 1,500 South African troops began to push their way toward Luanda in late October. Despite having advocated American intervention in Angola,

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[53] Diggs, "Climax of Decolonization," 7
[54] Kissinger, *Years of Renewal*, 794-797.
[55] Conversation reprinted in Ibid., 805-806.
[56] Diggs, "Climax of Decolonization," 7

African leaders responded negatively to South Africa's intervention on the side of UNITA. Most African officials deplored the South African aggression in Angola because, as Diggs observed, if Pretoria could invade a neighboring country to protect its economic interests, it would set a dangerous precedent that would have implications for the territorial integrity of other African nations.[57] In response the Soviets stepped up their aid to the MPLA. By mid-November the Soviet Union was estimated to have delivered two hundred armored vehicles, including up to fifty tanks, air defense weapons, rocket launchers, heavy artillery, including 122mm field guns, and over 20,000 rifles of various kinds, dwarfing the American supply effort, which consisted mostly of light weapons. Simultaneously, some 800 Cuban troops were airlifted into the area to assist MPLA forces. Eventually the Cuban force grew to over 3,000 combat personnel. The introduction of Cuban and South African ground forces meant the administration's clandestine support of FNLA and UNITA rebels would not go unnoticed much longer.[58]

Indeed, Secretary of State Kissinger had never held out much hope that the policy would remain secret. Upon assuming his duties at the State Department, Kissinger immediately ran into problems with the Africa Bureau. Like Dean Acheson and George Kennan before him, Kissinger complained that individuals working in the Bureau barely functioned in reality. Until well into the 1970s, a special kind of officer seemed to find the Africa Bureau congenial, thought Kissinger. "Insulated as the bureau was from the Cold War, it provided the ideal sort of environment for the promulgation of a rather inflexible version of Wilsoniaism…. Since they were not part of the mainstream of policymaking, many officers in the Africa bureau evoked a kind of siege mentality in

[57] Ibid., 7

which they transmuted their isolation into a claim of moral superiority, casting themselves as defenders of American idealism."[59] Officials in the Africa Bureau and their allies in the CBC were passionate promoters of the view that African issues had a special character requiring a unique kind of solution. Their politics, thought Kissinger, unwisely demanded "not weapons, but economic aid, not alignment, but a mystical African skill of maneuvering among contending forces without ever blighting the effort by a relationship to historic elements of power."[60]

In an attempt to defeat what he considered the overly liberal attitude of the Africa Bureau, Kissinger quickly began to search for a new assistant secretary of African Affairs. His choice, Nathaniel Davis, was a career diplomat who had served ably as ambassador to Chile from 1971 to 1973. Members of the Black Caucus opposed Davis' appointment vehemently. At issue was Davis' involvement in the military coup that deposed Salvador Allende during this period. Kissinger claimed that Davis had not been involved because the United States had not played in active role in the affair, but members of the CBC remained skeptical. As opposed to members of the Africa Bureau who sought only to limit American military involvement on the continent, members of the CBC had proven themselves opposed to American military intervention anywhere in the world. Indeed, since 1973, Ronald Dellums had repeatedly called for a reduction of the American troop presence overseas.[61]

There were two primary reasons the CBC supported a reduced American presence abroad. First, the CBC generally supported a foreign policy basing stability on economic

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[58] Odd Arne Westad, "Moscow and the Angolan Crisis, 1974-1976: A New Pattern of Intervention," *Cold War International History Project Bulletin* 8-9 (Winter 1996), 24.
[59] Kissinger, *Renewal,* 800
[60] Ibid., 801

progress, peace on self-determination in domestic institutions, and international relations on multilateral diplomacy and international law. They not only wished the Cold War away from Africa, they wanted the United States and Soviet Union to discontinue their struggle in other parts of the developing world as well. With constituencies who often lived in the basest poverty, members of the CBC were also concerned that massive defense spending was eating away a budget that could be better used at home.[62]

Despite the objections of CBC members and others within Congress, Davis was confirmed at the end of 1973. Kissinger, however, found the man less congenial than he had hoped. Davis, it turned out, was willing and eager to implement the Africa Bureau's conventional wisdom and reaffirm the group's traditional values. In the case of Angola this meant American non-intervention. By July, this position was unacceptable to Kissinger, particularly as Davis had yet to produce an alternative course of action. Kissinger later laid part of the blame for the failed Angolan operation at his subordinate's feet. "I would have benefited from a detailed analysis of risks and of why the bureau was so relaxed about the emergence of a Communist government in Angola installed by Soviet arms and Cuban trainers," recalled Kissinger in his memoirs. "Instead I received repetitions of the standard litany which did not deign to address the specific crisis we were seeking to overcome."[63]

Davis thus became an opponent of the administration's Angola policy, despite Kissinger's efforts to resurrect the former ambassador's career. He argued that, as in Vietnam, the United States was unnecessarily turning a local struggle into a display of

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[61] Congress, House, Congressman Dellums of California speaking in support of decreased defense spending, 92nd Congress, 2nd sess., *Congressional Record* (31 July 1973), 118, pt. 21: 26954.
[62] Congressman Dellums in support of decreased defense spending, *Congressional Record,* 26954.
[63] Kissinger, *Renewal,* 805.

resolve, voluntarily putting American credibility on the line. The worst possible outcome, argued Davis, was that the administration would pump up a third-rate, distant tribal struggle into a test of wills with the Soviets and then lose it. During discussions with the president in July concerning a massive infusion of covert aid for FNLA and UNITA forces, Kissinger warned Ford that the administration faced dissension from within the State Department, advising him that "they are passionately opposed and it (the covert aid) will leak." Ford then inquired as to Davis' position. "He will resign," the secretary of state informed him, "and take some with him." Ford was incredulous that Davis would do such a thing "after what you (Kissinger) and I did for him." By mid-November, with Davis' reassignment as ambassador to Switzerland, the story finally found its way into the press. [64]

Opposition to the Intervention

Intensified public scrutiny coincided with a desire on the part of the Ford administration to increase American aid to FNLA and UNITA forces. In early December, Senator Evan Bayh (D-IN) warned that the administration was attempting to escalate its involvement in Angola. Aid had now reached over $50 million dollars with more supposedly on the way and it was rumored that American-piloted spotter planes were in use over the country.[65] In the House of Representatives, the CBC joined Congressman Don Bonker (D-WA) in working to prevent America's growing involvement in Angola. Together they called upon the administration to announce American neutrality in Angola's internal strife. No military aid or assistance should be provided any of the participants, particularly the FNLA, which had arguably the smallest

[64] Ibid, 807-809.

ethnic base. They also urged Ford to press the Soviet Union, China, South Africa, and Cuba to end their support of proxies in the region, and allow the domestic turmoil to sort itself out. They suggested making it clear to the Soviets that the continuation of détente was contingent on big power neutrality in Africa. In the Senate, Senator John Tunney introduced an identical amendment.[66]

Trying to mute the rising criticism, Kissinger argued that announcing a formal intervention in the Angolan civil war would have been diplomatically untenable. He asserted that overt action would have been opposed by all the African states, including those who truly wanted American intervention in the conflict. "They might implore our assistance but were not prepared to avow it for fear of legitimizing a whole series of outside interventions," he explained. Kissinger, it would later be proved, was more astute than perhaps his critics realized. As rumors about American involvement gained increasing visibility, Kenneth Kaunda, a leading proponent of American intervention against the MPLA, slowly backed away from his earlier position. Hedging his bets, Kaunda informed the diplomatic community that "there should be no misunderstanding about Zambia's position regarding our relationship with the MPLA." The relationship dated to the years shortly after Northern Rhodesia became the independent country of Zambia, when MPLA forces established a base inside the new country's borders. Angola was a multi-party state with three groups that could not be said to respectively represent the population as a whole. Kaunda blamed the two superpowers and South Africa for choosing sides and trying to influence the outcome in favor of their respective proxy.

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[65] Senate, Senator Bayh of Indiana speaking in opposition to Angolan intervention, 93rd Congress, 2nd sess., *Congressional Record* (15 December 1975), 120, pt. 31: 40465.
[66] House, Congressman Bonker of Washington introduces amendment to Security Assistance Act, 93rd Congress, 2nd sess., *Congressional Record* (16 December 1975), 120, pt. 31: 41066.

"The involvement and rivalry of superpowers in Angola must not be condoned by the OAU," declared Kaunda.[67] This was dramatic departure from the Zambian president's attitude in mid-April when he had pleaded with the president and secretary of state to check Soviet advances in the area.

Despite the overwhelming need for secrecy, Kissinger also reminded his detractors that several members of Congress had been kept up to date on events in Angola. Between July and December, State Department and CIA officers had briefed congressional committees, subcommittees, and individual members and staff on a consistent basis. According to Kissinger, some forty briefings took place in that six-month period. Altogether he estimated that more than two dozen senators, 150 congressmen, and one hundred staff members of both houses had been briefed.[68] Members of the Black Caucus were unmoved by Kissinger's statements. They had met with the secretary of state in August and he had not deemed them important enough to rate an update about the American intervention in Angola. As the legitimate representatives of African American interest both foreign and domestic, members of the CBC demanded to know why they had not been informed about the intervention. The administration did not consult them, they contended, because Nixon knew the CBC would have vehemently opposed the intervention. Along with Senator Dick Clark (D-IA), chairman of Senate Subcommittee on Africa, they argued that Kissinger's briefings did not constitute true consultation anyway. Clark asserted that the people being briefed were not advised that their opinion was being sought. They were merely told what the

[67] House, Congressman Bingham of New York introduces remarks of Zambian President Kenneth Kaunda, 94th Congress, 1st sess., *Congressional Record* (3 February 1976), 121, pt. 2: 2199.

administration planned to do and the importance of keeping the situation quiet. He argued that those members of Congress who were informed were put in a difficult position because they were never advised that the White House decision was up for discussion and that their opposition might make a difference.[69]

For Diggs, this reeked of his experience on the U.S. delegation to the 26th General Assembly. Then too, the White House had waited until the last minute to inform the congressman how he should vote. Diggs had been offered no opportunity to venture his own suggestions and was instead expected to blindly endorse administration policy. He had stuck to his principles and walked out of the United Nations. Unfortunately, his allies in Congress had not been quite as steadfast in opposing Kissinger's intervention in Angola. As a result of their acquiescence, the American presence on the ground grew throughout the summer and fall of 1975. But this was all the more reason why caucus members should have been consulted, argued Diggs. Black legislators, many of whom were well versed in African affairs, would have explained to the Ford administration the shortcomings of its strategy. More importantly, they would not have granted the administration a blank check to finance a revolution in Angola.

Speaking before a crowd in Addis Ababa in early January 1976, Diggs called American intrusion into the Angolan conflict "the biggest blunder in the history of its relations with Africa and maybe the most serious foreign policy miscalculation it has ever made." Despite the coup in Portugal, the independence of its African colonies, and the decline of the strategic importance of the Cape route with the reopening of the Suez

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[68] Senate, Senator Griffin of Michigan introduces remarks of Secretary of State Henry Kissinger, 94th Congress, 1st sess., *Congressional Record* (28 January 1976), 121, pt. 2: 1506.
[69] Senate, Senator Clark of Iowa speaking before the Senate Foreign Relations Subcommittee on African Affairs, 94th Congress, 1st sess., *Congressional Record* (29 January 1976), 122, pt. 2:

Canal, the administration had allowed geopolitics to override good sense, aligning the United States with reactionary elements and the racist regime of South Africa. The tragedy of America's Angolan policy was that the fiasco had not been inevitable. Appropriate recommendations had come from American embassies in the region as well as the Africa Bureau in the State Department. Members of the CBC would have also suggested alternative courses had they been consulted. Instead, the administration circumvented African specialists and other interested parties. Kissinger's perspective on the Soviet and Cuban role revealed a glaring lack of sensitivity to African attitudes and an inadequate understanding of political events in Africa. "I find it unacceptable for the U.S. and the Soviet Union to shed African blood in their war by proxy, and that two superpowers should arm Africans to kill other Africans," Diggs stated passionately. "As an American," he continued, "I oppose U.S. military assistance for a war in which it has no vital interests, yet as a black American I regret that the U.S. has not lived up to its noble tradition as the first new nation to win a war of independence, that has continually espoused self determination for all people, but has allowed the Soviet Union to become identified as the principle supporter of African liberation."[70]

With Diggs out of the country, other members of the CBC rallied to support the Tunney and Bonker amendments. Shirley Chisholm reiterated the caucus' opposition to any continued funding of covert operations in Angola. "The Black Caucus has uniformly deplored all intervention in the war in Angola, said Chisholm, "not only because of the covert manner of U.S. involvement, but also because the CIA has defied the mandate of

[70] Congressman Charles Diggs, "Press Statement on Angola from Addis Ababa," (11 January 1976), *CDC MSRC* box 220, folder 12: 1-3.

the OAU opposing all foreign intervention."[71] Andrew Young expressed similar displeasure at the administration's attempts to involve the United States in what he believed was a largely local dispute. Kissinger, according to Young, had dragged cold war politics into a complex tribal conflict. "This situation is one that I have been really looking at for a long, long time," claimed Young, "for my Sunday school used to send Sunday school money to missionary stations in Angola. It is not a place that I have just heard about a few years ago." For many years the three factions had been competing for dominance, and throughout that time they had all been variously backed by the Soviets, the Chinese communists, Eastern European communists, and leftist African governments. Any government that emerged would have ties to socialism, he argued. This did not mean, however, that they would inevitably fall into the Soviet camp. "As soon as they are no longer needed, the Africans will put them out," Young predicted. He reminded his colleagues that members of all three factions had visited the United States only months before, and had urged American officials not to force them into the Soviet camp as they had Cuba. He warned members of Congress that the White House was unilaterally moving the United States into another Vietnam type conflict. "I believe" Young concluded, "that we must stop this outmoded and irresponsible method of conducting foreign affairs, this corrupt process of covert intervention which inevitably leads to prolonged American commitments and then embarrassing revelations." [72]

Representative John Conyers agreed with Young's assessment. American foreign policy under Kissinger was based on a narrow great power view of the world, he

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[71] House, Congresswoman Chisholm of New York speaking in opposition to Angolan intervention, 93rd Congress, 2nd sess., *Congressional Record* (19 December 1975), 120, pt. 32: 42329.
[72] House, Congressman Young of Georgia speaking about American intervention in Angola, 94th Congress, 1st sess., *Congressional Record* (27 January 1976), 122, pt. 2:1041-1042.

complained. "The legitimate interests of other nations, the great aspirations of other peoples, become subordinated to Machiavellian schemes conjured up by the National Security Council.…" Every crisis and struggle in the world became a means of reinforcing America's global position vis-à-vis the Soviet Union. This type of policy would inevitably lead to increased American intervention abroad and a heightened sense of crisis on the international scene. American credibility had already suffered greatly among its allies and the nations of black Africa. "Black African states cannot fail to notice that the United States began to provide significant aid to the Angolan independence movements only after Portugal relinquished its colonial power…. Once again, third world nations view us as intervening in their affairs only when our global – myopically anticommunist – interests are at stake."[73]

In late January, the Bonker/Tunney amendment passed the House, with full CBC support. This reaffirmed the Senate vote of the previous month, restricting the use of funds for Angola unless specifically appropriated in the budget, and officially ending American support for FNLA and UNITA, since overt assistance would take months of legislative wrangling. In June, 1976 the CBC similarly supported an amendment sponsored by Senators Dick Clark and Edward Brooke. The Clark amendment made Tunney's proposal permanent, prohibiting American involvement in Angola, apart from humanitarian operations, without the consent of Congress. In the meantime, the American position in Angola rapidly deteriorated. The Soviets continued providing the MPLA with arms and assisted by Cuban troops, the MPLA achieved a tenuous hold over the country in early 1976.

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[73] House, Congressman Conyers of Michigan speaking about American intervention in Angola, 94th Congress, 1st sess., *Congressional Record* (27 January 1976), 122, pt. 2:1041-1042.

Conclusion

The fall of Caetano's regime in April, 1974 and the disintegration of Portugal's African colonies shortly thereafter provided American policymakers with an opportunity to safely realign themselves with the liberation movements of southern Africa. The policy options laid out by the authors of National Security Memorandum 39, predicated as they had been on the notion that the nationalists would be unable to achieve their aims through military means, were discredited by events, first in Guinea-Bissau and later in Angola and Mozambique. Many members of the CBC, particularly Diggs, believed that events in the Portuguese colonies had altered the political and military situation in southern Africa, thereby strengthening the lobbying position of nationalist sponsors in the United States.

Yet, the White House's refusal to develop a more enlightened Africa policy, as well as Kissinger's continued reliance on the recommendations of the infamous NSC 39, revealed both the myopia and hypocrisy of the Ford administration. The Nixon/Kissinger/Ford led foreign policy stood indicted on a number of counts: supporting Portugal through the Azores agreement, duplicity over administration support for the repeal of the Byrd amendment, alignment with South Africa in Angola, and vetoes in the United Nations on resolutions opposing the white minority regimes. The way in which President Ford and Secretary Kissinger led the United States into a secretive role in the Angolan civil war in tacit collaboration with racist South Africa reflected in the worst way the tendency of the White House and the previous administration to place a

higher priority on opposing "communism" in white-dominated southern Africa than in opposing the core of that region's problems – namely, white supremacy. "It has been just such an overriding preoccupation by this and past administrations with big power diplomacy, and especially with the actions of the U.S.S.R., accompanied by indifference to the Third World that has brought about the crisis in our African relations reflected now in southern Africa," complained Diggs. The Vietnam/Angola intervention syndrome was "senseless and futile," he warned. [74]

Diggs further complained that African Americans continued to be underrepresented within the foreign policy establishment. If Africa policy were to move in a more positive direction, the next administration would need to increase substantially the black presence within the foreign policy mainstream. This could be accomplished through appointments to U.S. delegations to international meetings and support for black candidates for positions in the United Nations, as well as the promotion of blacks already employed in these institutions. For the CBC's platform to be successful, politicians would have to recognize black interest in Africa and deep concern for American policy in that part of the world, as well as the implications of this heightened interest for domestic politics.

By 1976, however, it had become increasingly unclear whether African issues truly resonated in the black community, or whether they were second-tier issues, primarily the province of Diggs and his associates in the CBC. A quarter century after the much smaller Jewish community enjoyed instantaneous recognition of Israel, the black community had not even been able to make American recognition of Guinea-

[74] Charles Diggs Jr., "The U.S. and Southern Africa after Angola: Will We See An 'Instant Replay'?" (25 March 1976) *CDC MSRC* Box 220, Folder 12, (25 March 1976): 2-4.

Bissau a salient issue; nor had they been able to muster public support for repealing the Byrd amendment or defying Portuguese colonialism.

Black legislators' only concrete triumph during this period was their support of the Tunney Amendment cutting off funding for covert military operations in Angola. CBC members also supported the subsequent efforts of Senator Dick Clark to amend the International Security Assistance Act of 1976. The Clark Amendment prohibited American involvement in Angola, apart from humanitarian operations, without the approval of Congress. It also provided over $85 million for assistance to Zaire, Zambia, and other states in southern Africa.[75]

The CBC's victories with respect to the Tunney and Clark amendments, however, were less the result of its successful lobbying on African issues, than the fact that their position neatly aligned with the majority of Congress in 1976. Members of Congress had not been insensitive to political and policy developments during the 1970s. On the contrary, they were much affected by the prolonged war in Vietnam, the landslide re-election of Richard Nixon and his use of presidential power, the Arab oil embargo, and, of course, the Watergate scandal.[76] Thus, the CBC and its allies often cloaked their support of African issues in the guise of greater congressional oversight on foreign policymaking, while at other times they were attacked for conceding too much authority to the executive. Congress studied itself more during this period than at any time in history. In an environment where many members were frustrated that their individual and collective reform efforts had not strengthened the role of Congress on foreign policy

[75] Letter from Herschelle Chanellor to Charles Diggs, "Problems with the Clark Amendment on International Security Assistance," (25 May 1976) *CDC MSRC* box 220, folder 9.
[76] Charles Jones, *The Trusteeship Presidency: Jimmy Carter and the United States Congress* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1988), 47.

issues, the Ford administration's attempted intervention in Angola was met with bitter hostility. Many legislators feared that an intervention in Angola could escalate into a Vietnam-scale involvement that would once again entangle the United States in a conflict without clear objectives.

Protecting this legislative victory remained a caucus priority into the 1980s. In March, 1981, the Reagan administration announced that it would seek the repeal of the Clark amendment, and a proposal along those lines passed the Senate. In the House, however, proponents of repeal decided not to bring the measure to the floor largely due to opposition organized by members of the CBC. In 1985, however, the CBC was unable to defeat renewed repeal attempts. Amidst growing alarm about the continued Cuban presence in Angola, the following year witnessed a covert, but publicly acknowledged, program of American assistance to anticommunist forces in the country.[77]

The impact of the CBC and their allies on the situation in Angola has been the subject of debate. Despite the eventual repeal of the Clark amendment, black legislators believed that they had helped prevent a proxy war during a decade of particularly intense competition between the superpowers. By the time covert aid was resumed, they argued, it was not as disruptive as it would have been, since almost a decade later the prospects of superpower confrontation in the developing world, even by proxy, seemed somewhat remote. Critics of the caucus complained, however, that its Angola positions, and particularly its support of the Clark amendment, had reduced American leverage in Angola, encouraged eastern bloc adventurism in Africa, and later delayed the negotiations, which finally began in 1988, that eventually brought about a Cuban withdrawal from the country. In the eyes of many of their opponents the CBC had

developed the most negative aspects of ethnic group's activism. It appeared that they would blindly support the aspirations of their imagined homeland over the common interests of the entire community. Thus, the CBC's failure to maintain a certain distance from the emotional aspects of African liberation continued to hamper the group's efforts to achieve legitimacy for its positions among policymakers schooled in traditional Cold War ideology.

[77] Copson, *CBC and Foreign Policy*, 24-26.

Chapter Four
The CBC, Jimmy Carter, and Liberal Internationalism

As members of the CBC celebrated the organization's five-year anniversary in January, 1976, they were determined to play a more prominent role in the upcoming presidential election. For the group's entire existence it had been denied access to the White House's inner sanctum, relegated instead to the margins of policymaking. It was hoped that a candidate beholden to the African American vote would be pliable on issues affecting the black community.

With regard to foreign policy, and southern Africa in particular, members of the Black Caucus called for an extensive re-evaluation of American interest in the developing world. The explosive independence of Angola, Mozambique, and Guinea-Bissau had escalated the timetable of change in South Africa and Rhodesia. It had simultaneously forced the United States to speed up its own timetable with regard to the pressing problems of the region. Black legislators urged members of the policymaking elite to recognize that the United States could exercise leadership but not hegemony in a post-World War II world in which it no longer exercised unchallenged authority. Moynihan-type bullying in response to opposition from the United Nations and Kissinger style threat tactics with respect to external assistance to the various liberation movements offered only illusory solutions, they argued. Until American policymakers overcame their blind fixation on communist influence in southern Africa and perceived the eradication of white minority domination as the top priority in bringing about real

stability in the region, American relations with black Africa would continue to be plagued by tension and mistrust.[1]

Jimmy Carter's election in November, 1976 heralded a new era of American foreign policy. As applied to the developing world, Carter's new brand of "liberal internationalism," forged by the experiences of Vietnam and détente, brought together many of the diverse strands that had made up the CBC foreign policy platform since 1971: the desire to minimize military commitments overseas, the inclination toward loosening old alliances and establishing new relationships, the ambition to reallocate the world's wealth so as to achieve greater equality of opportunity, the demand for racial justice and human rights, and the encouragement of an open economic system around the world. By freeing Americans from what President Carter described as that inordinate fear of Communism which once led us to embrace any dictator who joined us in our fear, the liberal internationalist was able to "rise above narrow national interests and work together to solve…formidable global problems."[2] The new president provided further encouragement to advocates of a more enlightened policy on the continent when he announced that CBC member Andrew Young would become ambassador to the United Nations and an integral part of his foreign policymaking team.

Yet, by the end of Carter's term, the liberal agenda pursued by his administration had been largely abandoned in the face of rising domestic criticism. By 1980, the containment doctrine, inspired by the traditional cold war paradigm, had effectively replaced the liberal policies of Carter's early years as the basis of American foreign

[1] Charles Diggs Jr., "The U.S. and Southern Africa after Angola: Will We See An 'Instant Replay'?" (25 March 1976) *CDC MSRC* box 220, folder 12: 2.

policy. The Carter administration's initial enthusiasm for and eventual abandonment of liberal internationalism raised interesting questions for students of foreign policy. Carter's early critics of past policies, based primarily on the same reaction to the Vietnam War that prompted the foreign policy positions of the CBC, while by no means radical, were systemic and far reaching. Similarly, the policy changes attempted by his administration were wide-ranging and interdependent. When Carter chose to discontinue these reforms, he was therefore forced to do so over a range of policies, including détente with the Soviet Union and liberalization with respect to American policy toward the developing world. The scope of Carter's attempted reforms in American foreign policy was matched by the fervor with which he approached the retreat from these initial policies. This suggests that the rise and fall of liberal internationalism under the Carter administration should be viewed as an aborted shift in the intellectual regime underlying American diplomacy as a whole. Thus it appeared that CBC failures on the foreign policy front were not only the result of organizational deficiencies, but were also due to the fact that domestic opinion was generally hostile to the foreign policy positions supported by black legislators.

Black Legislators and the Election of Jimmy Carter

The CBC's first major initiative of 1976 came in April, when members presented the organization's legislative agenda for the year. The major issues of concern were: full employment, health care, urban revitalization, rural development, civil and political rights, education, welfare reform, economic development/aid to minority businesses, the economy, and foreign policy. These were issues not only for the Congress to act upon;

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[2] See Donald Rothchild, "U.S. Policy Styles in Africa: From Minimal Engagement to Liberal Internationalism," in Kenneth Oye Donald Rothchild, and Robert Lieber, *Eagle Entangled: U.S. Foreign*

they were also election year issues for the presidential candidates to address. "We believe," stated members of the CBC, "that the black community and those with lower incomes will agree with our positions and insist that the candidates must take sound positions on the issues to merit the support of their constituency."[3]

In terms of foreign policy, the CBC declared that the United States needed to undertake a complete overhaul of its policy in Africa. The second largest continent in the world, Africa, had an overall energy potential more favorable than South America, Europe, or Australia. It enjoyed the greatest hydroelectric potential of all the continents. It was also home to ten percent of the world's supply of petroleum. Nigeria, for example, had been instrumental in supplying the U.S. with oil during the OPEC crisis of 1973. In addition to its energy potential, Africa was one of the richest continents in mineral wealth, containing more than half the world's supply of chromium, cobalt, gold, germanium, tantalum, lithium, phosphates, and diamonds along with significant deposits of copper, tin, iron ore, bauxite, and platinum. It was crucial that the United States recognized the changing locus of its economic interests in Africa. "Not only is [the] present U.S. policy inconsistent with U.S. interests," members of the CBC pointed out, "but it is diametrically opposed to the interests of Africa and Black America." "U.S. Africa policy must change," they demanded. "For Black America serves notice that policy on Africa will affect our votes in presidential, congressional, and local elections."[4]

In an attempt to quell tensions with the CBC, Secretary of State Kissinger met with black legislators in mid-April. Discussing his forthcoming trip to Africa, he

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Policy in a Complex World (New York: Longman, 1979), 317

[3] House, Congresswoman Burke of California speaking with regard to the CBC's Legislative Agenda for the 2nd session of the 94th Congress, 2nd sess., *Congressional Record* (14 April 1976), 122, pt. 10:11065

attempted to persuade CBC members that the administration had altered its policies toward southern Africa and was willing to place the United States squarely behind majority rule. Unimpressed, black legislators recommended that the administration should: (1) recognize and support the MPLA regime in Angola; (2) oppose bantustans (separate black homelands) and support majority rule in southern Africa; (3) repeal the Byrd amendment; and (4) mend relations with Nigeria.

Despite the meeting with Kissinger, members of the CBC, and black Americans in general, had little faith in Republican policies at home or abroad. They were also now quite conscious of the power of the black vote in the 1976 presidential elections and were determined to wring pledges from the Democratic candidates for a more enlightened policy toward Africans and African Americans. While black legislators were united with respect to the policies they wanted the next Democratic candidate to support, the group remained divided as to who they would endorse in 1976. Early in the vetting process, Congressman Andrew Young threw his support behind Georgia Governor Jimmy Carter. Carter impressed Young with a strong interest in African issues, requesting on several occasions that Young provide him with information on Rhodesia, South Africa, and Namibia.[5] Along with prominent black and liberal leaders, including Martin Luther King Sr., Atlanta Mayor Maynard Jackson and Leonard Woodcock, president of the United Auto Workers, Young also viewed Carter as a vehicle for defeating the candidacy of the

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[4] The Caucus of Black Democrats, "U.S. Policy Toward Africa, (12 April 1976) *CDC MSRC* box 220, folder 12: 1-4

[5] Andrew DeRoche, *Andrew Young: Civil Rights Ambassador* (Wilmington, Delaware: Scholarly Resources Inc., 2003), 72.

noted racist and segregationist, George Wallace. Carter was a logical candidate for the anti-Wallace forces because he was a racial moderate as well as a southerner.[6]

Young's support of Carter throughout 1975 and into 1976 did little to bring other black legislators into the governor's camp, however. A meeting between Carter and members of the CBC in May elicited little enthusiasm from Congressman Young's colleagues. Many of them liked the Georgia governor and were impressed by the number of African Americas on his staff. Still, many worried that racist skeletons might tumble out of his closet at any moment. [7] Nor were other prominent figures in the black community particularly impressed with the candidate. Reverend Jesse Jackson expressed concern that Carter's anti-Washington rhetoric was simply a code for drastic cuts in social programs. Georgia State Senator Julian Bond similarly criticized the candidate for turning his back on traditional liberal values. Carter's opponents tried to play upon these fears. Senator Hubert Humphrey, for example, warned that "candidates who make an attack on Washington are making an attack on government programs, on the poor, on blacks, on minorities, on the cities." [8]

Despite the reticence of other black leaders, Young remained a firm advocate of Carter's candidacy throughout the spring and summer of 1976. He had come to believe that Carter's style of southern liberalism enabled him to avoid both the guilt of the "converted redneck" and the paternalism of the northern white liberal.[9] He argued that Carter's record while governor of Georgia proved he was the best suited to advance black interests from the White House. His governorship saw the greatest advance for black

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[6] Robert Shogan, *Promises to Keep, Carter's First Hundred Days* (New York: Thomas Crowell and Company, 1977): 44-45.
[7] DeRoche, *Andrew Young*, 72.
[8] See Chuck Stone, "Black Political Power in the Carter Era," *Black Scholar* 8 (1976-77),19

Georgians since Reconstruction. The number of blacks employed by the state climbed rapidly and black appointments to governing boards went from three to fifty-three during Carter's four years in office. He also honored Martin Luther King, Jr., with a holiday and hung his picture in the Georgia statehouse, an extraordinary act for a governor from the Deep South.[10] Indeed, the candidate's rhetoric indicated that he viewed himself as a continuation of the civil rights agenda talked about by John F. Kennedy and initiated by Lyndon Johnson. At a pre-election rally in Harlem, Carter stated his determination "to seek out basic human rights and basic civil rights," a determination which American presidents had abandoned "when Lyndon Johnson left the White House and Richard Nixon came in…."[11]

At the Democratic convention in July, Young took center stage to second Carter's nomination as the Democratic candidate for president. Black legislators, many of whom had supported other candidates throughout the primary season, quickly joined Young in encouraging African Americans to support the Democratic candidate. In late September, the CBC held a conference with the theme "Political Power through Unity," at which CBC Chairwoman Yvonne Braithwaite Burke asserted that "our number one concern between now and November 2nd must be to see that every eligible Black person registers to vote and goes to the polls."[12] Congresswoman Barbara Jordan further advised members of the black community that voting in the upcoming election would make a noticeable difference in the outcome. "It will not change our society overnight," she

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[9] W.L. Miller, *Yankee from Georgia*, (New York: Times Books, 1978), 86.
[10] Jeremy D. Mayer, Running on Race: Racial Politics in Presidential Campaigns, 1960-2000 (New York: Random House, 2002), 128.
[11] Carter quoted in John Drumbrell, *The Carter Presidency: A Re-evaluation* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1995), 63.
[12] House, Congresswoman Burke of California talking about the CBC newsletter "For the People," 94th Congress, 2nd sess., *Congressional Record* (1 October 1976), 122, pt. 27: 35583

admitted, "but it can be the first step in forming a true national community…." Failing to vote would mean that African Americans "will continue to remain unequal and will continue to bear witness to the ruination of their government."[13] To ensure that this did not happen, Young and other members of the CBC embarked on an ambitious door-to-door campaign aimed at registering a million new black voters.[14]

Responding to the challenge set forth by black legislators and other prominent community leaders, African Americans threw their support behind Carter in November. While the majority of whites in several southern states supported Ford, blacks voters overwhelmingly backed Carter. The result was a narrow electoral victory over the incumbent Ford, 297-241. Without the black vote, Carter, a southerner, would not have carried the "solid south." However, with heavy support from the African American community, he carried every state in the old Confederacy with the exception of Virginia. Only in Georgia, Arkansas, and Tennessee was the new president's margin of victory larger than his portion of the black vote. Looking at the numbers, members of the CBC crowed: "there can be absolutely no doubting this simple, unvarnished fact: **Blacks elected Carter!**(author's emphasis)"[15] The *New York Times* agreed, noting the irony of "a South Georgia white man with a mint julep drawl being sent to the White House by the grandchildren of slaves."[16]

Members of the CBC immediately sought to parlay the black community's pivotal role in the president's election into major appointments for African Americans in the new administration. At Carter's invitation, Young and other influential black leaders began

[13] House, Congresswoman Jordan of Texas speaking about the importance of African Americans marching to the ballot box, 94th Congress, 2nd sess., *Congressional Record* (1 October 1976), 122, pt. 27: 35583
[14] Dennis A. Williams and Henry McGee, "Getting Out the Vote," *Newsweek* September 6, 1976, 14

compiling a list of positions they wanted filled by minorities.[17] Barbara Jordan was initially considered as a strong candidate to fill the position of ambassador to the United Nations. She made it clear, however, that she wanted to be attorney general, a post which Carter believed she was unqualified to fill. Leadership of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) was offered to Franklin Thomas, head of the Bedford-Stuyvesant redevelopment project in New York City, but he turned the position down. Shortly thereafter, Patricia Robert Harris took the position, becoming the first African American woman to head HUD. Drew Days from the NAACP was named Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights and Wade McCree, a black appeals judge, became solicitor general. The well-known white civil rights advocate Patricia Derian also joined the administration as, first, coordinator and subsequently Assistant Secretary of State for Human Rights.[18] Finally, in mid-December, upon Young's return from a research mission to Lesotho, South Africa with Congressman Diggs, Carter offered his most vocal African American supporter the position of Ambassador to the United Nations. The president convinced his friend that he intended to work more closely with the United Nations, a desire he spelled out more clearly several months later. "I myself," said Carter, "have a deep commitment to the United Nations and want to see its role expanded in the future. The world is too complex to be dealt with…by one powerful country or

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[15] "Blacks Elected Carter," undated, *Jimmy Carter Presidential Library,* box 12, Domestic Policy Staff: Special Assistant Louis Martin (folder, Blacks and the Carter Administration)
[16] Dumbrell, *The Carter Presidency,* 88.
[17] Susan Fraker, Henry McGee, and Vern E. Smith, "Carter and the Blacks" *Newsweek* July 19, 1976, 29.
[18] Shogan, *Promises to Keep,* 87-88.

three or four powerful countries. The other nations of the world resent it, and it is much better to have a forum where each nation's voice can be heard."[19]

News of Carter's offer was met with mixed reviews from Carter's friends and associates. John Lewis and Coretta Scott King were among the most outspoken opponents of his accepting the position. Charles Diggs was similarly unsure if Young should accept the position. "When Ambassador Young was first proposed for his U.N. position, " Diggs recalled, "I was one who counseled against his taking it. Having served as a member of the United States delegation to the United Nations for one session, I know from the precedents that influence from that vantage point was not only limited, but the experience would be frustrating for one who wanted to play an activist role. I wanted to see Andrew Young as a senior advisor within the White House where his maximum influence on both domestic and international policy could be exerted on a daily basis."[20] Remembering the advice offered by those around him, Young reminisced that "I have never had so many people cussing me out and crying and sending me messages not to take the job. All the people who really love me want to save me from the dangers."[21]

Still, Young decided to take the position, and his confirmation in January, 1977 was generally met with enthusiasm by his colleagues in the CBC. Carter's announcement shortly thereafter, that Young would become a member of his cabinet with status "equal to that of the Secretary of State or the Secretary of the Treasury, or anyone else," somewhat mollified Diggs' concern that Young had squandered his political capital with

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[19] Jimmy Carter, "Remarks to Members of the U.S. Delegation and U.S. Officials of the United Nations Secretariat," (4 October 1977), *Public Paper of the Presidents of the United States, Jimmy Carter, 2* (Washington D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1978), 1725

[20] House, Congressman Diggs of Michigan speaking in support of Ambassador Andrew Young, 95th Congress, 2nd sess., *Congressional Record* (20 July 1978), 124, pt. 16: 21888.

[21] Tom Mathews and Vern Smith, "Young Takes a Risk," *Newsweek* December 27, 1976, 21.

the new president.[22] He and the other members of the CBC had long sought a more prominent voice in foreign policy formulation. The assumption of a cabinet post by a former caucus member, and one of the leading congressional advocates of self-determination in southern Africa, meant that the foreign policy concerns of black legislators would finally be heard at the highest levels. As Benjamin Hooks, executive director of the NAACP, observed, "No black person has ever had such a forum (especially with the backing of a sympathetic and supportive president) for advocating policies on Africa that challenge white minority rule and oppressive domination."[23] After five years on the margins of American foreign policy, black legislators finally had a sympathetic ear in close proximity to the president and other key decision-makers.

Congress, the Carter Administration, and Human Rights

By the time Carter received the Democratic nomination in 1976, a well developed lobbying network for the cause of human rights in foreign policy existed within the United States. In Congress, the human rights issue was particularly well advanced in the period before Carter took office. During the early months of 1976, members of the CBC, along with their allies in the House, proposed a new tack for policy toward black Africa, pursuing influence by appealing to the values of human rights and racial equality that America shared with the nations there. It was imperative, they insisted, that the United States begin to work more constructively with the United Nations and other forums to help resolve disputes through negotiation rather than exacerbating them through confrontational techniques. Global interdependence and national self-interest required that the United States take a positive leadership role in restructuring the international

[22] See Donald S. Spencer, *The Carter Implosion: Jimmy Carter and the Amateur Style of Diplomacy* (New York: Praeger, 1988), 54.

economic system so that it served the interest of all nations. Should American policymakers adopt this approach, they argued, "Our cold war interests in Africa may very well take care of themselves." Whether or not the United States would measure up to the challenge, asserted members of the CBC, would depend on the degree to which Americans shook off the blind spot of communism and perceived the real threat to the West in southern Africa – namely, white minority rule.[24]

In late September, 1976, barely a month before the presidential election, members of the CBC hosted a conference on southern Africa to better articulate the group's platform on human rights. The Black Leadership Conference on Southern Africa was attended by over 100 individuals from various African American organizations, including the NAACP, the Black Economic Research Council, and the National Council of Negro Women. The conference attendees adopted a ten-point manifesto expressing solidarity with those Africans protesting racism and oppression in Rhodesia, South Africa, and Namibia. "We do this," they announced, "because…we know that the destiny of blacks in America and blacks in Africa is inextricably intertwined, since racism and other forms of oppression respect no territories or boundaries." They also condemned the role played by the United States and private corporations, "which by their presence and activities, offer psychological comfort to the minority regimes of southern Africa." Finally, they committed themselves to formulating a progressive policy toward Africa, challenging the Judeo-Christian community, the labor movement, the media, and the political, business, and civic leadership in the country to join them in seeing that "our government upholds

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[23] Seymour Maxwell Finger, *Your Man at the United Nations* (New York: New York University Press, 1980), 285.
[24] Charles Diggs Jr., "The U.S. and Southern Africa After Angola: Will We See An 'Instant Replay," (25 March 1976) *CDC MSRC* box 220, folder 12, 2

its values and its historical commitment to self-determination, freedom and justice."[25] The meeting proved that the candidate's position on American policy toward southern Africa was at least symbolically important to the black community in the upcoming election.[26]

The conference also led to the creation of TransAfrica as an independent public affairs organization dedicated to influencing Amerucan policy toward Africa and the Caribbean. Led by Diggs and Young, caucus members concluded that the "neglect of African and Caribbean priorities could only be corrected by the establishment of a private advocacy organization." Founding members included Ronald Walters, a professor of political science at Howard University, as well as two of Diggs' staff members, Randall Robinson and Herschelle Chanellor. TransAfrica officially began operations – with Robinson as its executive director – in 1978. In subsequent years the organization became active on a wide range of issues, including sanctions against South Africa and development aid to black Africa.[27]

Carter's victory two months later signaled a shift in American foreign policy along the lines outlined by the CBC in September. While the new president perceived relative growth in Soviet military power, he rejected alarmist interpretations of the American-Soviet balance of power as well as calls for the United States to respond to growing Soviet military might with a rapid buildup of its own. Instead, Carter questioned the political utility of large new investments in military power on the part of either superpower and preferred to emphasize political and economic means of influence. From

[25] Congressional Black Caucus, "The African American Manifesto on Southern Africa," (25 September 1976) *CDC* MSRC box 220, folder 14, 1-3.
[26] See Mayer, *Running on Race,* 124.

among his campaign advisors, Carter chose lawyer, diplomat, and former Pentagon official Cyrus Vance as secretary of state and Eastern European scholar and former State Department policy planner Zbigniew Brzezinski as national security advisor. Both men appeared to share the president's desire to end the country's "hysterical preoccupation" with communism. Vance supported this new approach in a policy paper written for the candidate in October, 1976. In it he had asserted that while the United States must protect its interest vis-à-vis the Soviet Union, policymakers could not let their relationship with the Soviets distort American relations with other countries.[28] Brzezinski also stressed the need for greater tolerance, observing that "for far too long, the United States had been seen, often correctly, as opposed to change, committed to stability for the sake of stability, [and] preoccupied with the balance of power for the sake of the preservation of privilege." The new NSA believed it was imperative that the new administration restore "America's political appeal to the Third World."[29]

Carter was fairly comfortable with the foreign policy positions of both men, having served with each on the Trilateral Commission throughout the 1970s. Along with David Rockefeller of Chase Manhattan Bank and Milton Katz, director of International Legal Studies at Harvard, Brzezinski was a principal organizer of the commission, which was formed to address issues affecting American international interests. Carter was brought in shortly after the group was formed in 1973, as were Andrew Young and Carter's future vice-president, Walter Mondale. The trilateral perspective embraced a program for inter-capitalist cooperation based on a post-Vietnam analysis of America's

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[27] Raymond W. Copson, *The Congressional Black Caucus and Foreign Policy 1971-2002* (New York: Novinka, 2003),13-14

[28] Cyrus Vance, *Hard Choices* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1983): 441-2.

place in the world. Its key concept was complex interdependence. The days of American hegemony based on the drive for economic and military superiority were over, most trilateralists believed. Many had come to view the Soviets as a status quo power, constrained by economic realities, and no longer engaged in a struggle for world revolution. In such an environment, it was important that American policymakers support a new collaborative internationalism with the economic dimension emphasized over the military. Thus, the commission's main objective was to promote greater economic links between the United States, Japan, and Western Europe, while improving America's standing in the developing world.[30]

The new president's involvement with the commission – founded as it was on the same liberal elite reaction to the Vietnam War that colored the CBC's perspective on foreign policy – pleased Congressman Diggs, who believed that Carter would pursue an enlightened policy toward Africa. In the period leading up to Carter's inauguration, Diggs tried to make sure this would be the case, offering his advice to the new president, his secretary of state, and his national security advisor regarding the direction of American policy on the continent. Brzezinski, who had discussed African policy at length with the congressman during a flight to Washington D.C., was particularly impressed with the congressman's counsel and "by the degree to which we agreed and by the scope and depth of your insights on matters which not only concern us but are of great importance to international peace."[31] The appointment of Andrew Young to the

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[29] Zbigniew Brzezinski, *Power and Principle* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1983), 52-4

[30] See Stephen Gill, *American Hegemony and the Trilateral Commission* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 222; also Shogun, *Promises to Keep*, 86. Two other major appointments came from the Commission's ranks. Harold Brown was named Secretary of Defense and Michael Blumenthal became Secretary of the Treasury.

[31] Letter from Zbigniew Brzezinki to Charles Diggs, (6 Jannuary 1977), *Jimmy Carter Presidential Library,* White House Name File: Charles C. Diggs Jr. (folder, (cong) 1/6/77-9/6/78)

United Nations and individuals with extensive Africa experience – for example, Donald McHenry and Anthony Lake – to key mid-level foreign policy positions signaled to Diggs that the new administration would indeed rethink American policy toward southern Africa. The interconnection in Carter's mind between human rights at home and abroad appeared evident in light of his selection of Young and Patricia Derian to prominent foreign policymaking positions. Neither had much foreign policy experience; instead, they were expected to apply the lessons gleaned from years of experience in the civil rights movement in the hope that the administration's policy could transcend the traditional domestic/foreign divide.[32]

Entering the White House in January, 1977, Carter and his advisors immediately set out to prove that their policy toward the developing world would be a distinct departure from the cold war oriented strategies of their Republican predecessors. In this respect, no country was courted more enthusiastically than Nigeria. The Nigerians were high on the list of "new influentials" in the developing world that the president wished to improve relations with. During Carter's first few months in office, he worked with Young to mend relations with Nigeria, which had been frayed under the previous two administrations. For the Nigerians, who had contributed over $50 million to the liberation movements in Rhodesia, "human degradation, oppression and deprivation as rationalized and perpetuated in southern Africa by the racist regime there is a crime against which not only Africa, but also mankind as a whole must fight."[33] The Rhodesian situation was thus a moral issue on which Nigeria would not accept lip service from American policymakers. The moral message was one the Carter administration

[32] Dumbrell, *The Carter Presidency*, 63.
[33] Rothchild, "U.S. Policy Styles in Africa," 320.

sympathized with, and in February Ambassador Young was dispatched to deliver a message of accommodation to the Nigerians. While Kissinger's attempt to visit the country had repeatedly been rebuffed, Young was welcomed with open arms by the Nigerian head of state, Olusegun Obasanjo. During the visit, Young reiterated the new administration's commitment to majority rule, stressing that Washington preferred a non-violent settlement to the conflict in Rhodesia. He also promised that the administration would work to persuade Congress to repeal the Byrd amendment, and thus end American complicity with Ian Smith's regime.[34]

The Byrd amendment had already survived repeated repeal attempts since its introduction in 1971. A coalition of pro-Rhodesia organizations, business interests, and conservatives had managed to convince a majority of Congress that its repeal would cost American steelworkers jobs, raise the price of imported chromium, and make the United States dependent on the Soviet Union for a crucial commodity. In early January, 1977, during his final days in Congress, Andrew Young co-sponsored House Resolution 1746, calling for the re-imposition of sanctions against Rhodesia along with Congressmen Diggs and Fraser. The amendment also sought to prevent the indirect importation of chrome from Rhodesia via specialty steels. It thus mandated that all imported chrome ore, ferrochrome, and nickel products would have to bear a certificate of origin that stated that the material therein had not originated in Rhodesia.[35]

The Carter administration, determined to demonstrate its unity with black African aspirations, urged Congress to move swiftly on the legislation to overturn the Byrd

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[34] Raymond Carroll, Peter Younghusband, and Loren Jenkins, "Goodbye to White Rhodesia" *Newsweek*, February 21, 1977, 24.
[35] House, Congresswoman Chisholm of New York speaking in support of H.R. 1746, 95th Congress, 1st sess., *Congressional Record* (14 March 1977), 122, pt. 6: 7410.

amendment. Testifying before the Senate Subcommittee on Africa, newly appointed Secretary of State Cyrus Vance announced that the State Department and White House would provide all necessary assistance to ensure Byrd's repeal. In his new capacity as ambassador to the United Nations, Andrew Young suggested that, "In very tangible terms repeal would show the Smith regime that it could not count assistance from the United States government in its obstinate refusal to accede to majority rule. It would also impress upon Africans that the United States is serious in its support for majority rule in an independent Zimbabwe."[36] In the House, Congressman Diggs echoed this sentiment, arguing that strong congressional backing on the issue "would strengthen the hand of the new administration as it tries to reach an accommodation on the southern Africa problem in the United Nations."[37] Primarily because Carter's position was unambiguous and effective, H.R. 1746 passed a House vote on March 14, 1977. The following day, led by Senator Dick Clark (D-IA), chairman of the Africa Subcommittee of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, members of the Senate voted 66-26 in favor of repealing the Byrd amendment.[38]

The success of the repeal effort lay in a voting shift by a number of moderate legislators, who, due to the strong lobbying effort by the White House, were no longer convinced that the amendment served American interests. Senator Howard Baker (R-TN), for example, who had consistently voted against Byrd's repeal, admitted his newfound conviction that "the long term interest of the United States will be adversely

[36] "Ambassador Andrew Young Testifies on the Rhodesian sanctions bill," (21 March 1977) *Department of State Bulletin* 76, No. 1969 (Washington D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office,) 271
[37] House, Congressman Diggs of Michigan speaking in support of H.R. 1746, 95th Congress, 1st sess., *Congressional Record* (14 March 1977), 123, pt. 44: H2022.
[38] Michael Clough, "From Rhodesia to Zimbabwe," in Michael Clough ed., *Changing Realities in Southern Africa: Implications for A,merican Policy* (New York: Institute of International Studies, 1982), 25.

affected by a continuance of the Byrd amendment."[39] On March 18, during a White House ceremony attended by members of the CBC, President Carter signed an executive order officially reinstituting sanctions against Rhodesia. Thanking black legislators for their assistance in the repeal effort, an exultant President Carter declared that the measure "puts us on the side of what's right and proper."[40]

The Carter Administration Pursues a Rhodesian Settlement

While the Carter administration was able to move quickly in repealing the Byrd amendment, it found a settlement on majority rule in Rhodesia far more elusive. Attempts to negotiate a breakthrough on majority rule in Rhodesia had been rekindled during 1976, primarily as the result of Henry Kissinger's efforts to broker a settlement between London and Salisbury. As American support for FNLA and UNITA forces in Angola collapsed in early 1976, Kissinger, sensing the changing geopolitical situation in southern Africa, began looking for opportunities to regain prestige for himself and for the United States. In this sense, the Angola crisis proved to be something of a watershed for American relations with black Africa. It was now evident to the secretary of state that minimal engagement with a tilt toward white Africa was increasingly counterproductive. Being the realist that he was, Kissinger altered his approach in an effort to align the United States with the emergent nationalist forces on the continent.[41]

The Ford administration's new tack toward southern Africa was spelled out during a speech in Lusaka, Zambia on April 27. In it, the secretary of state placed the United States firmly behind the principal of majority rule in Rhodesia, warning Salisbury

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[39] Senate, Senator Baker of Tennessee speaking in support of sanctions, 95th Congress, 1st sess., *Congressional Record* (15 March 1977), 123, pt. 44: S4309.
[40] Senate, Senator Harry Byrd of Virginia speaking in opposition to Byrd's repeal, 95th Congress, 1st sess., *Congressional Record* (29 March 1977), 122, pt. 8: 9505.
[41] Rothchild, "U.S. Policy Styles in Africa," 310-312.

that it could not expect American diplomatic or material support in its conflict with the African states and liberation movements; declaring America's willingness to provide aid to beleaguered Mozambique to assist that country due to the economic hardships incurred by its border closing with Rhodesia; asserting that the United States would similarly assist any of Rhodesia's other neighbors who would also close their borders with Rhodesia in an effort to better enforce sanctions against that country; announcing the administration's willingness to support the repeal of the Byrd amendment at home; and, finally, stating an interest in furthering the peacemaking process by contributing to the creation of a constitutional framework that would protect minority interests while establishing majority rule. He also urged South Africa to establish a firm, early deadline for granting self-determination to Namibia. Condemning South African apartheid, Kissinger called for a "clear evolution within a reasonable period of time toward equality and basic human rights. But he also indicated the administration's willingness to grant Pretoria time to achieve this transformation so long as it showed "its dedication to Africa," by putting pressure on the Smith regime to accept black rule.[42]

Kissinger's speech introduced the United States as a major actor in the effort to bring about a Rhodesian settlement. During a visit to southern Africa in September, 1976, Kissinger met with Smith and outlined the American position. The "Kissinger plan," actually more a British than an American product, required that: (1) Rhodesia agree to majority rule within two years; (2) Rhodesian representatives meet immediately with black leaders to establish an interim government until majority rule could be achieved; (3) The interim government would consist of a Council of State, half of whose

[42] Stephen J. Stedman, *Peacemaking in Civil War: International Mediation in Zimbabwe 1974-1980* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1991), 89-90. See also Henry Kissinger, *Years of Renewal* (New

members would be black and half white; (4) All members would take an oath that they would work for rapid progress toward majority rule; and, finally, (5) London would enact enabling legislation for progress on black rule. As a result of their discussion, Smith agreed to attend a British-chaired conference in Geneva seeking a solution to the situation in Rhodesia. Carter's defeat of Ford shortly thereafter, however, reduced Kissinger to lame duck status and limited his effectiveness as an intermediary between the various delegations.[43]

Poorly prepared, the Geneva Conference, conducted from October through December 1976, failed to achieve an agreement. With the secretary of state out of the picture, British animosity towards the Rhodesians rose to the surface. Kissinger later recalled that London's distrust of Salisbury was a major stumbling block to constructive negotiations. British leaders were viscerally opposed to backing Smith on any of the follow up negotiations, including minority rights, he complained.[44] For their part, the British viewed Kissinger as naïve and did not share his illusions about Salisbury's desire for a settlement. They argued that Smith's objections to majority rule were philosophical and not practical. London's low opinion of the Rhodesian prime minister was summed up by one member of the delegation, who when asked what might have made for a different outcome, replied, "Well, I remember thinking if Ian Smith had a heart attack or slipped under a car or something."[45]

Taking over the White House in January, 1977, the Carter administration found itself in the midst of an escalating crisis as the British officially announced that talks with

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York: Simon and Schuster, 1999), 939-940.
[43] Stedman, *Peacemaking in Civil War,* 90. See also Rothchild, "U.S. Policy Styles in Africa," 312.
[44] Kissinger, *Years of Renewal*, 1014.
[45] Quoted in Stedman, *Peacemaking in Civil War*, 123.

the Rhodesians had failed to produce even a minimal agreement. During the administration's first several months in office, Carter and his advisors failed to present a coherent plan to re-energize negotiations between the British and the Rhodesians. In February, Carter dispatched Ambassador Young to Africa to discuss the situation in Rhodesia with the leaders of black Africa. Young, however, claimed that he only planned "to listen," to the counsel of black Africa, not advance new initiatives.[46] Throughout the spring, the administration's position remained vague with Carter supporting the renewed efforts of new British Foreign Secretary David Owen to broker a settlement, while calling upon the South Africans to apply pressure on the Smith government to return to the bargaining table.[47] Young echoed this sentiment, offering his opinion to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee that South Africa remained one of the most important players in the process. "If South Africa says negotiate," he informed members of Congress, "Rhodesia will have to negotiate."[48]

Meanwhile, the Smith government announced that it would pursue an internal settlement instead of engaging in further discussions with the British. Even before the Geneva Conference had ended, Smith suggested that he would negotiate a separate settlement and implement Kissinger's plan unilaterally if Joshua Nkomo and Robert Mugabe – whose ZAPU and ZANU organizations had merged to form the Patriotic Front – remained intransigent at the bargaining table. Smith hinted at his plan of action when he declared the delegation of Bishop Abel Muzorewa, leader of the African National Congress (UANC) the "most responsible" of the nationalist leaders in attendance and

[46] Raymond Carroll, Peter Younghusband and Scott Sullivan, "Rhodesia: A Separate Peace?" *Newsweek* (7 February 1977), 46.

similarly praised Mugabe's former associate Ndabaningi Sithole. With the cost of the war against the guerillas increasing rapidly, and the Rhodesian economy near collapse, Smith had come to recognize that Western assistance and an end to sanctions would be necessary to save the country. In the past when Smith had negotiated with the blacks, he had not felt a need to make major concessions. By 1977, however, he realized that he had no choice. His new goal was to limit the amount of concessions he would have to make. Smith thus hoped to make a deal with the blacks in the weakest bargaining position (Muzorewa and Sithole) and crackdown on the others (Nkomo and Mugabe). For an internal settlement to succeed Smith would need the support of South Africa, the "moderate" black leaders, and, finally, Washington and London. Over the next two years, Salisbury committed all of its energy to achieving these ends.[49]

It was not difficult for Rhodesia to gain South African support. While Pretoria wanted an end to the Rhodesian conflict, they did not want to see a radical government come to power in Salisbury. A sudden collapse of the Rhodesian government with whites fleeing in large numbers might also embolden the black populace of South Africa and Namibia. Likewise, a black government in Salisbury could pose further threats to Pretoria's interests. Thus, from a strictly national security standpoint, it made sense for South Africa to support the regime in power. An internal settlement also appealed to the South Africans since they were pursuing a similar agreement with moderate blacks in Namibia.[50]

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[47] "Interview with the President: Question and Answer Session with a Group of Publishers, Editors, and Broadcasters," (15 April 1977) *Public Papers of the United States of America, Jimmy Carter, 1* (Washington D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1978), 646.
[48] Carroll, Younghusband and Sullivan, "A Separate Peace?" 46
[49] Clough, "From Rhodesia to Zimbabwe," 27-28.
[50] Ronald T. Libby, *Toward an Africanized U.S. Policy for Southern Africa: A Strategy for Increasing Political Leverage* (Berkeley, CA: University of California-Berkeley, 1980), 21.

Furthermore, Carter's victory in November, 1976, served to decrease Pretoria's interest in squeezing Rhodesia. As historian Donald Rothchild has observed, "whereas Kissinger adopted a step-by-step strategy for dealing with the southern Africa question, separating out the issues dealing with Rhodesia, Namibia, and South Africa into distinct negotiating tracts, the Carter administration tended to apply a single regional solution to the problem of white-minority dominance."[51] With Kissinger in charge of the negotiations, Pretoria had always held out the hope that helping the United States pursue a negotiated settlement in Rhodesia would lessen American pressure to reform. Carter, however, eschewed any such compromise with racism and universalized his attack on white domination on the continent, warning South Africa that failure to relinquish possession of Namibia and end the discriminatory policy of apartheid would force the United States to pursue sanctions in the United Nations.[52] Andrew Young added to the South Africans' discontent, when he suggested that the Afrikaner government was "illegitimate." Later, while visiting South Africa, it was alleged that the ambassador encouraged blacks to boycott the white minority.[53] The administration's generally hostile posture aroused doubt in Pretoria as to whether South Africa could work constructively with the new administration in Washington.

In February, after conferring with the South Africans, Ian Smith announced that Salisbury would officially pursue an internal settlement with non-terrorist black leaders such as Muzorewa and Sithole. They were attractive candidates for several reasons. First, their longstanding involvement in the nationalist movement gave them a semblance

[51] Rothchild, "U.S. Policy Styles in Africa,"317
[52] Michael T. Kaufman, "Carter Asks End to White Rule in South West Africa," *Newsweek,* May 18, 1977
[53] House, Representative Wilson of California complaining about Ambassador Young's meddling, 95th Congress, 1st sess., *Congressional Record* (9 June 1977), 123, pt.15: 18349.

of international credibility. Second, Rhodesian intelligence predicted that Muzorewa would probably win a fair election. Also, neither man controlled a large army and were thus in constant danger of being squeezed out of an eventual settlement by Mugabe and Nkomo. With little prospect of developing their own forces, it was in their best interest to conclude a settlement as quickly as possible. Believing that the nationalists and the international community would be satisfied if black moderates were placed in positions of authority, Smith quietly pursued an internal settlement throughout 1977. While Salisbury did not completely rule out negotiations with the British and American during this period, Smith made it clear that he believed there was "no future" in continuing talks with the Patriotic Front.[54]

The United States and Great Britain remained unreceptive to the proposed internal settlement, however. Throughout the summer, British and American officials, led by Andrew Young and British Foreign Secretary David Owen, met with the leaders of black Africa and the contending Rhodesian parties in an effort to hammer out an internationally acceptable solution. In early August, Tanzanian President Julius Nyerere visited the United States to discuss the situation with President Carter. Nyerere advocated Smith's removal, the dissolution of the Rhodesian security forces, and their replacement with an army based on the liberation forces. To everyone's astonishment, Carter agreed.[55] Meeting with Young at the end of August, Owen expressed British consternation at Carter's agreement, complaining that Salisbury would surely reject any plan that included Nyerere's demands. Despite internal disagreements, Young and Owen unveiled the Anglo-American proposal in early September. The plan called for the surrender of power

[54] Clough, "From Rhodesia to Zimbabwe," 30-31.
[55] DeRoche, *Andrew Young*, 84-85.

by Smith's regime, a transitional administration made up of neutral parties, the introduction of United Nations forces until a cease-fire could be reached, free and impartial elections on the principle of one-man, one-vote, a development fund to revive the economy, and a constitution providing for a democratically elected government and the protection of minority rights.[56]

Any hope the Western powers had of catching the Rhodesians in a conciliatory mood were hampered, however, by Smith's overwhelming re-election in mid-September. Not only did Smith receive eighty-five percent of the vote, his Rhodesian Front swept all fifty seats in parliament. Smith viewed his victory as a mandate to pursue an internal settlement and while he did not reject the Anglo-American proposal out of hand, he continually alleged that it was "a cunning scheme to ensure the triumph of black guerilla leaders."[57] His primary objection lay with the stipulation that he would have to hand over power to a British administrator. As Owens had predicted, Smith was also opposed to the replacement of the Rhodesian army with rebel forces. Major provisions of the plan were also rejected by the Patriotic Front, due to its opposition to proposals protecting white property rights and interference on the part of United Nations forces.[58]

As it became clear that neither Smith and the black moderates, nor Nkomo and Mugabe, would accept any formula that did not guarantee their power after independence, the Anglo-American plan fell apart. Smith therefore refocused his attention on negotiating a settlement with Muzorewa and Sithole. Despite a brief walkout by Muzorewa, the talks finally concluded in an agreement in late February, 1978. The

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[56] "Rhodesia: Proposals for a Settlement," (3 October 1977), *Department of State Bulletin* 77, no. 1997 (Washington D.C.: United States Government Printing Office,): 424-39.
[57] Milton Benjamin, Anthony Collins and Peter Younghusband, "A Boost for Ian Smith," *Newsweek,* September 12, 1977, 38

Salisbury accord called for a new government chosen on a one-man one-vote concept. It also included constitutional safeguards designed to protect the minority white population. For ten years, or two parliaments, whichever was longer, whites were to be guaranteed twenty-eight of the hundred seats in Parliament. Twenty of these would be elected by whites only; the remaining eight by a multiracial electorate. Other guarantees – an independent judiciary, an independent public services board, freedom from interference in public service, police and defense forces, and guarantees on pensions and citizenship – were all to be regarded as specially entrenched provisions of the constitution. Their amendment would require at least seventy-eight affirmative votes, meaning whites would retain enough seats to block any constitutional changes for at least a decade. As Smith intended, the intricate clauses of the accord served to keep effective control of the government in the hands of the white four percent of the Rhodesian population. There was also little hope that the blacks would co-opt white votes since all twenty eight whites belonged to the Rhodesian Front and it was reported that they had all taken blood oaths pledging never to vote against the party.[59]

The agreement called for the creation of a transitional government to take power on March 21, 1978. Smith was chosen as the chairman of a four-member executive council that included Muzorews, Sithole, and Chief Jeremiah Chirau. Smith declared the new government, which was responsible for guiding Rhodesia toward elections by the end of the year, "a victory for moderation." A general amnesty was declared offering those guerillas who stopped fighting an opportunity to integrate into the Rhodesian armed forces. Still, members of the Patriotic Front refused to lay down their weapons. Nkomo

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[58] Finger, *Your Man*, 277.

and Mugabe rejected any proposal that would leave white officials firmly in control of the coercive agencies of the state: namely, the War Council, the civil service, the army, the police, and the judiciary. Thus, rather than accept the proposed amnesty, Nkomo and Mugabe dismissed the internal settlement as a fraud and promised to continue the armed struggle for independence. With the South Africans behind them, Smith and his moderate black allies announced that they were no longer interested in talks with the Patriotic Front, and turned their attention to gaining Western support.[60]

The internal settlement in Salisbury was primarily designed to appeal to American legislators who could reverse the Carter administration's aggressive policy toward Salisbury, as well as British conservatives who were poised to replace the Labour government in Great Britain. The Salisbury accord, argued Smith, would provide the new government with the political legitimacy necessary to convince the West that continuing to support the insurgency was futile. A black government might also compel the United Nations, or at least leading Western countries, to end Rhodesia's international isolation and lift the economic sanctions that had been made more onerous by the repeal of the Byrd amendment in March, 1977. The termination of sanctions would provide the economic capability to prosecute a successful campaign against the remaining guerillas. It would also help restore health to the seriously damaged Rhodesian economy. Without access to Western loans and markets that recognition and an end of sanctions would bring, it had become clear to Smith that further decline was inevitable.[61]

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[59] Raymond Carroll and Peter Younghusband, "Smith Cuts a Deal," *Newsweek,* February 27, 1978, 37; see also Anthony Lewis, "No End to Torment III," *New York Times,* January 29, 1979
[60] Carroll and Younghusband, "Smith Cuts a Deal," 37.
[61] Jeffery Davidow, *A Peace in Southern Africa: The Lancaster House Conference on Rhodesia, 1979* (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press,), 23

By early 1978, the ruse appeared to be working as British Foreign Secretary Owen was forced to admit that the accord was a "significant step toward majority rule." Faced with increasing domestic pressure to accept the internal settlement, and amidst rumors of a growing rift between the United States and Britain, Secretary of State Vance also grudgingly acknowledged that the agreement was "a significant step," but added that "a great deal remains unclear about what is involved in that proposal.[62]

Worried that the Carter administration was softening in its opposition to Smith's plan, members of the CBC requested that the president publicly condemn the internal settlement. They complained that the settlement between Smith and the black moderates was illegitimate since it did not include all parties, particularly the fighting forces responsible in large measure for the stalemate that currently existed in the country.[63] Returning from a ten-day trip to the continent during which time he visited with Presidents Nyerere, Kenneth Kauda, and Joseph Mobutu, as well as Joshua Nkomo and ZANU representatives, Congressman Diggs advised Carter that "we have reached a crossroads in our evolving relationship with Africa." This being the case, "the responsibility for avoiding chaos, or at least minimizing conflict that may be inevitable in the march toward total decolonization in Africa, may rest principally with the United States," Diggs believed. He stated that there was a growing conviction among Africans that the British were not prepared to live up to their responsibilities in Southern Rhodesia and that only the United States could persuade London to do so. Certain leaders, such as Kenneth Kaunda, advised the congressman that Washington should act alone if necessary, rather than be held back by Great Britain. Diggs and other members of the

[62] Carroll and Younghusband, "Smith Cuts a Deal," 37.

CBC called upon the president's "personal courage," and "sense of moral justice" in urging him to take all necessary steps to bring about a settlement based on the Anglo-American plan. "If Smith is permitted to perpetuate white preeminence in this manner," Diggs warned, "you can anticipate a similar internal settlement in Namibia and protracted conflict in southern Africa which would probably be internationalized."[64]

Diggs' observations appeared accurate as African leaders pushed the administration for a strong condemnation of the internal settlement. In a vote of considerable symbolic importance, the United Nations Security Council approved a resolution in mid-March declaring any Rhodesian settlement made solely under the supervision of the Smith government would be deemed "illegal and unacceptable." Although the United States abstained from the vote, the depth of African feeling on the issue was crystallized in a speech made before the Security Council by Joseph Garba, Nigerian Commissioner for External Affairs. Garba called the transitional government a "black washed racist regime" and stated that Africans regarded the so-called internal settlement with utter contempt. They treated it as something "contrived by the illegal racist regime with its cohorts in Pretoria in the hope of delaying its doom."[65] Opposition within the African and African American community prompted the administration to reaffirm its commitment to the Anglo-American proposal. Thus, in his speech before the Security Council in mid-March, Ambassador Young emphasized the "serious inadequacies" of the internal settlement.[66]

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[63] House, Representative Diggs of Michigan speaking about CBC's letter to the president, 95th Congress, 2nd sess., *Congressional Record* (9 March 1978), 124, pt 5: 6329.
[64] Letter from Congressman Diggs to President Carter, 31 March 1978, *Jimmy Carter Presidential Library,* White House Name File: Charles C. Diggs Jr. (folder, (cong) 1/6/77-9/6/78)
[65] Quoted in Rothchild, "U.S. Policy Styles in Africa,"320.
[66] Finger, *Your Man,* 276-277.

Carter's reluctance to endorse the internal settlement represented a concrete triumph for Andrew Young and his allies in the Congressional Black Caucus. It also, however, exposed the first fractures in Western unity. Diggs was among the first to question London's commitment to the Anglo-American initiative. Suspecting that London was edging closer to accepting the settlement, Ambassador Young joined in Diggs' criticisms of Britain's complacency, publicly questioning whether London would "run out and leave us with 30 years of trouble, the way they did in Palestine in 1948?" Young's statement in many ways highlighted the bind that the Salisbury accord created for the Carter administration and its allies. While they were correct that the settlement would not end the war, it was nearly impossible for them to explain why this was the case, without coming down on the side of the avowedly Marxist guerilla forces. Newspaper editorials across the country openly questioned the lack of White House support for the agreement. Young's often intemperate remarks and Carter's refusal to even consider the agreement provided ammunition for conservative elements in the United States who had been uncomfortable with the administration's liberal foreign policy since it entered office. Over the next two and a half years, conservatives would use the situation in Rhodesia, as well as crises in other parts of the world, to discredit Carter's foreign policy. As one of the primary architects of that policy in the developing world, Young became a particularly popular target for critics of the administration.

Andrew Young and Conservative Opposition to Liberal Internationalism

The division in public opinion over American foreign policy made itself evident from the earliest days of the Carter White House. The administration's initial stance toward relations with the Soviet Union was characterized by a continued commitment to the policies of détente forged by the Nixon administration. The rise of the Soviet Union

to strategic parity with the United States was thought to raise the risks of renewed confrontation and to provide an inducement for both superpowers to cooperate in reducing the chances of war and curbing an expensive arms race. While respecting Soviet military might and acknowledging that increased Soviet activity in the developing world presented a challenge, most officials did not, however, perceive broad geopolitical designs in Soviet behavior. During their first year, most members of the administration viewed the Soviet Union as "occasionally opportunistic," but "generally cooperative in its intentions." Soviet expansionism was thought to be "constrained by the complexity of the international system."[67] Moreover, they were convinced that the United States possessed strengths that the Soviets did not. Led by Andrew Young, American policymakers were opposed to further military buildup in the developing world since the United States "fares better in the world through peaceful economic competition wherever possible." "The sooner the fighting stops and the trading starts," declared Young, "the quicker we win."[68]

As Carter prepared to take office, pro-military conservatives (both Democrat and Republican) were dismayed by what they perceived as the rise of a naïve, liberal internationalist view of the world. They also expressed concern over the appointments of Andrew Young, Patricia Derian, and several other "inexperienced" and "unreliable" younger people to second rank foreign policy positions.[69] While in the House of Representatives, Young had been a vocal proponent of a regionalist perspective of African affairs. Along with Congressman Diggs and other black legislators, he had

[67] Jerel Rosati, *The Carter Administration's Quest for Global Community: Beliefs and Their Impact on Behavior* (Columbia, S.C.: University of South Carolina Press, 1977), 69.
[68] Carl Gershman, "The World According to Andrew Young," *Commentary* 66(2), (August 1978), 19

argued that Africa should be spared the inconveniences of the American/Soviet dispute. This view, calling for greater nuance in American diplomacy, fit into the overall liberal internationalist platform supported by the CBC and the incoming administration. Upon assuming his duties at the United Nations, Young came to stand at the head of this regionalist interpretation of African affairs, vigorously opposing South Africa's administration of Namibia and its internal policies of apartheid, while supporting the progressive forces in southern Africa without regard to Soviet or Cuban actions in the region. Young's progressivism disturbed many conservatives who felt he was soft on communism and blind to Soviet designs on the developing world. He quickly confirmed their fears, making several controversial statements during his first weeks at the United Nations. This included the contention in early February that like "most colored people of the world," he did not fear communism as much as he feared racism. "Maybe that's wrong," he admitted, "but communism has never been a threat to me."[70]

The ambassador's flippant remarks created a furor among conservatives in Congress. Representative John Ashbrook (R-OH) believed Young was "a lamb" being sent "to the flesh pits of the United Nations" where "communist nations in alliance with African nations and Arab nations run the show." He doubted that "the average American who does believe communism is a threat to him, his home, his job, and his country would have any voice at all in the United Nations…."[71] One such American, writing to the *New York Times*, complained that Young's comments on racism were "too personal and limited in scope to be appropriate for our representative to the U.N." "As a feminist," she

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[69] Donald Rothchild, "The New Internationalisms," in Kenneth Oye Donald Rothchild, and Robert Lieber, (eds) *Eagle Entangled: U.S. Foreign Policy in a Complex World* (New York: Longman, 1979), 65-66

[70] House, Representative Ashbrook of Ohio speaking about the disqualifications of Ambassador Young, 95th Congress, 1st sess., *Congressional Record* (2 February 1977), 122, pt. 3: 3385.

continued, "I would be equally shocked if a woman in a high position said, 'I don't concern myself with Communism or racism, only sexism.'"[72] Conservative columnist Michael Novak agreed, observing that "if each of us was to interpret world realities by personal experiences as the ambassador seems to do, what a jungle of selfish viewpoints would be in conflict."[73]

Despite the chorus of criticism, Young showed no signs of quieting his rhetoric. Over the next several months the ambassador made a number of controversial statements ranging from: his contention that the presence of Cuban troops in Angola was a "stabilizing force;" his characterization of Richard Nixon and Gerald Ford as racists and his further accusation that the British had "practically invented racism;" his assertion that "it may take the destruction of Western Civilization to allow the rest of the world to emerge as a free and brotherly society;" and his suggestion that African American soldiers would not be willing to fight African Communist forces if ordered to do so. Young also supported the action of his aide, Brady Tyson, who used his official position on the United Nations delegation as a platform to apologize for American complicity in the overthrow of Salvador Allende in Chile in 1973. The admission was particularly galling for American policymakers since the State Department had repeatedly denied American involvement in the coup.[74]

Outraged by Young's behavior, the Conservative Caucus, a national right-wing political group chaired by New Hampshire's governor, Meldrim Thomsom, launched a

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[71] Representative Ashbrook speaking about Young, *Congressional Record*, (2 February 1977): 3385.
[72] Elizabeth Jordan, "Limited Vision," *New York Times*, March 11, 1977
[73] Michael Novak, "Andrew Young and Easy Morality in Foreign Affairs," *Washington Star,* March 13, 1977
[74] For a comprehensive list of Young's transgressions see House, Representative McDonald of Georgia speaking in favor of resolution to impeach Ambassador Young, 95th Congress, 1st sess., *Congressional Record* (5 October 1977), 122, pt. 25: 32559.

campaign to remove the ambassador from office in May and June of 1977. In conjunction with like-minded members of Congress, the Conservative Caucus manifested a lack of trust and confidence in Young's fitness to serve, due to his outrageous behavior and alleged support of communism. Conservative commentator Patrick Buchanan diagnosed Young with an unmistakable case of "hoof-in-mouth disease." "If he were not black," Buchanan complained, "he would have long since been shipped to Jibu or named consul general in the Falkland Islands. But, protected by his pigmentation, he remains in place, making a shambles out of what foreign policy we have."[75] Congressman James G. Martin (R-NC) was similarly unimpressed with the ambassador, pointing out that his flamboyant behavior had "terrified our allies and insulted the British." "When he spoke in Congress we listened," Martin acknowledged, but "now, we cringe."[76] Nor did it appear that anyone in the administration was listening. "His claim to be the 'point man' of U.S. foreign policy is made preposterous," objected Buchanan, "by the dozen times he has been contradicted, clarified, or corrected by the Department of State where he is referred to, affectionately, as 'Motor Mouth.'"[77] The mounting criticism directed towards Young throughout the summer culminated in an unsuccessful attempt to impeach the ambassador in early October.

Despite constant attacks from his right, Young found consistent support among his former colleagues in the CBC and other leaders within the black community. Congressman Charles Rangel, (D-NY) believed that Young's statements were not only valid, but deserved to be carried to as wide an audience as possible. "At last," exclaimed

[75] Patrick Buchanan, "It is Time for Andy to Bow Out," *Chicago Tribune*, April 29, 1977
[76] House, Representative Martin of North Carolina complaining about Ambassador Young, 95th Congress, 1st sess., *Congressional Record*, 122, pt. :
[77] Buchanan, "Time for Andy to Bow Out," Apr. 29, 1977

Rangel, "we have a spokesman in the field of foreign policy who speaks the truth without couching it in language which makes the meaning difficult to ascertain."[78] William Clay was even more exultant in his praise of Young, suggesting that he "has introduced to the United States and to the world a foreign entity in the annals of world politics. That element is total and complete honesty." His candor and willingness to discuss issues of enormous importance, while unsettling to those who preferred the "business as usual" approach to foreign policy, was encouraging for black Americans and the nations of the developing world. "To me," Clay declared, "Andy Young is a breath of fresh air, needed in these days of hush-hush overseas diplomacy.… Ambiguities, deception, and imperialism are out. Clarity, honesty, and self-determination are in."[79] Along with other prominent black leaders in the African American community, including Roy Wilkins of the NAACP, members of the CBC urged President Carter not to let the "enemies of racial progress" sway him from supporting Young.[80]

The president needed no such urging, however. During the ambassador's confirmation process, Carter had spoke of his friend in almost reverential terms, calling him "the finest elected official I have ever known," as well as "a national treasure" and Third World hero.[81] Young's antics upon assuming his position at the United Nations did little to change Carter's high opinion of the ambassador. Commenting on the president's relationship with Young, historian Donald Spencer has observed that "however freewhelling, antitraditionalist, and insubordinate Young's rhetoric might have seemed to those outside the White House, it nevertheless served the president's larger symbolic

[78] House, Representative Rangel of New York speaking in defense of Ambassador Young, 95th Congress, 1st sess., *Congressional Record* (3 May 1977), 123, pt. 11: 13388.
[79] House, Representative Clay of Missouri speaking in support of Andy Young, 95th Congress, 1st sess., *Congressional Record* (9 May 1977), 123, pt. 12: 14239.

purposes by registering shame for the old categories of foreign policy and embracing new ones in tune with the desires of the Third World."[82] Indeed, the president repeatedly made it a point to publicly affirm his "complete faith" in the way Young had gone about his diplomatic responsibilities. During a private conversation between the two men Young also remembered Carter as encouraging rather than discouraging his tendency to speak his mind. He recalled the president as saying: "I hope you'll stick with me. It gets awfully rough out there because people are not used to discussing foreign policy with the American people in advance…I hope you won't let it discourage you. I just think we've got to keep speaking out."[83] Carter's complicity in Young's actions were not lost on many of the administration's detractors. George Bush, the former ambassador to the United Nations, admitted, "I'm not hypercritical of Young himself. This is the president's foreign policy. He wants this, so why fault Young? I fault the president."[84] Representative Robert Mitchell (R-IL) similarly questioned whether the chaos in the administration's foreign policy was really Young's fault. "I prefer to call it the Jimmy Carter problem," Mitchell opined. "The buck, after all, stops at the same place today as it did when Harry Truman was president."[85]

Entering 1978, the Carter administration's policy in Africa was under increasing attack from conservative members of Congress and their supporters. Failure to convince any of the contending Rhodesian parties of the benefits of the Anglo-American initiative provided fodder for those who argued that the administration's policy was unwise.

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[80] Gershman, "According to Young," 17
[81] Carter quoted in Spencer, *The Carter Implosion*, 54
[82] Ibid., 56
[83] Raymond Carroll and Eleanor Clift, "Outspoken Andy Young," *Newsweek* (28 March 1977), 25.
[84] Bush quoted in Spencer, *The Carter Implosion*, 56
[85] House, Representative Mitchell of Illinois speaking about the administration's policy problems, 95th Congress, 1st sess., *Congressional Record* (10 March 1977), 123, pt. 6: 7269.

Speaking before the Senate, Harry Byrd (D-VA) protested that "since the advent of the Carter administration…American policy has been characterized by a great deal more action, although not a great deal more wisdom or judgment." He rejected the "so-called Anglo-American proposal on the grounds that it "would insure that the future government of Rhodesia would be in the hands of a minority – black rather than white – but still not representative of the majority of Rhodesians."[86] In the House of Representatives, Richard Ichord (D-MO) attacked the administration's refusal to acknowledge Smith's progress toward an internal settlement, which promised the transition to stable majority rule by moderate elements of the black community. Representative Ichord complained that the administration's reaction to the Smith initiative "is contrary to fostering peace in Zimbabwe, is contrary to our attempts to promote a transition to majority rule, is destabilizing, and advocates rebellion and will increase bloodshed both black and white."[87]

The successful conclusion of negotiations between the Smith government and moderate black leaders in early March led conservatives to demand that the Carter administration recognize the new transitional government. Statements from Ambassador Young and Secretary of State Vance suggesting that the United States viewed the settlement as illegal were met with disbelief from the administration's opponents. Columnist James Kilpatrick believed that, by rejecting the agreement, "the United States and Britain are showing how the West will be lost." The Carter administration, he asserted, had lost sight of America's primary interest in the region – namely, halting the

[86] Senate, Senator Byrd of Virginia speaking about realities in southern Africa, 95th Congress, 1st sess., *Congressional Record* (15 December 1977), 123, pt. 30: 39121.
[87] House, Representative Ichord of Missouri speaking about Ambassador Young's criticism of Ian Smith's initiative, 95th Congress, 1st sess., *Congressional Record* (7 December 1977), 123, pt.29: 38791.

spread of Soviet and Cuban influence that had already made inroads in Angola.[88] Citing Young specifically, critics complained that in trying to appease the nations of black Africa, the United States had unwillingly joined forces with a group of Marxist terrorists supported by the Soviet Union, against the democratic aspirations of a coalition of moderate blacks and the white minority. "Once an American is brought face-to-face with the realities of Southern Africa, he finds it impossible to explain his government's policies, let alone defend them," one observer protested.[89] Others argued that "now that there is an agreement between Prime Minister Smith and three prominent blacks – an agreement looking to a reasonable and workable transition to majority rule – it is time to call Mr. Young from left field. His one man…personal – some would say eccentric…policymaking will no longer do."[90]

In April, hoping to reenergize the Anglo-American effort, Secretary of State Vance and British Foreign Minister Owen traveled to Dar es Salaam, Tanzania to meet with the leaders of the Patriotic Front. A heated meeting with Nkomo and Mugabe soon made it clear that a settlement was unlikely. Vance and Owen then proceeded to Salisbury where they were greeted apprehensively. Now that Muzorewa and Sithole were on the inside of the Rhodesian government they saw little need for more talks. Both were indignant at Owens demands that the Patriotic Front be included in the future government. "How do we get Joshua Nkomo to return when he says publicly he will destroy the polling booths in the country and disrupt the democratic process," Sithole queried. "What choices are we given? Take Nkomo as King or get slaughtered. He is

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[88] James Kilpatrick, "Blunder over Rhodesia," *Washington Star,* March 21, 1978

welcome to try the slaughter."[91] Muzorewa, for one, believed that the Carter administration and Ambassador Young in particular "had been terribly brainwashed by the Patriotic Front." All the things they said they wanted and had been fighting for had come about, yet they wanted no part of it even though they were personally invited to participate in forming the new government. Democracy, then, was obviously not what the rebels had in mind. What they wanted was a Marxist dictatorship under their control. Speaking to a group of American businessman visiting Salisbury, Ian Smith sounded this theme warning that "If we fail now, then you know the alternative is – that the people who are being pushed by the Russians or the Marxists, will then come in at the point of a gun…"[92]

Critics charged that Carter's appeasement of the communist dominated minority in Rhodesia was representative of the bankruptcy of his policy on the continent. There were now Cuban military personnel stationed in some fifteen African countries, most of them concentrated in southern Africa and the Horn, the two zones where military conflict on the continent was most intense. The 25,000-man Cuban force in Angola, financed by the Soviet Union at a rate of two and a half million dollars a day, was one-quarter larger than it had been when Carter entered office. It served the dual purpose of securing communist control of that country and aiding pro-Soviet insurgents in neighboring countries. From their Angolan base, the Cubans trained Namibian and Rhodesian nationalists to prepare them for the eventual takeover of those countries. In the Horn,

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[89] Lieutenant General Daniel Graham, former head of Defense Intelligence Agency, "Rhodesians, Russians, and Revolutionaries," reprinted in House, Representative Ichord speaking in opposition to Carter's policy, 95th Congress, 2nd sess., *Congressional Record* 18 April 1978), 124, pt. 8: 10435.
[90] Editorial, "Rhodesia and Mr. Young," *Washington Star*, February 19, 1978
[91] Rowland Evans and Robert Novak, "A Dead End on Rhodesia," *Washington Post*, May 3, 1978
[92] Senate, Senator Goldwater of Arizona speaking in opposition to the administration's policy, 95th Congress, 2nd sess., *Congressional Record* (20 April 1978), 124, pt. 9:10954

12,000 Cuban troops, 1,000 Soviet advisers, and Soviet weapons enabled Ethiopia to drive Somali forces out of the Ogaden desert in March, 1978. Communist forces also reportedly trained and armed the Congolese National Liberation Front, which invaded Zaire's Shaba province in May. Thus, during the first year and a half of the Carter presidency, two areas of considerable strategic importance – southern Africa, with its vast mineral deposits, and the Horn of Africa, with its proximity both to the vital sea routes through the Red Sea and the Indian Ocean and to the world's largest oil reserves in Saudi Arabia – had fallen under increasing assault from the Soviet Union and its allied forces.[93] By the summer of 1978, however, more than just the administration's Africa policy had come under attack. With conservatives painting the administration as vacillating and weak in the face of Soviet aggression, Carter gradually found his administration being overwhelmed by conservative advocates of the traditional cold war paradigm.

The Conservative Shift in American Foreign Policy

Virtually all observers agreed that the Carter administration's foreign policy changed over time, though disagreement existed over the degree and nature of this shift. Some argued that Carter's retreat evolved gradually over the course of his four years in office. Others portrayed continuity across the first three years of Carter's term, followed by a wrenching shift in tone and policy in the aftermath of the Iranian hostage crisis and the Soviet invasion of Afganistan. Most observers depict the direction of policy change in the same way, with Carter abandoning his initial inclinations toward liberal reformism in favor of a traditional Cold War containment strategy. The most widely accepted explanation for this evolution holds that Carter's increasingly tough approach towards the Soviet Union and national defense was dictated by a harsh and threatening international

[93] Gershmann, "The World According to Andrew Young," 20-21

environment that undermined the president's optimistic assumptions about international relations and focused the administration in more conservative directions.[94]

Interpretations of the Carter administration's early foreign policies based on this premise commonly fall into two general schools of thought. Some saw only incoherence and inconsistency in Carter's initial policies. The administration's confusion was attributed to its failure to develop a central world-view. The fact that Carter basically served as his own chief of staff during this period added to the impression that policy-making under the new president was more chaotic than it had been in the past. Political scientist James D. Barbour has argued that Carter was the ultimate activist president, believing that he could coordinate the various arguments coming to him on any issue.[95] William Hyland, an NSC official who also served under Nixon noted, "Much more goes to the President through the system than in the past. Before, issues were not brought to him until they were talked out at Cabinet or sub-Cabinet level. Issues are now ventilated much earlier."[96] Despite Carter's involvement in the early stages of policy formulation, critics asserted that his advisors failed to provide him with a sufficient range of policy choices. Given the president's relative inexperience in foreign affairs, an absence of good menu options left him vulnerable to the consensus of his close associates and left his own policy proclivities critically unchallenged.[97]

Others credited the administration with a coherent yet naïve and ineffectual policy founded upon the president's own misplaced moralism. In their view, Carter's Wilsonian

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[94] David Skidmore, *Reversing Course: Carter's Foreign Policy, Domestic Politics, and the Failure of Reform* (Nashville, Tennessee: Vanderbilt University, 1996), 27-28.
[95] James D. Barbour, *The Presidential Character* (New York: Prentice Hall, 1977), 3.
[96] Interview with Carter by Neil R. Pierce, reprinted in Thomas E. Cronin and Rexford Tugwell (eds), *The Presidency Reappraised*, 2nd Edition (New York: Praeger, 1977), 44-45.
[97] See for example Alexander Moens, *Foreign Policy Under Carter: Testing Multiple Advocacy Decision-Making* (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1990)

idealism was matched by his exaggerated and intellectually faddish obsession with the so-called "transformative forces" in world politics. This preoccupation with change allegedly led Carter to ignore traditional definitions of the national interest and pursue policies inconsistent with the Cold War paradigm that had previously dominated American foreign policy.[98]

While each of these interpretations offers useful insights into some aspects of the Carter administration's foreign policy outlook, neither takes into account the role domestic politics played in accelerating the country's turn rightward. As political scientist David Skidmore has observed, "Attempts to institutionalize and legitimate the policy reforms embodied in Carter's program of liberal internationalism foundered on the shoals of public skepticism and elite opposition…. Carter's inability to rally domestic opinion around either the individual initiatives or the general purposes of his administration served as one of the more serious liabilities plaguing his efforts to redirect U.S. foreign policy."[99] Indeed, although public support for the liberal internationalist policies and outlook associated with the early Carter administration was at its peak around the time of Carter's election, the public's mood turned increasingly conservative during each succeeding year of his presidency. In this climate, when crises occurred, whether genuine or as a consequence of exaggerated perceptions of threat promoted by Carter's opponents, the administration found it extremely difficult to shape a liberal internationalist response without appearing weak or vacillating. Thus, politically all the incentives favored abandoning quiet diplomacy in favor of confrontation. According to Skidmore: "Each passing crisis found Carter yielding in growing measure to the rising

[98] Skidmore, *Reversing Course*, 27.
[99] Ibid., 66, 69

pressures to stake out a tougher stance." Indeed, Brzezinski, the most hawkish of Carter's advisors, took advantage of such episodes to slowly wrestle power from Secretary of State Vance, Ambassador Young, and other like-minded individuals.[100]

Those who alleged that the administration suffered from incoherence and poor management pointed to the clash between Brzezinski and Vance as a critical source of this policy inconsistency. Yet the divisions exposed by the public disagreements of the two advisors were more a symptom than a cause of Carter's foreign policy problems. As conservative attacks on Carter's liberal policies escalated and his public approval rating declined, the president turned increasingly to Brzezinski for advice, intensifying the internal struggle within the administration over the direction of foreign policy. The national security advisor's hawkish reputation provided a better fit with the increasingly conservative domestic climate than did Vance's preference for patient diplomacy. Former Carter officials Leslie Gelb and Anthony Lake recalled that "As conservative assaults on his policies began to score more heavily, Carter sought to beat them back by adopting more of their tone…. Rather than concentrate on what it was accomplishing, the White House (and especially National Security Assistant Zbigniew Brzezinski) went beyond describing the Soviet threat to looking for ways to dramatize it. The shift in tone was produced at least in part by political considerations. "It was no secret," Gelb and Lake conceded, "that Carter's White House political advisors wanted him to appear tough on East-West issues."[101] Thus, Brzezinski's growing influence merely reflected Carter's gradual move away from the liberal foreign policy tenets of his first year in office in response to domestic pressures. While Brzezinski undoubtedly sought to hasten this

[100] Ibid., 95

shift, he was merely the fortunate beneficiary of the president's policy shift and not its architect.

While historians disagree about the exact timing of the administration's drift away from liberal internationalism, the beginning of this shift was evident during the congressional debates regarding Rhodesia over the course of 1978. Although the Carter administration resisted calls to recognize the transitional government in March and April, throughout the spring and summer it became increasingly clear that its policy was under siege. *Newsweek* reported that "Russia's intervention in the Horn has provoked a major policy debate in Washington." In a sense, the debate tested whether Carter's moral imperatives could survive in the nasty world of international realpolitik. Growing tensions were also apparent between Ambassador Young and the national security advisor. Brzezinski favored a tougher line against the Soviets and it appeared that Carter was leaning his way, warning a high-level Soviet delegation visiting the United States that Moscow's actions in Ethiopia were creating a poor climate for congressional ratification of a new strategic arms limitation agreement.

Brzezinki's sudden outspokenness during this period disturbed many of the president's supporters, including Congressman Diggs. He was particularly concerned because black legislators had not been provided similar access to the national security advisor that they had been given to the secretary of state, or even the intelligence community. "It is vital that some determination be made by the President as to the administration's position," stated the congressman, "because obviously there is a dichotomy between the secretary of state plus the U.S. United Nations ambassador and

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[101] I.M. Destler, Leslie Gelb, and Anthony Lake, *Our Own Worst Enemy: The Unmaking of American Foreign Policy* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1984), 73

the chairman of the National Security Council on our Africa policy that needs to be adjudicated."[102] Hoping to alleviate Diggs' concern, Brzezinski wrote to the congressman reiterating the administration's continued pursuit of a progressive foreign policy and reminding him that "this administration has broken new ground in its commitment to majority rule in southern Africa…. We are indeed proceeding in this manner, even if our views on some points that you raise do not agree."[103]

Unconvinced, and sensing the administration's growing receptivity to conservative arguments, Diggs advised the president that "there is a great and deserved concern about the return to an East-West perception of American interests in Africa." Despite his support of the president's early efforts to reorient American policy, Diggs now protested that "at present, the Congress and the administration have allowed a preoccupation with Soviet activities in Africa to obscure our real interest in developing a positive and non-ideological policy on that continent…. Because of our tendency to react to developments in Africa within the intellectual framework of a persistent anti-Communist mind-set, our diplomatic and aid relations, particularly in southern Africa, risk becoming hostage to our hysteria toward the Soviet Union and Cuba, jeopardizing our long term interests in Africa as a whole." Carter's failure to defend the tenets of liberal internationalism were evidenced by Washington's continued refusal to recognize the MPLA-dominated government in Angola. This indirectly contributed to the climate of hostility that existed in that country as well as neighboring Zaire, Diggs complained. He was also frustrated by the White House's inability to block legislation disallowing

[102] House, Representative Diggs of Michigan speaking in support of H.R. 12598 to the Foreign Relations Authorization Act, Fiscal Year 1979, 95th Congress, 2nd sess., *Congressional Record* (31 May 1978), 124, pt.12: 15758.

economic assistance to Mozambique because that government had chosen a Marxist route to independence. This was the type of knee-jerk response that Diggs and his allies had experienced under Nixon and Ford, and the congressman complained that such actions limited the administration's ability to pursue an enlightened policy in the developing world.[104]

Disillusionment with Carter's policies was not relegated to foreign policy issues, though. By July, 1978 prominent members of the black community, most notably, Vernon Jordan, executive director of the National Urban League, had begun to criticize Carter's domestic policies, warning that the president's support was eroding in the black community. Black legislators endorsed Jordan's critique. Charles Rangel commented "For many months now, we have restrained ourselves from getting into a confrontation with the President of the United States, which we knew would ultimately happen." Representative John Conyers was more direct, suggesting that the Democrats risked losing black support if Carter did not recommit himself to African American issues. "We are acutely aware that black support for the president is eroding," observed Conyers. "It is too early, however, to state what this means in terms of the 1980 elections. Our backs are to the wall. There is no way we can come back in three years to our communities and tell them why the president should be re-elected."[105] Fearful that blacks, who had helped put Carter in office in 1976, might sit out the midterm elections of 1978 and presidential election of 1980, the White House tried to ease the tension rising between African Americans and the administration. In the run-up to the mid-term elections, Senator Frank

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[103] Letter from NSA (Brzezinski) to CBC Chairman Parren Mitchell and Charles Diggs, 24 April 1978, *Jimmy Carter Presidential Library,* White House Name File: Charles C. Diggs Jr. (folder, (cong) 1/6/77-9/6/78)

Church met with Conyers to discuss tactics that would promote a high black turnout. In a further effort to mend relations, Louis Martin, a former associate of Martin Luther King, Jr., and advisor to Presidents Kennedy and Johnson, was brought into the administration as a special assistant for African American Affairs.[106]

While Carter was worried about his diminishing support among African Americans, his attention remained, primarily, on the assault being launched from his right. In June, administration officials as well as members of the CBC were shocked when Senator Jesse Helms (R-NC) came within six votes of passing Senate Resolution 3075, which would have mandated that sanctions against Salisbury be lifted immediately.[107] Helms quickly launched a concerted effort to secure the additional votes needed. Fearful that he would be successful, thereby undercutting the administration's opposition to the internal settlement, Carter decided to accept compromise legislation proposed by Senators Clifford Case and Jacob Javits. The Case-Javits Amendment to the International Security Act of 1978 was adopted by the Senate on July 26, 1978. It called for the removal of sanctions against Rhodesia after December 31, 1978 provided the president determined that: (1) the government of Rhodesia had demonstrated its willingness to negotiate in good faith at an all-parties conference held under international auspices; and (2) a government was installed that was selected through free elections in which all political and population groups were allowed to participate freely, under the supervision of impartial, internationally recognized observers.[108]

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[104] House, Representative Diggs of Michigan speaking about American policy in southern Africa, 95th Congress, 2nd sess., *Congressional Record* (2 June 1978), 124, pt. 12: 16088.
[105] Editorial, "Hill Black Caucus Backs Criticisms of Carter's Programs," *Washington Post*, July 30, 1978
[106] Dumbrell, *The Carter Presidency,* 92
[107] Senate, Senator Case of New Jersey speaking in support of Case-Javits amendment, 95th Congress, 2nd sess., *Congressional Record* (28 June 1978), 124, pt. 15: 19268.
[108] Senator Case speaking in support of Case-Javits, *Congressional Record*, (28 June 1978): 19268.

The Case-Javits amendment redefined the terms of the debate over Rhodesia and put the Carter administration and its allies on the defensive. The two conditions it set were entirely different than the considerations that underpinned American policy. As Andrew Young repeatedly pointed out, even if a settlement was reached, the war would continue.[109] Recognition of the transitional government and the lifting of sanctions would have bolstered the resolve of the internal parties, but they still would not be able to win the war. On the contrary, the conflict would continue to escalate, polarizing the entire region and leaving the United States in a precarious position. By accepting the Case-Javits amendment, the Carter administration weakened its ability to defend its policy in the best possible terms. It was thus forced to debate on terms that the Smith regime and its supporters preferred.[110]

In early August, conservatives used debate over the Case-Javits amendment in the House to lash out at the president's policy. "U.S. policy toward Rhodesia is absolutely disgusting," contended Representative Ashbrook. "The Carter administration is supporting pro-Communist terrorists and guerrillas while turning its back on the moderate biracial government," he stated contemptuously.[111] Observing that the transitional government had adopted a timetable proposing a constitutional convention in October, 1978, with elections to be held in December of that same year, Representative Robert E. Bauman (R-MD) questioned the administration's failure to support the peaceful settlement. "We today have to make a decision," declared Bauman, "about whether or not we are going to continue a policy in Africa which I believe has failed miserably, both

[109] See Finger, *Your Man,* 276-277.
[110] Clough, "From Rhodesia to Zimbabwe," 37-38.
[111] House, Representative Ashbrook of Ohio speaking in favor of the Bauman amendment, 95th Congress, 2nd sess., *Congressional Record* (2 August 1978), 124, pt. 17: 23944.

in terms of preventing the spread of communism and in terms of guaranteeing the rights of all people of whatever race or creed or color, to have freedom and security." Bauman then introduced an amendment, which, similar to that of Senator Helms, called for the immediate cessation of sanctions against Rhodesia.[112]

In an attempt to defeat the Bauman amendment, Congressman Clement Zablocki (D-WI) offered a substitute that was similar in scope to the Case-Javits proposal. Rising in support of Zablocki's motion, Congressman Diggs exposed just how weakened the position of pro-sanctions advocates had become. Admitting that "I take the well as one who really prefers no amendment at all, even with conditions," Diggs conceded that "our best interests would be served by adopting the Zablocki substitute, which is the language that has been worked out on the Senate side…. It takes a neutral position, and I think that it is the obstacle course over which we can tread gingerly."[113] For Diggs and members of the administration, who had often stated their desire to align the United States firmly behind nationalist aspirations in southern Africa, to not only accept, but endorse a neutral posture was evidence of the declining fortunes of their preferred Anglo-American solution.

After the amendment was adopted, the Smith government was no longer forced to concern itself with genuine progress toward a negotiated settlement. As long as the government appeared to meet the two criteria imposed by Case-Javits, it had no need to negotiate seriously with the Patriotic Front. The Rhodesia regime and its supporters were also given a boost by developments in Great Britain. In June, the Conservative Party

[112] Representative Bauman of Maryland speaking in support of Bauman amendment, *Congressional Record*, (2 August 1978): 22938
[113] Representative Diggs of Michigan speaking in opposition to the Bauman amendment, *Congressional Record*, (2 August 1978): 23944. 1

announced that, in the event of its victory over the Labour Party in national elections, a Tory government would be ready to send a full-scale diplomatic mission to Rhodesia to help frame a constitution, guide the rulers in the internal settlement, and generally assist in establishing international confidence in the agreement. In early August, while Congressman Diggs worked to defeat the Bauman amendment, the Labour government barely defeated a Conservative amendment criticizing its Rhodesia policy and calling for an end to sanctions.[114] In order to give Salisbury's transitional leadership an opportunity to present its case to the American public, in September, conservative legislators led by Senator Jesse Helms invited them to visit the United States. Members of the CBC vehemently protested the proposed visit. Congresswoman Cardiss Collins (D-IL) stated her disapproval of the decision to grant Ian Smith and his compatriots visas to enter the country. "While I understand and identify with the administration's good intentions to seek a peaceful end to this tragic conflict, I fail to see what can possibly be gained by caving in under the pressure of those who fail to see oppression for what it is and instead are fooled by a charade of black masks in a theater of the absurd," she stated.[115]

Despite the protests of Collins and other CBC members, the Smith delegation arrived in the United States on October 7, 1978. Smith immediately went on the offensive against the Carter administration. He complained that the war continued in Rhodesia due to "the fact that the American and British governments are supporting the Patriotic Front of Marxist terrorists instead of supporting the internal settlement by peaceful people…. There is no doubt…that if we got the support…terrorism would have

[114] Clough, "From Zimbabwe to Rhodesia," 37.
[115] House, Representative Collins of Illinois speaking in opposition to the State Department's decision to grant visas to Ian Smith, 95th Congress, 2nd sess., *Congressional Record* (4 October 1978), 124, pt. : 33611.

collapsed by now."[116] For the next two weeks, the Rhodesians took advantage of every opportunity to express their distaste for the administration's policy. At the end of their visit, the delegation met with American and British officials to discuss a revised version of the Anglo-American initiative. After the meeting, Smith announced that the transitional government was willing to attend a conference with Nkomo and Mugabe. Salisbury's supporters could now claim that it would be in compliance with the terms of the Case-Javitis amendment as soon as elections were held.[117]

Inside Rhodesia the situation continued to deteriorate, however. The transitional government found itself unable to translate its successes abroad into progress against the rebels at home. In late-October, apparently without consulting Muzorewa or Sithole, Smith declared martial law and announced that elections would be delayed until April, 1979, due to high levels of violence, which made it nearly impossible to register voters in many parts of the country. Prospects for renewed talks between the contending Rhodesian parties collapsed soon thereafter as the Smith government launched a new military offensive against rebel camps in Zambia. Still, the influx of guerrillas into Rhodesia continued. Recognizing the seriousness of the situation, Smith admitted that his regime was not winning the war but argued that his forces would be able to contain the nationalists "for a long time."[118]

Smith's confidence stemmed primarily from the belief that he would eventually win Western support. The Rhodesian view held that once the new constitution was accepted by the transitional government and elections were held, international opposition

[116] Editorial, "Ian Smith in America," *Washington Post,* October 15, 1978
[117] Josh M. Goshko, "Midway in Campaign, Ian Smith Gains in U.S.," *Washington Post*, October 15, 1978

would be impossible to maintain. This perception was fueled by conservatives in the United States and Great Britain. Senator Jesse Helms, for example, provided encouragement to Salisbury, writing to Sithole: "There are many members of the United States Congress who are wholeheartedly behind you…. We shall continue to do our utmost to remove the impediment of sanctions, preferably quickly, but certainly not later than immediately after your elections."[119]

Smith was also emboldened by support from South Africa. In Pretoria, the success of the internal agreement became intertwined with that government's desire to create a "constellation of states" on the continent that would accept the Afrikaner presence and work toward common economic goals. Smith's negotiations with Muzorewa and Sithole were also similar to those taking place between South Africa and the South West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO), led by Sam Nujoma. Like Salisbury, Pretoria was under severe military pressure from SWAPO and by 1978 had realized the necessity of transferring power to a majority backed regime. As with Rhodesia, two parallel sets of negotiations took place; internally, between the territory's white leaders and moderate black representatives, and internationally between Pretoria, SWAPO, and the five members of the United Nations Security Council (the United States, Britain, France, Canada, and West Germany). Left to its own devices the South Africans desired an internal settlement with moderate black leaders inside Namibia. Led by Andrew Young, however, the United States and its allies in the United Nations made it clear that SWAPO would have to be involved in any negotiations for a settlement to be

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[118] See David B. Ottaway, "More Rhodesian Whites Seek Greener Pastures Abroad," *Washington Post*, December 18, 1978; also "Whites Fleeing Rhodesia Set Record in 1978," *New York Times,* January 26, 1979.

deemed legitimate by the Western powers. Finally, in late September, 1978 a compromise was reached calling for dual elections in Namibia. First, a South African sponsored election was to be held in December, 1978 to select local leaders who would then negotiate with the United Nations. After this round of discussions was concluded, another election would take place, this time under the supervision of the United Nations. The deal further exposed the rift developing between the United States and black Africa. Although Vance described the compromise as "a step forward," African members of the United Nations complained that the Carter administration was rewarding Pretoria for years of intransigence on the Namibia issue.[120]

Buoyed by growing support from South Africa and the West, the transitional government established a new constitution in January, 1979. Its provisions revealed the extent to which Muzorewa and the other black participants in the settlement had given in to Smith's demands. The constitution placed requirements for high office in the police, military, judiciary, and civil service that virtually guaranteed that few Africans would be able to assume positions of responsibility in the foreseeable future. The constitution's weakness reflected the situation on the ground, however. Muzorewa and Sithole were dependent on the white-controlled civil service and military to maintain their standing and prosecute the war against their rivals in the Patriotic Front. Thus, they were in a weak negotiating position, a reality that had led Smith to deal with them in the first place.[121]

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[119] Caryle Murphy, "Rhodesian Whites Vote Endorsement of Limited Black Rule Constitution," *Washington Post*, January 31, 1979
[120] See Finger, *Your Man,* 278-283; also Rothchold, "U.S. Policy Styles in Africa," 323-326.
[121] Davidow, *Peace in Southern Africa*, 24.

As the date of the internal elections neared, supporters of the transitional government argued that it was time for the president and his advisors to end their obstruction of an equitable Rhodesian settlement. "It is absolutely incredible to me," protested Senator Edwin J. Garn(R-UT), "that Ambassador Young can persist in his crusade against the efforts of blacks and whites in Rhodesia to achieve majority rule through the electoral process rather than the barrel of a gun." Garn went on to characterize the administration's vision as "narrow, self-righteous, and self-defeating," and along with other conservative members of Congress demanded that the White House dispatch observers to witness the results of the Rhodesian election.[122] In this endeavor they were joined by several senators from the liberal side of the isle, including Senator George McGovern, chairman of the Senate Subcommittee on Africa. McGovern called upon the administration to send observers so that Rhodesian compliance with the Case-Javits amendment could be determined. Opposing the initiative, Congressman Diggs and Randall Robinson, the head of TransAfrica, warned Secretary of State Vance that American observers would send the wrong message. "To observe, or even acknowledge the elections," they argued, "would serve only to validate the vastly discriminatory constitutional arrangement on which the elections rest."[123]

Despite the objections of Ambassador Young and members of the CBC, the Senate voted to send a team of observers to witness the elections. Conservatives in Great Britain passed a similar proposal in the House of Commons, setting the stage for Salisbury's attempted return to legality. Elections for the seventy-two seats in the new

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[122] Senate, Senator Garn of Utah speaking about the need to end U.S. obstructionism in Rhodesia, 96th Congress, 1st sess., *Congressional Record* (5 April 1979), 125, pt. 6: 7499.
[123] Letter from Randall Robinson to Secretary of State Vance, 2 February 1979, box 92, *Jimmy Carter Presidential Library,* White House Name File: Randall Robinson (folder, TransAfrica)

parliament were held from April 17-21, 1978. Bishop Muzorewa's UANC won a landslide victory, taking fifty-one seats and sixty-seven percent of the vote. Muzorewa thus became the new Prime Minister. Earlier in the month, in a separate election, the Rhodesian Front had won all twenty-eight of the reserved white seats. As the result of an agreement made among the internal parties that regardless of outcome the new government would be "a coalition of national unity," the whites retained one-quarter of the government's cabinet posts. This agreement, coupled with the built-in safeguards of the independence constitution, limited Muzorewa's power regardless of the size of his parliamentary majority. More important than the election results was how they appeared to the outside world. In order to satisfy the requirement of the Case-Javits amendment, Salisbury needed a large voter turnout and the appearance of free and fair elections. The turnout, well over sixty percent, was considerably higher than most had predicted it would be and international observers generally brought home favorable reports of the process. Therefore, from the perspective of the internal parties, the election was an unqualified success.[124]

In Washington, following the successful conclusion of the Rhodesian elections, conservatives intensified their attacks on administration policy. No less than five congressional resolutions were introduced calling for the end to sanctions against Salisbury. In the Senate, Harry Byrd stated that the elections were "a commendable and almost unique example in the history of Africa of a voluntary transfer of power from a

[124] John F. Burns, "Rhodesian Election Ends with Turnout Put at 65 Percent," *New York Times*, April 22, 1979; also House, Representative Bauman of Maryland calling upon Carter administration to lift sanctions against Rhodesia, 96th Congress, 1st sess., *Congressional Record* (25 April 1978), 125, pt. 7: 8532.

white dominated government to a black dominated government."[125] Senator Strom J. Thurmond expressed the opinion that 'If Andrew Young and the other extremist elements who have been advising the president on African affairs succeed in persuading the president that the sanctions must remain in force…they will succeed…in completely destroying a democratically elected government that offers the only hope of peace and stability and freedom for the people of Rhodesia…installing in its stead a bloodthirsty Marxist dictatorship subservient to Moscow."[126] Adding to the pressure on the Carter administration was the victory of the British Conservative Party during parliamentary elections in early May. During the campaign, conservatives, led by Margaret Thatcher made clear their preference for a quick settlement of the Rhodesia issue, even if this meant an agreement with the transitional government. "For the Carter administration, this change has a particular meaning," predicted Representative Robert Bauman. It now appeared that the Carter administration would stand in isolation on its policy on Rhodesia. Observing that Ambassador Young was traveling in the South Seas, Bauman suggested that he "might want to select a lonely island where he and Mr. Carter can gather with their Rhodesian policy in splendid isolation, as they deserve."[127] On May 15, members of the Senate joined Bauman in expressing their distaste for Carter's policy, voting 75-19 instructing the president to lift sanctions.

Speaking in opposition to the measure, CBC Chairwoman Cardiss Collins made it clear where black legislators stood on the issue. The CBC was opposed to the premature lifting of sanctions because "it would ally the United States directly with South Africa,

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[125] Senate, Senator Byrd of Virginia speaking about Rhodesian sanctions and congressional responsibility, 96th Congress, 1st sess., *Congressional Record* (4 May 1979), 125, pt. 8: 9843.
[126] Senate, Senator Thurmond of South Carolina calls for lifting of sanctions against Rhodesia, 96th Congress, 1st sess., *Congressional Record* (9 May 1979), 125, pt. 8: 10393.

result in an increased Soviet presence in the region, undermine our bilateral relations with Nigeria,…threaten trade patterns with black Africa, alienate valuable African allies in international organizations, especially on Middle East questions, undermine the authority of the U.N. Security Council which is key to U.S. interests in other areas, and give false hope to a Rhodesian government totalitarian towards blacks."[128] Fearing that the administration might yield to the conservative onslaught, Collins requested an audience with the president to discuss the CBC's reservations. "Because of the political significance of your decision on Rhodesia, as well as the strong feelings of the black community, I feel that it is important for you to meet with the Caucus before your decision becomes public," the congresswoman advised. When her repeated attempts to contact the president were rebuffed, Representatives Diggs and William Gray (D-PA) joined Collins in warning the president to be careful since "U.S. policy in southern Africa, and the specific possibility that the United States might prematurely lift sanctions on Rhodesia, is a source of growing, deep concern to the black community." [129]

The Carter administration had no intention of lifting the sanctions, however. At the end of May, Carter sent Secretary of State Vance to London to discuss the situation with the British. Vance briefed Lord Peter Carrington, the new British foreign minister on the growing conservative mood in Washington and in Congress particularly. He informed Carrington that the United States would consider lifting sanctions if Salisbury took specific steps to fix the deficiencies of the internal settlement. These included: constitutional revision, progress toward an all parties conference, and new,

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[127] House, Representative Bauman of Maryland suggests that elections in Great Britain signals change in Rhodesia policy, 96th Congress, 1st sess., *Congressional Record* (4 May 1979), 125, pt. 8: 9888.
[128] House, Representative Collins of Illinois speaking in opposition to lifting sanctions against Rhodesia, 96th Congress, 1st sess., *Congressional Record* (21 May 1979), 125, pt. 10: 12908

internationally supervised elections. Vance had been prepared for a major dispute when he arrived in London, but he was pleasantly surprised to find that the Thatcher government had no intention of reaching a premature settlement with Salisbury, particularly since international opinion remained openly hostile to it.[130]

Returning to Washington, Vance told the president that the British had agreed to reassume the primary role in pursuing a negotiated settlement. Members of the Carter administration thus refocused their efforts on preventing Congress from lifting sanctions and further increasing Salisbury's intransigence. As the White House and State Department formulated the administration's official findings as mandated by the Case-Javits amendment, Carter's advisors warned that black legislators and civil rights leaders had become increasingly critical of his failure to speak out against lifting sanctions. "Representative Cardiss Collins has called, written, and sent a telegram to relay the interest of the Caucus in meeting with you to discuss Rhodesia," they informed the president. "There has been a great deal of concern about your long silence on Southern African policy as opposed to other foreign policy issues." To resolve the growing tension, they suggested that Carter have Young and Vance brief CBC members on the administration's decision prior to the public announcement.[131]

On June 7, 1979, Carter announced that although there had been significant progress in Rhodesia, the election results were not sufficient to satisfy the provisions of the Case-Javits amendment. Pointing out that no other government had extended diplomatic recognition to the new regime, Carter asserted that the decision "best serves

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[129] Letter to President Carter from Representatives Collins, Diggs, and Gray, (1 June 1979), *Jimmy Carter Presidential Library,* White House Name File: Charles C. Diggs Jr. (folder, 9/18/78-7/2/80)
[130] Clough, "From Rhodesia to Zimbabwe," 42-43.
[131] Memo from Frank Moore, Valerie Pinson and Bob Beckel to President Carter, (4 September 1979),

not only American interests but the interests of our allies in a region of the world of increasing importance to us. It should preserve our diplomatic and trade ties with friendly African governments and also limit…the opportunity of outside powers to take advantage of the situation in southern Africa at the expense of the United States."[132] In a statement shortly thereafter, the secretary of state expanded on the president's message. Providing a more detailed assessment of the election's implications, Vance concluded that by lifting the sanctions the United States would diminish the chances for a peaceful settlement. "By giving the appearance of siding with Salisbury, our ability to work for a negotiated solution would be severely limited. We would encourage Salisbury to expect further American support and assistance in the military struggle. And we would harden the view of the external forces that their only option was a military one."[133]

While the statements from the administration came too late to stop conservative action in the Senate, Carter pledged to do everything within his power to prevail on the issue in the House. Spurred by the administration's pronouncement, in late June, CBC members and their allies engaged in a heated debate over the issue with their conservative opponents. Speaking on the floor of the House, Representative Parren Mitchell (D-MD) warned, "if we vote to lift sanctions now, we seriously undermine – perhaps irreparably – our credibility in Africa…. Nigeria, for example, with its substantial oil exports, has made it very clear that it will make reprisals against the United States in the event that it lifts sanctions." Nigeria's actions, thought Mitchell, would only "exacerbate an already

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Jimmy Carter Presidential Library, box 22, Special Assistant to the President: Louis Martin (folder, Congressional Black Caucus (O/A 6475))

[132] Jimmy Carter, "Sanctions: Zimbabwe-Rhodesia Decision Explained," (7 June 1979), *Jimmy Carter Presidential Library,* box 92, *White House Central File*: (folder, Rhodesia (June 1979))

[133] Cyrus Vance, "Statement on Rhodesia Policy," 12 June 1979, *Jimmy Carter Presidential Library,* box 92, White House Central File: (folder, Rhodesia (June 1979))

skeptical Third World."[134] Along with Stephen J. Solarz, Diggs' replacement as chairman of the re-established House Subcommittee on Africa, members of the CBC called upon their colleagues to pass H.R. 4439, mandating that the president lift sanctions against Rhodesia by October 15, 1979, unless he decided it was against the national interest to do so. The standard was so vague as to hardly be a standard at all, and Representative Harold Ford was confident that it would "provide the president with the flexibility he needs to…allow our allies with direct interest in the Rhodesian situation time to articulate their position on the sanctions issue." Another benefit, thought Ford, was that it would "give us more time to judge Bishop Muzorewa's claims of legitimacy."[135] In the end, the compromise legislation passed by a wide margin (350-37), negating the criteria set forth in the Case-Javits amendment. Similar legislation was eventually accepted in the Senate. Thus, after a year of gains the supporters of an internal settlement were finally defeated, providing the British with increased room to maneuver in future negotiations with Salisbury.

In September, the British announced that they had received agreement from all the contending parties to resume peace talks. For the next three months, Carrington chaired a conference at Lancaster House in London to find a resolution to the Rhodesia problem. Finally, on December 21, the head of the Salisbury delegation, Bishop Abel Muzorewa, the leaders of the Patriotic Front, Johua Nkomo and Robert Mugabe, and Lord Carrington signed an agreement that contained a constitution for the independent state of Zimbabwe, ceasefire provisions to end the war, and transitional arrangements to

[134] House, Representative Mitchell of Maryland speaking in support of H.R. 4439, 96th Congress, 1st sess., (28 June 1979), 125, pt. 15: 17209.
[135] Rep. Ford of Tennessee speaking in support of H.R. 4439, *Congressional Record* (28 June 1979): 17209.

guide the country through a brief period of British interim administration. On March 4, 1980, under the watchful eye of the international community, Mugabe's party, officially listed as ZANU-PF, won an overwhelming victory. The new prime minister immediately extended an olive branch to the white minority and his former ally Nkomo in an attempt to avoid further violence.[136]

Based on the criteria used by both the Ford and Carter administrations, the outcome in Rhodesia had to be viewed as a success. The ceasefire was maintained, an East-West confrontation was avoided, and elections had produced a government that appeared to be backed by a majority of the population. Members of the CBC, who had lobbied tirelessly in support of majority rule, felt redeemed as Mugabe launched a major drive to attract Western investment and made it clear that he did not intend to radically reorient the country's existing capitalist economic system. Despite the rhetoric of many conservatives that the nationalists, and Mugabe in particular, were committed Marxists, the new government also shunned the Soviet Union. While Western countries were soon invited to open embassies in Salisbury, the Soviet Union and East Germany were not encouraged to do so. Mugabe also pledged that he would not allow his country to be used as a base for guerrilla operations against South Africa. In a further gesture of goodwill, one of Mugabe's first trips was a well-received visit to the United States.[137]

During a reception in the East Room of the White House, Carter proclaimed American policy in Zimbabwe a success: "my administration, aided and supported by the Congressional Black Caucus, has carved out a new American foreign policy which we consider to be of great interest to the people of Africa and indeed, of the entire

[136] See Clough, "From Rhodesia to Zimbabwe," 47-55.
[137] Ibid., 56.

developing world…one of my earliest goals as President, supported by many of you…was to have a peaceful and just settlement of Zimbabwe and, as you know, just a few weeks ago the Prime Minister of that great country, a new democracy, was here in this same room to celebrate in an emotional way the birth of additional freedom and human rights and equality and the end of racial discrimination in that country." The work was not finished, however, and the president declared that he was "particularly eager to work with…the CBC, with our State Department and with our representatives at the UN to bring about democracy and freedom for the people of Namibia and to eliminate apartheid throughout the southern part of Africa in the early future – not in the distant future."

Despite a satisfactory conclusion to the Rhodesian conflict, Carter's foreign policy was in shambles by the beginning of 1980. Madeline Albright of the National Security Council staff remembered later that by 1979 there was a pervasive feeling of crisis within the administration. Albright recalled that, "As the world began to fall in on him (Carter), we…didn't know how he would come down."[138] Prominent among the shocks of 1979 – the "real world" that Albright felt enveloped Carter – were the Iranian and Nicaraguan revolutions. Revolutionaries in both countries viewed themselves as opposing the agents of American imperialism, and reverberations from each would virtually paralyze Carter's foreign policy in its latter stages. The triumph of the cold war paradigm was never total within the administration, however. Patricia Derian (and Andrew Young until his dismissal in August, 1979, and Cyrus Vance until his resignation in 1980) continued to promote the administration's early foreign policy agenda. Despite

[138] John Dumbrell, *American Foreign Policy: Carter to Clinton* (Hong Kong: Macmillian Press, Ltd, 1997), 42

these holdouts, by the end of 1979, the Carter administration had generally abandoned the tenets of liberal internationalism favored by members of the CBC, and reverted to containment as the country's guiding foreign policy principle.

The administration's failure to defend the ideals of liberal internationalism created a strain in its relationship with members of the CBC. The president's support within the black community was already on the decline during this period, however. By 1979, some members of the CBC, as well as many prominent black leaders, had come to question the administration's commitment to civil rights. As Carter prepared for the election of 1980, his support within the black community was on the decline. With several members of the CBC continuing to support the president, the campaign exposed fractures within CBC unity and threatened to break the group apart.

The CBC and the Election of 1980

While Congresswoman Chisholm's presidential candidacy in 1972 posed a serious threat to the continued existence of the CBC, the storm aroused by that controversy was miniscule when compared to the problems confronting the caucus in 1980. Infighting among members pushing for CBC endorsement of Carter's candidacy and those opposed to it created a serious chasm. Most supportive of the president were Representatives Mitchell, Diggs, Rangel, Stokes, Gray, and Mickey Leland; least supportive were Dellums, Hawkins, Clay, Collins, Chisholm, and Conyers. Collins was particularly hostile toward the administration due to her exclusion from a visit to Camp David with the rest of the black leadership.[139]

[139] Memo from Valerie Pinson to Frank Moore, "Jimmy Carter and the CBC," (4 September 1979), *Jimmy Carter Presidential Library,* box 22, Special Assistant to the President: Louis Martin (folder, Congressional Black Caucus (O/A 6475)).

Augustus Hawkins and John Conyers were similarly disgusted with the president, believing that the administration had undermined important legislation initiated by both. Along with Senator Hubert Humphery, Hawkins was chief architect of the Full Employment and Balanced Growth Act (Hawkins-Humphrey Full Employment Act) in 1977. He was responsible for drafting significant parts of the legislation and presided over 200 hours of hearings at which economists, labor leaders, and corporate executives testified. The bill envisaged the federal government as the employer of "last resort," mandating full employment even if the government had to create public service jobs through programs such as those created during the Great Depression. Perhaps the biggest enemy of the bill's concept, believed Hawkins, was President Carter who insisted on the inclusion of several crippling provisions in exchange for his support. As Representative William Clay recalled, "Some original cosponsors of the bill found his (Carter's) actions so obnoxious and so disgusting that they literally held their noses when voting for its passage."[140]

In Conyers case, his dealing with the administration during the debate over a federal holiday for Martin Luther King Jr.'s birthday, soured his opinion of Carter. Conyers, who led the struggle to enact the holiday bill, was fully aware of the Carter administration's hostility to the proposal. While the president publicly conveyed the impression of neither supporting nor opposing the bill, his political operatives were accused of working behind the scenes to ensure its defeat. Along with Conyers, Coretta

[140] See William Clay, *Just Permanent Interests: Black Americans in Congress, 1870-1991* (New York: Amistad, 1992), 95.

Scott King, Reverend Joseph Lowery, president of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, and others publicly attacked the president for his stance on the issue.[141]

Carter's relationship with the CBC suffered a further blow in August 1979 when he dismissed Andrew Young from his position as ambassador to the United Nations. It appeared to many black legislators that the president had to succumb to pressure from Jewish groups incensed by Young's secret meetings with representatives of the Palestinian Liberation Organization. The ambassador's actions put him directly at odds with another powerful ethnic lobby, Jewish-Americans, who showered the White House with protests. Young's outspokenness meant that he had constantly flirted with disaster, and his resignation, while seemingly inevitable, was poorly timed and unfortunate for the administration with the election season warming up. Predictably, African American leaders responded negatively to the dismissal. TransAfrica flooded the White House with letters, telegrams, and telephone calls. Prominent civil rights leaders like Coretta Scott King, Vernon Jordan, and Bayard Rustin formed the Black Leadership Forum to protest Young's firing. Many blacks believed that Young had been forced out because he attempted to challenge American foreign policy outside an area directly involving his own people.[142] To ensure this was not the case, members of the CBC wrote the president shortly thereafter requesting a meeting "to discuss and clarify United States policies in the Middle East, including issues of treaty negotiations, refugee policy and military assistance."[143]

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[141] Clay, *Permanent Interests,* 99-102.
[142] "Statement of Black Leadership Forum," undated, *Jimmy Carter Presidential Library,* box 109, Domestic Policy Staff: Special Assistant Louis Martin (folder 'Young'); see also Alexander DeConde, *Ethnicity, Race, and American Foreign Policy* (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1992), 179-180
[143] Letter from Representatives Cardiss Collins, Charles Diggs, and William Gray to Secretary of State Vance, (16 October 1979), *Jimmy Carter Presidential Library,* box 22, Domestic Policy Staff: Special Assistant Louis Martin (folder, Congressional Black Caucus (O/A 6475)).

International reaction was also generally critical of Carter's decision. While some observers within the developing world had been critical of Young's naïve belief that the civil rights struggle in the United States was comparable to the situation in Africa, he was also welcomed as a sharp departure from the usual personalities sent by the United States to the United Nations. In capitols across the developing world, editorials bitterly criticized President Carter for failing to stand up to conservative elements that had long sought Young's termination.[144] In Paris, *Le Monde* predicted that "Mr. Carter has just lost one of the last chances he had of being reelected to the presidency."[145]

Commentators in the United States were similarly pessimistic about Carter's re-election chances as disillusionment with his leadership grew not only among African Americans, but in other segments of the Democratic Party as well. For the majority of his time in office, Carter had more or less ignored the needs for recognition and participation in government of most of the major interest groups that made up the Democratic Party – in particular, blue-collar labor unions, white ethnic groups, and African Americans. As the nomination and election season neared, the president moved to allay concerns that he was aloof from the concerns of his core constituents.[146] Thus, when Congressmen Diggs and Mitchell suggested that the president speak at the CBC's annual fundraising dinner in September, 1979 to offer some words of reassurance to the organization, the president jumped at the opportunity. Carter's advisors believed he should attend the event since the "political climate in black community is at its lowest ebb. There is a deep sense of disappointment and hurt," they continued. "Andy's

[144] William Branigin, "Foreign Capitols Reactions Mixed to Young's Resignation," *Washington Post* (17 August 1979)
[145] "Other Voices," *New York Times*, August 30, 1979

resignation is seen not only as a political loss but a personal loss…A close tie between this President and the black community is lost…. It is important that Andy continue to be visible, and accessible to the President, and it is very important that continuity be visible soon."[147]

Despite Diggs and Mitchell's invitation, their colleagues in the CBC, in a deliberate slight to the president, invited the recently unemployed Young to be the dinner's keynote speaker instead. Young, however, disappointed those who thought he might denounce the president and those responsible for his firing. In his address he skirted the controversy by remaining silent about the events leading up to his dismissal.[148] While Young refused to speak ill of his former employer with the election just over the horizon, many of his former associates were not quite as reticent. John Conyers announced that he was organizing a "dump President Jimmy Carter campaign." "The facts are that President Carter has not lived up to his promise," he told one reporter. "He double-crossed us." At the CBC's annual dinner in 1980, which the president was not invited to attend, Cardiss Collins continued the attacks on Carter. To a cheering audience, Collins declared that "those who possess an arrogance of power (a direct reference to Carter) must not be rewarded for deserting those who put them in power."[149]

Attacks against Carter emanating from members of the CBC were emblematic of the growing restiveness of Democratic elected officeholders. Facing voters in 1980 with an unpopular, often uncooperative president at the head of the ticket seemed a losing prospect. One observer noted that Carter's political liabilities seemed so clear to so many

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[146] Nelson W. Polsby, "The Democratic Nomination," in Austin Ranney (ed.), *The American Elections of 1980* (Washington D.C.: American Interprise Institute for Public Policy Research, 1980), 40-41.
[147] Pinson to Moore, "Carter and the CBC," 4 September 1979
[148] See Clay, *Permanent Interests,* 304-305.

leaders of his own party that Democratic VIP's from all over the country were literally lining up behind one another outside Senator Ted Kennedy's office waiting to ask him to be the Democratic nominee for president. "Among those making that plea," he wrote, "were Democratic senators… facing re-election challenges in 1980 and all solely worried about running on a ticket headed by Jimmy Carter…. There were labor leaders…there were black leaders…and Jewish leaders and Greek-American leaders and feminist leaders."[150] In short, representatives from nearly every traditional Democratic constituency turned to Kennedy as a viable alternative to the incumbent president.

Kennedy officially announced his candidacy on Novenber 6, 1979. Two days earlier, however, events in Iran had drastically altered the terrain over which the battle for the nomination would be waged. Carter immediately benefited from what political scientist Nelson Polsby termed the "rally 'round the flag effect." He immediately perceived the hostage crisis as an opportunity to withdraw from ordinary political campaigning of the type that tended to put presidents on the same level as their opponents. In particular the crisis was given as a reason not to accept the challenge from Senator Kennedy to debate in Iowa. Instead, Carter sent surrogates to campaign on his behalf, thus underscoring the special presidential responsibilities that were his to perform during the crisis. "In times of crisis for our country," Carter reiterated, "I believe it's very important for the president not to assume, in a public way, the role of partisan campaigner in a political context."[151]

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[149] Conyers and Collins quoted in ibid., 302, 310.
[150] T.R. Reid, "Kennedy," in Richard Harwood (ed.), *The Pursuit of the Presidency* (New York: Berkeley, 1981), 65-66.
[151] Timothy D. Schellhardt, "'Rose Garden' Tactic Keeps Carter Home, Leaves Kennedy Railing Out in the Cold," *Wall Street Journal*, February 7, 1980.

Carter's eventual capture of the Democratic nomination over Senator Kennedy was not entirely the result of the privileges of incumbency, however. Indeed, Kennedy's own problems also served to sabotage his challenge for the party's nomination. During an interview with CBS news-anchor Roger Mudd in early November, 1979, Kennedy did little to help his cause. A retrospective news story in the *Washington Post* characterized the senator's performance as "stuttering" and "vacuous," portraying "a man who had no clear reason for running." The interview touched on several painful subjects including the decades old incident at Chappaquiddick, and his estrangement from his wife, which would plague Kennedy on the campaign trail.[152] As the months went by, it became clear that the Kennedy effort would fail. Heavy contributions to the senator's campaign early on quickly gave way to financial hardship. In the end, Jimmy Carter received fifty percent of all the votes cast in the Democratic primaries of 1980. Kennedy received thirty-eight percent. Of the thirty-four primaries entered by the senator, he lost twenty-four.[153]

Despite Carter's victory in the Democratic primaries his support within the party remained lukewarm. He had long since sewn up the party's nomination when the "rally 'round the flag effect" began to subside and his unpopularity with the voters reasserted itself. Some Democratic members of Congress, whose seats were presented with serious challenges watched this turn of events with dismay, as they realized that they would face the electorate with a weak and unpopular president at the head of their ticket. From an ad hoc association of such congressmen, some allied with Kennedy's candidacy, some not, came a short-lived campaign for an "open convention," in which delegates would be

[152] T.R. Reid, "Ill Starred, Stumbling, Ever Gutsy," *Washington Post*, June 4, 1980.
[153] Polsby, "Democratic Nomination," 53.

freed from their obligation to vote for the candidate in whose name they were selected.[154] While the proposal never got off the ground, Carter went into the Democratic Convention considerably weakened. Even during the convention he could not escape the contempt of a rising number of his colleagues. CBC member Ronald Dellums offered biting criticism of the nominee, speaking for Conyers, Collins, and Hawkins who had similarly supported Kennedy's challenge of the president. "Carter thinks he can out-Reagan Reagan," Dellums complained. "Carter thinks he can take the right wing of the Democratic Party and make it win by stretching it farther over the Republicans,…But I saw Reagan in California, and I can tell him that you don't beat Reagan unless you put up a positive alternative,…Carter is a fool if he thinks he doesn't need us,…"[155]

Like Young, however, many black legislators were leery of attacking the president too much lest they be presented with a more distasteful alternative after the election. Congressman Diggs was among those who supported the president, calling his colleagues' critiques of Carter "premature," and questioning whether the CBC should endanger the candidacy of a president who had consistently made himself and his staff available to them. By 1980, however, Diggs' long and glorious career was coming to end with his conviction on federal income tax evasion and misuse of public funds. Adding to the congressman's personal humiliation, he was sentenced to serve a short term in prison.

Despite opposition from most of the CBC, the black vote once again went overwhelmingly to Carter. Still, the eighty-five percent of blacks that cast their ballots for the president were not enough to get him re-elected. In the end, Ronald Reagan won fifty percent of the popular vote to Carter's forty-one percent. Carter carried only six

[154] Ibid., 55.
[155] Dellums quoted in Clay, *Permanent Interests,* 307.

states (Georgia, Hawaii, Maryland, Minnesota, Rhode Island, and West Virginia) and the District of Columbia, for a total of 49 electoral votes and Reagan carried the other forty-four states, for a total of 489 electoral votes.[156] Nor could the vocal opposition of prominent black leaders be discounted as Carter's advisors expressed disappointment that their support had dwindled in the black community since Ronald Reagan "had said or done things," that should not only have displeased, "but should have frightened blacks."[157]

Conclusion

The seventies were a period of tumultuous change in American foreign policy. The post- World War II consensus in American policy deteriorated under the weight of the Vietnam War, international economic turmoil, and a leadership crisis in Washington. Policy concepts such as détente and liberal internationalism prompted debate among policymakers and paved the way for new policies. The Nixon administration was the first to challenge the tenets of liberal internationalism when it took bold steps toward improving relations with the Soviet Union and China. These initiatives, however, did little to assuage the concerns of black legislators, who complained that traditional orthodoxy continued to govern American policy toward Africa, southern Africa in particular. By 1976, despite the Ford administration's efforts to reorient its policies in the region, members of the CBC were accusing Secretary of State Henry Kissinger of being indifferent to Africa and inaccessible to the African diplomatic community in Washington, except when there was a public relations advantage to be gained.

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[156] Polsby, "Democratic Nomination," 37.
[157] Memo to the President from P. Cadell, (18 August 1980), *Jimmy Carter Presidential Library*, box 77, Domestic Policy Staff: Chief of Staff Hamilton Jordan (folder, 'Campaign strategy')

The influence of new schools of thought on American foreign policy were most evident during the early stages of the Carter administration. Heralding a new era, Jimmy Carter and his advisors, like former CBC member Andrew Young, brought to office a belief that many of the traditional rationales that had guided American foreign policy for more than a generation were now outmoded and inappropriate to altered world realities. In this respect, the administration's new diplomatic posture meshed with the platform espoused by black legislators throughout the 1970s. As a practical consequence of these views, the Carter administration initially announced its intention to work toward normal diplomatic relations with a number of unrecognized regimes, including China, Angola, Vietnam, and Cuba. Under Young's direction, the administration also aligned itself with African aspirations for majority rule in the southern part of the continent.

Carter's emphasis on human rights was an intelligent attempt to restore consensus and purpose to American foreign policy after Vietnam. It was a sensitive and politically sophisticated attempt to respond to the erosion of American hegemony and to the rise of interdependence. Carter, however, was not the sole architect of liberal internationalism. Throughout the 1970s, the debate over human rights in American foreign policy witnessed a determined effort to prove that the vigorous advocacy of human rights could advance the national interest defined in terms of power. Indeed, many scholars have argued that Carter's early policies were partially an attempt to diffuse challenges from Congress in the area of human rights.[158] This agenda was especially popular in the House, where Congressmen Donald Fraser and Charles Diggs put the issue at the heart of their foreign policy platform.

[158] Dumbrell, *The Carter Presidency*, 116.

To understand the role of domestic politics in the Carter administration's gradual shift rightward beginning in 1978, it is necessary to specify the conditions under which comprehensive policy changes can prove successful. As historian David Skidmore has observed, the far-reaching reform of long-standing and deeply embedded policy patterns required two critical preconditions: (1) previous policies had to be discredited by their failure to cope with emerging anomalies or crises, and (2) the advocates of reform had to succeed in fashioning an effective strategy for establishing the legitimacy of policy change. He concludes that neither condition was sufficiently satisfied during this period. International setbacks and internal lobbying from members of Congress during the late sixties and early seventies led to only a partial decomposition of public support for conservative internationalism. While the Vietnam War and other foreign problems disrupted the Cold War consensus, disillusionment with the established paradigm was far from universal. The continued strength of traditional foreign policy orthodoxy through the remainder of the decade meant advocates of policy change would be met by stiff resistance from competing elites who held material and ideological interests in the continuation of Cold War policies. Carter's failure to fully implement his vision of liberal internationalism can thus be attributed, in part, to the domestic strength of his opponents. Drawing upon the continued ideological appeal of Cold War themes, conservatives used the fear of Soviet expansionism as a means to wrest control of foreign policy from Carter and his closest advisors.[159]

In the end, the policy turnaround of 1979-1980 was not as sudden as it appeared to many observers. Changes in the Carter administration's policies toward the Soviet Union began earlier. Despite Carter's desire to continue Nixon's policy of détente,

[159] Skidmore, *Reversing Course,* 67-69

relations with the Soviets got off to a rocky start in 1977 when Moscow rejected the administration's initial arms control proposals and reacted angrily to Carter's criticisms of the Soviet Union's human rights policies. The deterioration of the relationship continued in 1978. The administration regularly criticized the behavior of the Soviet Union during this period, especially with regard to regional flashpoints in the developing world, such as Angola, Zaire, the Horn of Africa, and Southeast Asia. Little remained of Carter's initial strategies of détente and liberal internationalism when Soviet troops invaded Afghanistan in 1979. Carter's response to the Soviet move decisively confirmed the breakdown in relations when he withdrew the SALT II treaty from Senate consideration, imposed wide-ranging sanctions against the Soviet Union, and suspended almost all official contacts between the two countries. Relations between Washington and Moscow remained cool throughout the rest of Carter's term, with American relations in the developing world undergoing a similar deterioration.[160]

How then, should we view the Carter administration's abandonment of the tenets of liberal internationalism? Did it suggest a wholesale rejection of the CBC's foreign policy platform by the American public. Certainly this appeared to be the case. Indeed, critics of ethnic interest groups have commonly complained that the most dangerous aspect of ethnic lobbying is that such groups sometimes support policies opposed to the common good. The hostility with which Andrew Young's attempts to articulate the intellectual shift taking place within American foreign policy were met within both conservative and moderate circles seemed indicative of the clash between the African American perspective on international affairs and the traditional American view. Commentator William Raspberry commented on this conflict in 1978 during an attempt

[160] Dumbrell, *Carter to Clinton,* 50-51.

to impart to Young the need for a modicum of self-restraint. Warning that the ambassador's bluntness spoke only to those who already agreed with him, Raspberry advised Young to stop talking to the media as if he were engaging in idle chit-chat. He reminded Young that his words were certain to be read by individuals who would not understand the context from which he was speaking. "You are, at least as far as Africa is concerned, Jimmy Carter's conscience," Raspberry reminded Young. "Through your righteous influence on him, you represent our best hope for changing the policies that have been an embarrassment to so many of us for so long. But only if you stay on the job." Raspberry feared that if Young allowed his self-generated controversy to lead to his removal from the United Nations it would be disastrous for America's maturing Africa policy."[161]

Less than a year later Raspberry's predictions were proven correct. Young was forced out of the United Nations after meeting with representatives of the Palestinian Liberation Organization, and the administration's policy in Africa was in shambles. Young's inability to cloak his rhetoric in a tone suitable not only for diplomatic, but for public consumption, was indicative of the administration's failure to tailor a message that resonated with the American people. And so it is quite possible that liberal internationalism, while deficient in many respects, was not entirely discredited by the inability of the Carter administration to convince the public of its utility. Carter's poor leadership skills were certainly an important source of this failure, as was his refusal to defend the administration's reforms despite outside pressures. Indeed, it is difficult to say how effective liberal internationalism could have been in the long term since Carter abandoned it so quickly. Had the president stuck to the convictions that guided American

[161] William Raspberry, "That's Right Andy, But," *Washington Post,* June 13, 1978

policy during his first year and a half in office there is no telling how those policies would have altered the international scene over the long term. After all, in Rhodesia, one of the only places where Carter refused to bend to conservative criticism, the situation was eventually resolved on terms favored by the White House and its allies in the CBC.

Yet Carter cannot be held solely responsible for the failure of the liberal internationalist platform. Despite Carter's efforts, the growing conservatism of the public provided a measure of the greater success of conservative elites, as compared with liberal opinion makers, in managing public perceptions of the salience and meaning of external events during the period. Conservatives managed to dominate and define the principal foreign policy debates that raged during the Carter years and their success in garnering public support increasingly placed the Carter administration on the defensive. Alongside the domestic strengths of the proponents of conservative internationalism lay the weakness of liberal advocacy groups; liberals outside the administration were not nearly as active or effectively organized as conservative interest groups. Despite significant organizational reforms, members of the CBC found the situation had changed little from the early 1970s when business groups and conservative legislators had used their expansive network of interests to align the United States with the racist regimes of southern Africa.

Having failed, along with the administration, to define the advantages of liberal internationalism to the American people, the CBC then refused to support an administration that had at least offered its members a seat at the policymaking table. In this respect, they were joined by several of their Democratic colleagues. Carter later complained that "most Democratic members had never served with a president of their

own political party, and their attitude was one of competition rather than cooperation with the White House."[162] This was particularly true of black legislators who had faced eight years of hostile relations with the Nixon and Ford administrations. It was not necessarily true that Carter would have mounted a more compelling challenge to Ronald Reagan in 1980 had he not faced an open revolt from inside the Democratic Party. Had more of the administration's allies resigned themselves to the administration's eleventh hour conversion to containment there was no telling what may have happened, however; these new policies were, after all, welcomed by the majority of Congress and appeared to rest on public approval. Indeed, in the 1980 election, Reagan basically supported the Carter doctrine, yet he was also able to exploit perceptions of the administration's weakness. Thus, as the election of 1980 approached, Carter not only had to contend with attacks from his right accusing him of stripping America's arsenal bare; he also faced the growing perception that he could not even lead his own party, let alone the entire country.

Carter's defeat in 1980 hurt the CBC on two major fronts. In the first place, it negated the progress made by the African American community as a strong voting bloc for the Democratic Party in 1976. While the eighty-five percent of blacks who supported the president was an impressive number, tension between the administration and the CBC and other prominent blacks convinced many African American voters to stay home in 1980.[163] The failure of the black community to return Carter to the White House punctured the myth among Democrats that the black vote could serve as an effective counterweight to the party's loss of the conservative white vote. Realizing that this was

[162] Charles Jones, *The Trusteeship Presidency: Jimmy Carter and the United States Congress* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University, 1988), 47-48.
[163] "Speech by D.S. Days," (11 November 1977), *Jimmy Carter Presidential Library*, box 22, Domestic Policy Staff: Civil Rights and Justice (folder, Human Rights).

not the case, and understanding that blacks generally would not support Republican candidates, the African American vote came to largely be taken for granted. Instead, the party worked hard to counteract the loss of Jewish and conservative voters during the election of 1980. This trend has continued into the present with Hispanics also becoming a coveted group for Democratic strategists.

If African Americans are going to continue to work primarily within the Democratic Party, it makes sense that they should work to register as many African American voters behind Democratic candidates so that they once again appear to balance the party's loss of conservative white voters. This would mean working with and supporting administrations, such as that of Jimmy Carter, that do not always live up to the promises that they make. This is of course a tenuous balancing act – no interest group wants to blindly lend its support to an administration that ignores its requests. Yet, this did not appear to be what was happening during the Carter administration. CBC members were certainly aware of the forces against the administration's proposed policy shifts, and while they criticized the president for refusing to stand up to these elements, they did little to deflect the repeated attacks from conservative forces. Nor did Young's behavior help matters; indeed he complicated them by providing a readily identifiable target for the administration's detractors. His rhetoric also distracted attention from the positive developments that liberal internationalism brought to the international scene.

Secondly, CBC attacks on the Carter administration led to the election of Ronald Reagan in 1980 and the official return of conservative politics to Washington. The decline of the executive branch on foreign policy, while real, has never been as far-reaching or complete as has been suggested by some scholars. At a time when the White

House continued to exercise control – although under increasing congressional oversight – it seemed foolish for the CBC to squander an opportunity to retain the ear of the White House. While black legislators did not always agree with the administration's foreign policy decisions, they could not claim, as they had been able to in the past, that they were not kept up to date on the options being discussed by policymakers. In December, 1979, for example, as the CBC's relationship with the administration continued to deteriorate, Charles Diggs, Cardiss Collins, William Gray, and Randall Robinson of TransAfrica were invited to a meeting of the National Security Council to discuss the American position on the British led Lancaster House negotiations.[164] With Reagan's victory any hope the CBC had of similar access to the White House during the early 1980s immediately vanished. The new administration's announcement that it would openly pursue constructive engagement with South Africa confirmed Diggs' anxiety that the devil you know is often better than the one you do not.

[164] Memo to Zbigniew Brzezinski from Jerry Funk, "Discussion of Rhodesian Sanctions by the National Security Council," (12 December 1979), box 3, Special Assistant to the President: Louis Martin (folder, Africa [4])

Conclusion

Ethnic influence on foreign policy is a reality, and ethnic interest groups have emerged as vocal, politically relevant, and legitimate parts of the American polity. The growing role of ethnic groups in shaping American foreign policy has been reinforced by the waves of recent immigration and by the arguments for diversity and multiculturalism. In addition, the greater wealth of ethnic communities and the dramatic improvements in communications and transportation now make it much easier for ethnic groups to remain in touch with their home countries. As a result, these groups are being transformed from cultural communities within the boundaries of a state into diasporas that transcend these boundaries. State based diasporas, that is trans-state cultural communities that control at least one state, are increasingly important and increasingly identify with the interests of their homeland. "Full assimilation into their host counties," one scholar pointed out, "has become unfashionable among both established and incipient state-based diasporas…. Many diasporal communities neither confront overwhelming pressure to assimilate nor feel any marked advantage in assimilating into their host societies or even obtaining citizenship there.[1]

Those who have spoken out against this type of influence on foreign policy – such as Tony Smith, Samuel Huntington, and James Schlesinger – overstate the dangers inherent in rising ethnic group influence. Certainly their arguments seem plausible, beginning with the premise that there exists an objective set of American national

interests that can be contrasted with the narrower parochial interests of ethnic interest groups. Smith's primary argument, for example, which is primarily guided by the concept of democratic citizenship, is correct in suggesting that if ethnic groups wish to be part of the broader community they have a political, as well as an ethical, obligation to support the common good. Yet this criteria must be applied to all nonstate actors, for if ethnic politics are as divisive as critics charge, so too are other forms of political agitation and socialization. Most major interest groups formed around agrarian, labor, or business interests have a long history of foreign policy agitation. From this perspective ethnic pressures are not so different from those originating with other organized interest groups. Why, then, should lobbying and voting based on ethnic or racial considerations, as by African Americans, Jewish Americans, and others, be considered less legitimate than those for economic, regional, or ideological reasons? Pluralist democratic theory assumes, after all, that the public good emerges from the conflict of private interests, and that pluralism should be treated as a recognized political force without being tainted as subversive.[2]

The idea that ethnic groups affect the coherence of American policy, while plausible, is based on the faulty assumption that ethnic group influence is a fairly recent occurrence, and that foreign policy during the better part of the twentieth century has been the result of a general consensus among elite policymakers concerning the national interest. Newer works, however, have exposed the fallacy of this assertion, detailing the prominence of ethnic groups throughout the twentieth century. As part of a liberal

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[1] Samuel Huntington: "The Erosion of American National Interests," *Foreign Affairs* 75, 1 (Sept/Oct 1997): 42.

[2] Thomas Ambrosio, "Legitimate Influence or Parochial Capture? Conclusions on Ethnic Identity Groups and the Formulation of U.S. Foreign Policy," in Thomas Ambrosio (ed.) *Ethnic Identity Groups and U.S.*

democratic society that is responsive to the people, interest groups have long been an accepted part of American politics. Rather than serving as a hindrance to American diplomacy, the debate over the legitimate range of influence by special interest groups should be an integral part of the political process. Such debates force politicians, scholars, and public figures to more clearly define American national interests.

Reviewing CBC attempts to influence United States policy toward Africa during the 1970s, it becomes clear that their influence was most readily apparent in their contribution to such debates. While the group's lobbying and organizational effectiveness were often less than that of their adversaries, black legislators nevertheless played an integral role in policy formulation toward Africa, limiting the space and maneuverability of policymakers with respect to the minority white regimes of southern Africa. Sustained opposition to American engagement with the white governments of southern Africa meant that the White House had to be aware of the political costs of doing business with South Africa, Rhodesia, and Portugal. Particularly important in this effort was Charles Diggs, who utilized the House Subcommittee on Africa as a forum where divergent views were presented and American policy was openly questioned. Diggs' effectiveness was thus largely rhetorical. Many of the proposals supported by the congressman – for example, cutting off all government contracts to firms conducting business in South Africa – were utterly fanciful. While his positions won acclaim from African nationalists and militant groups, they lacked the political finesse displayed by his conservative opponents.

Since the African American community was solidly Democratic, it makes sense that their arguments found greater acceptance with Jimmy Carter's election in 1976.

Foreign Policy (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2002), 201.

During the Carter administration Andrew Young, and later Donald McHenry, played foreign policy roles that transcended their formal responsibilities as United States representatives to the United Nations. With Young and other African Americans in prominent policymaking positions, members of the CBC finally had a receptive audience for their platform. Still, while black legislators were isolated from the White House during the Nixon and Ford administrations, it was apparent that then, too, they had a noticeable influence on American policy toward Africa. While Nixon and Ford generally discounted black influence, when speaking on foreign policy issues they often sought some way to appease African Americans. "Is there something in it for the jigs," Nixon would inquire of his speech writers and advisors like Henry Kissinger before major foreign policy speeches.[3]

Yet CBC influence during this period was not restricted to rhetorical gains. Since its formation, many of the foreign policy objectives sought by the CBC in foreign policy have been achieved. American policy with regard to sanctions against Rhodesia and South Africa, and aid to Africa and Haiti eventually changed in ways sought by the caucus – and the efforts of CBC members in conjunction with like-minded legislators were a significant factor in these changes. Led by Congressman Diggs, members of the CBC, black church groups, and other African American organizations pressured many multinational corporations to divest from southern Africa. As a result, General Motors, Kodak, and a host of other countries terminated or reduced their investments in South

[3] Nixon quoted in Alexander DeConde, *Ethnicity, Race, and American Foreign Policy* (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1992), 177-178.

Africa eventually causing that country to slip into a recession.[4] Another legitimate victory for members of the CBC was Robert Mugabe's election in 1980, which ended the conflict in Rhodesia on terms that had been supported by black legislators throughout the sixties and seventies.

Members of the CBC were also instrumental in organizing an effective African American foreign policy constituency. More often than not, the black members of Congress took the lead in articulating their community's foreign policy interest. By 1979, the CBC had positioned itself as the leading force in the fight to maintain sanctions against Rhodesia and impose stricter penalties on South Africa. Congressmen Diggs and Young also played a prominent role in the creation in 1977 of TransAfrica, the major Washington D.C. lobbying group for African nations. Randall Robinson, its executive director and founder, cut his teeth on African issues while serving as a staff assistant to Diggs, with the congressman consistently providing Robinson with the opportunity to meet key players in the independent countries of black Africa. TransAfrica was to be just one point of pressure among the many championed by members of the CBC to establish support in the black community for majority rule in Africa generally and the end of apartheid in South Africa specifically.[5]

As a result of CBC efforts during the seventies, by the 1980s newer members were confronted by a well-coordinated anti-apartheid movement made up of church groups, nonprofit organizations, the NAACP, unions, political leaders, celebrities, college students, and others. Together with these groups, members of the CBC, led by Representative William Gray (D-PA), who had assumed primary responsibility for

[4] See for example, "Voices for Disengagement," undated, *CDC MSRC* box 221, folder 15.

African affairs among his black colleagues with Diggs' resignation, succeeded in persuading Congress to pass the Comprehensive Anti-Apartheid Act in 1986, despite opposition from the Reagan administration. The CAAA specifically prohibited investment or loans to South Africa and prevented goods controlled by the South African government from coming into the United States. Most importantly, it disallowed American and South African military cooperation and officially expressed American support for dismantling apartheid. Although the legislation did not contain a comprehensive economic embargo, like many in the movement wanted, the CBC still considered the CAAA a significant victory in a battle the organization had been waging since the 1970s.

Despite some victories with respect to American policy toward South Africa and Rhodesia, the CBC's contribution to foreign policy remains minimal. As late as 1992, in a set of policy recommendations for the Clinton transitional team, black legislators still complained that there was an "institutional racism in our foreign and national security policy apparatus" that reflected "at least in part, the relative absence of input by African-Americans at the highest policymaking levels."[6] Scholars have generally traced CBC ineffectiveness to domestic policies as well. Writing in the late 1970s, Marguerite Ross Barnett, among others, argued that the CBC's legislative influence was limited to relatively conventional policy demands and defensive legislative actions.[7] Others argued convincingly that the CBC served more as a social club for its members than as a dominant voting cue, concluding that, even during its institutional maturity, the CBC's

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[5] William L. Clay, *Just Permanent Interests: Black Americans in Congress, 1870- 1991* (New York: Amistad, 1992), 88.
[6] Raymond W. Copson, *The Congressional Black Caucus and Foreign Policy 1971-2002* (New York: Novinka, 2003), 15.

legislative influence remained limited to the margins of policymaking.[8] Longtime CBC critic Manning Marable has suggested that the Tuskegee Machine during the Jim Crow period was more formidable than the CBC of the late seventies and eighties.[9] Carol Swain has agreed, noting that throughout the 1980s, the CBC lost much of its earlier momentum.[10]

Whereas other ethnic groups, such as Jewish-Americans and Polish-Americans have had a visible impact on American diplomacy, similar attempts by African Americans have been less successful. This failure stems, not from the lack of a legitimate electoral threat – indeed, the African American constituency in the Democratic Party is larger than either the Jewish or the Polish – but instead from an apparent ideological conflict that has yet to be resolved between black Americans and the foreign policymaking elite. As historian Martin Weil has observed, the success of Polish and Jewish interest groups was attributable "to an ideological harmony with the American psyche, an intense Americanism that attracted supporters from a broad spectrum of the electorate." Both groups were thus celebrators of the American way of life. In a very real sense, these and other Euro-American ethnic interest groups were American nationalists with an area specialization, exporting American traditions to their respective homelands.[11]

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[7] See Marguerite Ross Barnett, "The CBC Ten Years Later: An Analysis," *Crisis* (April 1981), 111; also Charles Henry, "Legitimizing Race in Congressional Politics," *American Politics Quarterly* 5: 149-76.
[8] Arthur B. Levy, and Susan Stoudinger, "Sources of Voting Cues for the Black Caucus," *Journal of Black Studies* 1: 29-46; also Roxanne Gile and Charles Jones, "Congressional Racial Solidarity: Exploring Congressional Black Caucus Voting Cohesion, 1971-1990," *Journal of Black Studies* 25: 622-41.
[9] Manning Marable, *Black American Politics: From the Washington Marches to Jesse Jackson* (London: Verso, 1985), 159.
[10] Carol Swain, *Black Faces, Black Interests, The Representation of African Americans in Congress* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1993), 39.
[11] Martin Weil, "Can the Blacks Do For Africa What the Jews Did For Israel?" *Foreign Policy* 60 (Fall 1985), 124-125.

Members of the CBC, on the other hand, have often been uncomplimentary of American hegemony in their attempts to reorient the country's foreign policy. Andrew Young was a perfect example of this, downplaying America's moral superiority and military preeminence throughout the world. Members of the CBC have historically been vocal in their opposition to issues they have found morally and strategically opposed to America's long-term interest. This has indeed been an admirable trait, and one that would be expected of a responsible member of Congress voting on his or her conscience; yet blunt statements have seldom been the language of diplomacy, a lesson that Andrew Young learned (or did not, depending on one's perspective) with much difficulty during his transition from Congress to the United Nations. Such policies were not likely to receive support from politicians or members of the diplomatic community, since theories involving American hubris and decline remain relatively unpopular with the public and the policymaking elite. Indeed, this was a major reason that the reforms implemented during Carter's first year and a half in office failed to catch on, based as they were on the concept that American's military dominance had come to an end, and readjustments needed to be made to the international balance of power. To be successful, a black movement for reform of American policy toward Africa must be perceived as a vehicle for exporting American values. It must be an affirmation of black faith in the United States and a demonstration of African American ability to manipulate the structures of American politics. "Blacks as blacks may identify with Africa," observed Weil, "but it is only as Americans that they can change United States policy in Africa…. To aid the revolution abroad, blacks must first join the establishment at home."[12]

[12] Weil, "Can the Blacks Do For Africa?" 127.

Most disturbing, however, has been the CBC's tendency to allow its role in foreign policy to be reduced to African and Caribbean affairs. This work, focused as it is on the CBC's influence on events in southern Africa, admittedly falls into this trap as well. The American political tradition grudgingly allows ethnic groups to help shape policies toward their regions of origin or special interest. At the same time, minority group members are often restricted to these fields at the expense of a voice on larger foreign policy issues. Such "ghettoizing" of the foreign policy field will have to be combated if African Americans are to effectively contribute to foreign policy formulation. It was natural for the original members of the CBC to be interested in Africa. Independence on the continent coincided with African Americans own struggle for civil rights in the United States. During the 1960s and 1970s, it also appeared as though African affairs might grow in importance to American policymakers as they attempted to alter the negative perceptions of the United States in the developing world. This, however, has not been the case, and events in Africa have remained a low priority for American policymakers. In the long run, CBC members will be more effective if they avoid becoming just another ethnic lobby. It is somewhat shortsighted to base any foreign policy on race or religion – already two of the most divisive issues in America – particularly since it has opened black legislators up to charges of hypocrisy and discrimination.[13] Instead, black Americans need to show that the policies they advocate are in the economic, strategic, and moral interest of all Americans, regardless of race, religion, color, or birthplace.

[13] See for example Fran Scott and Abdullah Osman, "Identity, African Americans and U.S. Foreign Policy: Differing Reactions to South African Apartheid and Rwandan Genocide," in Thomas Ambrosio, *Ethnic Identity Groups and U.S. Foreign Policy* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2002), 86.