

**THE WHITE HOUSE AND WHITE AFRICA: PRESIDENTIAL
POLICY ON RHODESIA 1965-79**

by

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**A thesis submitted to the University of Birmingham for the
degree of DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY**

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April 2016**

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ABSTRACT

My thesis offers an examination of U.S. policy towards Rhodesia as viewed through the lens of the respective Presidential administrations. The aim of my research is to demonstrate the changing American perspective on the Rhodesian question and how this directly affected the ultimate emergence of an independent Zimbabwe. I discuss the transformation in U.S. policy from the cautious approach of the Johnson White House, the shift towards 'white Africa' during the Nixon years as anti-communism and economic interests took centre stage and the subsequent attempt of the Ford Administration to achieve a peace settlement to prevent further communist expansion into southern Africa. Finally, I will analyse the critical role played by President Carter in bringing an end to UDI. When evaluating U.S. policy I highlight the diverse factors which drove presidential decision making. Anti-communism, trade, strategic interests, the increasing interdependence of the global system, a moral belief in decolonization, the growth of human rights, domestic race relations and the growing importance of the African-American vote all significantly impacted White House actions. On a broader level, I will demonstrate how relations with Salisbury offers an interpretative prism which reveals the evolution of U.S. foreign relations during the Sixties and Seventies.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to thank the University of Birmingham, the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library and the Lyndon B. Johnson Presidential Library for providing funding in support of my archival research in the United Kingdom and the United States.

I must thank a number of kind individuals for their advice, encouragement and logistical support including Dr. Jonathan Gumz, Professor Colin Samson, Dr. Gary Schultz and Dr. Carl Peter Watts.

Finally, I wish to thank my parents Rosie and Keith Michel and my partner Naomi Chinger for their love, support and patience during my PhD years.

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INTRODUCTION

On November 11 1965, the Rhodesian Government formally signed a Unilateral Declaration of Independence (UDI) from the United Kingdom. It was the first unilateral break by a British colony since the U.S. Declaration of Independence nearly two centuries before in 1776. Indeed, the wording of the Rhodesian proclamation was clearly modelled on the original American counterpart. Rhodesia, a self-governing colony desired full independence from London and following exhaustive negotiations had finally opted to take the matter into its own hands. In his statement immediately following the declaration, Rhodesian Prime Minister Ian Douglas Smith asserted that ‘In the lives of most nations there comes a moment when a stand has to be made for principle, whatever the consequences. This moment has come to Rhodesia...We have struck a blow for the preservation of justice, civilisation and Christianity, and in the spirit of this belief we have this day assumed our sovereign independence.’¹

A number of factors led to the Rhodesian decision to defy London and the world community by seizing its independence. The majority of white Rhodesians considered decolonization and majority rule in Africa as an erroneous policy symbolic of the decay of the once proud British Empire. A traditional Rhodesian assertion was that their white population, who had so heroically expanded the empire, held a ‘seemingly thankless sentinel duty’ to remind their more metropolitan cousins of their past glories and inspire them to future greatness. On a pragmatic note, the fact that many newly emergent African states descended into one party dictatorships or spiralled into vicious bloodletting and

¹ From Salisbury to Commonwealth Relations Office, No.1707, 11th November 1965, PREM 13/545, National Archives, London, From Salisbury to Commonwealth Relations Office, No.1708, 11th November 1965, PREM 13/545, National Archives, London and Carl Peter Watts, *Rhodesia's Unilateral Declaration of Independence: An International History*, (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), 39.

ethnic conflict further hardened the resolve of the white community to stand their ground against the tide of black nationalism.²

The populist Rhodesian Front (RF) government was also vehemently anti-communist and both publicly and privately held to a 'Manichean world view' in which the stirrings of African nationalism within their country stemmed from communist subversion as opposed to genuine political grievances. In the view of white Rhodesia, communism was insidiously spreading throughout Africa and London was doing little to prevent it. It therefore became incumbent on the Rhodesians themselves to become the first 'nation in the last two decades to have the determination and fortitude to say "so far and no further."' ³

It is also clear, however, that UDI represented the determination of the white community to retain their power and privilege in an 'independent' Rhodesia. The Rhodesians having built a economically viable modern nation, benefited, for the most part, from a privileged existence paying little tax and enjoying a high quality of life. Indeed, in 1965, the capital, Salisbury, boasted more swimming pools than any American city of a comparable size. In November 1965, just weeks before UDI, Time magazine commented that 'Few communities in the world can match the sun-drenched affluence that Rhodesia's hardy settlers have achieved for themselves.' It was also increasingly obvious that the white Rhodesians had no intention of giving it away. Ian Smith himself

² Donal Lowry "The impact of anti-communism on white Rhodesian political culture.c.1920s-1980," in *Cold War in Southern Africa. White power, black liberation*, ed. Sue Onslow (London and New York: Routledge, 2012), 90 and Ian Smith, *Bitter Harvest. Zimbabwe and the Aftermath of its Independence*, (London: John Blake, 2008), 107-108.

³ From Salisbury to Commonwealth Relations Office, No.1708, 11th November 1965, PREM 13/545, National Archives, London and Lowry "The impact of anti-communism on white Rhodesian political culture", in *Cold War in Southern Africa*, ed. Onslow 97-101.

privately stated that ‘The white man is the master of Rhodesia...He has built it and intends to keep it.’⁴

UDI and the United States

The period of Rhodesian ‘independence’ from British constitutional rule lasted over 14 years. The existence of the illegal regime and its ability to weather international hostility and economic sanctions posed an exceptional and challenging policy dilemma for four separate U.S. presidential administrations. The shifts in the American approach towards Salisbury were reflective not only of the personal beliefs of the individuals in the White House but represented the larger diverse pressures shaping foreign policy during the period of UDI.

The Rhodesian UDI represented an exceptional case for U.S. policy makers, an anti-colonial rebellion undertaken not to give a suppressed indigenous population the right to govern their own affairs but instead allow an entrenched colonial minority to remain in political control of the nation. Internationally, Rhodesia was the first nation to be placed under comprehensive mandatory UN sanctions and remained a non-recognized pariah state throughout the UDI era.

The Rhodesian question, however, also encapsulated the key dynamics which shaped U.S. foreign policy during the Sixties and Seventies. The Cold War, economics, race relations and human rights all guided White House decision making regarding Salisbury. Rhodesia, therefore, serves as useful interpretive prism to examine and better understand

⁴ Time Magazine, Vol 86 No.19, November 5 1965 p.40-48 and Robert C. Good, *The International Politics of the Rhodesian Rebellion*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1973), 4.

the American approach to global relations during the UDI era and the underlying forces that combined to shape U.S. actions.

Furthermore, as part of the global 'periphery', Salisbury offered a great deal of flexibility to the successive presidential administrations and this is reflected in their differing approaches towards Rhodesia. Indeed, the Rhodesian UDI and continued 'independence' provided a range of arguments for the differing administrations to deploy which then reflected the set of core beliefs within each presidency of how to approach international politics. Rhodesia, therefore offers a true picture of the fundamental values of the Johnson, Nixon, Ford and Carter Administrations.

Rhodesia also provides a particularly illuminative lens to view broader U.S. policy towards the wider racial struggle for political power in Southern Africa and especially towards the other members of the so called 'White Redoubt'. Like Rhodesia, South Africa and the Portuguese Territories were vehemently anti-communist, occupied strategic locations, possessed vast mineral deposits and enjoyed close economic ties with Washington. As with Salisbury, however, both Pretoria and Lisbon were active practitioners of white minority rule and denied, to varying degrees, the political rights of their black African populations.

Across the presidential administrations, an analysis of policy towards Rhodesia further captures and exposes the tension and interaction between pragmatism and morality in U.S. foreign relations during the 1960s and 1970s. The relationship between the pragmatic and moral approaches was fluid and varied according to the respective occupants of the Oval Office as well as the changing international and domestic background which confronted them.

The U.S. approach towards the UDI state, reveals broad patterns of conflict between realpolitik and moral justice but also times when pragmatism and ethical considerations aligned together to achieve mutually compatible goals. The case of Rhodesia also provides intriguing questions over the competing visions within Washington itself of what constituted pragmatism or morality in formulating foreign policy.

The Cold War was a major factor in shaping U.S. relations with Rhodesia during UDI era. The geopolitical struggle for global supremacy between Washington and Moscow, however, also revealed conflicting attitudes of how to deal with a vehemently anti-communist yet globally condemned racist regime. For many Americans, the anti-communism of the Rhodesians and the often repeated claim that Salisbury was a bastion of embattled Western civilization under siege from communist backed guerrilla movements meant that the clear pragmatic approach was to support Salisbury regardless of its domestic practices.

The counter-argument, advanced by both liberals and so called Cold Warriors, highlighted the fact that the continued existence of white minority rule in Rhodesia provided Moscow, Peking and later Havana, due in part to their lack of ties to Salisbury or Pretoria, an opportunity to align themselves as the true allies of black African aspirations to the detriment of Western interests. By the mid 1970s, it was contended that the increasing intensity of the Rhodesian Bush War combined with the expanding Cuban military presence in Africa dictated that the pragmatic approach was to accelerate the process of majority rule to prevent further communist expansion.

Questions of pragmatism also entered into economic considerations. American companies such as Union Carbide were dominating influences in the pre UDI Rhodesian economy and remained major investors in the 'independence' era. Rhodesia also possessed a range of strategic materials notably chrome that were vitally important to the U.S. on economic and on strategic grounds.

It was also increasingly important, however, for the U.S. to maintain and protect the growing trade with and business in the independent nations of black ruled Africa. These states possessed a large percentage of the mineral wealth of the free world as well as offering lucrative markets for export and other investment opportunities. Furthermore, the shifting power dynamic at the UN, notably the increasing influence of the Afro-Asian bloc, led to fears that unless Washington was seen as taking a strong stance against Salisbury the U.S. could lose black African support for its broader geopolitical agenda as well as trade ties.

Domestically, morality and pragmatism also intersected in terms of policy towards Rhodesia. Liberals and civil rights groups highlighted America's proud anti-colonial tradition and opposition to European imperialism to advocate a policy of hostility towards Salisbury. The fact that UDI represented the continuation of white minority rule led to parallels being drawn with the domestic struggle of African-Americans to achieve equal rights. As the African-American vote grew in electoral importance the White House became increasingly cognizant, on a pragmatic level, of the need to engage in policies which would not antagonize a key sector of the domestic electorate.

Many Americans, however, identified with Ian Smith seeing little difference between the U.S. Declaration of Independence and UDI. The shared frontier culture of both

nations and in the case of many white Southerners a similar racist outlook led to considerable empathy for the white Rhodesian population. As pointed out by pro-Rhodesian Americans, Salisbury should not be criticized for the imperfections in its political system and society given that it took Washington itself nearly two hundred years to give equal rights to all American citizens.

In the 1960s and 1970s, Anglo-Americans formed a solid electoral majority and a policy of slowing down the pace of racial change both domestically and overseas appealed to large numbers of white voters especially in the South. The political objective of capturing the white Southern vote combined with a powerful Rhodesia Lobby on Capitol Hill provided a pragmatic domestic rationale for avoiding overtly hostile policies towards Salisbury.

The late 1960s and 1970s also witnessed the emergence of the global human rights movement as an increasingly influential factor in international relations. The rise of the human rights movement led to pressure to end social injustice and asserted a global duty in protecting the welfare of all people regardless of national jurisdiction. In Washington, however, opponents and supporters of Ian Smith provided differing moral interpretations of how to apply the ideology of human rights to the case of Rhodesia.

Liberal figures and civil rights leaders observed that the right of a population to choose how it is governed was considered among the most vital of human rights therefore the Rhodesian Government operated in clear violation of the political rights of its citizens. Furthermore, the racial discrimination inherent in Rhodesian society represented a further affront to the basic human rights of black Rhodesians. A number of conservative figures, however, highlighted the human rights of the white Rhodesian minority, notably

the potential loss of their political and property rights in a black African ruled state. Proponents of Salisbury also observed the 'hypocrisy' of condemning Rhodesia for its lack of democracy when the vast majority of black-ruled African nations were one party dictatorships where the citizens, black or white, possessed even less political rights and freedoms.

It is also important to note, when comparing the policies of the presidential administrations towards Salisbury, the changing international and domestic backdrop in which they operated. Between 1965-79, the parameters of global and American politics altered dramatically which inevitably impacted White House decision making on Rhodesia.

On the global stage, while the 1960s and 1970s saw a period of détente between Washington and Moscow the world became increasingly divided between nations who supported the Western powers and those backed by communist support. In the Third World, the U.S. and USSR vied with each other to capture the political support of the newly independent countries. By the mid 1970s both Moscow and Havana were active in Southern Africa posing a direct threat to the Western oriented orbit of the region.

The waves of decolonization that swept over Asia and Africa during the late 1950s and 1960s also led to the creation of an Afro-Asian bloc. Over the following decade the growing political influence and economic resources of this bloc, dedicated to ending the last vestiges of colonial rule, contrasted with the diminishing sway of the remaining imperialist powers or white minority regimes. Combined with the rise of the global human rights movement this created a potent force for the achievement of racial justice.

Domestically, the Rhodesian UDI era, spanned a period of social and political change within the United States. American society moved from the radicalism and protest of the 1960s to a conservative resurgence characterized by the election of Richard Nixon and finally a distrust and disillusionment with Washington in part due to the revelations of the Watergate scandal.

African-American electoral power, following the Voting Rights Act of 1965, became an increasingly influential factor in domestic politics and indeed was the decisive element in the presidential election of 1976. The war in Vietnam also dominated politics in Washington and led to deep divisions among the American public. Indeed, even after the conflict, the ghost of Vietnam hung over U.S. foreign policy, especially potential military interventions throughout the rest of the UDI period.

Overall, presidential policy towards Salisbury highlights the impact of the shifting geopolitics of the Cold War, the fluctuating constellations of power in the global community, the need for and profits involved in obtaining strategic raw materials, the changing nature of domestic race relations and the growing political importance of the human rights movement on foreign relations. The case of Rhodesia, further reveals the wider struggle between pragmatism and moral justice in U.S. foreign relations as well as the opposing notions of what represented a pragmatic or moral approach.

Historiography

At the broadest level there exists a vast range of literature offering diverse perspectives that purport to explain American foreign relations with Africa and the Third World during the 1960s and 70s. A number of historians, notably John Lewis Gaddis,

have argued that the ‘containment’ of global Communism was the principal concern of policy makers during the entire Cold War era. In this perspective, all postwar presidential administrations from Truman to Reagan sought primarily to limit Soviet expansion although the methods used differed dependent on the incumbent president. Even Jimmy Carter, who had entered the White House determined to end the preoccupation with containment eventually acknowledged that the balance of relations with Moscow represented ‘the most critical factor in determining whether the world will live in peace or be engulfed in global conflict’.⁵

The concept of containment did not simply apply to Europe but was a global strategy aimed at preventing Soviet expansion anywhere in the world. Historians have observed that during the Sixties both the Kennedy and Johnson Administrations retained the ‘zero-sum game’ view of the world that victories for communism anywhere represented losses for the U.S. Nixon, Ford and Carter also remained strongly intolerant of Marxism in the developing world. Indeed, it has been suggested that the wider Third World was integral to the broader struggle for supremacy as both Washington and Moscow realized that full scale conflict in Europe or North America was unwinnable therefore the Cold War descended into a contest that consisted of ‘shadow-boxing’ in the peripheral regions.⁶

⁵ John Lewis Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment: A Critical Appraisal of American National Security Policy during the Cold War*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), ix and 343-344.

⁶ Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment*, 20-22, 127-128, 200-202, 273-275 and 343-345, Nancy Mitchell, “Terrorists or freedom fighters? Jimmy Carter and Rhodesia,” in *Cold War in Southern Africa. White power black liberation*, ed. Sue Onslow (London and New York: Routledge, 2012), 178, Nancy Mitchell “The Cold War and Jimmy Carter” in *The Cambridge History of the Cold War, Volume III Endings*, ed. ed. Melvyn P. Leffler and Odd Arne Westad (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 67 and 74-75, and Elizabeth Schmidt, *Foreign Intervention in Africa: From the Cold War to the War on Terror*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013) 1-2 and 7-8.

Odd Arne Westad and Michael E. Latham have contended that American efforts to shape the Third World centered around the belief that the trajectory of American history, specifically the experience of the its own ‘modern’ revolution coupled with its liberal democratic values provided a compelling vision for emerging nations as well as offering a promising future for those who would follow the American path. Thus Washington sought to press developing nations to adopt an ideological free market to counter Soviet collectivism and felt duty bound to assist in the exportation of American democracy. In contrast, Moscow was perceived as preying on the poverty and instability of the Third World. In the words of Walt Rostow, Special Assistant for National Security Affairs to LBJ, the communists were the ‘scavengers of the transitional process’, a malevolent force for that thrived on the weakness of the developing nations.⁷ .

In many cases the U.S. sought to influence the Third World through ‘positive interventionism’ in the forms of development aid to improve areas such as education and healthcare. The Peace Corps, established in 1961, was conceived as a tool to accelerate modernity. It has also been observed, however, including by Elizabeth Schmidt that American aid was primarily restricted to regimes that displayed anti-communist credentials, opposed radicalism and were willing to act as regional policeman in defence of Western interests. Policymakers in Washington generally exhibited little concern if such allies displayed repressive internal policies provided the governments remained firmly in the U.S. sphere of influence. Furthermore, other historians such as Gaddis and Andrew DeRoche have observed the covert role of the CIA in attempting to destabilize

⁷ Odd Arne Westad. *The Global Cold War*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 8-38 and Michael E. Latham “The Cold War in the Third World, 1963-1975” in *The Cambridge History of the Cold War, Volume II Crises and Détente*, ed. Melvyn P. Leffler and Odd Arne Westad (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 259-262.

leftist governments and replacing them with pro-Western regimes whether democratic or dictatorial in nature.⁸

In the case of Southern Africa, it has been posited that not only did the Cold War stimulate U.S. support for the vehemently anti-communist white settler states but moreover the Portuguese, Rhodesians and South Africans deliberately employed Cold War rhetoric and highlighted the international communist threat to the region in order to seek American assistance. In the cases of both Rhodesia and South Africa, anti-communism also prevented Washington from embracing the cause of majority rule during the 1960s and early 1970s. It has been further argued, that American involvement to achieve a Rhodesian settlement in the mid to late 1970s was motivated primarily by a desire to remove a source of potential communist intervention in the region rather than to achieve racial justice.⁹

Scholars have noted the role of economics in shaping U.S. foreign policy towards Africa during the Cold War period. According to this school of thought, the promotion of free market capitalism, specifically access to the raw materials and markets previously

⁸ Andrew DeRoche, "Relations with Africa since 1900" in *A Companion to American Foreign Relations*, ed. Robert D. Schulzinger (Malden: Blackwell Publishing, 2006), 112, Mark Atwood Lawrence, "Containing Globalism. The United States and the Developing World in the 1970s", in *The Shock of the Global: The 1970s in perspective*, Niall Ferguson et al. (Cambridge: Belknap Press, 2010) 209-210, Robert Litwak, *Détente and the Nixon Doctrine: American Foreign Policy and the Pursuit of Stability, 1969-1976*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), Jeremi Suri "Henry Kissinger and the Geopolitics of Globalization" in *The Shock of the Global*, ed. Ferguson et al., 175-186, Stephen Weissman, "The CIA and US Policy in Zaire and Angola", in *American Policy in Southern Africa: The Stakes and the Stance (Second Edition)*, ed. Rene Lemarchand (Washington D.C.: University Press of America, 1981), 438, Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment*, 155, Latham "The Cold War in the Third World," in *The Cambridge History of the Cold War, Volume II*, ed. Leffler and Westad, 259-263, Westad. *The Global Cold War*, 34-35, and Schmidt, *Foreign Intervention in Africa*, 8.

⁹ Andrew DeRoche, *Black, White and Chrome: The United States and Zimbabwe, 1953-1998*, (Trenton, New Jersey: Africa World Press, 2001), 7 and 209-210, Gerald Horne, *From the Barrel of a Gun: The United States and The War against Zimbabwe*, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2001), 166, Thomas Noer, *Cold War and Black Liberation: The United States and White Rule in Africa in Africa, 1948-1968*, (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1985), 254, Chris Saunders and Sue Onslow "The Cold War and southern Africa, 1976-1990" in *The Cambridge History of the Cold War, Volume III*, ed. Leffler and Westad, 223 and Schmidt, *Foreign Intervention in Africa*, 81-88 and 103.

controlled by European colonial powers, was a principal objective of policy makers. The mineral wealth, industrialized economies and cheap labour costs of the Rhodesian and South African regimes proved to be especially alluring for American corporate investment and trade.¹⁰

It has also been observed that for the U.S. the ideological role of capitalism versus Soviet collectivism heightened the importance of trade with and investment in Africa and the wider Third World. It has been asserted, notably by Westad, that Washington sought a greater economic role globally in order to demonstrate the superiority of the free market system over the rigid state centric economy of the USSR.¹¹

The high levels of American direct and indirect investment in South Africa and the predominance of Western companies in the apartheid economy have been documented by historians. American, and more broadly, Western investment, was particularly prevalent in the mining industry which was not only important to the West on strategic and economic levels but was also highly lucrative for the businesses involved. In the case of Rhodesia, while American support for UN sanctions effectively prohibited the direct involvement of domestic companies, subsidiaries of the major oil companies continued to sell petroleum products to Salisbury via Mozambique and South Africa. Indeed, it has been suggested that it was the strong support that Nixon enjoyed from the business sector

¹⁰ Thomas Borstelmann, *Apartheid's Reluctant Uncle: The United States and Southern Africa in the Early Cold War*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), 81 and 97, , Hunt Davis Jr, "US Policy toward South Africa: A Dissenting View" in *American Policy in Southern Africa*, ed. Lemarchand, 323-326, William Foltz "U.S. Policy toward Southern Africa: Economic and Strategic constraints" in *Ibid*, 283-285, David Gibbs, *The Political Economy of Third World Intervention: Mines, Money and U.S. Policy in the Congo Crisis*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991), Edgar Lockwood, "The Case of Zimbabwe" in *American Policy in Southern Africa*, ed. Lemarchand, 169, Robert K. Massie, *Loosing the Bonds: The United States and South Africa in the Apartheid Years*, (New York: Nan A. Talese/Doubleday, 1997), Winston Nagan, "The U.S. and South Africa: The Limits of "Peaceful Change"", in *American Policy in Southern Africa*, ed. Lemarchand, 231, and Westad, *The Global Cold War*, 208.

¹¹ Westad, *The Global Cold War*, 30-32.

that pushed his administration to adopt a policy of closer ties with and partial relaxation of sanctions against both Pretoria and by extension Salisbury.¹²

The emerging human rights movement in the 1970s also shaped the development of U.S. foreign policy. According to Michael Cotey Morgan, the ‘rebirth’ of human rights, ‘expanded the vocabulary of international ethics...spawning unprecedented concern for the fate of strangers on the other side of the world.’ Indeed, the growing assertiveness of the human rights movement and the increasing power and influence of its moral ideology has been highlighted as a factor in international decision making.¹³

Christian Americans on both the political left and right believed in promoting the cause of universal human rights. The ideal resonated strongly due to their beliefs in the universal applicability of Christianity, that natural rights came from God not the state and that America represented the ‘last best hope’ for freedom and justice. Many Christians therefore called for a foreign policy that extended beyond the political sphere to address social problems such as poverty and racism. It is noteworthy that Jimmy Carter, who made the human rights agenda a particular priority for his administration, was a born-again Southern Baptist who believed that universal human rights stemmed as much from social justice as political liberty.¹⁴

¹² Hunt Davis Jr, “US Policy toward South Africa: A Dissenting View” in *American Policy in Southern Africa*, ed. Lemarchand, 323-326, Foltz, “U.S. Policy toward Southern Africa”: in *Ibid*, 283-285, Anthony Lake, *The “Tar Baby” Option: American Policy Toward Southern Rhodesia*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1976), 123-130, Lockwood, “The Case of Zimbabwe” in *American Policy in Southern Africa*, ed. Lemarchand, 169, Nagan, “The U.S. and South Africa” in *Ibid*, 231 and Westad, *The Global Cold War*, 208.

¹³ Michael Cotey Morgan, “The Seventies and the Rebirth of Human Rights”, *The Shock of the Global*, ed. Ferguson et al., 238 and Samuel Moyn, *The Last Utopia. Human Rights in History*, (Cambridge: Belknap Press, 2010), 118.

¹⁴ Andrew Preston, “Universal Nationalism. Christian America’s Response to the Years of Upheaval,” in *The Shock of the Global*, ed. Ferguson et al., 313-314, and Atwood Lawrence, “Containing Globalism”, in *Ibid*, 214 and 216.

By the mid 1970s American foreign policy towards Southern Africa became increasingly influenced by the burgeoning cause of human rights and in particular the political right of the population to elect their government. In the case of Rhodesia, Carl Peter Watts has suggested that Ford sanctioned the Kissinger peace initiative of 1976 at least partly due to a strong commitment to the ethical principle of majority rule. He further argued that Ford was not prepared to back down from this moral duty even when it was clear such an approach posed an electoral risk to his campaign in the Republican primaries of 1976.¹⁵

It is widely agreed that following the inauguration of Carter in 1977 a major priority for the new president was ‘to launch a new era in American foreign policy by attaching central importance to human rights as a standard for crafting U.S. decisions and weighing the performance of other nations’. Many scholars have praised the Carter Presidency for its accomplishment in bringing an end to the UDI era noting Carter’s strong support for majority rule and taking the strongest stance against Salisbury ever adopted by an American president.¹⁶

The impact of race, specifically the rise of African-American political power during the Cold War era, on foreign policy towards Africa, has also been discussed among historians. It has been argued that as early as the 1950s, blacks in U.S., at least elite blacks, considered the liberation of colonial peoples of colour inseparable from the

¹⁵ DeRoche, *Black, White and Chrome*, 209-210 and Carl Watts, “‘Dropping the F-bomb’: President Ford, the Rhodesian crisis, and the 1976 election”, Panel 89: Domestic Aspects of U.S. Policy towards Southern Africa from Ford to Reagan, (SHAFR Conference, Lexington, Kentucky, 2014).

¹⁶ DeRoche, *Black, White and Chrome*, 228, Paul Gordon Lauren, *Power and Prejudice: The Politics and Diplomacy of Racial Discrimination*, (Boulder: Westview Press, 1996), 266-268, Lawrence, “Containing Globalism”, in *The Shock of the Global*, ed. Ferguson et al., 214 and 216, William Minter, *King Solomon’s Mines Revisited: Western Interests and the Burdened History of Southern Africa*, (New York: Basic Books, 1986) 298-299 and Mitchell, “Terrorists or freedom fighters”, in *Cold War in Southern Africa. White power black liberation*, ed. Onslow, 178 and 189-191.

struggle for racial justice in America itself. It has been further argued that the LBJ Administration was not only aware of the growing importance of the African-American vote but also that the Rhodesian issue represented a test of the White House's commitment to racial issues both domestically and overseas.¹⁷

By the 1970s, African-American electoral power had become sufficiently strong as to play a significant role in shaping relations with both the black and white regimes in Southern Africa. In his memoirs, Ian Smith himself has argued that Carter was heavily influenced by the increasingly important African-American vote. Scholars have also observed that Carter owed his electoral victory to black support in the southern states and African-American leaders including Coretta Scott King and Andrew Young possessed an 'unprecedented level of influence' on the White House which directly impacted decision making on Rhodesia.¹⁸

A different perspective on the impact of race is offered by Gerald Horne who argues that in the aftermath of UDI the primary concern of LBJ was to avoid a racial conflict in Rhodesia as such an event would aggravate racial tensions in the U.S. He further posits that the election of Nixon was significant as it demonstrated a dual electoral 'Southern Strategy' and 'Southern Africa Strategy' designed to play to the racial fears of white Americans. An approach that slowed down the pace of racial change both in the southern states and Southern Africa appealed to many whites in the U.S. He further suggests that the two strategies were mutually compatible as their origins lay in Cold War

¹⁷ DeRoche, *Black, White and Chrome*, 106 and 115, Brenda Plummer, *Rising Wind: Black Americans and U.S. Foreign Affairs, 1935-1960*, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996), Schmidt, *Foreign Intervention in Africa*, 24 and Penny Von Eschen, *Race Against Empire: Black Americans and Anticolonialism, 1937-1957*, (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1997).

¹⁸ DeRoche, *Black, White and Chrome*, 4 and 244-245, DeRoche, "Relations with Africa since 1900" in *A Companion to American Foreign Relations*, ed. Schulzinger, 117, Schmidt, *Foreign Intervention in Africa*, 24 and Smith, *Bitter Harvest*, 306.

rationalization, which postulated African Americans and Africans as the allies or dupes of the communists.¹⁹

The Cold War and the Color Line by Thomas Borstelmann also offers an insightful overview of the role of race in shaping U.S. decision making during the Cold War era. Borstelmann explores how questions of race and racial equality linked foreign and domestic policy. He highlights the dilemma faced by Washington of how to oppose racial discrimination both at home and abroad while not alienating Cold War allies such as apartheid South Africa or local authorities in the American South. Borstelmann further argues that the principal strategy adopted by the Cold War era presidential administrations was to try and control the pace of racial reform both domestically and overseas to encourage both gradual change but also to minimize provocation to the white authorities.²⁰

American policy towards Rhodesia, especially in light of the political repression and economic ineptitude of the post independence 'majority rule' regime led by Robert Mugabe, has once again become a topic of scholarly interest. Nevertheless, with the exception of *Diplomacy in Black and White: America's Contribution to the Search for Zimbabwean Independence, 1965-1980*, a dissertation by William Bishop, there is a comparative paucity of research regarding direct American-Rhodesian bilateral relations especially in terms of examining U.S. policy towards Salisbury through the lens of the specific presidential administrations. The existing literature typically comprises of either

¹⁹ Gerald Horne, *From the Barrel of a Gun: The United States and The War against Zimbabwe*. (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2001), 7.

²⁰ Thomas Borstelmann, *The Cold War and the Color Line: American Race Relations in the Global Arena*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2001), 2, 5 and 198-199.

broad overviews of American policy, narrow examinations of an individual time period or simply viewing Rhodesia through the restrictive prism of a single political issue.²¹

A number of the existing works are too expansive to offer an in depth analysis of each individual presidency and the rationale behind the presidential strategies to the Rhodesian crisis. *Black, White and Chrome* by DeRoche offers an overview of U.S. relations with Rhodesia/Zimbabwe between 1953 and 1998 but does not exclusively focus on the UDI era and the unique challenges that the rebellion posed for the U.S. both domestically and internationally. In *Rhodesia's Unilateral Declaration of Independence*, Watts provides an excellent and insightful analysis of the international responses to UDI. While useful to scholars of American foreign policy, it is, however, a primarily international history which covers the British, Commonwealth, UN and U.S. reactions in the immediate aftermath of the rebellion.²²

Furthermore, *Rhodesia's Unilateral Declaration of Independence*, also deals solely with the actions of the Johnson Administration. This is the case for a number of works, including *The "Tar Baby" Option* by Lake and Mitchell's *Jimmy Carter in Africa* which provide useful information on the approaches adopted by one or two presidents but do not offer a complete picture of the American role over the course of the entire UDI period.²³

Stephen Stedman's *Peacemaking in Civil War* offers an in depth analysis of the international efforts to mediate a settlement to end UDI and the Bush War. The book challenges the dominant view in conflict resolution theory, at least in 1990, which

²¹ William Bishop, 'Diplomacy in Black and White: America's Contribution to the Search for Zimbabwean Independence, 1965-1980', (PhD dissertation, Vanderbilt University, 2012).

²² DeRoche, *Black, White and Chrome* and Watts, *Rhodesia's Unilateral Declaration of Independence*.

²³ Lake, *The "Tar Baby" Option* and Nancy Mitchell, *Jimmy Carter in Africa*, (Washington: Woodrow Wilson Center Press, 2016).

dismissed the possibility of a negotiated settlement in a civil conflict. While a major contribution to the literature on war termination it does not focus exclusively on U.S. policy or the whole UDI era.²⁴

Another weakness in the existing scholarship is the fact that much of the literature seeks to examine the Rhodesian issue through the use of a specific lens. A good deal of the literature has either been defined by race centric narratives or Cold War binaries. Such works tend to discount or marginalize other dynamics that influenced decision making.

A number of works including *Power and Prejudice* by Lauren and DeRoche's *Black, White and Chrome* either focus primarily on race or seek to highlight the importance of race relations as opposed to a complete evaluation of the diverse factors which impacted presidential decision making. In *The Cold War and the Color Line*, Borstelmann insightfully observes that the question of Rhodesian independence reflected the fundamental disagreements within the U.S. itself of how to define Western values, specifically racial inequality, during the Cold War. Borstelmann nevertheless uses race as his sole lens to examine the Cold War era and simply integrates other determinants into his broader race-based narrative.²⁵

In *From the Barrel of a Gun*, Horne stated that his objective is to demonstrate the role of the U.S. in supporting the racist Smith regime and hindering the advent of majority rule. Lake, in *The "Tar Baby" Option*, offered an in depth analysis of the Nixon Administration's shift in policy but operated from the premise that the White House was

²⁴ Stephen Stedman, *Peacemaking in Civil War: International Mediation in Zimbabwe, 1974-1990*, (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1991).

²⁵ Borstelmann, *The Cold War and the Color Line*, DeRoche, *Black, White and Chrome* and Lauren, *Power and Prejudice*.

clearly erroneous in its policy of greater ‘communication’ with the racist regimes of white Africa.²⁶

Much of the literature has also been defined by narratives that place the Cold War as the dominating factor shaping U.S. policy towards Salisbury. In *The Global Cold War*, Westad offers an excellent account of the ideological and strategic rationale for U.S. involvement in Southern Africa. It is, however, primarily a Cold War history which places other determining factors, notably economic considerations, domestic civil rights and the changing dynamics at the UN, solely within the framework of the broader Cold War.²⁷

Foreign Intervention in Africa by Schmidt provides an analysis of how the Cold War powers sought to shape an international order in Africa that catered to their interests. The work, however, primarily focuses on the Cold War narrative offering only a brief analysis of economic concerns and does not consider the impact of other important dynamics. In *Jimmy Carter in Africa*, Nancy Mitchell provides a discerning account of Carter’s approach towards Rhodesia. She offers an insightful portrait of Carter himself, as well as examining the broader makeup and functioning of his administration. It is, nevertheless, primarily a Cold War history that acknowledges but downplays the role of other influences and Mitchell unequivocally argues that Carter was ‘from the beginning of his presidency to its end, a Cold Warrior.’²⁸

The existing literature on U.S. foreign policy towards Rhodesia is also somewhat dated. The last scholarly works that encompassed the full range of the UDI era were *Black, White and Chrome* by DeRoche and Horne’s *From the Barrel of a Gun* both of

²⁶ Horne, *From the Barrel of a Gun* and Lake, *The “Tar Baby” Option*.

²⁷ Westad, *The Global Cold War*.

²⁸ Mitchell, *Jimmy Carter in Africa*, 689 and Schmidt, *Foreign Intervention in Africa*.

which were published in 2001. In the fifteen years since then a greater range of primary source material has become accessible to researchers notably the number of declassified documents at the presidential libraries. These new sources help to provide a broader understanding of the differing approaches adopted by the presidential administrations towards Salisbury.

In this work, I have sought to provide the first sustained critical study of the approaches adopted by the Johnson, Nixon, Ford and Carter Administrations and the influences, both global and domestic, which shaped the presidential decision making on Rhodesia. My work goes beyond merely considering the Rhodesian problem through the prism of a single overriding factor. International relations is never that simple, and I am not seeking to praise nor condemn the paths chosen by the occupants of the Oval Office. I believe that my research serves to illuminate the choices made by the various administrations and in so doing provides a deeper understanding of policy towards Salisbury, emphasizing the different strategic, economic, ideological and moral viewpoints of each president, as well as the changing international and domestic arena against which their decisions were made.

Chapter 1 examines the approach adopted by LBJ both during the build up to the UDI and in the years following the Rhodesian rebellion. It discusses the various factors that influenced the White House including the 'special relationship' with London, the need to retain standing in black Africa to protect U.S. interests, the increasing power of the Afro-Asian bloc at the UN, the fact that the white regimes provided an opening for communist meddling in Southern Africa, the potential impact of UDI on American race relations, domestic support for Rhodesia and LBJ's own personal ideological opposition

to the concept of white minority rule. The chapter analyzes how these diverse and often conflicting influences impacted White House decision making throughout the road to UDI, the imposition of sanctions both bilaterally and at the UN, the Zambian airlift, the establishment of the Rhodesian Information Office (RIO) in Washington and during the tortuous negotiations between London and Salisbury over a potential 'return to legality'.

Chapter 2 discusses the shift in policy following the electoral victory of Nixon. The chapter analyzes the factors leading to the shift towards closer ties with the white regimes of Southern Africa. It observes that the Nixon Presidency was typified by a fixation with Cold War geopolitics especially the strategic balance of power and explains how the Rhodesian problem played into this preoccupation as chaos in Southern Africa would complicate the broader strategic mission. The chapter also discusses the significance of the fact that the Nixon Administration was also faced by an increasingly confident and assertive Rhodesian Government, a strategic need for chrome and a powerful domestic Rhodesia Lobby with ties to the White House itself. The chapter thus investigates how these factors not only influenced Nixon's move to greater 'communication' with Salisbury but also impacted on the other policy choices including the closure of the U.S. Consulate, the importation of Rhodesian chrome under the Byrd Amendment and support for the Smith-Home Agreement during the fall of 1971.

Chapter 3 explores the dramatic change in U.S. relations towards Salisbury that took place under President Ford. It observes how Washington, for the first time, became a crucial diplomatic protagonist in seeking a peaceful political resolution of the Bush War and shaping the future of an independent Zimbabwe. The chapter also considers the rationale behind the White House decision to place the power and prestige of the U.S.

Government into actively seeking a resolution to the Rhodesian problem including the sense of morality that Ford brought to the Oval Office but more importantly how the geopolitics of the Cold War stimulated an American interest in resolving the longstanding Rhodesian question.

The final chapter analyzes the key role played by President Carter in ending UDI and bringing about Rhodesian (Zimbabwean) independence under majority rule. It considers the elements underlying the vehement opposition of the administration to white controlled Rhodesia including Carter's deeply held moral commitment to democracy and human rights. The chapter also discusses the influence of leading African-American figures, notably Andrew Young, on White House thinking, the growing electoral importance of retaining the African-American vote, the belief that the escalating Bush War in Rhodesia was providing fertile conditions for Soviet and Cuban involvement and that only a fully democratic Zimbabwe under majority rule would curtail communist penetration. The chapter then illustrates the impact of these issues on the presidential decision making from early actions such as the repeal of the Byrd Amendment and attempted closure of the RIO to the involvement in the Anglo-American initiative, opposition to the Internal Settlement and most significantly the non-recognition of the government of Bishop Abel Muzorewa which directly led to the Lancaster House Agreement and the end of UDI.

CHAPTER 1. CAUTIOUS HOSTILITY: PRESIDENT LYNDON B. JOHNSON

On November 11 1965, the day of UDI, President Lyndon B. Johnson and his senior advisers were gathered at his ranch near Austin, known as the Texas White House. The immediate reaction of the Johnson Administration to UDI was one of criticism and condemnation. In a press statement, Secretary of State Dean Rusk, declared unequivocally that the White House deplored UDI and as a result the U.S. would not recognize the rebel regime and would furthermore immediately recall its Consul General from Salisbury. For the remainder of the Johnson era, the White House remained privately and publicly critical of continued white minority rule in Rhodesia and along with the UK sought to undermine or force concessions from the pariah regime through financial pressure and trade embargoes which eventually included mandatory comprehensive economic sanctions.²⁹

President Johnson, widely known by the disambiguation LBJ, had been Vice President under John F. Kennedy and ascended to the White House following the assassination of Kennedy on November 22 1963. While Johnson was in many ways an intimidating and ruthless career politician from rural Texas whose administration was dominated by the escalating conflict in Vietnam he also possessed an idealistic and compassionate nature and held a firm commitment to aiding those groups, notably the poor and the African-American community, which he felt needed the aid and protection

²⁹ Chapter 10 (The United Nations) Sections C, D and E, Department of State Administrative History Vol. 1, Box 4, LBJ Library, Executive Order relating to trade and other transactions involving Southern Rhodesia, January 5 1967, as attachment to letter to President Johnson from Walt W. Rostow, December 31 1968, "Rhodesia, Vol. 2 (1 of 3)," Country File, NSF, Box 97, LBJ Library, Executive Order 11419: Relating to trade and other transactions involving Southern Rhodesia, July 29 1968, as attachment to letter to President Johnson from Walt W. Rostow, December 31 1968, "Rhodesia, Vol. 2 (1 of 3)," Country File, NSF, Box 97, LBJ Library, Lake, *The "Tar Baby" Option*, 80-81 and Watts, *Rhodesia's Unilateral Declaration of Independence*, 174.

of the U.S. Government. His dedication to his beliefs is demonstrated by a domestic legacy which included the Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibiting racial segregation in public facilities, the Voting Rights Act of 1965 and the Great Society legislation designed to end poverty and improve the quality of life for all Americans.³⁰

The position developed by LBJ regarding Rhodesia was shaped by a number of significant factors. First, Johnson and many of his key advisers including Rusk viewed the Rhodesian issue as primarily a British responsibility but equally one in which America would support the UK both bilaterally and in international forums such as the UN. As observed by Anthony Lake, the so called 'special relationship' between London and Washington mattered deeply to Johnson who felt it a basic American interest to continue to develop close political, security and economic ties with UK. The administration was also aware that Britain no longer possessed the economic or military power to achieve its goal of ending UDI without active tangible U.S. assistance.³¹

Leading figures in the administration, however, including Rusk, Under Secretary of State George Ball and National Security Adviser McGeorge Bundy expressed reservations about taking measures beyond those adopted by the UK. It was felt that London was trying to push Washington to take the lead on the Rhodesian issue which could mean the U.S. sharing the blame for the failure of any initiatives and furthermore could prove potentially damaging to geopolitical and economic interests. This led to

³⁰ George Brown Tindall and David Emory Shi, *America: A Narrative History 8th Edition*, (New York: W.W. Norton, 2010), 1317-1324.

³¹ Memorandum for Walt W. Rostow from Rick Haynes, Balance Sheet: Rhodesian Crisis, April 22 1966, "Rhodesia, Vol. 2 (3 of 3)," Country File, NSF, Box 97, LBJ Library, Summary Notes of 567th NSC Meeting January 25 1967, "Vol.4 Tab 49 Southern Rhodesia", NSC Meetings File, NSF, Box 2, LBJ Library, 484. Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassy in the United Kingdom. Washington, October 22, 1965. FRUS, 1964-1968, Volume XXIV, Africa, Editors Nina Davis Howland and David S. Patterson. Washington DC: United States Government Printing Office 1995, 467. Memorandum of Conversation. Washington, September 20, 1965. FRUS, 1964-1968, Volume XXIV, Africa and Lake, *The "Tar Baby" Option*, 63 and 76.

Johnson developing a cautious approach to the Rhodesian problem while broadly remaining supportive of Britain.³²

LBJ was also influenced by the need to retain prestige and protect interests in the newly independent African states. As noted by Assistant Secretary of State for Africa, G. Mennen Williams, not only did Africa's huge land mass and air space have great strategic importance but African nations possessed a large free world percentage of certain minerals critical to American interests. Africa also offered lucrative markets for export and Washington had both a strategic and humanitarian interest in promoting democracy and encouraging economic and social improvements.³³

The White House was well aware that the extent of U.S. influence in black Africa was intrinsically linked to the stance that Washington took on the issues of primary interest to the Africans themselves. The president and his advisers were also cognizant of the fact that the ending of white minority rule in Southern Africa was of paramount importance to the black African states. In December 1965, Deputy Special Assistant for National Security Affairs Robert W. Komer informed LBJ that the Africans viewed Rhodesia as a straight anti-colonial issue and U.S. actions on UDI would greatly effect American influence on the continent.³⁴

³² Transcript, Dean Rusk Oral History Interview IV 3/8/70, by Paige E. Mulhollan, Electronic Copy, LBJ Library, 475. Memorandum of Telephone Conversation Between the President's Special Assistant for National Security Affairs (Bundy) and Acting Secretary of State Ball. Washington, October 5, 1965. FRUS, 1964-1968, Volume XXIV, Lake, *The "Tar Baby" Option*, 92-93 and Watts, *Rhodesia's Unilateral Declaration of Independence*, 175 and 178.

³³ Memorandum to Ambassadors and certain Principal Officers from Assistant Secretary of State, G. Mennen Williams, May 10 1965, "Africa General, Vol. 2 (3 of 4)," Country File NSF Box 76, LBJ Library and Confidential, Strengthened Africa Program, "Africa General, Vol. 3," Country File NSF Box 76, LBJ Library.

³⁴ Memorandum for President Johnson from Robert W. Komer, December 6 1965, Files of Edward K. Hamilton, NSF, Box 3, LBJ Library, Department of State Airgram to all African Diplomatic and Consular Posts, Brussels, Cairo, Geneva, Lisbon, London, Moscow, Paris, and United States Mission to the United Nations, April 1 1964, "Africa General, Vol. 1 (1 of 3)," Country File NSF Box 76, LBJ Library and National Intelligence Estimate Number 60/70-65: Problems and Prospects in Sub-Saharan Africa,

The changing power dynamic at the UN also affected the response to UDI. As observed by Glenda Sluga, at the time of its establishment the UN was comprised of fifty-one member states the majority of which were either European or part of the 'White British Commonwealth'. By the Sixties, however, the postcolonial bloc had become increasingly powerful, indeed by 1960 the number of newly independent colonies meant it had become impossible for U.S. and Western allies to muster enough votes to deprive the Afro-Asians of the two thirds majority needed for resolutions. This Afro-Asian bloc further sought to mobilize the power and resources of the UN to achieve their own objectives. High on the agenda was the increasingly volatile issue of the white minority governments in Southern Africa. As early as December 1960, the UN General Assembly passed Resolution 1514 the 'Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples' which demanded a swift end to colonial rule.³⁵

The increasing power of the Afro-Asians forced the West to rely on Third World diplomatic support for their geopolitical goals at the UN. This salient fact was noted not only by U.S. UN Ambassador Arthur Goldberg but also by officials at the State Department and the White House. If the U.S. did not take a strong line on Rhodesia then this would adversely affect American objectives at the UN. It is important to note, however, the Johnson Administration did not allow the UN to simply dictate policy on Rhodesia. At the UN Security Council, U.S. representatives opposed far reaching measures including the use of military force and together with the UK sought to pre-empt

submitted by the Director of Central Intelligence, concurred in by the United States Intelligence Board, April 22 1965, "60/70, Africa", National Intelligence Estimates File, NSF, Box 8, LBJ Library.

³⁵ Department of State Airgram to all African Diplomatic and Consular Posts, Brussels, Cairo, Geneva, Lisbon, London, Moscow, Paris, and United States Mission to the United Nations, April 1 1964, "Africa General, Vol. 1 (1 of 3)," Country File NSF Box 76, LBJ Library, Glenda Sluga, "The Transformation of International Institutions. Global Shock as Cultural Shock," in *The Shock of the Global*, ed. Ferguson et al. p.224-225 and Watts, *Rhodesia's Unilateral Declaration of Independence*, 186.

or moderate the demands of the more extreme Afro-Asians and replace them with more practical and peaceful solutions.³⁶

The White House position on UDI was also heavily influenced by disquiet with the growth of communist interest in and effect on African affairs. As early as the 1957 Bermuda Conference both Britain and U.S. had expressed strategic concerns about Soviet and Chinese influence in Africa. By April of 1965, the CIA observed that the USSR had cultivated diplomatic relations with twenty-one states in Sub-Saharan Africa and Communist China had relations with twelve countries in the region. The early Sixties also witnessed a startling increase in communist economic and military aid to the newly independent black nations as well as funds, covert arms shipments and guerrilla training to the liberation movements fighting white minority rule.³⁷

Intelligence reports at the time indicated that there was little danger of a broad communist takeover of the African continent and most newly independent African nations were unlikely to develop more than token relations with the communist bloc. The African desire for non-alignment in the Cold War, the massive amounts of aid received

³⁶ Chapter 10 (The United Nations) Sections A and B (1 of 2), Department of State Administrative History Vol. 1, Box 4, LBJ Library, Memorandum to Ambassadors and certain Principal Officers from Assistant Secretary of State, G. Mennen Williams, May 10 1965, "Africa General, Vol. 2 (3 of 4)," Country File NSF Box 76, LBJ Library and Memorandum for the President from Robert W. Komer, November 23 1965, "Africa General, Vol. 3," Country File NSF Box 76, LBJ Library.

³⁷ CIA Memorandum: Comments on UP1-25 of 22 Jan 64, January 22 1964, "Africa General, Vol. 1 (2 of 3)," Country File NSF Box 76, LBJ Library, Memorandum to the Secretary of State, the Secretary of Defense and the Director of Central Intelligence from McGeorge Bundy, February 13 1964, "Africa General, Vol. 1 (2 of 3)," Country File NSF Box 76, LBJ Library CIA Special Report, Chinese Communist Activities in Africa, June 19 1964, "Africa General, Vol. 1 (1 of 3)," Country File NSF Box 76, LBJ Library, CIA Special Report, Communist World's Economic Relations with Africa, April 16 1965, "Africa General, Vol. 2 (3 of 4)," Country File NSF Box 76, LBJ Library, CIA National Intelligence Estimate Number 60/70-65: Problems and Prospects in Sub-Saharan Africa, April 22 1965, "60/70, Africa", National Intelligence Estimates File, NSF, Box 8, LBJ Library and CIA Memorandum, Chinese Communist Activities in Africa, April 30 1965, "Africa General, Vol. 2 (3 of 4)," Country File NSF Box 76, LBJ Library.

from Western sources and the inapplicability of key parts of communist ideology to the African political milieu reduced the chances of communist penetration.³⁸

The 'White Redoubt' in Southern Africa, however, provided an opportunity for communist meddling and exploitation. The Soviets and Communist Chinese were unburdened by a colonial legacy and unlike Britain or the U.S. were not encumbered by close political or economic ties to the white regimes. In the words of Komer, the communists were able to pose as 'the apostles of decolonization'. Moreover, the longer the minority governments remained in power the greater the opportunities for communist sway over the leadership of the liberation groups. A widespread racial conflict in the region could lead to a sharp decrease in Western influence and a growth in power of pro-communist and other indigenous radicals.³⁹

As pointed out by Gerald Horne, the White House was also deeply concerned about the impact that UDI, and by extension racial conflict in Rhodesia, would have on domestic race relations. The passage of the Civil Rights Act and Voting Rights Act had incurred the ire of many white Americans especially in the South which was intensified

³⁸ CIA Special Report, Chinese Communist Activities in Africa, June 19 1964, "Africa General, Vol. 1 (1 of 3)," Country File NSF Box 76, LBJ Library, CIA Special Memorandum No.15-64, Communist Potentialities in Tropical Africa, December 1 1964, "Africa General, Vol. 2 (2 of 4)," Country File NSF Box 76, LBJ Library, National Intelligence Estimate Number 60/70-65: Problems and Prospects in Sub-Saharan Africa, April 22 1965, "60/70, Africa", National Intelligence Estimates File, NSF, Box 8, LBJ Library and Memorandum to the Secretary of State from Thomas L. Hughes, Bureau of Intelligence of Research, Department of State. An Outline Guide to Communist Activities in Africa, "Africa General, Vol. 1 (3 of 3)," Country File NSF Box 76, LBJ Library.

³⁹ CIA Special Report, Chinese Communist Activities in Africa, June 19 1964, "Africa General, Vol. 1 (1 of 3)," Country File NSF Box 76, LBJ Library, CIA Special Memorandum No.15-64, Communist Potentialities in Tropical Africa, December 1 1964, "Africa General, Vol. 2 (2 of 4)," Country File NSF Box 76, LBJ Library, National Intelligence Estimate Number 60/70-65: Problems and Prospects in Sub-Saharan Africa, April 22 1965, "60/70, Africa", National Intelligence Estimates File, NSF, Box 8, LBJ Library, Memorandum to President Johnson from Robert W. Komer, June 16 1965, "Africa General, Vol. 2 (4 of 4)," Country File NSF Box 76, LBJ Library, Memorandum to the Secretary of State from Thomas L. Hughes, Bureau of Intelligence of Research, Department of State. An Outline Guide to Communist Activities in Africa, "Africa General, Vol. 1 (3 of 3)," Country File NSF Box 76, LBJ Library and Lake, *The "Tar Baby" Option*, 61-62.

by events such as the Watts riot in Los Angeles in the summer of 1965. A violent split along racial lines in Southern Africa could potentially exacerbate race tensions in America. In spring 1965, the meeting of the American Negro Leadership Conference on Africa to create a permanent black pressure group to influence U.S. foreign policy was viewed with alarm and concern by the administration. It was feared that the appearance of an 'ethnic lobby' on Africa could lead to a segregated approach to foreign policy.⁴⁰

Finally, it is important to note that Johnson held a deep personal interest in ending white supremacy whether it existed in the Mississippi delta or in a distant African country. After taking office he told a White House staff member that 'I'm going to be the best friend the Negro ever had'. On March 15 1965, in a speech to a joint session of Congress entitled the 'American Promise', LBJ stated unequivocally that if America proved incapable of the task of achieving equal rights for African-Americans then 'we will have failed as a people and a nation.' This commitment to racial equality was not merely domestic in scope. In a less than subtle gesture, LBJ dispatched a copy of the 'American Promise' to South African Prime Minister Hendrik F. Verwoerd the so called 'architect of apartheid'.⁴¹

⁴⁰ Memorandum to McGeorge Bundy from Robert W. Komer, January 6 1965, "Africa General, Vol. 2 (2 of 4)," Country File NSF Box 76, LBJ Library, Memorandum for the Secretary of State from McGeorge Bundy, January 7 1965, "Africa General, Vol. 2 (2 of 4)," Country File NSF Box 76, LBJ Library, Memorandum to Robert W. Komer from Rick Haynes, March 25 1965, "Africa General, Vol. 2 (2 of 4)," Country File NSF Box 76, LBJ Library, Horne, *From the Barrel of a Gun*, 15 and Tindall and Shi, *America*, 1320.

⁴¹ Remarks of the President to a Joint Session of the Congress. The American Promise, March 15 1965, "Africa-Letters from the President to African Leaders, enc "The American Promise"," Country File NSF Box 77, LBJ Library, Letter to Dr. Hendrik Frensch Verwoerd, Prime Minister of the Republic of South Africa, May 8 1965, "Africa-Letters from the President to African Leaders, enc "The American Promise"," Country File NSF Box 77, LBJ Library, Background: The President's concern for Africa, "Chrono (1 of 3)", Files of Ulric Haynes, NSF, Box 1, LBJ Library, DeRoche, *Black, White and Chrome*, 8 and 98 and Tindall and Shi, *America*, 1318.

The Rhodesian UDI divided the American public although not exclusively along racial lines. African-American interest groups such as the Congress of Racial Equality, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, not unexpectedly, offered severe criticism of Ian Smith and urged LBJ to take the strongest possible stance against Salisbury. Equally unsurprisingly, an array of conservative groups ranging from the Liberty Lobby to the Sons of Confederate Veterans urged diplomatic recognition of Rhodesia and support for the Smith government.⁴²

Presidential correspondence, however, reveals that Rhodesia enjoyed widespread support among the American public. Letters to LBJ frequently criticized the U.S. Government's aggression toward a 'friendly' nation. A plethora of pro-Rhodesian interest groups sprung up post UDI including most notably the Friends of Rhodesian Independence which by June 1967 claimed 122 branches with 25,000 members. These groups often possessed colorful and quite bizarre names including the memorable Rhodesian Gung-Ho Troops and Hooray for Ian Smith, Titan of Rhodesian Yearning.⁴³

⁴² Telegram to President Johnson from Martin Luther King Jr, November 11 1965, Gen CO 250 Rhodesia, WHCF, Box 65, LBJ Library, Telegram to President Johnson from Roy Wilkins, November 12 1965, Gen CO 250 Rhodesia, WHCF, Box 65, LBJ Library, Telegram to President Johnson from James Farmer, National Director CORE, November 12 1965, Gen CO 250 Rhodesia, WHCF, Box 65, LBJ Library, Letter to President Johnson from Ottis L. Snipes Jr., Commander, Mississippi Division, Sons of Confederate Veterans, June 21 1966, Gen CO 250 Rhodesia, WHCF, Box 65, LBJ Library, Horne, *From the Barrel of a Gun*, 105 and Lake, "The Tar Baby" Option, 109.

⁴³ Letter to President Johnson from Margaret L. Clarkin, Marceline M. Griffin, Margaret L. Cochran, December 30 1965, Gen CO 250 Rhodesia, WHCF, Box 65, LBJ Library, Letter to President Johnson from Bruce L. Odou, City Councilman of Montebello, California, January 9 1967, Gen CO 250 Rhodesia, WHCF, Box 65, LBJ Library, Letter to President Johnson from Spencer McCallie, Missionary Ridge, Chattanooga, Tennessee, January 9 1967, Gen CO 250 Rhodesia, WHCF, Box 65, LBJ Library, Letter to President Johnson from Wesley Bolin, Secretary of State, Arizona, March 1 1967, Gen CO 250 Rhodesia, WHCF, Box 65, LBJ Library, . Letter to President Johnson from F.O. Goldbeck, San Antonio, Texas, Gen CO 250 Rhodesia, WHCF, Box 65, LBJ Library, Horne, *From the Barrel of a Gun*, 101-102 and Lake, "The Tar Baby" Option, 109.

The divisions among the public were also reflected in Congress. Liberal figures such as Congressman Donald M. Fraser (D-Minnesota) and Senator Edward Kennedy (D-Massachusetts) urged LBJ to take tough measures against the Rhodesian Government and sought to prevent American association with any potential British deal which allowed continued minority rule. The pro Rhodesia Lobby on Capitol Hill, however, included not only southern conservatives such as Senator James Eastland (D-Mississippi) and Representative Joe Waggoner (D-Louisiana) but also figures such as Senator Barry Goldwater (R-AZ), Congressman Harold R. Gross (R-Iowa) and Congressman Durwood G. Hall (R-Missouri). While race certainly played a role for some in explaining their support for the Rhodesians, others questioned American aggression against a non-hostile nation and wondered why LBJ appeared so eager to aid the UK when London was continuing to trade with Cuba and N. Vietnam.⁴⁴

The response of the Johnson Administration to UDI was shaped by a number of factors both international and domestic in nature. As a firm believer in the close bilateral relationship between Washington and London, LBJ naturally sought to aid Britain in bringing down the the Rhodesian ‘rebels’ although he was wary of any attempt to play more than a supportive role in a British colonial problem. The White House was also aware of the need to retain U.S. prestige in black African especially given the increasing

⁴⁴ Rhodesia/Zambia Situation Report No.27 to Thomas C. Mann from Thomas W. McElhiney, February 26 to March 1 1966, “Rhodesia, Vol. 2 (3 of 3),” Country File, NSF, Box 97, LBJ Library, Rhodesia/Zambia Situation Report No.28 to Thomas C. Mann from Thomas W. McElhiney, March 2 1966, “Rhodesia, Vol. 2 (3 of 3),” Country File, NSF, Box 97, LBJ Library, Letter to President Johnson from Congressman Durwood G. Hall, January 5 1967, Gen CO 250 Rhodesia, WHCF, Box 65, LBJ Library, Letter to President Johnson from Congressman H.R. Gross, January 5 1967, Gen CO 250 Rhodesia, WHCF, Box 65, LBJ Library, Memorandum for President Johnson from Edward K. Hamilton, August 16 1967, “Africa General, Vol. 5 (2 of 3),” Country File NSF Box 77, LBJ Library, Memorandum to President Johnson from Senator Frank E. Moss et al, American Policy on Africa, as attachment to letter to the President from U.S. Senator Frank E. Moss, August 24 1967, “Africa General, Vol. 5 (2 of 3),” Country File NSF Box 77, LBJ Library, Lake, *The “Tar Baby” Option*, 116 and Horne, *From the Barrel of a Gun*, 84.

power of the Afro-Asian bloc at the UN. Johnson was also conscious that UDI and continued white minority rule in Rhodesia provided Moscow and Peking with an opportunity to meddle in the affairs of Southern Africa.

On the domestic front, the Johnson Administration feared the impact that racial conflict in Rhodesia would have on the still volatile field of American race relations. LBJ himself also deeply opposed white supremacy on moral grounds regardless of whether it was in the cotton fields of the southern states or the veld of Southern Africa. Johnson was thus publicly critical of the Smith government and followed a policy designed to force an end to the rebellion through diplomatic and economic pressure.

The road to UDI: LBJ backs the British stance

When LBJ took office in the fall of 1963 the Rhodesian problem was growing rapidly in magnitude, indeed a CIA report described it as Britain's 'thorniest decolonization problem to date'. A potential UDI held strategic, political, economic and social repercussions not only for London and Salisbury but Washington too. As the crisis developed the White House found itself increasingly emmeshed in a volatile situation that was none of its making.⁴⁵

The first indication of the growing gravity of the Rhodesian issue was the ousting of Prime Minister Winston Field for failing to secure the goal of full independence. Field, a comparative moderate by Rhodesian Front (RF) standards had come under increasing criticism from his party for not taking a firm enough stance during negotiations with Britain. In December 1963, the CIA warned that unless the British gave further

⁴⁵ CIA Special Report: Breakup of the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland. December 27 1963, "Rhodesia, Vol. 1 (3 of 3)," Country File, NSF, Box 97, LBJ Library.

concessions to Field during negotiations then he would be removed and this would increase the chances of a UDI.⁴⁶

In January 1964, Field travelled to London for talks with British Prime Minister Alec Douglas-Home. It had been made clear to him by the RF caucus that he must give an ultimatum to the British that it was impossible for Rhodesia to continue in its present status if the other two states of the Central African Federation obtained independence. He also stated that he would not countenance a turnover of power to Africans but would consider some minor changes in franchise and end discriminatory legislation. The British responded that they were not prepared to precipitate a Commonwealth crisis by granting independence merely based on minor franchise alterations. In early April, the RF reacted by demanding the resignation of Field and on April 14 he resigned as prime minister.⁴⁷

The new leader was Ian Douglas Smith, the former finance minister and the first Rhodesian born prime minister. Smith despite a humourless demeanor and unsmiling countenance nevertheless possessed a disarming charm and engaging public modesty. His local roots made him less susceptible to the British viewpoint and inclined him to a more parochial and Rhodesian centric worldview.⁴⁸

An official British biographical note described Smith as a ‘simple minded, politically naïve, and uncomprehending character’ but also observed that he often

⁴⁶ CIA Special Report: Breakup of the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland. December 27 1963, “Rhodesia, Vol. 1 (3 of 3),” Country File, NSF, Box 97, LBJ Library, Telegram from American Consulate General Salisbury to Secretary of State, April 13 1964, “Rhodesia, Vol. 1 (1 of 3),” Country File, NSF, Box 97, LBJ Library and Watts, *Rhodesia’s Unilateral Declaration of Independence*, 17.

⁴⁷ Telegram from American Consulate General Salisbury to Secretary of State, April 13 1964, “Rhodesia, Vol. 1 (1 of 3),” Country File, NSF, Box 97, LBJ Library, Notes for the record Monday January 27 1964 meeting between Winston Field and the Prime Minister PREM 11/5023, National Archives, London and Outward Telegram from Commonwealth Relations Office 8 February 1964 PREM 11/5023 National Archives, London and Watts, *Rhodesia’s Unilateral Declaration of Independence*, 18-19.

⁴⁸ Trevor Royle, *Winds of Change: The End of Empire in Africa*, (London: John Murray, 1996), 238, Good, UDI, and Watts, *Rhodesia’s Unilateral Declaration of Independence*, 19.

possesses a 'shrewder assessment of a particular situation than at first appears on the surface and he should not be under-rated.' In his memoirs, Smith himself commented that; 'For the first time in its history the country now had a Rhodesian-born PM, someone whose roots were not in Britain, but in Southern Africa, in other words, a white African.'⁴⁹

In Washington, the U.S. Government viewed with grave concern the developments in Rhodesia. The State Department considered the cabinet crisis of Field as wiping out any moderation in the RF and heightening the chances of a UDI. State therefore advised interested embassies to inform host governments that the U.S. was troubled by recent events but also emphasize that direct responsibility for Rhodesia lay with the British Government.⁵⁰

The State Department also issued instructions to the U.S. Consul General in Salisbury, Paul McClelland, to maintain only the minimum necessary contact with the new Rhodesian Government. McClelland shared the anxiety of officials in Washington over the increased prospect of a UDI but also noted that Smith himself faced a limited time frame to attain the elusive goal of independence or he too could face a coup by extremists from within the RF.⁵¹

⁴⁹ Confidential Biographical Note of Ian Smith September 1964 PREM 11/5040, National Archives, London and Smith, *Bitter Harvest*, 67.

⁵⁰ Telegram to American Embassies Accra, Canberra, Dar es Salaam, Freetown, Kampala, Kuala Lumpur, Lagos, London, Nairobi, New Delhi, Ottawa, Wellington and American Consulate General Salisbury, April 15 1964, "Rhodesia, Vol. 1 (1 of 3)," Country File, NSF, Box 97, LBJ Library, Andrew DeRoche, *Black White and Chrome*, 100.

⁵¹ Telegram to American Embassies Accra, Canberra, Dar es Salaam, Freetown, Kampala, Kuala Lumpur, Lagos, London, Nairobi, New Delhi, Ottawa, Wellington and American Consulate General Salisbury, April 15 1964, "Rhodesia, Vol. 1 (1 of 3)," Country File, NSF, Box 97, LBJ Library, Telegram from American Consulate General Salisbury to Secretary of State, April 13 1964, "Rhodesia, Vol. 1 (1 of 3)," Country File, NSF, Box 97, LBJ Library and Telegram from American Consulate General Salisbury to Secretary of State, June 16 1964, "Rhodesia, Vol. 1 (1 of 3)," Country File, NSF, Box 97, LBJ Library.

Over the following months relations between London and Salisbury continued to deteriorate. The decision of Douglas-Home to exclude Rhodesia from participation in the Commonwealth Prime Minister's Conference and refusal to meet with Rhodesian African Chiefs engaged in a tour of Europe was met with anger in Salisbury. In September, during negotiations with Smith in London, the British also rejected a proposition for an indaba or council meeting of African Chiefs and Headmen as an adequate representation of African opinion on independence.⁵²

On October 15, the Labour Party led by Harold Wilson triumphed over the Conservatives in the British General Election. The Labour victory stimulated further anxiety in the white Rhodesian community due to repeated publicly stated opposition to independence on the basis of the 1961 Constitution and insistence on majority rule. New Commonwealth Secretary Arthur Bottomley moved quickly to reaffirm that the British Government did not recognize an indaba as sufficient and it would not send observers to such a meeting.⁵³

Smith, however, was determined to prove, albeit by his own methods, that the majority of all Rhodesians black or white favored independence under the 1961 Constitution. On October 22, six hundred and twenty-two Chiefs and Headmen gathered

⁵² Letter to Prime Minister Alec Douglas-Home from Prime Minister Kwame Nkrumah, 24th April 1964 PREM 11 4625, National Archives, London, Immediate cypher No.873 from Nairobi PREM 11 4625, National Archives, London, Confidential India House Aldwych, London May 8 1964 PREM 11 4625, National Archives, London, Immediate cypher No.477 confidential from Canberra PREM 11 4625, National Archives, London, Immediate cypher No.189 from Wellington PREM 11 4625, National Archives, London, Prime Minister's Personal Telegraph To: The Prime Minister of Great Britain From: The Prime Minister of Southern Rhodesia. 6th June 1964 PREM 11 5039, National Archives, London, Memorandum by the Southern Rhodesian Chiefs for the Secretary of State 3rd July 1964 PREM 11/5032, National Archives, London, Record of a discussion with the Prime Minister of Southern Rhodesia, PREM 11 5039, National Archives, London, Report of a discussion with the Prime Minister of Southern Rhodesia, PREM 13/85, National Archives, London, Good, *UDI*, 46, Smith, *Bitter Harvest*, 68-70 and Watts, *Rhodesia's Unilateral Declaration of Independence*, 20 and 90-91.

⁵³ Telegram No.1353 Consultation with African Commonwealth Secretary to Smith PREM 13/85, National Archives, London, Good, *UDI*, 47 and Watts, *Rhodesia's Unilateral Declaration of Independence*, 22 and 24-25.

in the largest indaba in the history of Rhodesia and every single attendee voted yes to independence. While the British and Americans stayed away eight other nations including Australia, France, Portugal and South Africa sent observers to the event. On November 5, a referendum of the white electorate also voted overwhelmingly in favor of independence.⁵⁴

As observed by Carl Peter Watts, the determination of the RF to demonstrate, on their own terms, that the Rhodesian population wished for independence alarmed the newly elected Labour government. Commonwealth Secretary Bottomley demanded an audience with the Black Nationalist leaders in Salisbury. He further stated that if prevented from seeing who he wished then the British would publish a public statement warning of the consequences of UDI. The terms as well as the imperious nature of the demand enraged Smith who refused and subsequently rejected a proposal to meet in London. On October 27, the UK released a public statement stating that a UDI would have no legal effect and would represent an open act of rebellion against the Crown.⁵⁵

The increasing likelihood of a UDI also created angst on the other side of the Atlantic and spurred Washington to make American opinion clear to Salisbury. According to Wilson, both Johnson and Rusk were increasingly concerned about Chinese and Russian penetration in Africa and recognized that Western influence was being threatened by events in Rhodesia. For his part, Wilson was eager to enlist U.S. assistance

⁵⁴ Smith, *Bitter Harvest*, 81-82 and Watts, *Rhodesia's Unilateral Declaration of Independence*, 25 and 143.

⁵⁵ Telegram No.1353 Consultation with African Commonwealth Secretary to Smith PREM 13/85, National Archives, London, Telegram from Commonwealth Relations Office to High Commissioner PREM 13/87, National Archives, London, Smith, *Bitter Harvest*, p.82 and Watts, *Rhodesia's Unilateral Declaration of Independence*, 25-26.

in placing pressure on Salisbury to take a more accomodating line towards the British position.⁵⁶

In October, Rusk assured Foreign Secretary Patrick Gordon Walker that the U.S. firmly supported the British in opposing any UDI. American diplomatic officials in Salisbury declined the opportunity to attend the indaba and on October 28, in response to a request from London, issued a public statement of support for the British which warned Salisbury to consider the dangers of a UDI.⁵⁷

To what extent the combined Anglo-American diplomatic warnings daunted Smith and the RF is a matter of conjecture. Richard Wood has argued that the threats had little effect on the Rhodesian Prime Minister. Wood states that 'If Wilson was hoping to cow Ian Smith, he had misjudged his man.' Nevertheless, as noted by Watts, on October 29 just days after the British and American public statements the Rhodesian Legislative Assembly passed a motion which rejected any program for UDI based on the upcoming referendum of the white community in early November.⁵⁸

While the RF may not have been prepared in the fall of 1964 to force the issue of a UDI the question of independence continued to sour relations between London and Salisbury. It is also quite clear that on a personal level Smith and Wilson disliked and distrusted for each other. At a meeting in January 1965, Wilson described Smith as being 'extremely difficult, extremely sour, and not a little offensive about his particular

⁵⁶ Watts, *Rhodesia's Unilateral Declaration of Independence*, 164 and Harold Wilson, *The Labour Government, 1964-1970: A Personal Record*, (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson and Michael Joseph, 1971), 47.

⁵⁷ 457. Memorandum of Conversation. Washington, October 26, 1964. FRUS, 1964-1968, Volume XXIV, Africa and Report of a conversation between Patrick Gordon Walker and Rusk, PREM 13/85, National Archives, London.

⁵⁸ J.R.T. Wood. *"So Far and No Further!" Rhodesia's Bid for Independence during the retreat from Empire 1959-1965*, (Victoria, B.C.: Trafford Publishing, 2005), 245 and Watts, *Rhodesia's Unilateral Declaration of Independence*, 27.

aversions' one of which happened to be the Labour Government. Smith was not alone among his cabinet in his disdain for the British Prime Minister. The Minister of Information, P. K. Van der Byl, described Wilson as a 'highly dangerous, uninformed and conceited little man.'⁵⁹

On April 26, the Rhodesian Government published a White Paper titled 'Economic Aspects of a Declaration of Independence' which suggested that the economic consequences of UDI would not be as serious as claimed by London. Less than two weeks later the RF won an overwhelming electoral victory capturing all fifty 'A' Roll seats. British officials in Salisbury stated that the electorate voted for Smith and independence.⁶⁰

Earlier in April, the Commonwealth Relations Office formulated five principles for the granting of full independence to Rhodesia. First, the principle and intention of unimpeded progress to majority rule already enshrined in the 1961 Constitution would have to be maintained and guaranteed. Secondly, there must be guarantees against retrogressive amendment of that constitution. Thirdly and fourthly, there would need to be immediate improvement in the political status of the African population and progress toward ending racial discrimination. Finally, the British would need to be satisfied that any basis proposed for independence was acceptable to the whole population of Rhodesia. The principles, though, were not revealed to Smith by British High

⁵⁹ Hannes Wessels, *PK Van der Byl. African Statesman*, (Johannesburg: 30° South Publishers, 2010), 123, Smith, *Bitter Harvest*, 85-86, Watts, *Rhodesia's Unilateral Declaration of Independence*, 133-134 and Wilson, *The Labour Government*, 73-74.

⁶⁰ Government of Rhodesia. Prime Minister's Office Economic Aspects of a Declaration of Independence. Printed by Government Printer, Salisbury, April 1965, (White Paper), PREM 13/536, National Archives, London, From Salisbury to Commonwealth Relations Office, No.576 8th May 1965, PREM 13/536, National Archives, London and Watts, *Rhodesia's Unilateral Declaration of Independence*, 29-30 and 32.

Commissioner Johnson until May 27 to avoid turning the Rhodesian General Election into a referendum on them.⁶¹

On the global stage, the U.S. remained fully supportive of the approach adopted by the British Government. In late April, at a United Nations Security Council (UNSC) meeting convened at the request of African nations to consider whether Rhodesia was a threat to international peace and security, Washington voiced approval of the British position. On May 6, in support of London, the U.S. abstained from voting along with the British on UNSC Resolution 202 which while opposing UDI also demanded action exclusively by the UK.⁶²

The U.S. was also becoming increasingly vocal in its criticism of Rhodesia. At the UN Human Rights Commission, American representative Marietta P. Tree scolded the Rhodesian Government for its oppressive practices and its insistence on minority rule. Tree expressly stated that immediate independence was not an answer to Rhodesia's problems.⁶³

U.S.-Rhodesian bilateral relations reached a new low in mid April following the refusal of Washington to sell Salisbury T-28 military aircraft. On April 14, the Rhodesian Government issued a harshly worded aide memoire to Consul General McClelland in Salisbury protesting the decision. The aide memoire deplored this 'unfriendly act' and stated that Rhodesia concludes that the United States 'has reached position in its relations with Rhodesia which removes basis of friendship, mutual respect and cooperation.' The

⁶¹ Note from Commonwealth Relations Office, May 1965, PREM 13/536, National Archives, London, Commonwealth Relations Office Instructions to High Commissioner Salisbury, 25 May 1965, PREM 13/537, National Archives, London and Watts, *Rhodesia's Unilateral Declaration of Independence*, 31.

⁶²Memorandum for Robert W. Komer from Rick Haynes, April 22 1965, "Chrono (3 of 3)", Files of Ulric Haynes, NSF, Box 1, LBJ Library and 460. Memorandum From Ulric Haynes of the National Security Council Staff to the President's Special Assistant for National Security Affairs (Bundy). Washington, April 29, 1965. FRUS, 1964-1968, Volume XXIV, Africa.

⁶³ Watts, *Rhodesia's Unilateral Declaration of Independence*, 170.

State Department was infuriated by the intemperate response and instructed McClelland to stress American 'shock, regret and irritation at inaccuracies, unrealistic tone, intemperate and undiplomatic phrasing and offensive lecturing tenor of document.'⁶⁴

On June 15, Assistant Secretary of State Williams, in a speech before the Chicago Chapter of the Federal Bar Association clarified the American position by formally announcing a policy of a total arms embargo on Rhodesia and stated that the U.S. would support the British position in event of a UDI. British records suggest that Washington even considered a strong statement in the UNSC noting they had refused the Rhodesian arms request as they would not associate themselves with policies that were ill-advised and dangerous, but did not do so at the request of London.⁶⁵

The State Department also contemplated refusing to receive the new Rhodesian minister in Washington, Air Vice Marshal Bentley, who was attached to the British Embassy. The Rhodesian minister's first meeting with Williams demonstrated just how prickly relations had become between the two nations. Williams denounced the Rhodesian Government and hectored Bentley to push the RF to show greater willingness for talks with the African Nationalists. Bentley, in turn, suggested that perhaps Washington should consider practicing what it preaches vis a vis North Vietnam.⁶⁶

The growing possibility of Rhodesian independence also prompted the White House to consider the implications on the U.S. and make contingency plans to deal with

⁶⁴ Telegram for the Secretary of State from Consulate General Salisbury, April 16 1965, Files of Edward K. Hamilton, NSF, Box 3, LBJ Library, From Washington to Foreign Office, No.1126, 28th April 1965, PREM 13/536, National Archives, London, 461. Telegram From the Department of State to the Consulate General in Southern Rhodesia, Washington, May 6, 1965, FRUS, 1964-1968, Volume XXIV, Africa.

⁶⁵From Washington to Foreign Office, No.1126, 28th April 1965, PREM 13/536, National Archives, London, 460. Memorandum From Ulric Haynes of the National Security Council Staff to the President's Special Assistant for National Security Affairs (Bundy). Washington, April 29, 1965. FRUS, 1964-1968, Volume XXIV, Africa and Memorandum for McGeorge Bundy from Rick Haynes, June 14 1965, "Chrono (3 of 3)", Files of Ulric Haynes, NSF, Box 1, LBJ Library.

⁶⁶ Watts, *Rhodesia's Unilateral Declaration of Independence*, 170-171.

such an eventuality. Measures included non-recognition of the post-UDI Rhodesian Government and support for diplomatic and economic punitive actions taken by the UK or the Commonwealth. The U.S. would however maintain a skeleton staff at the consulate as a symbol of concern for the black Rhodesian population.⁶⁷

Zambia posed a particularly difficult problem. The threat that a UDI and ensuing sanctions posed to the Zambian economy was a primary concern not only to Lusaka but to London and Washington as well. The Zambian copperbelt, along with the southern Congolese province of Katanga produced almost 700,000 tons annually which represented 25% of all free world copper. The Zambian economy, however, was dependent on the whim of her southern neighbour. If Zambia imposed sanctions on Rhodesia then Salisbury could retaliate by crippling Zambian financially and driving up the price of copper on the world market.⁶⁸

In May 1965, U.S. officials held talks with Canada and the UK to clarify what measures could be taken to assist Lusaka in the event of a UDI. It was agreed that through the use of alternative land routes and supplemented by an airlift it would be possible to maintain the Zambian economy at minimum levels and allow the export of approximately 300,000 tons of copper annually. This would nevertheless still cause a price rise on the global market, have a damaging effect on UK industry and could force Washington to consider a release of copper from the strategic stockpile.⁶⁹

⁶⁷ 462. Information Memorandum From the Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs (Williams) to the Under Secretary of State (Ball), Washington, May 10, 1965, FRUS, 1964-1968, Volume XXIV, Africa.

⁶⁸ Note by Board of Trade, Implications for the United Kingdom economy of loss of Zambian copper, PREM 13/536, National Archives, London, Good, *UDI*, p.88-89 and Watts, *Rhodesia's Unilateral Declaration of Independence*, 166.

⁶⁹ 462. Information Memorandum From the Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs (Williams) to the Under Secretary of State (Ball), Washington, May 10, 1965, FRUS, 1964-1968, Volume XXIV, Africa, The Disruption of the Zambian Economy following a Unilateral Declaration of Independence, Summary of Report of Official Mission to Washington, Commonwealth Relations Office, June 1965, PREM 13/698,

President Kenneth Kaunda was more than aware of the dangers that a UDI posed to his country. In May he approached Washington requesting assistance in constructing a 1,000 mile long rail link from Zambia to Dar es Salaam in Tanzania, thus providing Lusaka with an outlet to the Indian Ocean. Johnson, however, was reluctant to engage in such an expensive project, the cost would have been around \$400 million, and vetoed the proposal. Komer described the proposal as an economically unfeasible 'boondoggle'. The White House instead offered a comprehensive economic survey of a road link deemed far less expensive and more economically versatile.⁷⁰

By September, the White House was increasingly convinced that the Rhodesian Government was moving towards an imminent UDI. Officials noted that at the RF party conference in August, there was a clear impatience with talks and a desire to swiftly engage in a UDI. White Rhodesian public sentiment was also strongly in favor of full independence. Furthermore, as observed by Haynes the 'Lack of progress during the last six months dialogue between Salisbury and London has driven both Rhodesians and British to the point of mutual exasperation.'

On September 8, Clifford Dupont, the Rhodesian Minister for External Affairs announced that he had appointed Harry Reedman as an 'Accredited Diplomatic Representative' to Lisbon. In terms of independent diplomatic representation, Rhodesia already possessed a High Commission in London, a Mission in Pretoria and a Consul

National Archives, London, Note to Prime Minister from AJB, 10th June 1965, Rhodesia-Zambia, PREM 13/698, National Archives, London Note by Board of Trade, Implications for the United Kingdom. economy of loss of Zambian copper, PREM 13/536, National Archives, London, Good, *UDI*, 88-92 and Watts, *Rhodesia's Unilateral Declaration of Independence*, 167.

⁷⁰ From Lusaka to Commonwealth Relations Office, No.631, 5th May 1965, PREM 13/698. National Archives, London, 463. Memorandum From Robert W. Komer of the National Security Council Staff to the President's Special Assistant for National Security Affairs (Bundy), Washington, May 28, 1965. FRUS, 1964-1968, Volume XXIV, Africa, Memorandum for President Johnson from Robert W. Komer, July 8 1965, "Chrono (2 of 3)", Files of Ulric Haynes, NSF, Box 1, LBJ Library and Good, *UDI*, 93.

General in Lourenco Marques but as noted by the British the action represented a 'creeping independence'. The fact that Portugal, despite strong representations from London continued to allow Reedman to operate in its jurisdiction further emboldened Salisbury.⁷¹

The volatility of the situation led to apprehension at the highest levels of the Johnson Administration. At the National Security Council (NSC) Robert Komer and Ulric Haynes were especially vocal in urging a more aggressive effort to deter a UDI. On September 29, Komer wrote to LBJ urging stronger support of the UK position arguing that a UDI was legally and morally wrong, Anglo-American ties required Washington to help London in a situation that threatens them economically and politically and almost all Afro-Asian nations opposed UDI and would be judging the U.S. on its actions regarding Rhodesia.⁷²

On September 29, the Department of State instructed Consul General McClelland in Salisbury to give an oral message to Smith warning the Rhodesian leader that the course of events was causing increasing concern to the U.S. Government. The message noted the 'close and friendly' relations between Rhodesia and the U.S. which would be

⁷¹ White House Memorandum for McGeorge Bundy from Rick Haynes, Possible Speeding up of Rhodesian UDI, September 13 1965, "Rhodesia, Vol. 1 (3 of 3)," Country File, NSF, Box 97, LBJ Library, Memorandum for the President from Robert W. Komer, Developments in Africa, September 13 1965, LBJ Library, RAC Project Number NLJ-020R-11-2-1-5, Memorandum for President Johnson from Robert W. Komer, September 27 1965, "Chrono (2 of 3)", Files of Ulric Haynes, NSF, Box 1, LBJ Library, Record of Meeting on Rhodesian Representation in Lisbon, PREM 13/567, National Archives, London, From Salisbury to Commonwealth Relations Office, No.1065, 8th September 1965, PREM 13/567, National Archives, London, Prime Minister PM/65/134, September 11th 1965, PREM 13/567, National Archives, London, From United Kingdom Delegation to NATO Paris to Foreign Office, No.234, September 15th 1965, PREM 13/567, National Archives, London, From Foreign Office to Lisbon, No.735, Note Verbale to Dr. Nogueira, September 22nd 1965, PREM 13/567, National Archives, London and From Foreign Office to Lisbon, Cypher OTP No.770, October 4th 1965, PREM 13/567, National Archives, London.

⁷² 466. Memorandum From Ulric Haynes of the National Security Council Staff to the President's Special Assistant for National Security Affairs (Bundy), Washington, September 13, 1965, FRUS, 1964-1968, Volume XXIV, Africa and 468. Memorandum From Robert W. Komer of the National Security Council Staff to President Johnson, Washington, September 29, 1965, FRUS, 1964-1968, Volume XXIV, Africa.

tragically severed by ‘an ill-considered and irrevocable unilateral action on the part of your Government.’ The message also specifically stated that Washington would not condone a UDI and would support the British position. At the meeting with the Rhodesian Prime Minister, Smith informed McClelland that his government would not engage in ‘rash or irresponsible’ action but it was his duty to protect Rhodesia from becoming another Tanzania dangerously infiltrated by communists. Smith also observed the irony of London appealing to Washington for help against a rebellious colony.⁷³

In early October, Smith travelled to London accompanied by several other high ranking Rhodesian officials including Minister of Internal Affairs William Harper and the Minister of Justice, Desmond Lardner-Burke. During the extensive negotiations, Wilson made clear to the Rhodesians that while he was prepared to grant independence before majority rule it had to be on the basis of the Five Principles. Smith, though, insisted that independence must be based on the 1961 Constitution and rejected repeal of the Land Apportionment Act on the grounds that it protected the Africans from exploitation.⁷⁴

During the talks in London, Wilson also made the somewhat strategically bizarre decision to inform Smith that in the event of a UDI the UK did not consider the use of force against Rhodesia as a realistic possibility. According to the head of the Rhodesian Central Intelligence Organization, Ken Flower, up to this point leading figures in the RF had expressed serious concerns about a British military response to a UDI. It appears as

⁷³ 469. Telegram From the Department of State to the Consulate General in Southern Rhodesia, Washington, September 29, 1965, FRUS, 1964-1968, Volume XXIV, Africa and 470. Telegram From the Consulate General in Southern Rhodesia to the Department of State, Salisbury, October 2, 1965, FRUS, 1964-1968, Volume XXIV, Africa.

⁷⁴ Meeting between the Prime Minister and the Prime Minister of Rhodesia, 7th October 1965, PREM 13/540, National Archives, London, Note of a meeting held at 10 Downing Street, 8th October 1965, PREM 13/540, National Archives, London, Smith, *Bitter Harvest*, 92, Watts, *Rhodesia's Unilateral Declaration of Independence*, 35 and Wilson, *The Labour Government 1964-1970*, 146-148.

though Wilson, arguably unwittingly, may well have given the green light to the Rhodesians to declare independence.⁷⁵

On October 7, at the request of the White House, again following an appeal from Wilson for U.S. involvement, the Charge d’Affaires in London, Phil Kaiser, met Smith and passed on a statement of support for British policy towards Rhodesia. The Rhodesian Prime Minister commented with disgust that the British were ‘crawling’ to the United States for help.⁷⁶

Two days later Kaiser received a written reply from Smith stating that Rhodesia was seeking independence on its 1961 Constitution agreed by the UK and Rhodesia as well as representatives of all political parties and racial groups in the country. While Smith appreciated the advice of friendly governments like the U.S., nevertheless, the ‘Rhodesian government would be failing in their duty not only to themselves but to the ordinary people of the country and to the cause of Western civilisation on the continent of Africa if they were persuaded to abandon the stand they have taken and to expose the people of the country to all the unhappiness and conflict which stems from unbridled racial government, which would be the result of immediate majority rule.’⁷⁷

⁷⁵ Ken Flower, *Serving Secretly: An Intelligence Chief on Record, Rhodesia into Zimbabwe 1964-1981*, (London: John Murray, 1987), 47-51.

⁷⁶ Memorandum to McGeorge Bundy from Rick Haynes, October 2 1965, “Chrono (2 of 3)”, Files of Ulric Haynes, NSF, Box 1, LBJ Library, 473. Telegram From the Department of State to Secretary of State Rusk in New York, Washington, October 2, 1965, FRUS, 1964-1968, Volume XXIV, Africa, 474. Memorandum From the President’s Deputy Special Assistant for National Security Affairs (Komer) to President Johnson, Washington, October 4, 1965, FRUS, 1964-1968, Volume XXIV, Africa, 475. Memorandum of Telephone Conversation Between the President’s Special Assistant for National Security Affairs (Bundy) and Acting Secretary of State Ball, Washington, October 5, 1965, FRUS, 1964-1968, Volume XXIV, Africa, 478. Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassy in the United Kingdom, Washington, October 6, 1965, FRUS, 1964-1968, Volume XXIV, Africa and Memorandum for McGeorge Bundy from Rick Haynes, October 7 1965, “Chrono (2 of 3)”, Files of Ulric Haynes, NSF, Box 1, LBJ Library and Watts, *Rhodesia’s Unilateral Declaration of Independence*, 172.

⁷⁷ 479. Telegram From the Embassy in the United Kingdom to the Department of State, London, October 9, 1965, FRUS, 1964-1968, Volume XXIV, Africa.

The gravity of the situation and its effect on American geopolitical objectives was highlighted by a CIA report considering the repercussions of a Rhodesian UDI. It was observed that political and economic sanctions alone would prove insufficient to dislodge white minority rule at least for the next few years. The continued presence, however, of a white government in Salisbury would cause increasing frustration among black African nations triggering recurrent difficulties for the U.S. at the UN and lead to greater pressure on Washington to take stronger measures. It would also provide an opportunity for greater Communist involvement in the region to the detriment of Western interests.⁷⁸

On October 25, Wilson personally visited Rhodesia and met with the Council of Chiefs, detained Nationalist leaders, as well as Smith and other members of the Rhodesian Government. Wilson made two proposals to Smith regarding the granting of independence. First, a referendum of all Rhodesian taxpayers to test the RF assertion that the majority of the population favored independence on the basis of 1961 Constitution and secondly, a Royal Commission to propose constitutional arrangements for independence which would be acceptable to the people of Rhodesia as a whole.⁷⁹

In terms of the two options, Smith summarily rejected the former and made a counter-offer on the latter that the Royal Commission should receive from the Rhodesian and British Governments' an agreed constitution which it would then put to the

⁷⁸ CIA Special National Intelligence Estimate: Repercussions of a Unilateral Declaration of Independence by Southern Rhodesia, October 13 1965, "72, Rhodesia", National Intelligence Estimates File, NSF, Box 8, LBJ Library.

⁷⁹ Message from the Prime Minister Wilson to Prime Minister Smith, October 21st 1965, PREM 13/565, National Archives, London, White House Situation Report for McGeorge Bundy from Rick Haynes, Rhodesian UDI, October 21 1965, "Rhodesia, Vol. 1 (3 of 3)," Country File, NSF, Box 97, LBJ Library, Memorandum for President Johnson from Robert W. Komer, October 25 1965, "Chrono (2 of 3)", Files of Ulric Haynes, NSF, Box 1, LBJ Library, Telegram from American Consulate General Salisbury to Secretary of State, October 30 1965, "Rhodesia, Vol. 1 (1 of 3)," Country File, NSF, Box 97, LBJ Library, Watts, *Rhodesia's Unilateral Declaration of Independence*, 36-38 and Wilson, *The Labour Government*, 153-165.

Rhodesian population to ascertain if it was acceptable. On November 1-2, the British Cabinet agreed to a Royal Commission and agreed to submit the constitution proposed by Smith but would publicly disassociate the British Government from it. It was also agreed that the UK would only support the report of the commission if it was unanimous in nature. The British decision infuriated Salisbury which viewed the terms as evasive and essentially a rejection of the proposals.⁸⁰

In Washington, the White House closely monitored the course of the negotiations and sought to emphasize to Salisbury both the gravity of the situation and the extent of American support for the British. Before the commencement of the talks, Rusk, via the U.S. Embassy in London, asked Wilson to convey to Smith that Washington supported UK in seeking a solution satisfactory to the Rhodesian population as a whole and that the U.S. would condemn a UDI and be compelled to sever traditional close and friendly ties with Salisbury.⁸¹

On October 29, Johnson himself, at the request of Wilson, sent a personal message, via McClelland, to Smith. The message reminded Smith that Washington was fully supportive of the British and would continue to back UK policy in the event of a UDI. LBJ urged Smith to give deep consideration to the proposals advanced by Wilson and expressed the ‘hope that you and your colleagues will avoid a course which, in

⁸⁰ Personal Message from Ian Smith to Harold Wilson, 9th November 1965, PREM 13/545, National Archives, London, Smith, *Bitter Harvest*, p.98-99, Watts, *Rhodesia's Unilateral Declaration of Independence*, 38-39 and Wilson, *The Labour Government*, 168.

⁸¹ Message from Dean Rusk to Harold Wilson via the U.S. Embassy, 23 October 1965 PREM 13/542, National Archives, London, Memorandum for President Johnson from Robert W. Komer, October 25 1965, “Chrono (2 of 3)”, Files of Ulric Haynes, NSF, Box 1, LBJ Library and White House Situation Report for McGeorge Bundy from Rick Haynes, Rhodesian UDI, October 30 1965, “Rhodesia, Vol. 1 (3 of 3),” Country File, NSF, Box 97, LBJ Library.

addition to all its other consequences, would inevitably break the strong ties of friendship and understanding which have bound our countries together in war and peace.’⁸²

Despite Smith’s assurances, delivered in his ‘usual disarmingly reasonable manner’, that Salisbury sought a constitutional solution of its problems with London, McClelland was increasingly convinced that negotiations had reached the end of the road. McClelland pointed out that the British proposal of a Royal Commission was an anathema to the RF and the majority of the white electorate. Furthermore, the delaying tactics adopted by Wilson had only served to fuel the fires of Rhodesian impatience for independence. He also observed that the RF caucus informed Smith that if he accepted the Royal Commission and its report was negative on independence then he would be asked to resign. His replacement would undoubtedly be less moderate on the question of a UDI.⁸³

The RF, especially the powerful hardliners like Dupont and Lardner-Burke, had indeed lost patience with the negotiations and were pushing Smith inexorably towards a UDI. On November 5, the Rhodesian Government declared a three month State of Emergency including severe newspaper censorship. Smith then rejected the British terms for, although not the concept of, a Royal Commission and refused an offer from Wilson for further talks in Malta. The following day McClelland reported that the Rhodesian

⁸² Telegram from Secretary of State to American Consulate General Salisbury, October 29 1965, “Rhodesia, Vol. 1 (1 of 3),” Country File, NSF, Box 97, LBJ Library, Telegram from American Consulate General Salisbury to Secretary of State, October 30 1965, “Rhodesia, Vol. 1 (1 of 3),” Country File, NSF, Box 97, LBJ Library, Lake, “*The Tar Baby*” Option, 79 and Watts, *Rhodesia’s Unilateral Declaration of Independence*, 173.

⁸³ Telegram from American Consulate General Salisbury to Secretary of State, October 29 1965, “Rhodesia, Vol. 1 (1 of 3),” Country File, NSF, Box 97, LBJ Library, Telegram from American Consulate General Salisbury to Secretary of State, October 30 1965, “Rhodesia, Vol. 1 (1 of 3),” Country File, NSF, Box 97, LBJ Library, Letter to President Johnson from Prime Minister Smith, October 30 1965, “Rhodesia”, Special Head of State Correspondence, NSF, Box 47, LBJ Library, White House Situation Report for McGeorge Bundy from Rick Haynes, Rhodesian UDI, October 30 1965, “Rhodesia, Vol. 1 (3 of 3),” Country File, NSF, Box 97, LBJ Library and Telegram from American Consulate General Salisbury to Secretary of State, November 5 1965, “Rhodesia, Vol. 1 (1 of 3),” Country File, NSF, Box 97, LBJ Library.

Government was 'poised, indeed impatient, to take UDI'. Finally, on November 11 1965, the Rhodesian Government, despite a last minute telephone call from Wilson to Smith, formally declared a UDI from British rule.⁸⁴

Throughout the tortuous and eventually futile negotiations between London and Salisbury, the LBJ Administration stood steadfastly behind the British position. This solid support was partly due to Johnson's belief in the importance of the Anglo-American alliance but also due to concerns over the strategic and economic consequences of a UDI especially the impact on Zambian copper exports which could destabilize the world market. As the chances of a UDI grew stronger the U.S. attitude not only hardened against Salisbury, as demonstrated by the arms embargo, and the White House repeatedly warned the Rhodesians against taking such a rash and unwise action. Ultimately, however, the warnings were not heeded and LBJ was faced with the undesirable option of how to deal with an 'independent' Rhodesia.

Geopolitical realities dictate U.S. involvement in seeking a swift end to UDI

In the aftermath of the Rhodesian declaration, Washington adopted a posture of hostility towards Salisbury to demonstrate American opposition to white minority rule, show solidarity with black African nations and to support London, a key Western power.

⁸⁴ Memorandum for President Johnson from Rick Haynes, November 8 1965, "Chrono (2 of 3)", Files of Ulric Haynes, NSF, Box 1, LBJ Library, Memorandum for McGeorge Bundy from Rick Haynes, Situation Report Rhodesian UDI, November 9 1965, "Chrono (2 of 3)", Files of Ulric Haynes, NSF, Box 1, LBJ Library, Telegram from American Consulate General Salisbury to Secretary of State, November 9 1965, "Rhodesia, Vol. 1 (1 of 3)," Country File, NSF, Box 97, LBJ Library, Telegram from American Consulate General Salisbury to Secretary of State, November 10 1965, "Rhodesia, Vol. 1 (1 of 3)," Country File, NSF, Box 97, LBJ Library, From Salisbury to Commonwealth Relations Office, No.1691 10 November 1965, PREM 13/545, National Archives, London, From Salisbury to Commonwealth Relations Office, No.1707, 11th November 1965, PREM 13/545, National Archives, London, From Salisbury to Commonwealth Relations Office, No.1708, 11th November 1965, PREM 13/545, National Archives, London and Watts, *Rhodesia's Unilateral Declaration of Independence*, 39.

Nevertheless, the LBJ Administration wished to avoid radical actions that could precipitate a broader racial war in the region and invite communist intervention. Furthermore, the Rhodesian situation was still deemed to be primarily a British responsibility and while the White House was prepared to assist their NATO ally the U.S. was not prepared to take the lead in dealing with an internal colonial predicament which could have serious repercussions on American interests. This decision, however, would prove difficult to stand by as broader pressures came to bear on the U.S. Government.⁸⁵

On the day of the UDI, Secretary of State Rusk, in a press statement, deplored the action, declared that Washington would not recognize the rebel regime, announced the recall of Consul General McClelland and the closure of the U.S. Information Office in Salisbury. The following day Johnson approved a comprehensive embargo of all arms and military equipment, suspension of loans, credit and investment guarantees, suspension of the quotas for Rhodesian sugar and the withdrawal of U.S. diplomatic recognition for Rhodesian personnel at the British Embassy in Washington.⁸⁶

The British had commenced actions against Salisbury on the day of UDI including a boycott of Rhodesian sugar and tobacco as well as exchange controls and a denial of financial capital. London subsequently passed a number of Orders in Council including the annulment of the Rhodesian 1965 Constitution, voiding of any laws passed by the illegal regime and granting Britain the power of executive authority over the

⁸⁵ Memorandum for McGeorge Bundy from State Department Executive Secretary Benjamin H. Read, 1965 Sugar Quota for Rhodesia, November 18 1965, "Rhodesia, Vol. 1 (3 of 3)," Country File, NSF, Box 97, LBJ Library.

⁸⁶ 493. Notes of Telephone Conversation, Washington, November 12, 1965, FRUS, 1964-1968, Volume XXIV, Africa, Memorandum for McGeorge Bundy from Gordon Chase, Southern Rhodesia-Security Council Statement, November 12 1965, "Rhodesia, Vol. 1 (3 of 3)," Country File, NSF, Box 97, LBJ Library, Chapter 5 (Africa), Department of State Administrative History Vol. 1, Box 2 (2 of 2), LBJ Library, Chapter 10 (The United Nations) Sections C, D and E, Department of State Administrative History Vol. 1, Box 4, LBJ Library, Lake, *"The Tar Baby" Option*, 80-82 and Watts, *Rhodesia's Unilateral Declaration of Independence*, 174.

colony. On December 1, the sanctions were extended to include all agricultural, metal and mineral products which represented ninety-five percent of imports from Rhodesia.⁸⁷

At the UN, UDI became, in the words of Robert Good, a 'cause celebre overnight'. On November 11, the UN General Assembly voted by one hundred and one votes to two (Portugal and South Africa) to condemning the Rhodesian action. The following day the UNSC passed Resolution 216 denouncing UDI and called on all states not to recognize or render any assistance to the illegal regime. The U.S. voted in favor of both these measures.⁸⁸

Both London and Washington, however, were aware of the desire of the African group at the UN to demand radical action including the use of Chapter 7 of the UN Charter. This would have declared Rhodesia a threat to international peace and security and authorized all necessary action, nonmilitary and military, to restore peace. On November 20, in a compromise deal brokered largely by U.S. Ambassador Goldberg the UNSC adopted Resolution 217 which called on all member states to voluntarily cut economic relations with Rhodesia including the sale of oil and other petroleum products.⁸⁹

⁸⁷ Foreign Affairs and Commonwealth Relations Office to certain missions, No.458, 11 November 1965, PREM 13/566 National Archives, London, Southern Rhodesia Act 1965, 16th November 1965, PREM 13/545, National Archives, London, Orders in Council made by Privy Council, November 16 1965, PREM 13/545, National Archives, London, From Foreign Office to all Her Majesty's Representatives and From Commonwealth Relations Office to British High Commissions, 1st December 1965, PREM 13/1143, National Archives, London and Good, *UDI*, 65 and 69.

⁸⁸ United Kingdom Mission to the United Nations to Foreign Office, No.2876, 11 November 1965, PREM 13/1113, National Archives, London and 495. Memorandum of Telephone Conversation Between the President's Special Assistant for National Security Affairs (Bundy) and the Under Secretary of State (Ball), Washington, November 13, 1965, FRUS, 1964-1968, Volume XXIV, Africa, Chapter 10 (The United Nations) Sections C, D and E, Department of State Administrative History Vol. 1, Box 4, LBJ Library and Good, *UDI*, 73.

⁸⁹ From United Kingdom Mission to the United Nations, New York, 13 November 1965, PREM 13/545, National Archives, London, Department of State Research Memorandum to Acting Secretary of State Ball from Director of Intelligence and Research Thomas L. Hughes, UDI Developments and Reactions,

The issue of sugar quotas proved to be the first test of the American desire not to get ahead of the UK on the Rhodesian question. On November 12, Ambassador Goldberg had informed the UN that the U.S. had suspended its quotas for Rhodesian sugar imports. The suspension would commence with the upcoming quota for the calendar year of 1966. The 1965 quota, however, comprising 9,542 tons had been contracted for by a U.S. importer and was already en route to the United States. The question of how to approach this shipment of sugar deeply divided opinions in the Johnson Administration.⁹⁰

The British Embassy informed the State Department that London intended to honor all import agreements with Rhodesia which were made prior to November 12, 1965. Under Secretary Ball therefore opposed the cancellation of the quota as he feared this would place Washington in the lead regarding sanctions on Rhodesia. The Department of Agriculture also urged the White House not to interfere with the sugar due to adverse comment in the trade and possibility of legal action.⁹¹

Ambassador Goldberg, however, argued strongly in favor of suspension of the quota. In his opinion, the arrival of a boat load of Rhodesian sugar at an American port would cause 'considerable excitement at the United Nations' and cast doubt whether Washington was genuinely determined to end white minority rule in Rhodesia. The Africa Bureau at the State Department shared his concerns and counselled cancellation.

November 16 1965, "Rhodesia, Vol. 1 (3 of 3)," Country File, NSF, Box 97, LBJ Library, Lake, "*The Tar Baby*" Option, 85-86 and Watts, *Rhodesia's Unilateral Declaration of Independence*, 195.

⁹⁰ Memorandum for McGeorge Bundy from State Department Executive Secretary Benjamin H. Read, 1965 Sugar Quota for Rhodesia, November 18 1965, "Rhodesia, Vol. 1 (3 of 3)," Country File, NSF, Box 97, LBJ Library, 497. Memorandum From the Executive Secretary of the Department of State (Read) to the President's Special Assistant for National Security Affairs (Bundy), Washington, November 18, 1965, FRUS, 1964-1968, Volume XXIV, Africa and Lake, "*The Tar Baby*" Option, 81-82.

⁹¹ Memorandum for McGeorge Bundy from State Department Executive Secretary Benjamin H. Read, 1965 Sugar Quota for Rhodesia, November 18 1965, "Rhodesia, Vol. 1 (3 of 3)," Country File, NSF, Box 97, LBJ Library, Telcon Goldberg Ball 11/18/65, S. Rhodesia, Papers of George W. Ball, Box 6, LBJ Library and 497. Memorandum From the Executive Secretary of the Department of State (Read) to the President's Special Assistant for National Security Affairs (Bundy), Washington, November 18, 1965, FRUS, 1964-1968, Volume XXIV, Africa.

The issue was also certain to raise questions domestically. Indeed, as early as November 18, the powerful AFL-CIO labor union had already spoken out against the shipment and pressed for cancellation of the quota.⁹²

The White House had been informed, by the Legal Adviser's Office of the State Department, that the President could legally suspend the quota under the 1965 amendment to Sugar Act of 1948. The matter was also somewhat urgent as the shipment of sugar was due at Yonkers, New York, on December 10. On November 20, at the recommendation of the State Department, Johnson directed the Secretary of Agriculture to formally suspend both the 1966 and 1965 sugar quotas for Rhodesia. The presidential decision is noteworthy for two reasons. First of all, for the first time in the Rhodesian crisis it pushed Washington ahead of London regarding punitive measures against Salisbury and secondly, as the decision was clearly influenced by a need to mollify the Afro-Asians at the UN and avoid domestic criticism at home.⁹³

The Johnson Administration also increasingly feared that the situation was escalating beyond the control of the British and this could lead to greater pressure on the U.S. to adopt a more assertive and indeed aggressive approach towards Salisbury. On

⁹² Memorandum for McGeorge Bundy from State Department Executive Secretary Benjamin H. Read, 1965 Sugar Quota for Rhodesia, November 18 1965, "Rhodesia, Vol. 1 (3 of 3)," Country File, NSF, Box 97, LBJ Library and 497. Memorandum From the Executive Secretary of the Department of State (Read) to the President's Special Assistant for National Security Affairs (Bundy), Washington, November 18, 1965, FRUS, 1964-1968, Volume XXIV, Africa.

⁹³ Memorandum for McGeorge Bundy from State Department Executive Secretary Benjamin H. Read, 1965 Sugar Quota for Rhodesia, November 18 1965, "Rhodesia, Vol. 1 (3 of 3)," Country File, NSF, Box 97, LBJ Library, Memorandum for President from Acting Secretary of State George W. Ball, Southern Rhodesia and the United States Sugar Quota, November 19 1965, "Rhodesia, Vol. 1 (3 of 3)," Country File, NSF, Box 97, LBJ Library, Memorandum for the Secretary of Agriculture, Finding Pursuant to Section 202 (d) (1) (B) of the Sugar Act of 1948, as amended by the Sugar Amendments of 1965, "Rhodesia, Vol. 1 (3 of 3)," Country File, NSF, Box 97, LBJ Library, Chapter 10 (The United Nations) Sections C, D and E, Department of State Administrative History Vol. 1, Box 4, LBJ Library, 497. Memorandum From the Executive Secretary of the Department of State (Read) to the President's Special Assistant for National Security Affairs (Bundy), Washington, November 18, 1965, FRUS, 1964-1968, Volume XXIV, Africa and Lake, "*The Tar Baby*" Option, 85-86.

December 6, Komer warned LBJ that there was ‘a mounting risk that Wilson may lose control of it to a gaggle of irresponsible Africans, perhaps with Soviet support.’ If London did lose power over the proceedings then the Organization of African Unity and radical African states would likely press for more extreme measures including use of force. The CIA warned that African emotions were ‘aroused to an unprecedented extent over the Rhodesian crisis’. Washington feared facing the unappealing choice of assisting in military operations against Rhodesia or losing a great deal of credibility in black Africa to the benefit of the communist bloc.⁹⁴

Johnson himself recognized the mounting gravity of the situation and the need to assist the British in moving faster to end the rebellion. The White House and the State Department, however, were frustrated by perceived British prevarication and the apparent lack of any plan that would soon see the rebellion defeated. Indeed, G. Mennen Williams asked Ball to inform London that Washington was fully prepared to help but needed to be advised about the British program or indeed the overall thinking on Rhodesia.⁹⁵

⁹⁴ Department of State Research Memorandum to Acting Secretary of State Ball from Director of Intelligence and Research Thomas L. Hughes, UDI Developments and Reactions, November 16 1965, “Rhodesia, Vol. 1 (3 of 3),” Country File, NSF, Box 97, LBJ Library, Memorandum for President Johnson from Robert W. Komer, December 6 1965, Files of Edward K. Hamilton, NSF, Box 3, LBJ Library, Telcon Amb. Goldberg Ball 12/16/65, S. Rhodesia, Papers of George W. Ball, Box 6, LBJ Library and Memorandum for the President on the Rhodesian Crisis from Thomas C. Mann, December 22 1965, CO 250 Federation of Rhodesia-Nyasaland, CF, WHCF, Box 11 (1 of 2), LBJ Library, CIA Intelligence Memorandum, The Rhodesian Situation: African Pressure and British Dilemma, “Rhodesia, Vol. 1 (2 of 3),” Country File, NSF, Box 97, LBJ Library, 502. Memorandum From the President’s Deputy Special Assistant for National Security Affairs (Komer) to the President’s Special Assistant for National Security Affairs (Bundy), Washington, December 6, 1965, FRUS, 1964-1968, Volume XXIV, Africa, 514. Memorandum From the President’s Deputy Special Assistant for National Security Affairs (Komer) to President Johnson, Washington, December 20, 1965, FRUS 1964-1968, Volume XXIV, Africa and Good, *UDI*, 101-105.

⁹⁵ Memorandum for Robert W. Komer from Rick Haynes, Rhodesian Work Group Meeting, November 24 1965, “Chrono (1 of 3),” Files of Ulric Haynes, NSF, Box 1, LBJ Library, Memorandum for the Secretary of State Rusk from McGeorge Bundy, The Rhodesian Crisis, “Rhodesia, Vol. 1 (2 of 3),” Country File, NSF, Box 97, LBJ Library and Watts, *Rhodesia’s Unilateral Declaration of Independence*, 173.

The apparent normalcy on the ground in Rhodesia and high level of support for Smith and the UDI among the white population appeared to demonstrate the inadequacy of the British response. U.S. Consul Gebelt reported that the security forces were firmly in control and he believed that existing sanctions would not adversely affect the local economy in the immediate future. The Consul also noted that the measures sanctions had additionally served to unite the white community solidly behind Smith. He urged that contingency planning include the possibility of a relatively long tenure Smith government.⁹⁶

On December 17 the British formally announced the embargo of oil to Rhodesia. The same day the the U.S. made a public announcement backing the UK decision. ‘The United States Government welcomes and supports the British decision to prohibit oil imports into Rhodesia. The United States fully recognizes the authority of HMG in this matter and therefore is advising all U.S. citizens and enterprises to comply with the terms of the British Order.’ It is important to note that the British only agreed to impose an embargo after LBJ had assured Wilson of the voluntary compliance of American oil companies.⁹⁷

⁹⁶ Telegram from American Consulate Salisbury to Secretary of State, November 17 1965, “Rhodesia, Vol. 1 (1 of 3),” Country File, NSF, Box 97, LBJ Library and Telegram from American Consulate Salisbury to Secretary of State, November 29 1965, “Rhodesia, Vol. 1 (1 of 3),” Country File, NSF, Box 97, LBJ Library.

⁹⁷ 506. Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassy in the United Kingdom, Washington, December 9, 1965, FRUS, 1964-1968, Volume XXIV, Africa, 508. Memorandum of Telephone Conversations Between the President’s Special Assistant for National Security Affairs (Bundy) and the Under Secretary of State (Ball), Washington, December 13, 1965, FRUS, 1964-1968, Volume XXIV, Africa, 509. Memorandum From Ulric Haynes of the National Security Council Staff to the President’s Special Assistant for National Security Affairs (Bundy), Washington, December 14, 1965, FRUS, 1964-1968, Volume XXIV, Africa and Chapter 10 (The United Nations) Sections C, D and E, Department of State Administrative History Vol. 1, Box 4, LBJ Library. Circular from Telecommunications Operations Division to All American Diplomatic Posts and American Consulates’ Salisbury, Elisabethville, Lourenco Marques, Luanda and U.S. Mission to UN, “Rhodesia, Vol. 1 (2 of 3),” Country File, NSF, Box 97, LBJ Library and U.S. Announcement on Oil Embargo, December 17 1965, PREM 13/564, National Archives, London.

The White House, however, was aware that it was unlikely that the announcement of an oil embargo would go far enough to satisfy the African bloc. NSC staffer Haynes noted that African attitudes towards London ranged from ‘profound disappointment to wild fury’. The extent to which this concerned the Johnson Administration is demonstrated by the fact that LBJ deemed it necessary to write a personal message to President Julius Nyerere of Tanzania regarding American support for the British position. In the letter, Johnson pointed out that the measures taken against Salisbury represented a ‘broader range of economic restrictions than ever applied by the international community to a single country in peacetime.’ He urged support for the thorough application of sanctions and commented that it was difficult for him to fathom the apparent feeling among many Africans that London and Washington were not determined to end the UDI.⁹⁸

While publicly supporting the British position, in private the White House doubted the effectiveness of the approach adopted by London. In late December, a CIA report observed that the British strategy of tightening diplomatic, economic and political pressures on Salisbury would fail to bring down the Rhodesian Government or erode support for Smith in the white community. Indeed, U.S. officials expressed scepticism over Wilson’s confidence that South Africa would not violate the embargo leading to the failure of sanctions.⁹⁹

⁹⁸ Memorandum to McGeorge Bundy from Rick Haynes, Situation Report: Rhodesian Crisis, December 17 1965, “Rhodesia, Vol. 1 (2 of 3),” Country File, NSF, Box 97, LBJ Library, Memorandum for the President on the Rhodesian Crisis from Thomas C. Mann, December 22 1965, CO 250 Federation of Rhodesia-Nyasaland, CF, WHCF, Box 11 (1 of 2), LBJ Library and Letter to President Nyerere from President Johnson via Embassy Dar es Salaam, December 1965, Files of Edward K. Hamilton, NSF, Box 3, LBJ Library.

⁹⁹ 513. Memorandum of Conversations. Washington, December 16-17, 1965. FRUS, 1964-1968, Volume XXIV, Africa, CIA Special Memorandum No. 30-65, Possible UK military intervention in Southern Rhodesia, December 21 1965, “Rhodesia, Vol. 1 (2 of 3),” Country File, NSF, Box 97, LBJ Library,

The perceived ineffectiveness of the British measures led to concern over how this would impact U.S. involvement on the Rhodesia question. The CIA warned that as Britain became more deeply embedded in costly and difficult sanctions initiatives, Wilson would increasingly turn to Washington for aid including foreign exchange commitments and access to the U.S. copper stockpile. On a diplomatic level, as pointed out by Under Secretary of State Thomas C. Mann in a memorandum to LBJ, if the status quo was to continue 'African resentment against the U.K. will inevitably rub off on the U.S.'¹⁰⁰

The British continued to publicly and privately insist that the economic sanctions would soon end the rebellion in Southern Africa. In early January, at a special Commonwealth Prime Ministers' Meeting on Rhodesia, hosted by Nigeria, Wilson stated that the cumulative effects of economic sanctions would end UDI in a matter of weeks rather than months. The British subsequently announced new economic measures which included a total ban on imports and exports to or from Rhodesia.¹⁰¹

Memorandum for President Johnson on the Rhodesian Crisis from Under Secretary of State for Economic Affairs, Thomas C. Mann, December 22 1965, "Rhodesia, Vol. 1 (2 of 3)," Country File, NSF, Box 97, LBJ Library and Memorandum for President Johnson from Robert W. Komer, December 28 1965, "Rhodesia, Vol. 1 (2 of 3)," Country File, NSF, Box 97, LBJ Library.

¹⁰⁰ 511. Memorandum From the Joint Chiefs of Staff to Secretary of Defense McNamara, Washington, December 16, 1965, FRUS, 1964-1968, Volume XXIV, Africa, CIA Special Memorandum No. 30-65, Possible UK military intervention in Southern Rhodesia, December 21 1965, "Rhodesia, Vol. 1 (2 of 3)," Country File, NSF, Box 97, LBJ Library, Memorandum for President Johnson on the Rhodesian Crisis from Under Secretary of State for Economic Affairs, Thomas C. Mann, December 22 1965, "Rhodesia, Vol. 1 (2 of 3)," Country File, NSF, Box 97, LBJ Library and Memorandum for President Johnson from Robert W. Komer, December 28 1965, "Rhodesia, Vol. 1 (2 of 3)," Country File, NSF, Box 97, LBJ Library.

¹⁰¹ Telegram from Embassy London to Secretary of State, January 5 1966, "Rhodesia, Vol. 1 (2 of 3)," Country File, NSF, Box 97, LBJ Library, Rhodesia/Zambia Situation Report No.17 for Thomas C. Mann from Thomas W. McElhiney, January 26-27 1966, "Rhodesia, Vol. 1 (2 of 3)," Country File, NSF, Box 97, LBJ Library, Memorandum for Robert W. Komer from Rick Haynes, February 2 1966, "Chrono (1 of 3)", Files of Ulric Haynes, NSF, Box 1, LBJ Library, Good, *UDI*, 118-121 and Watts, *Rhodesia's Unilateral Declaration of Independence*, 105.

While doubtful of the efficacy of sanctions Washington continued to back the UK position. By February 26, the Department of Commerce was able to announce that a license was now required for virtually all U.S. exports to Rhodesia. On March 18, there was a comprehensive ban on virtually any commodity of value to the Rhodesian economy.¹⁰²

The actions taken by the White House against Rhodesia following UDI divided both the American public and political figures. Following UDI, African-American community leaders including Dr. Martin Luther King and A. Philip Randolph denounced the Rhodesian action as an attempt to perpetuate white supremacy and praised LBJ for the imposition of sanctions. Other political or religious groupings including the Catholic Association for International Peace, the National Council of Churches and the United States Youth Council also supported a strong stance against Salisbury. At the grassroots level, however, many Americans were supportive of UDI and condemned the use of U.S. power and influence to suppress Rhodesia national aspirations.¹⁰³

¹⁰² Telegram from Deputy Assistant Secretary for Economic Affairs Edward R. Freed to American Tobacco Companies, February 8 1966, "Rhodesia, Vol. 1 (2 of 3)," Country File, NSF, Box 97, LBJ Library, Rhodesia/Zambia Situation Report No.27 to Thomas C. Mann from Thomas W. McElhiney, February 26 to March 1 1966, "Rhodesia, Vol. 2 (3 of 3)," Country File, NSF, Box 97, LBJ Library, Chapter 5 (Africa), Department of State Administrative History Vol. 1, Box 2 (2 of 2), LBJ Library, Chapter 10 (The United Nations) Sections C, D and E, Department of State Administrative History Vol. 1, Box 4, LBJ Library and Lake, "*The Tar Baby*" Option, 91.

¹⁰³ Telegram from A. Philip Randolph and Donald S. Harrington, CoChairmen of the American Committee on Africa to President Johnson, November 11 1965, as attachment to memorandum for Benjamin Read from McGeorge Bundy, November 15 1965, EX CO 1-1 Africa, WHCF, Box 7, LBJ Library, Telegram to President Johnson from Roy Wilkins, November 12 1965, Gen CO 250 Rhodesia, WHCF, Box 65, LBJ Library, Letter to President Johnson from Bishop Reuben H. Mueller, President and R.H. Edwin Espy, General Secretary, National Council of Churches, November 12 1965, Gen CO 250 Rhodesia, WHCF, Box 65, LBJ Library, Letter to President Johnson from Joseph A. Fallon, President of the United States Youth Council, December 9 1965, Gen CO 250 Rhodesia, WHCF, Box 65, LBJ Library, Telegram to President Johnson from Dr. Martin Luther King Jr, President Southern Leadership Conference, December 16 1965, Gen CO 250 Rhodesia, WHCF, Box 65, LBJ Library, Statement of the World Order Committee Catholic Association for International Peace on Southern Rhodesia, December 22 1965, as attachment to letter to President Johnson from RG. Rev. Msgr. George G. Higgins, Executive Secretary Catholic Association for International Peace, December 22 1965, Gen CO 250 Rhodesia, WHCF, Box 65, LBJ Library, Letter to President Johnson from Margaret L. Clarkin, Marceline M. Griffin, Margaret L. Cochran, December 30

In Congress, opinions were also deeply split on the question of policy towards an ‘independent’ Rhodesia. Congressmen Adam Clayton Powell (D-New York), Chairman of the House Committee on Education and Labor, and Benjamin S. Rosenthal (D-New York) were fierce critics of UDI and urged the White House to consider stronger measures including a world economic boycott, severance of all diplomatic relations and Chapter 7 measures at the UN. Congressman Harold R. Gross of the House Foreign Affairs Committee and Senator James Eastland remained strong supporters of Ian Smith and condemned any economic measures designed to hurt the Rhodesian Government. Indeed, on February 17, in the House of Representatives, Congressman Gross denounced the fact that ‘the friendly government of Rhodesia has been made the victim of an outrageous boycott by the US Government’.¹⁰⁴

Following UDI, the White House supported the British sanctions initiative to end the rebellion on both strategic and moral grounds. Johnson also recognized that taking a strong stance on Rhodesia would enhance American prestige in Africa and garner support from liberal whites and African-Americans at home. While publicly supportive of the British position, privately however, LBJ doubted the effectiveness of sanctions. Washington backed London, though, in part due to a fear that if the UK lost control of the

1965, Gen CO 250 Rhodesia, WHCF, Box 65, LBJ Library and Resolution sent to President Johnson by the East Feliciana Teen Age Republican Club, Clinton, Louisiana, March 28 1966, Gen CO 250 Rhodesia, WHCF, Box 65, LBJ Library.

¹⁰⁴ Letter to President Johnson from Congressman Adam Clayton Powell, Chairman House Committee on Education and Labor, November 15 1965, Gen CO 250 Rhodesia, WHCF, Box 65, LBJ Library, Letter to President Johnson from Congressman Benjamin S. Rosenthal, December 16 1965, Gen CO 250 Rhodesia, WHCF, Box 65, LBJ Library, Letter to President Johnson from Congressman H.R. Gross, House Foreign Affairs Committee, December 17 1965, Gen CO 250 Rhodesia, WHCF, Box 65, LBJ Library, Rhodesia/Zambia Situation Report No.23 to Thomas C. Mann from Thomas W. McElhiney, February 18 1966, “Rhodesia, Vol. 2 (3 of 3),” Country File, NSF, Box 97, LBJ Library and Rhodesia/Zambia Situation Report No.29 to Thomas C. Mann from Thomas W. McElhiney, March 3 1966, “Rhodesia, Vol. 2 (3 of 3),” Country File, NSF, Box 97, LBJ Library.

situation then the Afro-Asian bloc, via the UN would seek to impose far more extreme measures which would escalate the simmering situation to a far more volatile level.

Zambian airlift: Despite doubts over its effectiveness, LBJ offers U.S. assistance

In order to protect Western interests and urged by both London and Lusaka, Johnson, despite skepticism over its success, reluctantly agreed to American participation in an emergency airlift to alleviate Zambian oil shortages and expedite copper exports. It also aimed to bolster the local economy before a border closure with its pariah neighbor to the south which the British hoped would end the Rhodesian rebellion.

The White House was well aware of the potential repercussions of a Rhodesian UDI on the export of Zambian copper. The Katangan and Zambian copperbelt produced approximately one quarter of all free world copper. If this supply was to be cut off it would drive up the price of copper on the world market and lead to Britain suffering a substantial loss in foreign exchange earnings and a crisis of confidence in sterling. While the U.S. would be less adversely affected, nevertheless, the scarcity of copper could force the release of copper from the national stockpile and Washington would face increasing pressure from London for large scale financial assistance.¹⁰⁵

UDI presented Lusaka with thorny economic, political and social problems. The Zambian economy was reliant on the good will of Salisbury. The Kariba Power Station on the Rhodesian side of the Zambezi provided the majority of Zambian hydroelectric

¹⁰⁵ CIA Special Memorandum No. 30-65, Possible UK military intervention in Southern Rhodesia, December 21 1965, "Rhodesia, Vol. 1 (2 of 3)," Country File, NSF, Box 97, LBJ Library, Memorandum for the President on the Rhodesian Crisis from Thomas C. Mann, December 22 1965, CO 250 Federation of Rhodesia-Nyasaland, CF, WHCF, Box 11 (1 of 2), LBJ Library, Memorandum for Robert W. Komer from James W. Clark, Chief, International Division, Bureau of the Budget, December 29 1965, Files of Edward K. Hamilton, NSF, Box 3, LBJ Library and Wilson, *The Labour Government*, 182-183.

power while virtually all imports including oil and petroleum products arrived in Zambia via Rhodesian railroads. The immense wealth of the copperbelt could only be profitably harnessed through continued economic and trade ties with her southern neighbour. Copper exports flowed south via Rhodesia and the mines were dependent on coal from Wankie.¹⁰⁶

Nevertheless, President Kaunda, a comparative moderate by African standards, faced pressure both externally from more radical Organization of African Unity leaders and internally from colleagues including Foreign Minister Simon Kapwepwe to take strong action against Salisbury. Kaunda, had hoped to build a peaceful non-racial society on the borders of white-ruled Africa and avoid the racial violence suffered by other newly independent African nations. UDI threatened this noble experiment. Black African emotions ran high and many in the white community, who often played a key role in the civil service and transportation network, were sympathetic towards Salisbury. In a racial flare up in Livingstone, two hundred white railroad workers, many of whom were Rhodesian, went on strike bringing Zambian rail traffic almost to a standstill.¹⁰⁷

Zambia was also becoming increasingly important to the British plan for a 'quick kill' to rapidly bring an end to the nettlesome rebellion. The idea was to intensively reinforce the Zambian economy with oil and POL products to allow it to survive on a

¹⁰⁶ Memorandum from Robert W. Komer, Ways and Means of Maintaining Zambia/Katanga Copper Production, "Rhodesia, Vol. 1 (3 of 3)," Country File, NSF, Box 97, LBJ Library, 516. Memorandum From the Under Secretary of State for Economic Affairs (Mann to President Johnson. Washington, December 22, 1965, FRUS, 1964-1968, Volume XXIV, Africa, and Wilson, *The Labour Government*, 181-182.

¹⁰⁷ 500. Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassy in the United Kingdom, Washington, November 29, 1965, FRUS, 1964-1968, Volume XXIV, Africa, 502. Memorandum From the President's Deputy Special Assistant for National Security Affairs (Komer) to the President's Special Assistant for National Security Affairs (Bundy), Washington, December 6, 1965, FRUS, 1964-1968, Volume XXIV, Africa, CIA Special Memorandum No. 30-65, Possible UK military intervention in Southern Rhodesia, December 21 1965, "Rhodesia, Vol. 1 (2 of 3)," Country File, NSF, Box 97, LBJ Library and Good, *UDI*, 97-98 and 101-112.

‘care and maintenance’ basis then Lusaka would close the border with Rhodesia. Wilson hoped that the slowly tightening diplomatic and economic pressures, especially the oil embargo, would lead to public pressure forcing Smith to either surrender or resign permitting the establishment of a government willing to return to legality on British terms. Zambian participation in sanctions was crucial as thirty percent of Rhodesian foreign revenue derived from sales of goods or services to its northern neighbour.¹⁰⁸

As with the broader strategy of British sanctions, U.S. officials doubted the effectiveness of the plan. The NSC and CIA were pessimistic that the strategy would bring down the RF. There were also fears that a Zambian border closure would actually hurt Lusaka more than it would Salisbury. In a memorandum to LBJ, Komer expressed the fear that the ‘simple fact of the matter is that Ian Smith can strangle Zambia a lot faster than Britain can strangle Smith.’¹⁰⁹

The situation was further exacerbated by the woeful Zambian contingency preparations. By the time of the UDI very little had been achieved by Lusaka to extricate itself from its dependence on Salisbury. Zambia still only had a marginal stockpile of

¹⁰⁸ CIA Special Memorandum No. 30-65, Possible UK military intervention in Southern Rhodesia, December 21 1965, “Rhodesia, Vol. 1 (2 of 3),” Country File, NSF, Box 97, LBJ Library, Telegram from Embassy London to Secretary of State, January 5 1966, “Rhodesia, Vol. 1 (2 of 3),” Country File, NSF, Box 97, LBJ Library, Memorandum for McGeorge Bundy from Rick Haynes, Situation Report: Rhodesian Crisis, January 6 1966, “Rhodesia, Vol. 1 (2 of 3),” Country File, NSF, Box 97, LBJ Library, 502. Memorandum From the President’s Deputy Special Assistant for National Security Affairs (Komer) to the President’s Special Assistant for National Security Affairs (Bundy), Washington, December 6, 1965, FRUS, 1964-1968, Volume XXIV, Africa, 514. Memorandum From the President’s Deputy Special Assistant for National Security Affairs (Komer) to President Johnson, Washington, December 20, 1965, FRUS, 1964-1968, Volume XXIV, Africa, 522. Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassy in the United Kingdom, Washington, January 7, 1966, FRUS, 1964-1968, Volume XXIV, Africa, and Good, *UDI*, 114.

¹⁰⁹ 514. Memorandum From the President’s Deputy Special Assistant for National Security Affairs (Komer) to President Johnson, Washington, December 20, 1965, FRUS, 1964-1968, Volume XXIV, Africa, CIA Special Memorandum No. 30-65, Possible UK military intervention in Southern Rhodesia, December 21 1965, “Rhodesia, Vol. 1 (2 of 3),” Country File, NSF, Box 97, LBJ Library, 521. Memorandum From Ulric Haynes of the National Security Council Staff to the President’s Special Assistant for National Security Affairs (Bundy). Washington, January 6, 1966, FRUS, 1964-1968, Volume XXIV, Africa and Good, *UDI*, 114-115.

coal and almost no supplies of oil and petroleum. Furthermore, the Zambian Government had only just begun the to explore the possibility of developing alternative routes and sources of supply for its vital imports.¹¹⁰

Both London and Lusaka were eager for American involvement in an intensive program to support and reinforce the Zambian economy. As early as December, during talks with the State Department, UK officials raised the question of U.S. participation in an emergency air lift for Zambia which would serve to bring oil and petroleum into Zambia and facilitate the export of copper. Kaunda also urged the White House to assist and Zambian officials warned Washington that an economic collapse could lead to the establishment of a radical leftist government in Lusaka.¹¹¹

During the talks in mid December with Wilson in Washington, LBJ agreed to help the British in a Zambian airlift. The agreement was on the understanding that the support was limited to a two month period while Zambia developed alternative supply routes and was by no means an open-ended undertaking. On December 30, the State Department formally announced American participation in the airlift.¹¹²

¹¹⁰ Good, *UDI*, 94-95.

¹¹¹ 504. Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassy in the United Kingdom, Washington, December 8, 1965, FRUS, 1964-1968, Volume XXIV, Africa, 506. Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassy in the United Kingdom, Washington, December 9, 1965, FRUS, 1964-1968, Volume XXIV, Africa, 507. Memorandum of Telephone Conversation Between the Deputy Secretary of Defense (Vance) and the Under Secretary of State (Ball), Washington, December 11, 1965, FRUS, 1964-1968, Volume XXIV, Africa and Chapter 10 (The United Nations) Sections C, D and E, Department of State Administrative History Vol. 1, Box 4, LBJ Library, Letter to President Johnson from President Kaunda via Embassy Lusaka, December 16 1965, "Chrono (1 of 3)", Files of Ulric Haynes, NSF, Box 1, LBJ Library, Letter to President Johnson from President Kaunda, December 18 1965, "Chrono (1 of 3)", Files of Ulric Haynes, NSF, Box 1, LBJ Library, Memorandum for Robert W. Komer from Rick Haynes, December 23 1965, "Chrono (1 of 3)", Files of Ulric Haynes, NSF, Box 1, LBJ Library and Good, *UDI*, 108.

¹¹² 509. Memorandum From Ulric Haynes of the National Security Council Staff to the President's Special Assistant for National Security Affairs (Bundy), Washington, December 14, 1965, FRUS, 1964-1968, Volume XXIV, Africa, 513. Memorandum of Conversations, Washington, December 16-17, 1965, FRUS, 1964-1968, Volume XXIV, Africa, Chapter 10 (The United Nations) Sections C, D and E, Department of State Administrative History Vol. 1, Box 4, LBJ Library, Good, *UDI*, 106-107 and Lake, "*The Tar Baby*" *Option*, 89-90.

On December 18, one day after the British oil embargo, Salisbury announced it had cut off oil supplies, but not broader trade ties, with Zambia. On December 19, the first RAF Britannia aircraft arrived in Lusaka carrying three thousand gallons of fuel. The Canadian Government also joined the airlift before the end of December. On New Year's Day 1966, Smith, offered to accept crude oil for Lusaka, refine it and ship it north to Zambia. He further stated that he hoped the gesture would lead to restoration of normal relations between Lusaka and Salisbury. The American Consul in Salisbury considered the offer a 'legitimate attempt to make statesmanlike gesture in critical situation' and urged acceptance. The British Government, however, dismissed it as a ploy and Kaunda rejected the offer.¹¹³

Three days later, the U.S. joined the rescue mission. Washington had chartered two Boeing 707s from Pan American World Airways and Trans World Airlines. Each of the giant aircraft was capable of carrying almost thirty tons of cargo per trip. The White House also agreed to assist the British and Zambians in repairing and improving the Great North Road which connected central Zambia to the Tanzanian capital of Dar es Salaam on the Indian Ocean thus giving Lusaka an outlet to the sea.¹¹⁴

The timing of the potential embargo was of paramount importance. If Kaunda succumbed to domestic or external African pressure to close the border before Zambia was able to sustain itself without Rhodesian trade then Lusaka would face severe

¹¹³ Telegram from American Consulate Salisbury to Secretary of State, January 2 1966, "Rhodesia, Vol. 1 (1 of 3)," Country File, NSF, Box 97, LBJ Library, Rhodesia/Zambia Situation Report for Thomas C. Mann from Thomas W. McElhiney, January 4 1966, "Rhodesia, Vol. 1 (2 of 3)," Country File, NSF, Box 97, LBJ Library, Memorandum for McGeorge Bundy from Rick Haynes, Situation Report: Rhodesian Crisis, January 6 1966, "Rhodesia, Vol. 1 (2 of 3)," Country File, NSF, Box 97, LBJ Library, Good, *UDI*, 108-109 and 117 and Watts, *Rhodesia's Unilateral Declaration of Independence*, 176.

¹¹⁴ Rhodesia/Zambia Situation Report for Thomas C. Mann from Thomas W. McElhiney, January 4 1966, "Rhodesia, Vol. 1 (2 of 3)," Country File, NSF, Box 97, LBJ Library, Chapter 5 (Africa), Department of State Administrative History Vol. 1, Box 2 (2 of 2), LBJ Library and Good, *UDI*, 90 and 108-109.

economic dislocation and possible political unrest. U.S. officials also feared that Washington would be obligated to supply Lusaka with all its essential economic needs. The border closure would also prevent the export of Zambian copper. It was imperative that the embargo be imposed by Lusaka at a time when Rhodesia was already so weakened by the existing sanctions, especially oil sanctions, that the the Zambian action would simply become the final 'coup de grace' in ending UDI.¹¹⁵

As early as mid November 1965, U.S. Ambassador Good met with Kaunda and urged restraint regarding any moves to aggravate tensions with Salisbury. Following the Rhodesian decision to cut off Zambian oil supplies Kaunda first threatened a total trade embargo on Salisbury but following a personal warning from Secretary of State Rusk advising against this rash action merely issued a generic threat to take action if Rhodesia continued to threaten Zambian interests.¹¹⁶

In mid January, following the commencement of the airlift, the Zambian Government again threatened to close the border despite the economy not being sufficiently reinforced to survive such a move. Prime Minister Wilson flew to Lusaka to avert any precipitous actions. Johnson, in support of Wilson, wrote to Kaunda assuring him that the crunchtime with Salisbury was approaching but it was essential to get the timing correct. LBJ also reminded Kaunda of the vast efforts and expense undertaken by London and Washington

¹¹⁵ Memorandum for the President on the Rhodesian Crisis from Thomas C. Mann, December 22 1965, CO 250 Federation of Rhodesia-Nyasaland, CF, WHCF, Box 11 (1 of 2), LBJ Library, Memorandum for McGeorge Bundy and Joseph Califano from Robert W. Komer. Copper and the Rhodesian Crisis, January 5 1966, Files of Edward K. Hamilton, NSF, Box 3, LBJ Library and 526. Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassy in the United Kingdom, Washington, January 11, 1966, FRUS, 1964-1968, Volume XXIV, Africa.

¹¹⁶ 496. Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassy in Zambia, Washington, November 13, 1965, FRUS, 1964-1968, Volume XXIV, Africa, 517. Telegram from Department of State to the Embassy in Zambia, Washington, December 22, 1965, FRUS, 1964-1968, Volume XXIV, Africa and Good, *UDI*, 111.

to place Zambia in the position of striking the final blow against Rhodesia. Again Kaunda backed down.¹¹⁷

In Washington, though, officials were also becoming anxious over the increasingly prolonged duration of the 'quick kill' and the spiralling cost of the airlift. Johnson, had initially approved a two million dollar expenditure for the Zambian contingency plan. As early as late December, before the operation had even begun, the projected outlay spiralled to five million dollars due to the airlift expenses proving more costly than anticipated and the U.S. agreement to help improve the overland transportation routes. Haynes counseled that the mission was proving to be ever more expensive and would be increasingly so as the British and Zambians would push for a longer commitment from Washington than the existing two month duration.¹¹⁸

On February 1, London requested that Washington continue the airlift until April 30. British officials assured their U.S. counterparts that Rhodesia would run out of oil and petroleum products by mid April which would cause a significant erosion in white Rhodesian confidence in the RF as Smith had declared that this would never happen. The White House agreed to support the UK and maintain the airlift until the end of April.¹¹⁹

On April 30, the U.S. oil airlift to Zambia ended. The Boeing 707s had completed around five hundred round-trip flights between the Congolese airports at Leopoldville

¹¹⁷ 526. Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassy in the United Kingdom, Washington, January 11, 1966, FRUS, 1964-1968, Volume XXIV, Africa, and Telegram from State Department to Embassy Lusaka, January 1966, "Chrono (1 of 3)", Files of Ulric Haynes, NSF, Box 1, LBJ Library.

¹¹⁸ Memorandum to McGeorge Bundy from Rick Haynes, Situation Report: Rhodesian Crisis, December 13 1965, "Rhodesia, Vol. 1 (2 of 3)," Country File, NSF, Box 97, LBJ Library, Memorandum for President Johnson on the Rhodesian Crisis from Under Secretary of State for Economic Affairs, Thomas C. Mann, December 22 1965, "Rhodesia, Vol. 1 (2 of 3)," Country File, NSF, Box 97, LBJ Library and Memorandum for McGeorge Bundy from Rick Haynes, December 30 1965, "Chrono (1 of 3)", Files of Ulric Haynes, NSF, Box 1, LBJ Library.

¹¹⁹ Memorandum for Robert W. Komer from Rick Haynes, February 2 1966, "Chrono (1 of 3)", Files of Ulric Haynes, NSF, Box 1, LBJ Library and Chapter 5 (Africa), Department of State Administrative History Vol. 1, Box 2 (2 of 2), LBJ Library.

and Elisabethville (the POL was then trucked to Zambia) and transported nearly four million gallons of oil and petroleum products. The total cost to the U.S. Government was four and half million dollars. The airlift and increased oil tanker traffic on the Great North Road provided Lusaka with a much needed accumulation of petroleum stocks although rationing remained in place until August 1968 and oil flowed in through a newly laid pipeline from Dar es Salaam.¹²⁰

The Rhodesian-Zambian border, however, was never closed and the UK hopes for a ‘quick kill’ failed to materialize. Indeed by April, it was becoming clear that the whole program of British sanctions was increasingly unlikely to achieve its intended goal of ending UDI. The British had not only underestimated the determination and solidarity of white Rhodesians when faced by external threats but also failed to counter the growing support that Salisbury received from her de facto allies in the ‘White Redoubt’.¹²¹

It is quite clear that London failed to appreciate the support that Smith and the RF had acquired in the white community. The white Rhodesians were isolated from London not only in terms of distance but also societal values and political outlook. Rhodesia was an insular society with an inherent suspicion, even hostility, of external forces especially the socialist government in Britain. As noted by Donal Lowry, many white Rhodesians were proud of their British heritage but disillusioned with London for allowing the decline of the British Empire. Smith and the RF reflected the values of white Rhodesian

¹²⁰ Chapter 5 (Africa), Department of State Administrative History Vol. 1, Box 2 (2 of 2), LBJ Library, Good, *UDI*, 109-110 and Lake, “*The Tar Baby*” *Option*, 89-90.

¹²¹ CIA Intelligence Memorandum: Effect of UK Sanctions on the economies of Rhodesia and Zambia, April 1966, “Department of State Vol. 4 (1 of 2)”, Agency File, NSF, Box 60, LBJ Library.

society in general and had become representative of Rhodesian cultural and political beliefs.¹²²

In the months following UDI and the imposition of the British sanctions, the reports from Consul Gebelt in Salisbury reflected a growing sense of solidarity among the white community and a unifying of the electorate behind the figure of Smith. As early as November 29 1965, Gebelt reported that the Rhodesian Government enjoyed the firm support of the white population and warned that the imposition of sanctions had helped create a 'laager mentality' which will do more to unite Rhodesians than anything else. The CIA also observed that there was a strong sense of cohesion in the white community and little evidence that this would change in the near future.¹²³

During the first months of 1966, despite British assurances that the Smith government was close to collapse, Gebelt saw little evidence of a desire for regime change in Salisbury. He informed Washington that the imposition of sanctions had served to harden white support of the RF and even those who opposed UDI were now rallying behind Smith. By mid February, it was becoming increasingly clear to the White House that sanctions were not having the desired political effect on the Rhodesian electorate indeed NSC staffer Haynes offered a damning indictment of the sanctions program. He observed that not only had it failed to remove the RF from power but on the contrary 'the

¹²² Lowry, "The impact of anti-communism on white Rhodesian political culture," in *Cold War in Southern Africa*, ed. Onslow, 90-93 and Good, *UDI*, 39-43.

¹²³ Telegram from American Consulate Salisbury to Secretary of State, November 29 1965, "Rhodesia, Vol. 1 (1 of 3)," Country File, NSF, Box 97, LBJ Library and CIA Special Memorandum No. 30-65, Possible UK military intervention in Southern Rhodesia, December 21 1965, "Rhodesia, Vol. 1 (2 of 3)," Country File, NSF, Box 97, LBJ Library.

sharper the economic pinch, the more whites rally behind the Smith regime to the point where Smith is now supported by nearly all whites in Rhodesia.’¹²⁴

By the spring of 1966, it was also becoming increasingly clear that the sanctions, notably the oil embargo, were becoming increasingly ineffective due to Salisbury receiving extensive assistance from Lisbon and especially Pretoria. The Portuguese viewed Rhodesia as a barrier against communist infiltration and shared the concerns of Salisbury regarding the potential upheaval of a rapid transition to black majority rule in Rhodesia or indeed their own African territories. The ruling National Party government in South Africa, as noted by John Daniel, saw Rhodesia as an integral part of a ‘cordon sanitaire, a political and military buffer between the Republic and black-ruled Africa.’ South Africa also possessed long standing commercial, familial, religious and sporting ties to white Rhodesia and among the white South African electorate the Rhodesian Government enjoyed widespread support.¹²⁵

Lisbon and Pretoria, while offering no overt declarations of support or recognition of the Rhodesian Government, were not prepared to commit their respective nations to participate in any form of embargoes or sanctions against Salisbury. South African Prime Minister Verwoerd stated that Pretoria would pursue a policy of ‘non-interference’ and maintain ‘normal and friendly’ relations with both London and Salisbury. At the UN

¹²⁴ Telegram from American Consulate Salisbury to Secretary of State, January 3 1966, “Rhodesia, Vol. 1 (1 of 3),” Country File, NSF, Box 97, LBJ Library, Telegram to Secretary of State from American Consulate Salisbury, February 11 1966, “Rhodesia, Vol. 2 (1 of 3),” Country File, NSF, Box 97, LBJ Library and 530. Memorandum From the President’s Deputy Special Assistant for National Security Affairs (Komer) to President Johnson, Washington, February 17, 1966, FRUS, 1964-1968, Volume XXIV, Africa, Memorandum for Walt W. Rostow from Rick Haynes, April 4 1966, “Department of State Vol. 4 (1 of 2),” Agency File, NSF, Box 60, LBJ Library.

¹²⁵ Letter to President Johnson from Prime Minister Salazar, May 11 1966, LBJ Library, RAC Project Number NLJ-004R-47-2-2-3, John Daniel “Racism, the Cold War and South Africa’s regional security strategies. 1948-1990,” in *Cold War in Southern Africa*, ed. Onslow, 37 and Sue Onslow, “The South African factor in Zimbabwe’s transition to independence,” in *Cold War in Southern Africa*, ed. Onslow, 113.

Portuguese Foreign Minister Franco Nogueira was noncommittal about participation in sanctions and Lisbon emphasized its legal responsibilities as a seaboard entrepot to land locked states.¹²⁶

On January 25, as oil shortages became severe in Rhodesia, Verwoerd gave a speech to the South African Parliament in which he interpreted the policy of 'non-interference' as meaning that South Africa would not stop the continuation of normal trade with Rhodesia. On February 5, it was reported by the Rand Daily Mail that at least three or four fuel tankers carrying oil crossed the Beit Bridge into Rhodesia. Five days later Consul Gebelt informed Washington that fourteen tankers delivered oil from South Africa over a single twenty-four hour period. It was also noted that many of the tankers belonged to South African subsidiaries of American or British oil companies. Gebelt warned that if 'such traffic becomes regularized, this critical weapon in British hands becomes badly blunted.'¹²⁷

Over the month of February, oil from South Africa continued to breach the embargo in ever spiralling amounts. On February 28, Verwoerd, in a campaign speech defined normal trade as selling as much as you can. He stated that 'Normal trade means that everyone in competition tries to sell as much as he can....If one sells more, it is not abnormal trade, but better trade.'¹²⁸

¹²⁶ Rhodesia/Zambia Situation Report No.23 to Thomas C. Mann from Thomas W. McElhiney, February 18 1966, "Rhodesia, Vol. 2 (3 of 3)," Country File, NSF, Box 97, LBJ Library and Good, *UDI*, 22 and 134.

¹²⁷ Rhodesia/Zambia Situation Report No.17 for Thomas C. Mann from Thomas W. McElhiney, January 26-27 1966, "Rhodesia, Vol. 1 (2 of 3)," Country File, NSF, Box 97, LBJ Library, Telegram to Secretary of State from American Consulate Salisbury, February 11 1966, "Rhodesia, Vol. 2 (1 of 3)," Country File, NSF, Box 97, LBJ Library, Rhodesia/Zambia Situation Report No.22 to Thomas C. Mann from Thomas W. McElhiney, February 17 1966, "Rhodesia, Vol. 2 (3 of 3)," Country File, NSF, Box 97, LBJ Library and Good, *UDI*, 127 and 130.

¹²⁸ Rhodesia/Zambia Situation Report No.21 for Thomas C. Mann from Thomas W. McElhiney, February 16 1966, "Rhodesia, Vol. 2 (3 of 3)," Country File, NSF, Box 97, LBJ Library, Rhodesia/Zambia Situation Report No.26 to Thomas C. Mann from Thomas W. McElhiney, February 25 1966, "Rhodesia, Vol. 2 (3 of

Portugal was also conspicuously violating sanctions. In early March, the South African press reported that large volumes of oil were being shipped by rail to Rhodesia from Lourenco Marques while the U.S. Consul General in Mozambique noted the construction of six large oil storage tanks in Beira built with Rhodesian finances. On March 3, as a result of the growing flow of oil from South Africa and Mozambique, the Rhodesian Government allowed a relaxation of the gasoline rationing.¹²⁹

The White House viewed these developments with great concern. Washington was aware that the longer the Rhodesian crisis continued the greater the anger and frustration of the black African nations leading to increased pressure for more radical action. Both London and Washington, however, wished to avoid precipitating an economic or military confrontation with Pretoria through the use of Chapter 7 of the UN Charter or an oil blockade of South Africa. In March, U.S. representatives in Portugal and South Africa informally approached their host governments expressing grave concerns over the oil leakage and warned that pressures for Chapter 7 action would mount if the oil embargo continues to be circumvented.¹³⁰

3)," Country File, NSF, Box 97, LBJ Library, Rhodesia/Zambia Situation Report No.28 to Thomas C. Mann from Thomas W. McElhiney, March 2 1966, "Rhodesia, Vol. 2 (3 of 3)," Country File, NSF, Box 97, LBJ Library and Good, *UDI*, 131-132.

¹²⁹ From Embassy Pretoria to Foreign Office, No.119, 16 February 1966, PREM 13/1137, National Archives, London, Rhodesia/Zambia Situation Report No.35 to Thomas C. Mann from Thomas W. McElhiney, March 11 1966, "Rhodesia, Vol. 2 (3 of 3)," Country File, NSF, Box 97, LBJ Library, Rhodesia/Zambia Situation Report No.30 to Thomas C. Mann from Thomas W. McElhiney, March 4 1966, "Rhodesia, Vol. 2 (3 of 3)," Country File, NSF, Box 97, LBJ Library and Good, *UDI*, 128.

¹³⁰ CIA Special Memorandum No. 30-65, Possible UK military intervention in Southern Rhodesia, December 21 1965, "Rhodesia, Vol. 1 (2 of 3)," Country File, NSF, Box 97, LBJ Library, From Cape Town to Foreign Office, No.150, 15 February 1966 PREM 13/1137, National Archives, London, Memorandum for President Johnson from Robert W. Komer, February 17 1966, "Rhodesia, Vol. 2 (3 of 3)," Country File, NSF, Box 97, LBJ Library, Rhodesia/Zambia Situation Report No.34 for Thomas C. Mann from Thomas W. McElhiney, March 11 1966, "Rhodesia, Vol. 2 (3 of 3)," Country File, NSF, Box 97, LBJ Library, Rhodesia/Zambia Situation Report No.37 for Thomas C. Mann from Thomas W. McElhiney, March 15 1966, "Rhodesia, Vol. 2 (3 of 3)," Country File, NSF, Box 97, LBJ Library and Good, *UDI*, 27.

On April 9, the UNSC passed Resolution 221 which declared that the oil importation to Rhodesia through Mozambique posed a Chapter 7 threat to world peace and called upon the British to use force if necessary to prevent any vessels carrying shipments of oil destined for Rhodesia from reaching Beira. The resolution also instructed the UK to arrest a Greek registered vessel, the *Joanna V*, which was currently in Beira harbour, if she discharged her cargo of oil. London had tabled the resolution two days previously in an obvious attempt to preempt the Afro-Asian group at the UN from pushing for more extreme measures. U.S. representatives supported the British position and voted in favour of the resolution.¹³¹

The UN resolution was met with anger and righteous indignation in both Salisbury and Lisbon. On April 16, Smith castigated London for breaking its solemn pledges not to use force and accused the British of intervening militarily in Rhodesian affairs. Smith also stated that Rhodesia would not use any oil from the *Joanna V* as by so doing Salisbury could endanger the whole world by disturbing the peaceful conditions in Southern Africa. The Portuguese Government criticized Britain and the UN for making Lisbon the 'scape goat' for the failure of the oil sanctions given that the oil for Rhodesia was being supplied by international companies and the leak had originated in South Africa.¹³²

¹³¹ United Nations Security Council Resolution 221, April 9 1966, PREM 13/1113, National Archives, London, Memorandum for Walt W. Rostow from Rick Haynes, April 1966, "Rhodesia, Vol. 2 (2 of 3)," Country File, NSF, Box 97, LBJ Library, Chapter 10 (The United Nations) Sections C, D and E, Department of State Administrative History Vol. 1, Box 4, LBJ Library and Good, *UDI*, 140.

¹³² Communique of the Portuguese Foreign Ministry on the British oil embargo on Rhodesia, April 8 1966, Gen CO 250 Rhodesia, WHCF, Box 65, LBJ Library, Memorandum for Walt W. Rostow from Rick Haynes, April 1966, "Rhodesia, Vol. 2 (2 of 3)," Country File, NSF, Box 97, LBJ Library, Telegram to Secretary of State from American Consulate Salisbury, April 16 1966, "Rhodesia, Vol. 2 (1 of 3)," Country File, NSF, Box 97, LBJ Library.

In terms of actually preventing the passage of oil to Rhodesia the UN resolution achieved little. The British were not prepared to hazard an economic or military confrontation with Pretoria and scrupulously avoided the inclusion of South Africa in the resolution. It is also worth noting that while London asked the UN for permission to use force against vessels suspected of carrying oil to Beira the resolution made no mention of the Mozambican port of Lourenco Marques which would have interfered with South African oil imports. Pretoria continued to allow oil to flow across its northern border and, as pointed out by Smith himself, Portugal continued to supply Salisbury from its refinery in Lourenco Marques. The oil embargo had failed and Rhodesia continued to defy the will of the majority of the international community.¹³³

American participation in the Zambian airlift was motivated by three important factors. The White House wished to avoid the economic repercussions of a loss of nearly 25% of free world copper, wanted to avoid the political collapse of a comparatively moderate African government and while skeptical of the British plan for a 'quick kill', was nonetheless prepared to support its ally in London, at least for a limited period. Washington, however, was not prepared to countenance actions that could lead to an economic or military confrontation with South Africa thus threatening U.S. and Western interests.

The Rho-dents: Salisbury's quasi-diplomacy causes problems for the White House

In the early months of 1966, while the oil embargo was collapsing, Rhodesia was also posing a domestic headache for President Johnson. The Smith government stirred up

¹³³ CIA Intelligence Memorandum: Effect of UK Sanctions on the economies of Rhodesia and Zambia, April 1966, "Department of State Vol. 4 (1 of 2)", Agency File, NSF, Box 60, LBJ Library, Lake, *The "Tar Baby" Option*, 39 and Smith, *Bitter Harvest*, 117.

controversy by establishing the Rhodesian Information Office (RIO) in Washington DC, posing an awkward problem that the White House was unable to overcome. The inability of the LBJ Administration to end the operations of the RIO led to criticism both internationally from black Africa and also domestically from liberals and civil rights groups.

Prior to November 11 1965, Salisbury, had been diplomatically represented in the U.S. by the Office of the Minister of Southern Rhodesian Affairs at the British Embassy in Washington. The Rhodesians who staffed the office, including Senior Counselor Kenneth Towsey and Henry J. C. Hooper, were fully accredited members of British Embassy staff holding diplomatic passports and full privileges. Nevertheless, on October 18, the Southern Rhodesian Minister Bentley held a press conference in which he stated that he expected to be asked to leave the U.S. following the announcement of a UDI.¹³⁴

Following UDI, the Rhodesians on the British Embassy staff became 'out of status' for immigration purposes and lost their diplomatic privileges. Former Minister Bentley and Counselor Towsey were further informed by the Rhodesian Affairs representative at the State Department, Edward W. Mulcahy, that there would be no special arrangements to maintain minimum contact between the U.S. and Rhodesian Governments' as the current administration in Salisbury was not recognized by Washington. Towsey and Hooper, however, remained in the U.S. In January, the American Consul in Salisbury informed the State Department that if Towsey was to be

¹³⁴ Memorandum of Conversation for Robert W. Komer from Rick Haynes, October 12 1965, Files of Edward K. Hamilton, NSF, Box 3, LBJ Library, Memorandum for President Johnson from R.W. Komer, October 18 1965, "Chrono (2 of 3)", Files of Ulric Haynes, NSF, Box 1, LBJ Library, Memorandum to Robert W. Komer from Rick Haynes, February 24 1966, Files of Edward K. Hamilton, NSF, Box 3, LBJ Library and Memorandum for Hayes Redman from Rick Haynes, April 8 1966, "Rhodesia, Vol. 2 (3 of 3)," Country File, NSF, Box 97, LBJ Library and Lake, *The "Tar Baby" Option*, 104-105.

deported then reliable sources had warned him that the Rhodesian Government would close down the U.S. Consulate or expel three members of its staff. Either action would accord Salisbury an authority or a de facto recognition that Washington was reluctant to grant.¹³⁵

On February 4, Hooper filed registration for the RIO with the Department of Justice under the Foreign Agents Registration Act. Hooper himself was named as an agent of the 'Department of External Affairs, Ministry of Information, Government of Rhodesia'. Former Counselor Towsey also became a member of the newly established RIO. The RIO was located at the same address as the former Office of Southern Rhodesian Affairs, 2852 McGill Terrace NW Washington DC. The Rhodesians, despite having had their diplomatic privileges withdrawn, nevertheless, continued to carry their British diplomatic passports.¹³⁶

The RIO, almost immediately began to disseminate information, indeed often slanted propaganda in favor of Salisbury. The office also began to attract support from groupings on the extreme right of the political sphere including Goldwater Republicans, the John Birch Society, Dixiecrats and the Liberty Lobby. NSC staffer Haynes commented that the RIO enjoyed the backing of a 'most vocal and unsavory bunch of right-wing reactionary types'. It is worth noting, however, that Hooper himself told U.S.

¹³⁵ Telegram from Secretary of State to American Consulate Salisbury, November 13 1965, "Rhodesia, Vol. 1 (1 of 3)," Country File, NSF, Box 97, LBJ Library, Memorandum for Hayes Redman from Rick Haynes, April 8 1966, "Rhodesia, Vol. 2 (3 of 3)," Country File, NSF, Box 97, LBJ Library, Telegram from American Consulate Salisbury to Secretary of State, January 11 1966, "Rhodesia, Vol. 1 (1 of 3)," Country File, NSF, Box 97, LBJ Library and Lake, *The "Tar Baby" Option*, 104-105.

¹³⁶ Rhodesia/Zambia Situation Report No.18 for Thomas C. Mann from Thomas W. McElhiney, January 28 to February 11 1966, "Rhodesia, Vol. 2 (3 of 3)," Country File, NSF, Box 97, LBJ Library, Rhodesia/Zambia Situation Report No.19 for Thomas C. Mann from Thomas W. McElhiney, February 12-14 1966, "Rhodesia, Vol. 2 (3 of 3)," Country File, NSF, Box 97, LBJ Library, Memorandum to Robert W. Komer from Rick Haynes, February 24 1966, Files of Edward K. Hamilton, NSF, Box 3, LBJ Library and Lake, *The "Tar Baby" Option*, 104.

officials that he was dismayed by attempts of American racists to associate themselves with the RIO. He further asserted that Salisbury could not win the propaganda war with London if the public were aware of these type of connections.¹³⁷

On February 12, the Department of State issued a public statement regarding the establishment of the RIO. It was made clear that the registration of the office with the Department of Justice in no way implied U.S. approval of the activities of the agent, political faction or regime that it represented. The statement also reiterated U.S. non-recognition of the Rhodesian Government and the acknowledgement of Britain as the sovereign power.¹³⁸

The U.S. statement, though, did little to appease the outraged reaction of the black African nations. Ghana condemned the opening of the RIO while Zambia presented an official protest to the U.S. Embassy in Lusaka criticizing what it saw as the lack of any 'definite statement against the propaganda center opened on behalf of the rebel regime' and hoped it did not become a step towards de facto recognition. African ambassadors in Washington also met at the residence of Zambian Ambassador Soko to consider the issue of the RIO.¹³⁹

Both the White House and the State Department were concerned by the African reaction. Officials were instructed to use the statement of February 12 as the basis of their

¹³⁷ Memorandum for Hayes Redman from Rick Haynes, April 8 1966, "Rhodesia, Vol. 2 (3 of 3)," Country File, NSF, Box 97, LBJ Library, Rhodesia/Zambia Situation Report No.27 to Thomas C. Mann from Thomas W. McElhiney, February 26 to March 1 1966, "Rhodesia, Vol. 2 (3 of 3)," Country File, NSF, Box 97, LBJ Library, Horne, *From the Barrel of a Gun*, 45 and Lake, *The "Tar Baby" Option*, 104.

¹³⁸ Rhodesia/Zambia Situation Report No.19 for Thomas C. Mann from Thomas W. McElhiney, February 12-14 1966, "Rhodesia, Vol. 2 (3 of 3)," Country File, NSF, Box 97, LBJ Library.

¹³⁹ 530. Memorandum From the President's Deputy Special Assistant for National Security Affairs (Komer) to President Johnson, Washington, February 17, 1966, FRUS, 1964-1968, Volume XXIV, Africa, Rhodesia/Zambia Situation Report No.22 to Thomas C. Mann from Thomas W. McElhiney, February 17 1966, "Rhodesia, Vol. 2 (3 of 3)," Country File, NSF, Box 97, LBJ Library and Rhodesia/Zambia Situation Report No.26 to Thomas C. Mann from Thomas W. McElhiney, February 25 1966, "Rhodesia, Vol. 2 (3 of 3)," Country File, NSF, Box 97, LBJ Library.

replies to any protests and highlight that the registration of the RIO with the Justice Department did not signify U.S. approval and that Washington did not recognize the regime in Salisbury. On February 22, Assistant Secretary of State Williams met with the African ambassadors to explain the situation and clarify the position of the U.S. as laid out by the earlier public statement.¹⁴⁰

The establishment of the RIO also excited considerable interest from media outlets and angered domestic civil rights groups. On February 17, the picketing of the RIO by an albeit small group of African-Americans received coverage in both the press and television. Interviews with the protestors and Hooper were published in newspapers and shown on news networks. Civil rights organizations stridently condemned the U.S. Government for permitting the founding of the RIO. In one letter to Johnson, Charles Kindle, Chairman of Foreign Affairs for the United Negro Protest Committee, stated that by 'allowing the Rhodesian rebels to establish an information center in Washington, D.C., the United States is indirectly encouraging the dissemination of false news about racial superiority.'¹⁴¹

In the Johnson Administration, opinions differed greatly over the best approach to adopt to the RIO and the Rhodesians who staffed it. U.S. Ambassador to the UN Goldberg, Assistant Secretary of State Joseph Sisco and Legal Adviser to the State Department Leonard Meeker all advocated immediate deportation of the Rhodesians. It

¹⁴⁰ Rhodesia/Zambia Situation Report No.21 for Thomas C. Mann from Thomas W. McElhiney, February 16 1966, "Rhodesia, Vol. 2 (3 of 3)," Country File, NSF, Box 97, LBJ Library, Memorandum for President Johnson from Robert W. Komer, February 17 1966, "Rhodesia, Vol. 2 (3 of 3)," Country File, NSF, Box 97, LBJ Library and Rhodesia/Zambia Situation Report No.35 to Thomas C. Mann from Thomas W. McElhiney, March 11 1966, "Rhodesia, Vol. 2 (3 of 3)," Country File, NSF, Box 97, LBJ Library.

¹⁴¹ Rhodesia/Zambia Situation Report No.22 to Thomas C. Mann from Thomas W. McElhiney, February 17 1966, "Rhodesia, Vol. 2 (3 of 3)," Country File, NSF, Box 97, LBJ Library, Letter to President Johnson from Charles Kindle, Chairman, Foreign Affairs, United Negro Protest Committee, February 24 1966, TA2 Boycotts-Embargoes, EXTA1, WHCF, Box 4, LBJ Library, Memorandum for Hayes Redman from Rick Haynes, April 8 1966, "Rhodesia, Vol. 2 (3 of 3)," Country File, NSF, Box 97, LBJ Library.

would not only serve to hinder the effectiveness of the RIO but send a strong psychological message to Salisbury and the global community. This position was also shared by Haynes who urged the deportation of these ‘bothersome Rhodesian residents’ or ‘Rho-dents’.¹⁴²

A number of senior figures, however, contested such a move. Under Secretary of State Mann argued that the U.S. should not take such action as the registered agents of other non-recognized regimes including Communist China and Cuba were allowed to remain and establish similar offices. Assistant Secretary of State Williams, certainly no friend of Rhodesia, also opposed deportation on the grounds that it could lead the Rhodesian Government to force the closure of the U.S. Consulate which provided information on the ground and support for Americans in Rhodesia.¹⁴³

In a compromise agreement it was decided that Under Secretary Mann would send a letter to Hooper informing him that RIO would be permitted to continue to operate provided it did not portray itself as representing the Government of Rhodesia but instead a foreign principal or group. Hooper was reminded, though, that he and his colleagues had no official capacity or legal immigration status in the U.S.¹⁴⁴

On February 28, Hooper replied to the Under Secretary stating that ‘it has not been my intention to lay claim to any official capacity in the United States, and my action in filing a registration statement in terms of the Foreign Agents Registration Act was taken on the supposition that no such capacity was in present circumstances available to

¹⁴² Memorandum to Robert W. Komer from Rick Haynes, February 24 1966, Files of Edward K. Hamilton, NSF, Box 3, LBJ Library.

¹⁴³ Memorandum to Robert W. Komer from Rick Haynes, February 24 1966, Files of Edward K. Hamilton, NSF, Box 3, LBJ Library.

¹⁴⁴ Memorandum to Robert W. Komer from Rick Haynes, February 24 1966, Files of Edward K. Hamilton, NSF, Box 3, LBJ Library, Rhodesia/Zambia Situation Report No.27 to Thomas C. Mann from Thomas W. McElhiney, February 26 to March 1 1966, “Rhodesia, Vol. 2 (3 of 3),” Country File, NSF, Box 97, LBJ Library and Lake, *The “Tar Baby” Option*, 104-105.

me.’ Rhodesian supporters in the U.S. associated the warning letter to Hooper with a potential closure of the RIO and urged the White House not to engage in such an action.¹⁴⁵

The RIO, despite the fears of its supporters, remained in place and continued to promote the regime in Salisbury. No further steps were taken to act directly against the ‘Rho-dents’. Towsey, was promoted to run the office in March 1967 and later that year was granted permanent resident status. In March 1968, Hooper also submitted an application for permanent residency. While under review, the UNSC passed Resolution 253 which required all states to prevent entry of persons ordinarily resident in Southern Rhodesia as well as those who have encouraged or will encourage actions of the Smith government. The status of Hooper, however, remained ‘an applicant for adjustment of status to permanent resident’ and he did not face deportation. The RIO was also able to circumvent the further financial restrictions imposed by the UNSC resolution by withdrawing from U.S. bank accounts funded by groups who transmitted money to Rhodesia for charitable purposes and were subsequently refunded by Salisbury in Rhodesian dollars.¹⁴⁶

The establishment and continued existence of the RIO led to repeated criticism from both international and domestic sources. It is also important as it demonstrated the ability of the Rhodesian Government to circumvent the restrictions placed upon it and the limited options available to the White House when Rhodesia used the freedoms inherent

¹⁴⁵ Rhodesia/Zambia Situation Report No.27 to Thomas C. Mann from Thomas W. McElhiney, February 26 to March 1 1966, “Rhodesia, Vol. 2 (3 of 3),” Country File, NSF, Box 97, LBJ Library, Letter to President Johnson from John G. Schmitz, California State Senator, March 3 1966, Gen CO 250 Rhodesia, WHCF, Box 65, LBJ Library and Letter to President Johnson from Robert L. Wyckoff, Attorney at Law, March 3 1966, Gen CO 250 Rhodesia, WHCF, Box 65, LBJ Library.

¹⁴⁶ Lake, *The “Tar Baby” Option*, 104-108.

in American democracy to engage in quasi-diplomacy by establishing an unofficial yet clearly representative office of the pariah regime located in Washington DC itself.

Spring of 1966: LBJ continues to back London and reassures black Africa of U.S. opposition to white minority rule

As noted earlier, by April 1966, it had become clear to U.S. officials that the program of British sanctions would not achieve its stated goal of bringing down the Smith government in Salisbury. Furthermore, the White House was aware that the longer the crisis dragged on the greater the determination of the RF regime to push forward alone or seek any settlement on its own terms.

The Johnson Administration was also cognizant of the fact that the U.S. could not realistically avoid involvement in the Rhodesian issue and it was in the best interests of Washington to aid the British in achieving a internationally accepted settlement. Furthermore, the British objectives could not be achieved without tangible U.S. support and despite the ‘fiction’ that Rhodesia was a British problem, the substantial American support of the UK linked Washington and London together on the Rhodesian question.¹⁴⁷

In the view of the State Department as well as the CIA, the continued existence of the white minority regime constituted a threat to U.S. prestige and influence both in Africa and on the world stage. By the spring of 1966, the Organization of African Unity had become increasingly focused on the problems of Southern Africa especially the eradication of the vestiges of colonial rule. The impotence of black African nations,

¹⁴⁷ Memorandum for Walt W. Rostow from Rick Haynes, April 1966, “Rhodesia, Vol. 2 (2 of 3),” Country File, NSF, Box 97, LBJ Library, Memorandum for Walt W. Rostow from Rick Haynes, April 4 1966, “Chrono (1 of 3)”, Files of Ulric Haynes, NSF, Box 1, LBJ Library and Memorandum for Walt W. Rostow from Rick Haynes, Balance Sheet: Rhodesian Crisis, April 22 1966, “Rhodesia, Vol. 2 (3 of 3),” Country File, NSF, Box 97, LBJ Library.

however, when confronted by the 'staying power of white Rhodesia' led to frustration and even embarrassment when compared to the intractable economic problems of the independent states and the stagnation of the liberation movements.¹⁴⁸

Given the already substantive U.S. involvement, its global role as the preeminent Western power and anti-colonial heritage, any unsatisfactory outcome would have a negative impact on Washington's relations with black ruled Africa. The collective strength of the Organization of African Unity gave the thirty-six member states a powerful voice among the international community and at global forums such as the UN General Assembly. U.S. officials, notably diplomats at the State Department and UN, feared the diplomatic and economic implications of antagonizing the Afro-Asian bloc especially given the Cold War gridlock at the UN Security Council. The White House was urged to give a high priority to ensuring that American policy meshed with African aspirations especially bringing an end to white minority rule in Southern Africa.¹⁴⁹

On April 12, U.S. officials held a Senior Interdepartmental meeting focusing on Rhodesia. It was agreed that the U.S. should continue to play a constructive role in helping to create conditions that would lead to a speedy and acceptable political settlement between London and Salisbury. The decision was also made, however, that America should avoid actions including military or a further escalation of sanctions which would increase Washington's involvement in the crisis.¹⁵⁰

¹⁴⁸ Airgram to all Diplomatic and Consular Posts in Africa, May 4 1966, "Africa General, Vol. 4 (1 of 2)," Country File NSF Box 76, LBJ Library and CIA Special Memorandum No. 8-66, The Current Political Situation and Prospects in Tropical Africa, May 20 1966, "Africa General, Vol. 4 (2 of 2)," Country File NSF Box 76, LBJ Library.

¹⁴⁹ Memorandum for Walt W. Rostow from Rick Haynes, April 4 1966, "Chrono (1 of 3)", Files of Ulric Haynes, NSF, Box 1, LBJ Library and Airgram to all Diplomatic and Consular Posts in Africa, May 4 1966, "Africa General, Vol. 4 (1 of 2)," Country File NSF Box 76, LBJ Library.

¹⁵⁰ Senior Interdepartmental Group, Record of Agreements and Decisions, Fifth Meeting. April 12 1966, "Department of State Vol. 1", Agency File, NSF, Box 56, LBJ Library.

In late April, the British and Rhodesian Governments' announced that they were prepared to begin informal talks without preconditions to ascertain if there existed a basis for formal negotiations. It was illustrative of the growing importance of Anglo-American unity on the Rhodesian issue that Wilson apprised Johnson of this development before publicly announcing it to his own parliament. LBJ assured Wilson of his support in peacefully settling the 'critical problem'.¹⁵¹

The U.S. was aware, however, that Zambian President Kaunda was deeply angered by the British move as he opposed the talks and feared a British compromise deal allowing continued white minority rule. This uneasiness was also shared by civil rights groups within the U.S.. The Portuguese Government, though, was delighted by the resumption of talks. President Salazar wrote a personal message to LBJ stating that Lisbon was advocating a position of moderation to Salisbury and urged Washington to press London to be accomodating during the talks.¹⁵²

The British-Rhodesian talks, though, failed to make any tangible progress. London insisted on a end to UDI then a test of acceptability of the Rhodesian people on an agreed consitutional settlement. For its part, Salisbury sought to settle the constitutional question then consider renouncing UDI provided the British gave assurances that independence would be granted on the basis of that constitutional formula. Any testing of public opinion would take place under the present Rhodesian Government.¹⁵³

¹⁵¹ 534. Message From Prime Minister Wilson to President Johnson, London, April 27, 1966, FRUS, 1964-1968, Volume XXIV, Africa and Good, *UDI*, 150-152.

¹⁵² Letter to President Johnson from Roy Wilkins, Executive Director of National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, May 4 1966, Gen CO 250 Rhodesia, WHCF, Box 65, LBJ Library, Letter to President Johnson from Prime Minister Salazar, May 11 1966, LBJ Library, RAC Project Number NLJ-004R-47-2-2-3 and Good, *UDI*, 155-156.

¹⁵³ Good, *UDI*, 160.

It was also clear, that the Rhodesians were in no mood to make any significant concessions. Prior to the opening of the talks, the Chairman of the RF, Lt. Col. William Knox, publicly declared that Smith would not let white Rhodesia down and would never surrender independence. On June 21, Smith himself told the annual congress of the Rhodesian National Farmers Union that the 'last thing we are going to do is throw in the sponge'. In early July, Prime Minister Wilson announced a pause in the talks to consider the respective positions.¹⁵⁴

While the talks in London and Salisbury dragged on to an unsatisfactory conclusion, in Washington, the Johnson Administration was determined to maintain good relations and reaffirm U.S. interest and support for black Africa. Of particular importance, especially following the British failure to swiftly end UDI was to publicly reiterate American opposition to white minority governance in Southern Africa and commitment to the establishment of majority rule.¹⁵⁵

On May 26, the White House held a reception for African ambassadors to celebrate the third anniversary of the Organization of African Unity. In his address, Johnson stated that it was the 'inalienable right' of all people to control their destiny and enjoy the benefits of self-government. He criticized the 'repugnant...narrow and outmoded policy which in some parts of Africa permits the few to rule at the expense of the many.' LBJ noted that as part of the American national tradition, Washington cannot condone perpetuation of racial or political injustice anywhere in the world and supported

¹⁵⁴ Good, *UDI*, 157-159.

¹⁵⁵ Memorandum to President Johnson from Dean Rusk, Reception for African Ambassadors from OAU States, May 2 1966, "Africa General, Vol. 4 (1 of 2)," Country File NSF Box 76, LBJ Library.

self-determination and majority rule globally and furthermore these principles shape U.S. policy on Rhodesia.¹⁵⁶

As U.S. officials had hoped, the speech was enthusiastically received by black African leaders and was praised by UN Secretary General U. Thant. The British press gave positive reviews while the USSR, in a rare display of unity with Washington, was also supportive, though Moscow hedged its approval by saying it would welcome the remarks if backed up by actions too. Unsurprisingly, the speech received heavy criticism in the Afrikaans press of South Africa. In the influential *Die Burger*, in an editorial entitled 'America Discovers A New Deep South', the paper condemned the projection of American domestic civil rights to white controlled Africa as 'a very dangerous view...and to a false parallelism between the American Negro Problem and white-black relations in southern Africa'.¹⁵⁷

In the view of most American media and press outlets, the most important fact was that President Johnson had made such a speech at all. This of itself signified a major shift in the U.S. approach to white ruled Africa and was generally well received. In the *Chicago News*, though, conservative commentator, William F. Buckley Jr. launched a scathing criticism of LBJ's approach to Rhodesia and South Africa. He noted the hypocrisy of censuring the nations for white political control when such governance had brought material progress and benefits to all Rhodesians whether black and white. He

¹⁵⁶ Remarks of the President at White House Reception Celebrating the Third Anniversary of the Organization of African Union, Office of the White House Press Secretary, May 26, 1966. "Africa General, Vol. 4 (2 of 2)," Country File NSF Box 76, LBJ Library and President Johnson denounces white supremacy rule in African states, News Release from the Democratic National Committee Publicity Division, May 27 1966, B-4150 Johnson Denounces White Supremacy Rule in African States, Records of the Democratic National Committee, Box 89, LBJ Library.

¹⁵⁷ Memorandum for Walt W. Rostow from Executive Secretary Benjamin H. Read, Press and Diplomatic Reactions to the President's May 26 Speech on Africa, June 9 1966, "Africa General, Vol. 5 (3 of 3)," Country File NSF Box 77, LBJ Library.

also stated that the black majority in Rhodesia enjoyed greater freedom than in almost all the states of black Africa many of which were also dominated by black racism under the guise of 'Africa for the Africans'.¹⁵⁸

As noted by the New York Times, however, whether American commentators agreed or disagreed with LBJ on white minority rule in Africa, the salient fact remained that the speech underlined the Johnson Administration's interest in Africa and publicly aligned the U.S., at least theoretically, on the side of majority rule and self determination for all the indigenous peoples of Southern Africa.¹⁵⁹

The actions of the White House during the spring of 1966 reflected a growing realization that Washington could not avoid involvement in the Rhodesian crisis and that the best approach was to support British efforts for a globally acceptable settlement. The LBJ Administration was also cognizant of the need to maintain strong diplomatic and economic ties with the newly independent African states and recognized that any agreement unacceptable to black Africa could prove prejudicial to American interests. It was thus important for Johnson to demonstrate a steadfast commitment to the cause of majority rule in Southern Africa.

As diplomacy fails the White House turns to UN sanctions

The fall of 1966 saw increased U.S. involvement in the Rhodesian question culminating in support for mandatory UN sanctions on the rebel regime. The White

¹⁵⁸ Memorandum for Walt W. Rostow from Executive Secretary Benjamin H. Read, Press and Diplomatic Reactions to the President's May 26 Speech on Africa, June 9 1966, "Africa General, Vol. 5 (3 of 3)," Country File NSF Box 77, LBJ Library and "Johnson on Africa: Double Standard", by William F. Buckley Jr., Chicago News, June 3 1966, B-4150 Johnson Denounces White Supremacy Rule in African States, Records of the Democratic National Committee, Box 89, LBJ Library.

¹⁵⁹ Memorandum for Walt W. Rostow from Executive Secretary Benjamin H. Read, Press and Diplomatic Reactions to the President's May 26 Speech on Africa, June 9 1966, "Africa General, Vol. 5 (3 of 3)," Country File NSF Box 77, LBJ Library.

House, remained eager to see a swift resolution to the crisis and supported British efforts to obtain an equitable settlement at the talks on HMS Tiger. Following the failure of the negotiations, Washington, despite doubts over its effectiveness and domestic opposition, backed the British resolution at the UN which successfully imposed selective economic sanctions on Salisbury.

On September 6, the annual Commonwealth Prime Ministers' Conference began in London. The African delegation at the conference was determined to press the UK to use force against the Smith regime, to declare categorically and unconditionally that there would be no independence before majority rule, known by the acronym NIBMAR, and also to support a resolution of comprehensive mandatory sanctions at the UN Security Council.¹⁶⁰

The British Government itself sought two broad objectives at the conference. The first was to hold the Commonwealth together, the second was to keep the Rhodesian problem, as much as possible under the control of Britain and away from the more radical African nations. London was not prepared to consider the use of force, unequivocally commit to NIBMAR or seek comprehensive mandatory sanctions at the UN.¹⁶¹

At the conference, despite vociferous criticism from the African nations, Wilson was able to achieve a compromise agreement. First, the British would prepare a settlement proposal as an ultimatum to Rhodesia. This would include the termination of UDI, the appointment of a broad based representative administration with which the British would negotiate a new constitution acceptable to the people of Rhodesia as a whole as

¹⁶⁰ 542. Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassy in the United Kingdom, Washington, September 24, 1966, FRUS, 1964-1968, Volume XXIV, Africa and Good, *UDI*, 170.

¹⁶¹ 542. Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassy in the United Kingdom, Washington, September 24, 1966, FRUS, 1964-1968, Volume XXIV, Africa.

well as the world community. Secondly, if this last chance was rejected by Salisbury then the British would support selective mandatory sanctions at the UN Security Council against Rhodesia. It was also agreed that if the Commonwealth nations supported these limited sanctions then London would withdraw all previous offers made to the Rhodesians and publicly declare no independence before majority rule.¹⁶²

On September 7, Foreign Minister Stewart met with Assistant Secretary of State Sisco in Washington to request an American assessment of the feasibility of a UNSC resolution on Rhodesia. The resolution would include mandatory sanctions on the importation of certain Rhodesian products including pig iron and chrome as well as the transit of petroleum products for Rhodesia through Mozambique but not South Africa. Stewart stated that the British goal was to take the minimum action necessary at the UN to hold the Commonwealth together 'without risking UK vital economic interests' and specifically wished to avoid being forced into oil sanctions on SA leading to economic warfare with Pretoria.¹⁶³

The Department of State response was that the U.S. would be prepared to support limited sanctions on pig iron and possibly chrome. Regarding petroleum, officials believed that such a resolution was unlikely to impress the Commonwealth and would fail pass the UNSC as South Africa was the main conduit. Indeed, the British proposal would probably elicit an immediate response to broaden the resolution to include South Africa along with Mozambique. In such an event the U.S. was not prepared to risk the

¹⁶² 542. Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassy in the United Kingdom, Washington, September 24, 1966, FRUS, 1964-1968, Volume XXIV, Africa and Good, *UDI*, 176-177.

¹⁶³ 541. Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassy in the United Kingdom, Washington, September 8, 1966, FRUS, 1964-1968, Volume XXIV, Africa.

international odium of vetoing a potential UNSC resolution which extended the sanctions to cover oil transit from South Africa.¹⁶⁴

It is clear that Wilson wished to ensure that London and Washington remained united on the Rhodesian question and any attempt to expand sanctions to include South Africa. In a message on September 23, Wilson reminded LBJ of the repercussions of imposing sanctions on Pretoria. In his view, this would lead to an economic war with the subsequent excessive damage to British, American and Western interests as well as possible armed conflict. Wilson also stated that the UK alone could not be expected to veto a UN resolution involving South Africa. In an obvious attempt to induce the White House to greater participation, Wilson concluded that 'I think these are really our joint troubles; and if there is anything you feel you can usefully do now, we may be able to avoid finding ourselves jointly in a much more difficult situation which may confront us within the coming months' and urged LBJ to remind Pretoria that a Rhodesian settlement would be in their own best interests.¹⁶⁵

Johnson, aware of the necessity of a swift and internationally acceptable political settlement, informed Wilson that while the U.S. was not prepared to have direct contact with the Rhodesian Government the U.S. Ambassador in South Africa would reiterate support for British policy and remind Pretoria that a settlement was in its own political and economic interests. LBJ also assured Wilson that if 'Smith throws away his last chance, you may depend on our full support for the moves spelled out in your letter. Specifically, we will support your withdrawal of all previous offers to Smith, your

¹⁶⁴ 541. Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassy in the United Kingdom, Washington, September 8, 1966, FRUS, 1964-1968, Volume XXIV, Africa and Chapter 10 (The United Nations) Sections C, D and E, Department of State Administrative History Vol. 1, Box 4, LBJ Library.

¹⁶⁵ 542. Telegram from the Department of State to the Embassy in the United Kingdom, Washington, September 24, 1966, FRUS, 1964-1968, Volume XXIV, Africa.

adoption of a position of no independence before majority rule, and your proposal of limited mandatory economic sanctions in the Security Council.’¹⁶⁶

By late November the prospects of a settlement looked bleak indeed. British efforts to gain Rhodesian agreement for the proposals had proven unsuccessful. Smith insisted that Salisbury would only restore normal relations after a final settlement was signed and he would be ‘mad’ to give up independence for an unknown constitution. On November 4, Rhodesia formally rejected the British proposals. In the House of Commons, on November 22, Wilson declared that he would only meet Smith once ‘Rhodesia has returned to constitutional rule’.¹⁶⁷

The Prime Minister, however, was clearly prepared to be more flexible than his public statement indicated. Two days after his speech Commonwealth Secretary Herbert Bowden was back in Salisbury. Smith offered minor concessions including the use of the 1961 Constitution during the transition period until the test of acceptability was completed and a new constitution approved. This would of course leave the Rhodesian Government in complete control but offered Wilson the appearance of a return to legality. On November 29, the British Government formally offered to meet with Smith for talks on the battleship HMS Tiger off Gibraltar. It is noteworthy, in terms of the importance of U.S. support that Wilson informed LBJ of his decision before telling his own parliament.¹⁶⁸

¹⁶⁶ 544. Telegram from the Department of State to the Embassy in the United Kingdom, Washington, October 18, 1966, FRUS, 1964-1968, Volume XXIV, Africa.

¹⁶⁷ Good, *UDI*, 177-181.

¹⁶⁸ Message to President Johnson from Prime Minister Wilson, November 29 1966, CO 250 Federation of Rhodesia-Nyasaland, CF, WHCF, Box 11 (1 of 2), LBJ Library, 548. Memorandum of Conversation. Washington, December 1, 1966, FRUS, 1964-1968, Volume XXIV, Africa and Good, *UDI*, 182-186.

On December 2, talks between Wilson and Smith began on board the HMS Tiger. On the subject of a new constitution for Rhodesian independence, the discussions progressed positively and the two parties were able to concur on a broad constitutional settlement including unimpeded progress towards majority rule, immediate improvement in the political status of black Rhodesians and guarantees against retrogressive amendments to constitution. Following the advent of majority rule, the white minority would be assured of a 'blocking quarter' in parliament to assure the protection of their rights.¹⁶⁹

The Tiger talks, however, fell apart on the question of the mechanism for the implementation of the constitutional agreement. At the heart of the problem was the issue of which party would possess military and political power in Rhodesia during the period of British sovereignty before the granting of independence. Wilson insisted on the dissolution of the existing Rhodesian Government and the establishment of a broad based government appointed by Governor Gibbs for the interim period. Gibbs would also have legislative power during the interim period although would act on the advice of the ministers. For Smith, this was intolerable as it amounted to a 'surrender and submission of power' and would leave the British in complete control. The Rhodesian leader informed Wilson that while he would sign the document as a correct record of proceedings he needed to return to Salisbury to consult his colleagues.¹⁷⁰

¹⁶⁹ 548. Memorandum of Conversation. Washington, December 1, 1966, FRUS, 1964-1968, Volume XXIV, Africa, CIA Intelligence Memorandum, The Rhodesian Problem after the failure of the Smith-Wilson Talks, December 9 1966, "Rhodesia, Vol. 2 (2 of 3)," Country File, NSF, Box 97, LBJ Library, Good, *UDI*, p.188-190 Smith, *Bitter Harvest*, 129 and Wilson, *The Labour Government*, 310.

¹⁷⁰ CIA Intelligence Memorandum, The Rhodesian Problem after the failure of the Smith-Wilson Talks, December 9 1966, "Rhodesia, Vol. 2 (2 of 3)," Country File, NSF, Box 97, LBJ Library, Good, *UDI*, 191, Smith, *Bitter Harvest*, 129-131 and Wilson, *The Labour Government*, 312-316.

Following the departure of Smith, Wilson wrote to LBJ expressing his frustration at the ‘strangely tantalizing--yet again--ultimately disappointing’ meeting. He claimed that the British had offered a better deal on the independence constitution, return to legality and external guarantees than the Rhodesian Government deserved but nevertheless failed as ‘we are dealing with a very devious and schizophrenic personality’. Wilson noted that the South African Government was leaning heavily on Smith to accept the settlement and proposed that LBJ send a message to Pretoria urging continued pressure on Salisbury.¹⁷¹

Secretary of State Rusk advised the White House not to become directly involved in the settlement especially as the U.S. had not been provided with substantive details of the exact agreement. It was determined instead that Rusk himself would send a general message to the South African Foreign Minister Hilgard Muller urging in broad terms to encourage a settlement. The note to Muller emphasized that the U.S. had not seen the text of the agreement but stated that ‘If this is the fair and equitable settlement it appears to be, I believe that the interests of all of us lie in Mr. Smith’s accepting it. If you agree, I would urge you to try to convince him of the wisdom of reaching agreement with the British.’¹⁷²

On the evening of December 4, the British Cabinet accepted the working document that had been produced by the talks on the Tiger. In Salisbury, however, the Rhodesian Cabinet remained locked in discussions over the settlement throughout the

¹⁷¹ Message for President Johnson from Prime Minister Wilson via Embassy London, December 4 1966, CO 250 Federation of Rhodesia-Nyasaland, CF, WHCF, Box 11 (1 of 2), LBJ Library and Chapter 10 (The United Nations) Sections C, D and E, Department of State Administrative History Vol. 1, Box 4, LBJ Library.

¹⁷² Memorandum for President Johnson from Walt Rostow, December 1966, CO 250 Federation of Rhodesia-Nyasaland, CF, WHCF, Box 11 (1 of 2), LBJ Library and 550. Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassy in South Africa, Washington, December 4, 1966, FRUS, 1964-1968, Volume XXIV, Africa.

day. Finally, Smith announced to the press that while the Rhodesian Government was prepared to accept the constitutional principles it could not accept a return to British rule before the new constitution was secured and voted on by the people. He concluded with the laconic statement; ‘and so, ladies and gentlemen, as you might have guessed, the fight goes on.’¹⁷³

Following the Rhodesian rejection of the Tiger Proposals the British moved swiftly to seek UN sanctions. On December 8, Foreign Secretary Brown tabled a resolution for selective mandatory economic sanctions on Salisbury. The goal, according to Brown was ‘to reduce Rhodesian economic activity and prospects to a point where even the most stubborn members of the Rhodesian Front party could see that there would be no tolerable economic future for their country if their present policy were pursued.’¹⁷⁴

On December 12, U.S. Ambassador to the UN Goldberg made a strong statement of support for the British draft and stated the Washington was supportive of the need for action under Chapter VII of the UN Charter. Intelligence reports, however, indicated serious reservations over the efficacy of mandatory sanctions especially the use of Chapter VII in circumstances where enforcement was almost impossible. As noted by Good, though, it was difficult to identify a better alternative and as a result Washington continued to back the British position at the UN.¹⁷⁵

¹⁷³ Peter Baxter, *Rhodesia: Last Outpost of the British Empire 1890-1980*, (Johannesburg: Galago Press, 2010), 365, Good, *UDI*, 192-193 and Wilson, *The Labour Government*, 317-321.

¹⁷⁴ 552. Memorandum From the Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for International Organization Affairs (Popper) to the Ambassador at Large (Harriman), Washington, December 13, 1966, FRUS, 1964-1968, Volume XXIV, Africa and Good, *UDI*, 203-204.

¹⁷⁵ CIA Intelligence Memorandum, The Rhodesian Problem after the failure of the Smith-Wilson Talks, December 9 1966, “Rhodesia, Vol. 2 (2 of 3),” Country File, NSF, Box 97, LBJ Library, 552. Memorandum From the Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for International Organization Affairs (Popper) to the Ambassador at Large (Harriman), Washington, December 13, 1966, FRUS, 1964-1968, Volume XXIV, Africa and Good, *UDI*, 205.

The draft resolution did not go far enough for the African bloc at the UN. On December 13, Uganda, Nigeria and Mali, on behalf of the African nations, submitted to the UNSC proposals to amend the British resolution to include a comprehensive oil embargo, sanctions on Rhodesian coal and manufactured goods as well as a reminder that ‘appropriate action’ would be taken against violators of mandatory sanctions. It also called upon the UK to declare categorically that it would not grant independence to Rhodesia until majority rule was achieved. London indicated that if necessary it would not oppose the oil provision but the majority of the other amendments were unacceptable.¹⁷⁶

On December 16, the UNSC passed Resolution 232 which imposed selective mandatory economic sanctions on Rhodesia. The resolution represented a compromise deal between London and the African bloc. It determined that the situation in Rhodesia constituted a threat to international peace and security, embargoed Rhodesian export commodities including asbestos, chrome, meat, sugar and tobacco, and prohibited any activity promoting the supply of arms, military equipment, aircraft, motor vehicles and oil. In a veiled warning to South Africa, the resolution also reminded member states that a failure or refusal to implement the sanctions constituted a violation of the UN Charter.¹⁷⁷

In Rhodesia, UNSC Resolution 232 was met with anger and criticism. In his memoirs, Smith noted that Salisbury wrote to the UN challenging the decision on the

¹⁷⁶ 552. Memorandum From the Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for International Organization Affairs (Popper) to the Ambassador at Large (Harriman), Washington, December 13, 1966, FRUS, 1964-1968, Volume XXIV, Africa and Good, *UDI*, 206.

¹⁷⁷ Resolution adopted by the Security Council, Question of Southern Rhodesia, December 16 1966, as attachment to letter to President Johnson from Walt W. Rostow, December 31 1968, “Rhodesia, Vol. 2 (1 of 3),” Country File, NSF, Box 97, LBJ Library and Chapter 10 (The United Nations) Sections C, D and E, Department of State Administrative History Vol. 1, Box 4, LBJ Library.

grounds that if Rhodesia was not an independent state but a part of the UK then how could Britain under international law impose sanctions on itself? Equally, if the UN imposed sanctions on Rhodesia that must represent a de facto form of recognition in which case Salisbury had a right of a hearing at the Security Council. U.S. Ambassador Goldberg, however, explained the U.S. legal rationale for supporting the resolution by stating that Rhodesia was not a 'state' recognized by any nation and the UN resolution was not intervention but action taken at request of London which possessed the legitimate legal authority over Rhodesia.¹⁷⁸

On January 5 1967, President Johnson issued Executive Order 11322, which, under Section 5 of the UN Participation Act, enacted into law the provisions of the UN resolution. It is worth noting, however, that both the British and U.S. implementation of the resolution did not affect the operations of foreign subsidiaries owned or controlled by their nationals. The embargo, therefore, did not extend to U.S. or UK oil subsidiaries in South Africa thus helping to avert an overt clash with Pretoria. A Department of Treasury press release also stated that to avoid cases of 'undue hardship' Treasury would licence imports which had been exported from Rhodesia prior to December 16 1966 and in general issue a licence when payment has been made by Americans prior to January 5 1967.¹⁷⁹

¹⁷⁸ Chapter 10 (The United Nations) Sections C, D and E, Department of State Administrative History Vol. 1, Box 4, LBJ Library and Smith, *Bitter Harvest*, 132.

¹⁷⁹ Memorandum from the Under Secretary of State to Walt W. Rostow, Executive Order to implement Security Council sanctions against Rhodesia, December 22, 1966, "Rhodesia, Vol. 2 (1 of 3)," Country File, NSF, Box 97, LBJ Library, White House Executive Order 11322, Relating to trade and other transactions involving Southern Rhodesia, Office of White House Press Secretary, January 5 1967, CO 250 Federation of Rhodesia-Nyasaland, CF, WHCF, Box 11 (1 of 2), LBJ Library and Rhodesian Transaction Regulations, Department of Treasury, March 11 1967, International Countries: Rhodesia, Papers of Henry Fowler, Box 40, LBJ Library.

The issuance of Executive Order 11322 led to intense criticism of the White House from both political leaders and the American public. Former Secretary of State Dean Acheson condemned them as entirely inappropriate for dealing with Rhodesian internal difficulties while Congressman Hall pointed out that Rhodesia had engaged in no hostile actions against the U.S. and constituted no threat to world peace which would be the only justification for sanctions under the UN Charter. He further observed that there were no sanctions against North Vietnam and that Washington continued to trade with communist nations who aid the North Vietnamese. On a broader level, criticism from Capitol Hill centered around fears that U.S. support for mandatory economic sanctions could lead to use of military force and Washington should not have helped out London because of their less than satisfactory performance on Vietnam.¹⁸⁰

Presidential correspondence also indicated concern and anger regarding the imposition of U.S. sanctions on Rhodesia. Bruce L. Odou, a city councilman from Montebello, California wrote that it appeared that Washington had declared 'war' on Salisbury and reminded LBJ of the great American tradition of non-interference of the internal affairs of any other nation. Spencer McCallie from Chattanooga, Tennessee, stated that he had never written to a President before but felt obliged to do so as he fervently believed that U.S. policy toward Rhodesia was all wrong.¹⁸¹

¹⁸⁰ Letter to President Johnson from Congressman Durwood G. Hall, January 5 1967, Gen CO 250 Rhodesia, WHCF, Box 65, LBJ Library Letter to President Johnson from Congressman H.R. Gross, January 5 1967, Gen CO 250 Rhodesia, WHCF, Box 65, LBJ Library and Memorandum for President Johnson from Joe Califano, February 23 1967, CO 250 Federation of Rhodesia-Nyasaland, CF, WHCF, Box 11 (1 of 2), LBJ Library and DeRoche, *Black, White and Chrome*, 151.

¹⁸¹ Letter to President Johnson from Bruce L. Odou, City Councilman of Montebello, California, January 9 1967, Gen CO 250 Rhodesia, WHCF, Box 65, LBJ Library, Letter to President Johnson from Spencer McCallie, Missionary Ridge, Chattanooga, Tennessee, January 9 1967, Gen CO 250 Rhodesia, WHCF, Box 65, LBJ Library and Letter to President Johnson from Wesley Bolin, Secretary of State, Arizona, March 1 1967, Gen CO 250 Rhodesia, WHCF, Box 65, LBJ Library.

In terms of the effectiveness of the UN sanctions, the CIA warned the White House that they were unlikely to achieve the desired result of bringing down the Smith government or ending the rebellion. The agency stated that South Africa and Portugal would continue to support Salisbury and this would allow the Rhodesian economy to function at close to present levels. The report also pointed out that there was a worldwide demand for Rhodesian agricultural and mineral products and that UK companies, communist nations and Afro-Asian states had surreptitiously been trading with Rhodesia since UDI. Furthermore, Salisbury had now gained experience in sanctions busting and increased international pressure would merely stiffen white resolve and rally support behind Smith.¹⁸²

The CIA analysis would prove to be correct. South African Prime Minister B.J. Vorster stated Pretoria would not participate in sanctions whether voluntarily or under compulsion while Lisbon continued to insist on a policy of neutrality. While the Rhodesian tobacco and sugar industries suffered damage, mineral exports remained a key part of the economy. Indeed, according to Smith, chrome from his home town of Selukwe, was exported to the USSR which then sold an inferior grade of its own chrome to the U.S. at double the price. Rhodesian imports and exports continued to flow through Mozambique or South Africa, albeit at a price, and customers included British and Japanese companies. In the words of Good, 'It was not for nothing that grateful Rhodesians displayed car stickers reading 'Muito obrigado, Mocambique' or 'Dankie

¹⁸² CIA Intelligence Memorandum, Rhodesia and Zambia: From Voluntary to Mandatory Sanctions, January 1967, as attachment to memorandum for the National Security Council from Executive Secretary Bromley Smith, January 23 1967, CO 250 Federation of Rhodesia-Nyasaland, CF, WHCF, Box 11 (1 of 2), LBJ Library.

Suid Afrika'. Occasionally a cynical Rhodesian would add 'Dankie Suid Afrika, plus 10 per cent'.¹⁸³

In Washington, officials were concerned by the prospect of a further prolonged period of de facto Rhodesian 'independence' potentially leading to a reduction of U.S. prestige in Africa, racial conflict and communist meddling, but saw no feasible option for the U.S. other than to continue to support the British position. and provide London with the maximum leverage to reach an acceptable settlement. At a NSC meeting on January 25, it was agreed that economic sanctions were not going to succeed and there was no realistic way to stop South Africa from continuing to aid Rhodesia. The decision was reached that the best policy for the U.S. was to urge the British to resume negotiations with Rhodesia and to use American leverage to try to bring the parties together and achieve a viable agreement.¹⁸⁴

In Rhodesia itself, the year of 1967 brought some ominous signs of the beginning of a long term insurgency by the black Nationalist groups. In July, approximately two hundred guerrillas crossed the Zambezi and engaged in fighting with the Rhodesian security forces. While the military were able to stop the incursion it took nearly a month to do so and seven Rhodesian security personnel were killed. On October 25, the Minister for Law and Order, Lardner-Burke told the Rhodesian Parliament that the raid signified 'a serious threat and probably a mounting one, and we must be prepared.'¹⁸⁵

¹⁸³ Good, *UDI*, 207-218 and Smith, *Bitter Harvest*, 135.

¹⁸⁴ 553. Paper Prepared in the Department of State. Washington, January 23, 1967, FRUS, 1964-1968, Volume XXIV, Africa, 556. Summary Notes of the 567th Meeting of the National Security Council, Washington, January 25, 1967, FRUS, 1964-1968, Volume XXIV, Africa and Summary Notes of 572nd NSC Meeting July 17 1967, "Vol.4 Tab 54 African Problems", NSC Meetings File, NSF, Box 2, LBJ Library.

¹⁸⁵ Baxter, *Rhodesia*, 366-367 and Good, *UDI*, 233-238.

As the year progressed, South Africa became increasingly involved in the Rhodesian counterinsurgency efforts. The intervention of Pretoria was based not only on a shared belief in a white controlled Africa but also concerns that if Rhodesia fell to a radical black nationalist movement then South Africa would have lost an integral part of its own cordon sanitaire. The anxieties of the South African leadership were heightened by the fact that the guerrilla incursions into Rhodesia were joint operations conducted by both the Zimbabwe African People's Union (ZAPU) and Umkonto we Sizwe, the armed wing of the South African ANC.¹⁸⁶

In September, the number of South African 'riot police' units in the Zambezi Valley rose to two thousand men. In response to a formal diplomatic complaint by London over the South African presence, Vorster responded that the units had been dispatched at the request of Salisbury and would remain as long as necessary. The Rhodesian Government policies on racial issues also appeared to be falling in line with Pretoria. This was demonstrated by the the passage of the Municipal Amendment Act which segregated recreational facilities and the Residential Protection Bill which prevented Asians and 'Coloreds' from owning property in white areas. Black Africans had already been excluded by the Land Apportionment Act.¹⁸⁷

Despite the increase in insurgent activity, the CIA advised the White House that the liberation movements in Rhodesia stood little chance of success in the near future. The intelligence community believed that neither ZAPU nor the Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU) possessed sufficient indigenous support, suffered from

¹⁸⁶ Daniel, "Racism, the Cold War and South Africa's regional security strategies", in *Cold War in Southern Africa*, ed. Onslow, 38-39 and Baxter, *Rhodesia*, 366-367.

¹⁸⁷ Baxter, *Rhodesia*, 366-367, Daniel, "Racism, the Cold War and South Africa's regional security strategies", in *Cold War in Southern Africa*, ed. Onslow, 38-39 and Good, *UDI*, 228-230 and p.240.

factionalism and were unlikely to expand insurgency operations sufficiently to shake determination of the Rhodesian Government. In contrast, the white minority regime retained a steely resolve to remain in power and possessed the necessary military might to destroy any black nationalist threat to its security.¹⁸⁸

The success of the Rhodesian regime in maintaining white minority rule and de facto independence increasingly concerned the Johnson Administration. The prolonged existence of the Smith government in Salisbury was seen as potentially sparking a racial conflict in the region, encouraging communist intervention and was clearly detrimental to U.S. interests in black Africa. The White House therefore supported British efforts to obtain an acceptable agreement at the Tiger talks and backed the UK on the question of mandatory sanctions. While U.S. officials expressed reservations over the effectiveness of the embargo, the White House recognized there was no realistic alternative other than offering political and economic leverage to the British in hope of attaining an equitable and internationally supported solution.

The Salisbury hangings lead to further sanctions

On March 6 1968, three black African inmates were hung in Salisbury Central Prison. The executions caused outrage in the international community and vociferous condemnation of Rhodesia. In Washington, the Johnson Administration recognized the moral and strategic necessity of a UN response to punish Salisbury and assuage the anger of the Afro-Asian bloc. The White House, however, wished to avoid the imposition of

¹⁸⁸ National Intelligence Estimate Number 70-1/67: The Liberation Movements of Southern Africa, submitted by the Deputy Director of Central Intelligence, concurred in by the United States Intelligence Board, November 24 1967, "70, South and East Africa", National Intelligence Estimates File, NSF, Box 8, LBJ Library.

radical or unenforceable measures or steps that would place UN punitive actions in conflict with the U.S. judicial system and provoke an major domestic controversy.¹⁸⁹

Two of the condemned men, Victor Mlambo and James Dhlamini, had been members of a ZANU guerrilla band known as the Crocodile Gang. On July 5 1964, near Umtali, Mlambo and Dhlamini had murdered a white farmer named Petrus Johannes Oberholzer. The two guerrillas had been convicted and sentenced to death in December 1964. The third prisoner, Duly Shadreck, had murdered a tribal Chief following a violent argument over the Chief's support for the Smith government.¹⁹⁰

Despite the convictions, Salisbury had procrastinated over the enactment of capital punishment. Under Rhodesian law, any death sentences had to be signed by the British Governor. Following UDI, Salisbury was unwilling submit any cases to the Officer Administering the Government, Clifford Dupont, to avoid a defense counsel raising with the High Court judiciary the potentially embarrassing question of the legality of the regime. No executions therefore were carried out and the three inmates remained alive in prison. On August 31 1967, however, the Rhodesian Government announced that the sentences would be carried out. In February 1968, after a prolonged legal battle the Appellate Division of the Rhodesian High Court decided that the de facto government had the duty to govern including 'the unpleasant task' of death sentences.¹⁹¹

¹⁸⁹Memorandum for Walt W. Rostow from Benjamin R. Read, Status Report on Southern Rhodesia, April 7 1968, "Rhodesia, Vol. 2 (1 of 3)," Country File, NSF, Box 97, LBJ Library, Chapter 10 (The United Nations) Sections C, D and E, Department of State Administrative History Vol. 1, Box 4, LBJ Library, 562. Information Memorandum From the Assistant Secretary of State for International Organization Affairs (Sisco) to Secretary of State Rusk, Washington, March 8, 1968, FRUS, 1964-1968, Volume XXIV, Africa and 563. Paper Prepared in the Department of State, Washington, May 9, 1968, FRUS, 1964-1968, Volume XXIV, Africa and Good, *UDI*, 242.

¹⁹⁰ Peter Godwin, *Mukiwa: A White Boy in Africa*, (New York: Grove Press, 2004), 3-20, Terence Ranger, "Violence Variousy Remembered: The Killing of Pieter Oberholzer in July 1964" in *History in Africa*, Vol. 24, (1997), 273 and Good, *UDI*, 243.

¹⁹¹ Good, *UDI*, 243-246.

On March 2, at the request of Prime Minister Wilson, the Queen issued a Royal Reprieve which commuted the sentences to life in prison. Rhodesian Chief Justice Beadle, however, stated that the nature of the de facto governance and the internal sovereignty granted by the 1961 Constitution meant that only Salisbury could exercise clemency. On March 5, the Rhodesian Cabinet sat for seven hours considering the issue. It was decided that the viability of the government and the security of the nation required full retribution for acts of terrorism and therefore the condemned men must be executed.¹⁹²

Following the executions, Salisbury was subjected to strident condemnation from much of global community. In the UK, Secretary of State for Commonwealth Affairs George Thomson expressed 'shock and outrage' at the Rhodesian actions. It is worth noting, that for Britain, the executions were not only morally questionable but represented an ultimate act of defiance against the constitutional authority of the British Crown.¹⁹³

On March 19, the UNSC met to discuss the executions and a suitable UN response. The Afro-Asian bloc pushed for strong action including use of force, broader mandatory sanctions backed by enforcement measures to ensure South African and Portuguese compliance and the severance of all communication links to Rhodesia. Britain, for its part, advocated a less radical response encompassing comprehensive sanctions, a limited travel ban on all persons ordinarily resident in Rhodesia and who

¹⁹² Godwin, *Mukiwa*, 20 and Good, *UDI*, 243-246.

¹⁹³ Baxter, *Rhodesia*, 368 and Good, *UDI*, 243-244.

were believed to be involved in activities calculated to evade sanctions, as well as the expansion of the role of the UN Secretary-General in policing sanctions.¹⁹⁴

In Washington, the White House sought to assist British position at the UN but also wished to avoid actions that would contravene U.S. law, lead to adverse domestic reaction or were simply unenforceable. Both London and Washington agreed that a resolution calling for the use of force, severance of communications or enforcement measures against Lisbon and Pretoria were totally unacceptable.¹⁹⁵

The White House, however, also expressed concerns over a number of British suggestions including a travel ban affecting U.S. citizens as it would lead to domestic political problems and stopping transport services to and from Rhodesia due to the potential impact on the Zambian economy. London was also informed that the U.S. wished to maintain its consular establishment in Salisbury and had no legal basis to act against the RIO in Washington. The U.S. also expressed doubts over the effectiveness of comprehensive sanctions, noting the difficulties in implementation and enforcement, but recognized that it represented the best course of action to deflect more radical proposals and agreed to support such an embargo.¹⁹⁶

¹⁹⁴ Memorandum for Walt W. Rostow from Roger Morris, March 19 1968, "Rhodesia, Vol. 2 (1 of 3)," Country File, NSF, Box 97, LBJ Library, Memorandum for Walt W. Rostow from Benjamin R. Read, Status Report on Southern Rhodesia, April 7 1968, "Rhodesia, Vol. 2 (1 of 3)," Country File, NSF, Box 97, LBJ Library and Chapter 10 (The United Nations) Sections C, D and E, Department of State Administrative History Vol. 1, Box 4, LBJ Library.

¹⁹⁵ Memorandum for Walt W. Rostow from Benjamin R. Read, Status Report on Southern Rhodesia, April 7 1968, "Rhodesia, Vol. 2 (1 of 3)," Country File, NSF, Box 97, LBJ Library, Chapter 10 (The United Nations) Sections C, D and E, Department of State Administrative History Vol. 1, Box 4, LBJ Library, 562. Information Memorandum From the Assistant Secretary of State for International Organization Affairs (Sisco) to Secretary of State Rusk, Washington, March 8, 1968, FRUS, 1964-1968, Volume XXIV, Africa and 563. Paper Prepared in the Department of State, Washington, May 9, 1968, FRUS, 1964-1968, Volume XXIV, Africa.

¹⁹⁶ Memorandum for Walt W. Rostow from Benjamin R. Read, Status Report on Southern Rhodesia, April 7 1968, "Rhodesia, Vol. 2 (1 of 3)," Country File, NSF, Box 97, LBJ Library and Chapter 10 (The United Nations) Sections C, D and E, Department of State Administrative History Vol. 1, Box 4, LBJ Library.

On May 29, the UNSC unanimously adopted Resolution 253 against Rhodesia. The resolution implemented a comprehensive mandatory trade embargo on Rhodesia, called on member states to prevent the entry of Rhodesian passport holders or individuals ordinarily resident in Rhodesia and whom it was believed to have furthered or likely to further the interests of Salisbury, prohibited investments or transfer of funds to Rhodesia, tightened transportation restrictions and called for a UN committee to monitor the progress of the embargo. The resolution also contained two non-mandatory provisions that member states cut off communications and withdraw consular and trade representation. Overtly radical measures, however, had been avoided after London and Washington made representations to the other members of the UNSC.¹⁹⁷

On July 29, Johnson issued Executive Order 11419 which implemented the mandatory provisions of the UNSC resolution. By so doing LBJ prohibited virtually all financial and trade transactions between the U.S. and Rhodesia. The White House was aware, however, that the intelligence community doubted the effectiveness of the UN embargo. The CIA observed that South Africa and Portugal would continue their policies of non-compliance which would allow Rhodesia to sell sufficient exports and obtain the necessary imports. Furthermore, the Rhodesian economy had become more self sufficient

¹⁹⁷ Status Report on Southern Rhodesia, as attachment to memorandum for Walt W. Rostow from Benjamin H. Read, May 9 1968, "Rhodesia, Vol. 2 (1 of 3)," Country File, NSF, Box 97, LBJ Library, 564. Memorandum From the Under Secretary of State (Katzenbach) to President Johnson, Washington, May 28, 1968, FRUS, 1964-1968, Volume XXIV, Africa, United Nations Security Council Resolution 253 adopted at its 1428th meeting on 29 May 1968, as attachment to letter to President Johnson from Walt W. Rostow, December 31 1968, "Rhodesia, Vol. 2 (1 of 3)," Country File, NSF, Box 97, LBJ Library, Chapter 5 (Africa), Department of State Administrative History Vol. 1, Box 2 (2 of 2), LBJ Library and Chapter 10 (The United Nations) Sections C, D and E, Department of State Administrative History Vol. 1, Box 4, LBJ Library.

than at any time during the UDI. Salisbury could not only feed itself but also produced a wide range of manufactured goods for its domestic requirements.¹⁹⁸

The Johnson Administration had voted in favor of Resolution 253 as it was deemed tolerable and avoided the imposition of more radical measures. The White House was especially pleased with the formation of a UN committee to supervise the implementation of sanctions. U.S. representatives had pressed for the inclusion of this measure as commercial interests felt they were being asked to adhere to sanctions more strictly than in a number of other countries. Regarding the non-mandatory measures, Ambassador Goldberg stated that the U.S. would not cut off communication links to Rhodesia. Regarding the consular representation in Salisbury, it was decided to maintain the consulate as it offered protection for the over one thousand U.S. citizens in Rhodesia, supplied vital intelligence reports and provided a focal liaison with the other nine nations with consular or other missions in Salisbury.¹⁹⁹

Fearless Talks: LBJ supports Wilson's diplomacy but fears the implications of a British sell out

In October of 1968 the British and Rhodesians met once again on a warship anchored off Gibraltar in order to try to reach a mutually acceptable agreement to end

¹⁹⁸ Executive Order 11419: Relating to trade and other transactions involving Southern Rhodesia, July 29 1968, as attachment to letter to President Johnson from Walt W. Rostow, December 31 1968, "Rhodesia, Vol. 2 (1 of 3)," Country File, NSF, Box 97, LBJ Library, Chapter 5 (Africa), Department of State Administrative History Vol. 1, Box 2 (2 of 2), LBJ Library, CIA Intelligence Memorandum, Rhodesia: A Third Round of Sanctions, June 1968, "Rhodesia, Vol. 2 (1 of 3)," Country File, NSF, Box 97, LBJ Library.

¹⁹⁹ 564. Memorandum From the Under Secretary of State (Katzenbach) to President Johnson, Washington, May 28, 1968, FRUS, 1964-1968, Volume XXIV, Africa, 565. Action Memorandum From the Assistant Secretary of State for International Organization Affairs (Sisco) and the Deputy Assistant Secretary for African Affairs (Quimby) to Secretary of State Rusk, Washington, June 10, 1968, FRUS, 1964-1968, Volume XXIV, Africa, Memorandum for President Johnson from Walt W. Rostow, May 29 1968, "Meetings with the President, May-June 1968 (2 of 5)", Files of Walt W. Rostow, NSF, Box 2, LBJ Library and Chapter 10 (The United Nations) Sections C, D and E, Department of State Administrative History Vol. 1, Box 4, LBJ Library.

UDI. The White House, while in favor of any solution which was broadly acceptable to the international community was nevertheless guarded in terms of endorsing any potential settlement. The Johnson Administration encouraged British efforts but also feared that London, for the sake of expediency, might settle for a compromise which while ending UDI could be viewed by African states as a sell out of black Rhodesian political rights and majority rule. If such a deal was struck, Washington would be placed in the unenviable dilemma of either being seen globally as backing a settlement that explicitly allowed continued white minority rule or would be forced to overtly and unequivocally disassociate the U.S. from the British stance on Rhodesia and by so doing aggravate a key Cold War ally.

In a speech to the British Parliament following the executions, Wilson had labelled the Rhodesian Government as 'essentially evil' and stated he had taken a serious risk in negotiating with such men and offering them independence before majority rule. The British leader, however, was a pragmatist and in September dispatched a senior Commonwealth Office official, James Bottomley, to Salisbury to gauge the receptiveness of the Rhodesian Cabinet to the prospect of talks. Bottomley reported that Smith was receptive to a settlement based on the Tiger proposals but steadfastly opposed NIBMAR and the return to legality remained a stumbling block.²⁰⁰

On September 28, Wilson, via Governor Gibbs, invited Smith to join him at Gibraltar for formal talks aboard the HMS Fearless. In London, the Labour Government was under increasing pressure from the business community and vocal Conservative critics to engage in new negotiations. Wilson also viewed the recent resignations of

²⁰⁰ Baxter, *Rhodesia*, 368-369, Good, *UDI*, 255-256, Smith, *Bitter Harvest*, 140-141 and Wilson, *The Labour Government*, 565-567.

William Harper and Lord Graham, both hardliners on racial issues, from the Rhodesian Cabinet as a sign that Smith was willing to compromise. In early October Smith formally accepted the offer.²⁰¹

It is likely that the Rhodesian willingness to meet stemmed primarily from South African pressure to end the intransigent problem. While Pretoria was prepared to offer economic and military aid to Salisbury, the South Africans also realized that if left unresolved the situation could become an international liability. Such a scenario could only be to the detriment of South Africa itself. The growth of the guerrilla insurgency and fears over the long term effects of comprehensive sanctions also undoubtedly influenced the Rhodesian decision.²⁰²

In a letter to Johnson, Wilson reassured the White House that any settlement would not represent a sacrifice of the rights and interests of the black Rhodesians. The Head of the British Residual Mission in Salisbury affirmed to U.S. Consul Paul O'Neill that the UK Government would not grant independence unless there was a blocking quarter of elected black Africans in the Rhodesian Parliament, right of appeal to Privy Council on constitutional changes and the formation of a broader based government. O'Neill warned the State Department, however, that the first two positions were only acceptable to

²⁰¹ 568. Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassy in the United Kingdom. Washington, October 8, 1968. FRUS, 1964-1968, Volume XXIV, Africa, David Smock, "The Forgotten Rhodesians" in *Foreign Affairs*, New York: Council of Foreign Relations, April 1969, 535-538, Good, *UDI*, 263-269 and Wilson, *The Labour Government*, 567.

²⁰² CIA Special Memorandum No.21-68, What next for Rhodesia?, November 15 1968, "Rhodesia, Vol. 2 (1 of 3)," Country File, NSF, Box 97, LBJ Library, 568. Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassy in the United Kingdom, Washington, October 8, 1968, FRUS, 1964-1968, Volume XXIV, Africa, Smock, "The Forgotten Rhodesians" in *Foreign Affairs*, April 1969, 535-538, Good, *UDI*, 260.

Salisbury if modified and Smith viewed the demand for a change in government as 'humiliating'.²⁰³

On October 8, negotiations began aboard the *Fearless*. The British Government, despite its assurances to Washington, in fact offered Rhodesia an exceedingly generous compromise settlement regarding the terms for independence. Wilson dropped the commitment to NIBMAR and only asked for a commitment to majority rule. In terms of the return to legality, there would be no period of direct British rule and thus any test of acceptability would take place under the control of the Rhodesian Government.²⁰⁴

As noted by Peter Baxter, the Rhodesians should have been delighted with the settlement but instead the talks stalled when Smith and his colleagues took issue with the 'apparently innocent clause' that any individual could make an appeal to the British Privy Council on matters of legislation. Smith believed that was inherently wrong that 'a British court could decide as to whether the Rhodesian Parliament was making the correct political decisions.' Smith left for Salisbury with a document stating the British terms for independence including entrenched provisions protected by an African blocking quarter in parliament and the external safeguard of Privy Council.²⁰⁵

On October 22, the Rhodesian Government sent an aide memoire to London which indicated that if the Privy Council problem could be removed then all other issues were

²⁰³ Telegram to Secretary of State from American Consulate, Salisbury, British propose new Wilson-Smith meeting, October 1968, "Rhodesia, Vol. 2 (1 of 3)," Country File, NSF, Box 97, LBJ Library and 568. Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassy in the United Kingdom, Washington, October 8, 1968, FRUS, 1964-1968, Volume XXIV, Africa.

²⁰⁴ CIA Special Memorandum No.21-68, What next for Rhodesia?, November 15 1968, "Rhodesia, Vol. 2 (1 of 3)," Country File, NSF, Box 97, LBJ Library, Memorandum for Walt W. Rostow from Roger Morris, Rhodesian Talks, November 15 1968, "Rhodesia, Vol. 2 (1 of 3)," Country File, NSF, Box 97, LBJ Library, Baxter, *Rhodesia*, 369 and Good, *UDI*, 272-274.

²⁰⁵ CIA Special Memorandum No.21-68, What next for Rhodesia?, November 15 1968, "Rhodesia, Vol. 2 (1 of 3)," Country File, NSF, Box 97, LBJ Library, Memorandum for Walt W. Rostow from Roger Morris, Rhodesian Talks, November 15 1968, "Rhodesia, Vol. 2 (1 of 3)," Country File, NSF, Box 97, LBJ Library, Baxter, *Rhodesia*, 369, Good, *UDI*, 272-274 and Smith, *Bitter Harvest*, 145.

resolvable. In early November, while a British counter offer preserved the review powers of the Privy Council it left the last word on the amendment of the constitution within Rhodesia. In exchange, the British requested that Salisbury accept all other points at issue including the formation of a broad based interim government and allow ZANU and ZAPU to be politically active.²⁰⁶

The White House had adopted a cautious approach to the Fearless talks. It was believed that the best posture was to remain broadly supportive of the UK unless London so clearly betrayed the principle of unimpeded progress toward majority rule as to force Washington to consider explicit detachment from the British position. By early November, officials were confident that London and Salisbury would reach agreement on the terms for independence. The Rhodesian question began to shift from how to help achieve a satisfactory settlement, to whether this particular agreement would be internationally accepted and how the U.S. should treat a 'legitimate' Rhodesia especially if it remained a pariah state. As noted by the NSC staffer for African Affairs Roger Morris, the key issue was whether the White House would be forced to decide between the American moral and political position in black Africa and a public break with UK.²⁰⁷

As it turned out, the White House was never required to deliberate over such a potentially hazardous decision. By mid November there had been no movement at all towards an agreement and talks adjourned on November 17. While Smith had accepted

²⁰⁶ Telegram to Secretary of State from American Embassy London, Rhodesia: New instructions for Thomson, November 1968, "Rhodesia, Vol. 2 (1 of 3)," Country File, NSF, Box 97, LBJ Library, Memorandum for Walt W. Rostow from Roger Morris, Rhodesian Talks, November 15 1968, "Rhodesia, Vol. 2 (1 of 3)," Country File, NSF, Box 97, LBJ Library, Good, *UDI*, p.276-281, Smith, *Bitter Harvest*, 145-147 and Wilson, *The Labour Government*, 575.

²⁰⁷ CIA Special Memorandum No.21-68, What next for Rhodesia?, November 15 1968, "Rhodesia, Vol. 2 (1 of 3)," Country File, NSF, Box 97, LBJ Library, Memorandum for Walt W. Rostow from Roger Morris, Rhodesian Talks, November 15 1968, "Rhodesia, Vol. 2 (1 of 3)," Country File, NSF, Box 97, LBJ Library.

the proposals for a broad based interim government and the internal safeguard of an African blocking quarter in parliament, the Privy Council issue remained a stumbling block and the Rhodesians also opposed the concept of the banned terrorist organizations being allowed to resume political activity. On November 19, in a public broadcast, Smith commented that it had become clear that the British were 'obsessed' with the question of black majority rule and defiantly stated that 'There will be no majority rule in my lifetime....or in my children's'.²⁰⁸

On November 26, following the failure of the Anglo-Rhodesian negotiations, the Senior Interdepartmental Group met to consider policy towards the white minority governments in Southern Africa. In a paper prepared by the Department of State, it was observed that the confrontation between black and white-controlled Africa was deepening but nevertheless the 'White Redoubt' would survive for the foreseeable future. In the case of Rhodesia, South African economic assistance would help Salisbury survive the sanctions while the security forces would be able to prevent any serious internal threats. It was also noted that the integration of Rhodesia into the South African security sphere dimmed the prospects of meaningful African political participation. While the liberation movements were weak, the paper observed a disturbing increase in communist influence leading to indoctrinated cadres hostile to Western interests.²⁰⁹

In terms of U.S. policy, the Interdepartmental Group considered that American relations with both black Africa and the white minority governments were under increasing pressure as racial tensions mounted on both sides of the Zambezi. It was agreed that economic and political interests dictated continued support for black African

²⁰⁸ Good, *UDI*, 282-286, Smith, *Bitter Harvest*, 146-147 and Wilson, *The Labour Government*, 575-577.

²⁰⁹ Department of State Policy Planning Council, National Policy Paper on Southern Africa, November 1968, "Department of State Vol. 8", Agency File, NSF, Box 59, LBJ Library.

aspirations but a commitment to a peaceful adjustment of racial relations in the region. A race war would not only be a 'bloodbath' but invite communist intervention and would be detrimental to U.S. geopolitical and financial interests. It was proposed that the best approach was to continue to strengthen the stability of the black states, identify Washington with nationalist aspirations, avoid any alignment with Salisbury and to urge Pretoria, in its own interests, to press Salisbury to take a moderate line in any future negotiations with the UK.²¹⁰

By this point, however, the LBJ era was already drawing to a close. On March 31, Johnson had publicly announced that he would not be seeking or accepting the Democratic Party nomination for another term as president. Following the presidential election of November 1968, Rhodesia, along with Vietnam and the domestic social upheaval of the Sixties would soon become the responsibility of the newly elected Republican president, Richard M. Nixon.²¹¹

The LBJ Years

For Johnson, the Rhodesian decision to declare UDI, was a most unwelcome development which embroiled Washington in a colonial issue that was none of its own creation. In November 1965, the White House was occupied with the growing crisis in Southeast Asia and implementation of the domestic Great Society programs. The prospect of significant entanglement in the racially charged atmosphere of Southern Africa was unappealing. The nature of the Rhodesian crisis, however, necessitated that

²¹⁰ Department of State Policy Planning Council, National Policy Paper on Southern Africa, November 1968, "Department of State Vol. 8", Agency File, NSF, Box 59, LBJ Library and Chairman's Summary of Discussion and Decisions at the 47th SIG Meeting on December 3 1968, "Department of State Vol. 8", Agency File, NSF, Box 59, LBJ Library.

²¹¹ Tindall and Shi, *America*, 1334-1337.

Washington, albeit reluctantly, involve itself in the confrontation between Salisbury and London.

While LBJ viewed the Rhodesian issue as primarily a British problem the White House was also aware of the fact that London no longer held sufficient economic or military strength to end UDI especially in the event of a direct confrontation with apartheid South Africa. It was clear that Britain would require substantive American aid both geopolitically and economically to achieve its aim of ending UDI. Johnson also believed that it was a basic interest to maintain the 'special relationship' of close ties with London. Supporting the British position on Rhodesia would reflect the unity of purpose between the two nations.

The White House was also influenced by the need to retain prestige and protect interests in black Africa for strategic, economic and diplomatic reasons. LBJ was well aware that the extent of U.S. influence in black Africa was inherently tied to the stance that Washington took on the issues of primary importance to the Africans themselves. In the case of Rhodesia, the ending of white minority rule was an issue of utmost importance to the black African states.

The need to maintain a positive American image in Africa was heightened by the increasing power of the Afro-Asian bloc at the UN. Washington was becoming increasingly reliant on Third World support for its geopolitical objectives at the UN especially in the General Assembly. The White House was aware that any perception that the U.S. was less than wholeheartedly committed to ending UDI could potentially play havoc with its broader Cold War agenda.

The early 1960s had revealed a substantive increase in communist interest in African affairs which also influenced the position of LBJ regarding the Rhodesian rebellion. Although there appeared to be little concern of broad communist penetration into the continent, the 'White Redoubt' in Southern Africa provided an opening for communist regimes to exploit at the expense of the West. While Communist China and Soviets could emphatically align themselves with the cause of black liberation thus gaining prestige with black African nations, the U.S. was forced to tread a more delicate line due to its close political and economic ties to Lisbon and Pretoria.

On a domestic level, the LBJ Administration was also troubled about the potential repercussions of a Rhodesian race war on communities in the U.S. itself. Following the passage of the Civil Rights Act and Voting Rights Act race relations in the U.S. remained tense and on occasions erupted into violence. The White House feared that a racial conflict in Southern Africa could exacerbate political and social tensions in America.

Finally, Johnson himself held a deep moral interest in ending white supremacy in Rhodesia. For LBJ, his commitment to racial equality and ending discriminatory practices extended beyond the borders of the United States. White minority rule in Southern Africa was as abhorrent to him as white political control in the southern states.

In terms of policy, the administration adopted a posture of support and close consultation with London regarding the Rhodesian issue. As early as 1964, officials assured their British counterparts of U.S. opposition to UDI and urged Salisbury to avoid such a precipitous action. Following UDI, Washington continued to publicly back the British posture against Rhodesia and offered substantial assistance when required.

It is important to note, however, that the White House approach was not simply following in the British footsteps but reflected an awareness of how Rhodesia could affect U.S. strategic and economic interests. This is reflected in the guarded approach adopted by the administration which for the most part avoided measures deemed detrimental to the U.S. and the LBJ was prepared to disassociate the U.S. from any Anglo-Rhodesian agreement which could prove harmful to broader American global objectives.

The White House also consistently reiterated its opposition to white minority rule both in Rhodesia and Southern Africa in general. Both publicly and privately LBJ identified himself as supportive of black African hopes for majority rule and critical of any form of continued white political control.

The President, however, urged a peaceful resolution of racial relations in the region and opposed attempts to change the status quo through violence. LBJ was more than aware that a race war would be a protracted brutal struggle, invite communist intervention and be injurious to U.S. goals. The White House was also not prepared to countenance the possibility of an economic or military confrontation with the members of the 'White Redoubt', especially South Africa. At the UN, the United States, sought to avoid radical action including the use of force to end UDI and the broadening of sanctions to include Pretoria.

Overall, the stance on Rhodesia during the LBJ era represented a cautious and measured approach. The White House, offered tangible public backing along with material support to the British but was nevertheless prepared to distance itself in the event of a settlement that would prove unacceptable to the black Africans and the broader

global community. LBJ also sought to align the U.S. alongside the African aspirations for genuine independence and majority rule but was not prepared to support extreme measures that could embroil Washington in a broader economic and military conflict in Southern Africa. His successor in the Oval Office, however, would adopt a posture that shifted U.S. policy toward a greater degree of association with the white minority regimes.

CHAPTER 2. LIMITED ASSOCIATION: PRESIDENT RICHARD M. NIXON

On January 20 1969, Richard Milhous Nixon was inaugurated as President of the United States. In the presidential campaign of 1968, Nixon had been elected by the conservative resurgence of a middle class America angered and tired by the liberalism and radical politics of the 1960s. At the end of a traumatic decade in U.S. history Nixon promised a middle ground on which a majority of Americans could come together.²¹²

The election of Nixon also led to a distinct shift in policy towards Southern Africa. As early as January 1970, the administration moved towards a policy of closer ties with South Africa and greater 'communication' with the rebel regime in Rhodesia. The Nixon years also witnessed the U.S. openly defying the UN and formally importing Rhodesian chrome in violation of the sanctions imposed by the Security Council. Nevertheless, it should also be noted that the U.S. continued to support the British position on Rhodesia, closing, albeit reluctantly, the consulate in Salisbury following the Rhodesian decision to become a republic and privately supporting the Smith-Home Agreement of late 1971.

As Secretary of State, Nixon appointed the former Attorney General under President Eisenhower, William Rogers. His control of foreign affairs, however, was limited by both Nixon's distrust of the State Department as a holdout of liberal Democrats and the influence of National Security Adviser Henry A. Kissinger, a former professor of Political Science at Harvard University. The realpolitik espoused by Kissinger focused on the reassertion of American power and the prevention of communist expansion across the globe. For Kissinger, containing the communist threat trumped

²¹² Tindall and Shi, *America*, 1337 and 1364.

issues of justice or morality, especially as applied to anti-communist nations, and he viewed the world as too complex to simply adopt a univocal code of right and wrong.²¹³

Kissinger was also a pragmatist who based his policy choices on the facts on the ground. If circumstances changed in any given situation he reacted by rearranging his policies to fit the new realities. In the late Sixties and early Seventies, the anti-communism of Rhodesians and the firm political and military control enjoyed by Salisbury, dictated for Kissinger, that on a pragmatic level, Washington should support for the Smith regime.

White House domination of key foreign policy decision making was further stimulated by Nixon's desire that he personally would be perceived as the key figure in shaping foreign policy in both conception and execution. The new president surrounded himself with staffers and advisers who both stood for traditional conservative values and would carry out his orders without question.²¹⁴

On a conceptual level, the foreign policy of Nixon years, as shaped by Kissinger, was characterized by a preoccupation with the balance of power linked to a form of global federalism with the U.S. at the apex of a multipolar pyramid of nations. Kissinger believed that in such a system both of the two superpowers would feel less directly threatened by each other's every action and also American leverage would increase as regional allies could voluntarily shoulder responsibility for their area of the globe. Therefore, in addition to ending the ongoing conflict in Vietnam, the priorities of the White House were to focus on solidifying the transatlantic alliance with Western Europe

²¹³ Henry Kissinger, *Years of Upheaval*, (London: Simon and Schuster, 1982), 414 and 418, Tindall and Shi, *America*, 1365 and Suri, "Henry Kissinger and the Geopolitics of Globalization," in *The Shock of the Global: The 1970s in perspective*, ed. Ferguson et al., 186.

²¹⁴ Kissinger, *Years of Upheaval*, 414 and 418 and Tindall and Shi, *America*, 1364.

and increased overtures to the People's Republic of China to engage in this new strategic framework.²¹⁵

Southern Africa, while at least theoretically an area of comparatively little interest to the new administration, was nonetheless important as a loss of influence in the 'periphery' would complicate the broader geopolitical mission. Peripheral regions such as Southern Africa or Southeast Asia, unlike Europe, offered a greater range of policy options for both Washington and Moscow including opportunities for military intervention. The expansion of communist influence into such areas would not only affect the geopolitical balance of power but would also weaken U.S. credibility both domestically and internationally.

Kissinger, in particular, was concerned by the appeal of the social mobilization and justification for political power inherent in Marxist ideology to anti-colonial leaders. The Nixon Doctrine of 1969 advocated the pursuance of American strategic interests through military and other aid to friendly governments. These governments could include unpalatable regimes provided they possessed vehemently anti-communist credentials. In sub-saharan Africa, in practical terms this meant closer ties with the 'White Redoubt'.²¹⁶

A second strategic issue was access to chrome. Prior to the Rhodesian UDI in 1965, Rhodesia had been a major supplier of metallurgical chrome ore to the U.S. The chromium was a vital component in the manufacture of numerous essential products including stainless steel and was used in electric power generation, chemical manufacturing and by NASA in the space program. U.S. adherence to the UN sanctions

²¹⁵ Suri, "Henry Kissinger and the Geopolitics of Globalization," in *The Shock of the Global*, ed. Ferguson et al., 173-184.

²¹⁶ Atwood Lawrence, "Containing Globalism. The United States and the Developing World in the 1970s," in *The Shock of the Global*, ed. Ferguson et al., 209-210 and Henry Kissinger, *White House Years*, (London: Simon and Schuster, 1979) 69.

on Rhodesia led to a growing dependence on chrome ore from the USSR. This was not only deemed unwisely strategically but was also hurting U.S. businesses due to inflated prices and inferior quality of ore. By 1969, the scarcity of chromite ore was beginning to cause concern to several government departments' including Commerce and the Office of Emergency Preparedness (OEP).²¹⁷

It is also important to note that the administration, including both Nixon and Kissinger, were not immune to racial and cultural prejudices when formulating policy on Africa. In his biography, Nixon noted that he was discouraged and unimpressed by the quality of African leadership. Indeed, as pointed out by Andy DeRoche, Nixon repeatedly snubbed meeting Zambian President Kenneth Kaunda during his visits to Washington as well as emissaries from the Organization of African Unity.²¹⁸

In the case of Kissinger, the former colonial nations of Africa remained at the bottom of his multi-polar global pyramid. For the new National Security Adviser, developing countries with a lack of political tradition, immature economies and little military might were ranked low in terms of importance and respect. On one notable occasion in September 1971, during a private conversation with the President, when Kissinger referred to the African delegation accompanying Mauritanian President Ould Daddah to Washington as 'savages' Nixon erupted with laughter.²¹⁹

²¹⁷ Memorandum for President Nixon from Maurice H. Stans. Rhodesian Sanctions: Response to NSDM-47. May 15 1970. NSC Institutional ("H") Files, NSDM -47. Box H-214. Nixon Library.

²¹⁸ Andy DeRoche (2011) KK, the Godfather, and the Duke: Maintaining Positive Relations between Zambia and the USA in Spite of Nixon's Other Priorities, *Safundi* 12:1. p.97 DOI: [10/80/175.2011.533915](https://doi.org/10.80/175.2011.533915), Richard Nixon, *The Memoirs of Richard Nixon*, (New York: Grosset and Dunlap, 1978) 283.

²¹⁹ 57. "Conversation Between President Nixon and the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger)" Washington, September 28 1971, FRUS, 1969-1976, Volume XXVIII, Southern Africa, Department of State. (Washington DC: United States Government Printing Office, 2011) 143-145. Suri, "Henry Kissinger and the Geopolitics of Globalization," in *The Shock of the Global* ed. Ferguson et al., 186, and Kissinger, *White House Years*, 69.

Domestically, a key element in Nixon's electoral success was the 'Southern Strategy'. His campaign staff, notably political strategist Kevin Phillips, shaped an approach in which Nixon could win over white voters in the southern states, traditionally a stronghold for the Democratic Party, by assuring conservatives he would slow federal enforcement of civil rights laws and appoint pro-southern justices to the Supreme Court. In the election of 1968, several southern states, including Florida, Oklahoma and South Carolina, voted for Nixon providing the popular vote margins he needed for victory.²²⁰

Nixon himself was also reluctant on ideological grounds to push forced integration on the de facto segregated communities in the South and elsewhere. While Nixon believed that de jure segregation was inherently wrong, he nevertheless viewed de facto segregation as, in his own words, 'the natural outgrowth of economic and social patterns within individual communities and neighborhoods.' As President, while Nixon sought to remove the last vestiges of formal segregation he also opposed instant integration as fraught with social tensions.²²¹

It has been argued that this nuanced slant on civil rights adopted by the Nixon Administration was mirrored by a similar attitude toward the white dominated nations of Southern Africa. Gerald Horne suggests that the Nixon Presidency 'signaled the arrival of a remarkable double-barreled approach - a "Southern Strategy" and a "Southern Africa Strategy" - based on playing to the racial fears of Euro-Americans discomfited by the pace of racial change, be it south of the Mason-Dixon line or at the southern tip of

²²⁰ Tindall and Shi, *America*, 1337 and 1365 and Horne, *From the Barrel of a Gun*, 7.

²²¹ Nixon, *The Memoirs of Richard Nixon*, 439-440.

Africa.’ A key component of this dual strategy, in the view of Horne, was the positing of African-Americans and Africans as the allies or tools of communism.²²²

It is certainly fair to state that parallels existed between the White House’s domestic approach to civil rights and its relations with the white governments of Southern Africa. In both cases, Nixon publicly condemned racism and racially discriminatory laws yet was reluctant to push for instantaneous meaningful change. Indeed, many of Rhodesia’s most vocal supporters including Senators’ Harry F. Byrd (I-Virginia) and Strom Thurmond (R-South Carolina) as well as Congressman James Collins (R-Texas) not only hailed from former Confederate states and held racist views but many also enjoyed close ties to Nixon himself.²²³

The most notable example of this was Senator James Eastland, a man renowned for his opposition to civil rights and a strong supporter of white Rhodesia who was considered by Nixon to be a vital ally. In 1972, Nixon even forsook party allegiances and refused to endorse the Republican candidate challenging Eastland’s senatorial seat. The unsavory views of Senator Eastland on racial issues were noted by Ken Flower, the head of the Rhodesian Central Intelligence Organization. On a visit to Salisbury, Eastland, upon witnessing black and white Rhodesians mingling in a Salisbury hotel, rebuked his hosts stating ‘You’ve inserted the thin end of the wedge by allowing stinking niggers into such a fine hotel.’²²⁴

It should be noted, however, that the Rhodesian question continued to evoke strong opinions nationwide. The American Committee on Africa and other liberal groups opposed to the white regimes continued to agitate for stronger U.S. actions against

²²² Horne, *From the Barrel of a Gun*, 7.

²²³ Joseph Crespino, *Strom Thurmond’s America*, (New York: Hill and Wang, 2013) 54, 71 and 193.

²²⁴ Nixon, *The Memoirs of Richard Nixon*, 669 and Flower, *Serving Secretly*, 150.

Pretoria and Salisbury and there was evidence of increasing congressional hostility towards the Smith government. Rhodesia, though, continued to enjoy strong political supporters including former Secretary of State and informal White House adviser Dean Acheson.

Although the claim by the Rhodesian Commentary, published by the RIO, that millions of U.S. citizens opposed sanctions on Rhodesia must be treated with skepticism, presidential correspondence certainly reflected also a pro-Rhodesia bias among many Americans. This attitude is typified by a letter from Dr. Leon Halsted, a chiropractor from El Paso, Texas who urged Nixon to recognize Rhodesia and end the 'soft on communism' State Department policy of hurting our friends and helping our enemies.²²⁵

On the question of how to deal with an increasingly confident and self-assured Rhodesian regime the U.S. government was as divided in its opinions as the public. The Department of State, especially the Africanists, and the U.S. Mission to the United Nations favored a continuation of existing policy or further dissociation from Salisbury and closer identification with black Africa. Other government departments including Commerce, Defense, Treasury and the OEP favored some relaxation of posture towards the Smith government. This view was also supported by Kissinger and the National Security Council.²²⁶

The differences of opinion inevitably led to tensions over the administration's tilt to the right towards Southern Africa. Indeed, Nixon himself, in late 1969, upon learning

²²⁵ Paper to Henry A. Kissinger from Dean Acheson. U.S. Policies Toward Southern Africa Require Change. April 30 1969. WHCF, CO 135 South Africa, Republic of (1969-70). Box 63. Nixon Library, Letter to the President from U.S. Senator Strom Thurmond. April 15 1970. NSC Country Files, Rhodesia Vol 2 (1970-1974) Box 743. Nixon Library, Rhodesian Commentary 14th October 1968. WHCF CO 124 Rhodesia Begin--12/31/69. Box 63. Nixon Library, and Letter to President Richard M. Nixon from Dr. Leon W. Halsted. 26 August 1969. WHCF, CO 124 Rhodesia Begin--12/31/69. Box 63. Nixon Library.

²²⁶ ISSUES FOR DECISION. NSC Meeting 12/17/69 NSC Institutional ("H") Files Southern Africa (NSSM 39) (3 of 3). Box H-026. Nixon Library and Lake, *The "Tar Baby" Option*, 125-126.

that Assistant Secretary of State David Newsom had told a House Foreign Affairs Subcommittee that sanctions policy did not go far enough commented ‘Wow - this guy is a menace!’²²⁷

Overall, during the Nixon era, White House policy towards Salisbury was guided by strategic considerations linked to both geopolitics and commercial interests. Nixon demonstrated little moral interest on the question of majority rule in Rhodesia or ending UDI. Under President Nixon, America developed a policy of selective relaxation of its stance towards both Pretoria and Salisbury to protect U.S. interests based on the premise that the white minorities remained in firm political control and this was unlikely to change in the near future.

NSSM 39: Closer ties to the ‘White Redoubt’

The new administration came into office with a determination to broadly reshape foreign policy. Specifically, the President and his advisers wished to move away from the liberal reformist agenda of the Sixties notably crisis management and pouring energy and resources into the poverty stricken states of Africa, Asia and Latin America in the hopes of achieving political and social improvements. In their view, this had failed to deal with the deeper underlying causes of the global crises and had failed to stimulate greater democracy as demonstrated by the rise of totalitarian, often Marxist, regimes. In the words of Kissinger, when Nixon took office, it was imperative to ‘articulate a new foreign policy for a new era.’²²⁸

²²⁷ A.D. Horne, Washington Post, Maintenance of Ties Denied summer or fall 1969. NSC Country Files Rhodesia (1969-1970) Box 743. Nixon Library.

²²⁸ Atwood Lawrence, “Containing Globalism,” in *The Shock of the Global*, ed. Ferguson et al., 205 and Kissinger, *White House Years*, 65.

In order to impose a new blueprint on foreign policy, Kissinger, beginning in the spring of 1969, began to inundate the State Department with requests for comprehensive policy reviews of U.S. relations and interests worldwide. On April 3, at the recommendation of the NSC staffer Roger Morris, Kissinger urged Nixon to order a National Security Study Memorandum (NSSM) on Southern Africa.²²⁹

In a memorandum for the President, Kissinger argued that a NSSM was necessary as there had been no comprehensive high level review of U.S. interests and objectives in Southern Africa since the Kennedy era of the early 1960s. Since that time, however, the situation had become increasingly volatile including the appearance of the USSR and China as patrons of the terrorist groups. Furthermore, as noted by Kissinger, the U.S. had meaningful yet potentially conflicting interests in the area which needed to be clearly identified and weighed. While there was a political stake in dissociation from the repressive policies of the white regimes there were also material interests which required involvement with those same governments. It was necessary for the NSC to be able to consider all the possible options open to U.S. policy in dealing with the white minority controlled nations.²³⁰

It is worth noting that Kissinger also identified that the heart of the problem lay with the powerful white South African Government whose effective military and prosperous economy bolstered its policy of apartheid. Rhodesia, in his view, lacked the doctrinal and institutional efficiency of its southern neighbor and merely stayed afloat due

²²⁹ Memorandum for the President from Henry Kissinger. NSC Review of Policy toward Southern Africa. April 3 1969. NSC Institutional ("H") Files, NSSM - 39 3 of 3 (1 of 4). Box H-144. Nixon Library, Memorandum from the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger) to President Nixon, NSC Review of Policy toward Southern Africa, Washington. April 3 1969, FRUS, 1969-1976, Volume XXVIII, Southern Africa and Lake, *The "Tar Baby" Option*, 124.

²³⁰ White House Memorandum for the President from Henry Kissinger. NSC Review of Policy toward Southern Africa. April 3 1969. NSC Institutional ("H") Files, NSSM - 39 3 of 3 (1 of 4). Box H-144. Nixon Library.

to a lack of British political will to end UDI and the economic aid that Salisbury received from Pretoria.²³¹

Nixon was clearly convinced by Kissinger's arguments as well as those of Dean Acheson who met with the President in the Oval Office and stridently condemned the Rhodesian policy adopted by the LBJ Administration. On April 10, the National Security Adviser ordered the review in NSSM 39, the purpose was to examine the background and future prospects of the problems in Southern Africa, consider alternate views of U.S. interests and put forward the full range of basic strategies and policy options open to the U.S. Government.²³²

On August 15 1969, the Interdepartmental Group completed its response to NSSM 39. As an overview, the group noted the important U.S. strategic and economic interests in the white controlled states, notably South Africa, including the approximately \$1 billion dollar investments, a highly favorable balance of payments in trade, the important NASA tracking station and the key geographic position. In the case of Rhodesia, the group observed that before UDI Salisbury had provided between a quarter and a third of metallurgical chromite imports before sanctions, noted U.S. mining assets currently under Rhodesian Government control and the small overall investment amounting to around \$56 million.²³³

²³¹ White House Memorandum for the President from Henry Kissinger. NSC Review of Policy toward Southern Africa. April 3 1969. NSC Institutional ("H") Files, NSSM - 39 3 of 3 (1 of 4). Box H-144. Nixon Library.

²³² National Security Council. National Security Study Memorandum 39. To: The Secretary of State, The Secretary of Defense, Director, Central Intelligence Agency from Henry A. Kissinger: Southern Africa. April 10 1969. NSC Institutional ("H") Files, NSC Meeting 12/17/69 Southern Africa (NSSM 39) (3 of 3). Box H-026. Nixon Library and DeRoche, *Black White and Chome*, 160.

²³³ National Security Council Interdisciplinary Group for Africa. Study in Response to National Security Study Memorandum 39: Southern Africa. August 15 1969. NSC Institutional ("H") Files, NSSM - 39 2 of 3 (1 of 2). Box H-144. Nixon Library.

The study pointed out, however, that American interests in the white dominated states were seen as at least tacit acceptance of racism which affected U.S. standing with other African states and it was also considered as reflecting the American domestic stance on racism. The group also noted that U.S. investments in black Africa were valued at around \$1.5 billion and trade relations were expanding. Increasing violence in the region stemming from black insurgency and white reprisal posed a real threat to American interests. It was noted, though, that ‘There is no likelihood in the foreseeable future that liberation movements could overthrow or seriously threaten the existing white governments.’²³⁴

The Interdepartmental Group critiqued the LBJ policy of trying to balance economic, scientific and strategic interests in the white states with the political interest of dissociating the U.S. from the white minority regimes and their repressive racial policies. According the study, policy decisions had been made on an ad hoc judgement of benefits and political costs at a given moment. The strength of the policy, its flexibility, was also its weakness. A failure to define an exact approach combined with the significant differences of view within the government led to decisions having been held in suspense.²³⁵

The group also commented on the increasing difficulties the U.S. would face at the UN. Although Washington played a leading role in the arms embargo on South Africa and the mandatory economic sanctions on Rhodesia these actions exhausted the store of measures the U.S. Government was prepared to take. The Afro-Asian bloc, however, had steadily increased its demands for stronger UN measures including sanctions on South

²³⁴ Ibid.

²³⁵ Ibid.

Africa and Portugal as well as the use of force, measures that U.S. was not prepared to countenance. In contrast, the tough line taken by China and the USSR in supporting the liberation movements both rhetorically and logistically had led to these geopolitical rivals making some gains in Africa and at the UN.²³⁶

In the case of Rhodesia, the group commented that the U.S. had continued to recognize British sovereignty, reduced staff at the consulate in Salisbury which continued to operate under exequatur from the UK Crown and maintained contact with the exiled Nationalist movements. Washington, though, had discouraged the use of violence by both sides. Although the liberation movements as yet posed no real threat and the communist powers had shown no interest in direct military involvement against Salisbury, the Rhodesian decision to become a republic could increase African hostility and in the case of the U.S., lead to greater pressure to remove the consulate.²³⁷

Regarding the effect of sanctions, the group observed that Rhodesia had with South African assistance averted an economic disaster although sanctions had restricted the economy, retarded economic growth, disrupted normal trade patterns and forced trade to be conducted on conditions somewhat unfavorable to Rhodesia. The sanctions and pariah status of Salisbury, however, were observed to have bolstered support for Smith and the Rhodesian Front. 'The isolation and "state of siege" feeling has helped solidify white support for the regime; Smith, himself, enjoys great personal popularity among the majority of the white electorate.'²³⁸

The NSSM study also discussed the growing Congressional interest in Southern Africa. According to the Interdepartmental Group a large majority on the Hill were

²³⁶ Ibid.

²³⁷ Ibid.

²³⁸ Ibid.

critical of South African policies but there existed a minority, not exclusively from the South, who favored closer relations with Pretoria and a more friendly attitude towards Salisbury. Insertions in the Congressional Record showed a definite linkage of Southern African issues with domestic civil rights by both supporters and opponents of the policies.²³⁹

The Interdepartmental Group response to NSSM 39 laid out a number of options for consideration by the NSC including closer relations with the white regimes, a broader association with both black and white states, limited ties to white Africa and dissociation from the Southern African region to avoid any form of formal U.S. involvement in the racial problems of the area.²⁴⁰

On October 16 1969, the NSC Review Group met to discuss the findings of the Interdepartmental Group Paper. On the day before the meeting NSC staffers Charles H. Hermann, Richard T. Kennedy and Roger Morris had suggested several talking points to Kissinger. Notably they focused on the fact that the white governments were in firm control and violence, which in any case the black states are ill equipped to engage in, would not bring change. Any change in white policies would be slow and modest and unlikely to satisfy black Africa. International attempts to isolate the whites had failed and led to the creation of a siege mentality not moderation. It was also noted that the black African reaction to increased relations with the white states would be limited to rhetoric alone as their nations needed American support and aid money.²⁴¹

²³⁹ Ibid.

²⁴⁰ National Security Council Interdisciplinary Group for Africa. Study in Response to National Security Study Memorandum 39: Southern Africa. August 15 1969. NSC Institutional ("H") Files, NSSM - 39 2 of 3 (1 of 2). Box H-144. Nixon Library and Lake, *The "Tar Baby" Option*, 128.

²⁴¹ White House Memorandum for Henry Kissinger from Richard T. Kennedy, Charles H. Hermann and Roger Morris. Southern Africa-NSC Review Group-Thursday October 16. October 15 1969. NSC Institutional ("H") Files, Southern Africa 10/16/69 Box H-040. Nixon Library.

At the meeting, chaired by Kissinger, it was agreed upon to reformulate the options proposed by the Interdepartmental Group prior to the upcoming NSC Meeting in December. The revised options fell into three broad categories of relaxation of relations with the white regimes, closer identification with black Africa and disassociation from white Africa. Within each broad posture there were two operationally different options which created a total of six possibilities for consideration.

The first, known at the time as the ‘Acheson Option’, was a normalization of U.S. relations with all states of the area, keeping a low profile on internal white policies and consulting U.S. interests in pursuit of economic and other relations. A similar but less politically explosive option was the selectively broadening of ties with both white and black states to encourage moderation and protect interests on both sides.²⁴²

The third and fourth possibilities involved increased identification with the black states to permit the U.S. to pursue minimum necessary interests in the white states. They differed in that in the former Washington would make a greater effort to win over the black nations. These options were broadly considered to be a continuation of LBJ’s policy towards the region.²⁴³

A fifth option was greater dissociation from the white regimes and considerably closer identification with black Africa to enhance standing on racial issues in Africa and internationally. The final choice was for the U.S. to engage in coercive measures short of

²⁴² National Security Council Review Group Meeting. Southern Africa (NSSM 39) October 16 1969. NSC Institutional (“H”) Files, NSSM - 39 3 of 3 (4 of 4). Box H-145. Nixon Library and ISSUES FOR DECISION. NSC Meeting 12/17/69, NSC Institutional (“H”) Files, Southern Africa (NSSM 39) (3 of 3). Box H-026. Nixon Library.

²⁴³ Ibid.

armed force to induce change in the racial policies of white states and to greatly increase aid including military assistance to the black ruled nations.²⁴⁴

In the weeks prior to the NSC meeting in mid December it became clear that there was a sharp division between the government departments over the policy choices. At the two extremes of the range, no agency favored the first or last options. Normalization was considered too costly domestically and internationally due to the political costs of repudiating the previous position in UN, encouraging white intransigence and potentially handing the initiative to communists. Option six was also discarded as it would lead to the U.S. forfeiting important strategic and scientific interests in white states, sacrificing economic interests to other nations like France and UK, hardening white resolve, and stimulating further demands by blacks while sanctions enforcement would pose serious military problems.

On the other hand, the second option, the selective broadening of ties with the white governments, appealed to a number of agencies. Commerce supported it as it would expand U.S. exports, Treasury liked the potential balance of payments, the OEP wanted access to Rhodesian chrome while Defense believed it would protect important strategic, scientific and economic interests. Kissinger and the NSC staff also broadly favored a relaxation of posture along the lines set out by the Interdepartmental Group.

The Department of State, however, favored limited association on the grounds that such an approach would protect some of the American interests in the white states but lead to only minimal damage to U.S. political goals and retain flexibility for the future. Officials feared the diplomatic repercussions of broadening ties with the white regimes as

²⁴⁴ Ibid.

any relaxation of relations with Pretoria and Salisbury was unacceptable to black Africa and the option also represented a potential withdrawal from UN commitments.

The U.S. Mission to the UN and some Africanists in the State Department, in the cases of South Africa and Rhodesia, preferred disengagement. It was argued that such a policy would greatly increase credibility in Africa and the UN, counter Soviet and Chinese influence in black states and liberation movements, put the white governments on notice they could expect no assistance in the event of a future conflict and counter Afro-Asian demands for greater actions. It was in their view the minimum posture which could protect political interests at home and abroad.²⁴⁵

It is important to note that while NSSM 39 primarily focused on the Republic of South Africa, Rhodesia, was not included, as some commentators suggested, as a mere afterthought to the process. In fact, the Rhodesian problem was a far more difficult case for the U.S. to emphasize a policy of ‘communication’ given the international ‘illegality’ of the regime and the claim of de jure British sovereignty.²⁴⁶

Regarding Rhodesia, Nixon faced choices on three issues. First, whether to continue to implement the UN sanctions program against Salisbury. The normalization of ties, as laid out in option one would require phased withdrawal from sanctions which would aggravate relations with both the UK and black Africa.²⁴⁷

Secondly, whether to relax the ban on chrome or allow the importation of chrome by two American companies on hardship grounds. Chrome imports (which will be

²⁴⁵ ISSUES FOR DECISION. NSC Meeting 12/17/69. NSC Institutional (“H”) Files, Southern Africa (NSSM 39) (3 of 3) Box H-026. Nixon Library and Memorandum for the President from Maurice H. Stans, Secretary of Commerce, U.S. Policy Toward Southern Africa. December 12 1969. NSC Meeting 12/17/69. NSC Institutional (“H”) Files, Southern Africa (NSSM 39) (3 of 3). Box H-026. Nixon Library.

²⁴⁶ ISSUES FOR DECISION. NSC Meeting 12/17/69. NSC Institutional (“H”) Files, Southern Africa (NSSM 39) (3 of 3). Box H-026. Nixon Library and Lake, *The “Tar Baby” Option*, 123.

²⁴⁷ ISSUES FOR DECISION. NSC Meeting 12/17/69. NSC Institutional (“H”) Files, Southern Africa (NSSM 39) (3 of 3). Box H-026. Nixon Library.

covered in a later section) were becoming a major political issue and the UN embargo was seen as both ineffective and penalizing U.S. firms. Importing Rhodesian chrome would also avoid increasing dependence on the USSR for a strategic resource. Finally, whether the consulate in Salisbury should remain open to provide consular services for the approximately 1100 U.S. citizens in Rhodesia and intelligence collection despite its presence being seen as legitimizing the Smith government.²⁴⁸

The NSC Meeting on Southern Africa was held on December 17 1969. The minutes of the meeting clearly indicate the participants primary concern lay with the interests of their particular government departments. Commerce highlighted the large amount of trade and investment the U.S. had in Southern Africa and urged, along with the OEP Director General Lincoln, that the president should grant the hardship licences for the importation of chrome. On the issue of the consulate, U.S. Representative to the UN Charles W. Yost urged for its closure while this was opposed by CIA Director Richard Helms on the grounds that the U.S. would lose an important source of intelligence.²⁴⁹

President Nixon himself stated that Southern Africa had become important primarily due to the moral and domestic political issues involved. On the broader question of which policy option to follow it is clear that Nixon favored some form of ‘relaxation’ of relations with the white regimes. The President stated that the U.S. ‘must analyze where our national interest lies and not worry too much about other peoples’ domestic policies.’ He also observed that 6% of the African population, the whites in

²⁴⁸ Ibid.

²⁴⁹ Minutes of the NSC Meeting on Southern Africa, December 17 1969. NSC Institutional (“H”) Files, NSSM - 39 3 of 3 (2 of 4) Box H-145. Nixon Library.

South Africa, produce 40% of the continent's GNP and that they were there to stay. The 'White Redoubt' remained strong and firmly in control of its own destiny.²⁵⁰

On January 28 1970, President Nixon issued National Security Decision Memorandum (NSDM) 38. On the advice of Kissinger, the President had selected a policy along the lines of partial relaxation. This included balancing U.S. relations in the area by compensating for as opposed to abandoning tangible interests in the white states, lowering the American profile at the UN, quietly relaxing bilateral relations with South Africa and avoiding pressure on the Portuguese.²⁵¹

In the case of Rhodesia, regarding the chrome imports, the hardship case would be examined by State, Treasury, Justice and Commerce under the chairmanship of the Justice Department to clarify status under present regulations. This would be followed by a more general policy study on imports of Rhodesian chrome. The consulate was to remain in Salisbury provided the legal question of recognition did not arise.²⁵²

The presidential decision to opt for a policy of closer ties with the white governments represented a significant change in policy toward Southern Africa, As opposed to an administration being guided by the principle of political dissassociation with the white regimes the White House now sought greater 'communication' with

²⁵⁰ Ibid.

²⁵¹ Memorandum for the President from Henry A. Kissinger. Decisions on Southern African Policy. January 15 1970. NSC Institutional ("H") Files, NSSM - 39 3 of 3 (4 of 4). Box H-145. Nixon Library and Memorandum from Henry A. Kissinger to the Vice President, Secretary of State, Secretary of the Treasury, Secretary of Defense, Attorney General, Secretary of Commerce, Director of Emergency Preparedness from Henry A. Kissinger. National Security Decision Memorandum 38. United States Policy Toward Southern Africa. January 28 1970. NSC Institutional ("H") Files, NSSM - 39 3 of 3 (2 of 4). Box H-145. Nixon Library.

²⁵² Memorandum from Henry A. Kissinger to the Vice President, Secretary of State, Secretary of the Treasury, Secretary of Defense, Attorney General, Secretary of Commerce, Director of Emergency Preparedness from Henry A. Kissinger. National Security Decision Memorandum 38. United States Policy Toward Southern Africa. January 28 1970. NSC Institutional ("H") Files, NSSM - 39 3 of 3 (2 of 4). Box H-145. Nixon Library.

Pretoria, the Portuguese Territories and to a lesser extent Salisbury. This shift in stance horrified many Africanists and others at the State Department. They also feared that the policy of tighter relations with the white states would once adopted become sticky and difficult to abandon. It was therefore dubbed the ‘tar baby option’ referring to the Uncle Remus story of how Brer Fox caught Brer Rabbit with a mix of tar and turpentine which he nicknamed a tar baby.²⁵³

It is significant that Nixon chose to keep this new policy approach highly secret and out of sight of not only the news media and the public but most government personnel as well. It was ‘on a need to know basis’ with scrupulous classification. White House officials apparently preferred that the shift towards the white regimes not be revealed because it was to be a quiet and protracted relaxation of American relations that would only become evident over time.

It is clear that Nixon and the NSC staff were aware of the potential political firestorm that such a shift in policy would cause among liberals and African-Americans. Southern Africa was the only area of the globe where the government policies represented a direct affront to the dignity of many Americans. The niceties of a foreign policy that proclaimed an abhorrence of apartheid but conducted business as usual with its practitioners would be lost on those who identified with the oppressed black population.²⁵⁴

²⁵³ Lake, *The “Tar Baby” Option*, 129.

²⁵⁴ Memorandum from Henry A. Kissinger to the Vice President, Secretary of State, Secretary of the Treasury, Secretary of Defense, Attorney General, Secretary of Commerce, Director of Emergency Preparedness from Henry A. Kissinger. National Security Decision Memorandum 38. United States Policy Toward Southern Africa. January 28 1970. NSC Institutional (“H”) Files, NSSM - 39 3 of 3 (2 of 4). Box H-145. Nixon Library and Memorandum for Henry Kissinger from Richard Kennedy and Roger Morris. NSC Meeting on South Africa, December 17 1969. NSC Meeting 12/17/69. NSC Institutional (“H”) Files, Southern Africa (NSSM 39) (3 of 3). Box H-026. Nixon Library.

U.S. Consulate: Nixon reluctantly concedes to British pressure

While the Inter-Departmental Group prepared their study in response to NSSM 39, a new headache was developing for the Nixon Administration regarding the continued presence of the consulate in Salisbury. The U.S. Consulate which provided services for Americans in Rhodesia as well as being a useful listening post for intelligence gathering had continued to operate since UDI, albeit with a reduced staff, under exquatur from the UK Crown. The existence of the consulate had therefore never implied U.S. recognition of the Rhodesian Government but in the event that the exquatur was withdrawn by the UK then its continued presence could be considered de facto and potentially de jure acceptance of the Rhodesian regime.²⁵⁵

By January 1969, Smith and the governing RF were increasingly buoyant and confident about the future of a white controlled Rhodesia. As noted by the CIA, the white Rhodesians felt they no longer needed any settlement with London or the Commonwealth to survive as a nation and overcome the sanctions and diplomatic isolation. The Rhodesian economy was relatively prosperous, with South African and Portuguese help imports and exports had increased since 1967, the country was well endowed with natural resources and UN sanctions had proved ineffective and were likely to become increasingly so.²⁵⁶

The Rhodesian military was more than capable, especially with South African support, of defeating any threat from the black African countries. The Front Line nations

²⁵⁵ National Security Council Interdisciplinary Group for Africa. Study in Response to National Security Study Memorandum 39: Southern Africa. August 15 1969. NSC Institutional ("H") Files, NSSM - 39 2 of 3 (1 of 2). Box H-144. Nixon Library and Briefing by Richard Helms, Director of Central Intelligence for the National Security Council December 17 1965. NSC Institutional ("H") Files, NSSM - 39 3 of 3 (2 of 4). Box H-145. Nixon Library.

²⁵⁶ Briefing by Richard Helms, Director of Central Intelligence for the National Security Council December 17 1965. NSC Institutional ("H") Files, NSSM - 39 3 of 3 (2 of 4). Box H-145. Nixon Library.

would also suffer economically if trade with the the white controlled nations was to be cut off. Domestically, the black Rhodesian population was 'quiescent' and the externally based insurgent movements had been ineffective due in part to the strength of the security forces. In the white community there was very little political opposition to Smith, only limited dissatisfaction among tobacco farmers and unionized railroad workers.²⁵⁷

The Rhodesian Government, therefore, no longer felt any need to either maintain links to the UK and were increasingly firm in their belief they could chart their own future without talks with London. On January 20, the Head of the UK Residual Mission to Rhodesia was informed by CIO Director Flower that it was highly unlikely that Smith would seriously pursue further negotiations with the British Government. The Rhodesian Minister of External Affairs Jack Howman, reportedly assured Mozambique Governor General De Sousa in Lourenco Marques that there would be no further negotiations and Rhodesia would move along its own path. Consul O'Neill commented that; 'We have recently reported mounting evidence of regime's cockiness illustrated by deliberate actions calculated to rub British wrong way and worsen atmosphere for negotiations.'²⁵⁸

On February 13, the Rhodesian Government sent a memorandum to the UK which set forth the Rhodesian position on differences between the two parties. The British, however, noted that it did not contribute a new set of proposals and was described as 'very disappointing'. Consul O'Neill informed Secretary of State Rogers that the UK Government appeared to be still interested in obtaining a settlement acceptable to all Rhodesians but unless Pretoria pressures Smith to negotiate it looks as if

²⁵⁷ Ibid.

²⁵⁸ American Consul Salisbury to Secretary of State Washington DC. Regime may have definitely decided to go it alone. January 1969. NSC Country Files, Rhodesia (1969-1970) Box 743. Nixon Library.

the ‘two sides have just about reached end of road and that we are in for the longer haul.’²⁵⁹

As early as September 1968 the RF had drafted new constitutional proposals which, if approved by the primarily white electorate, would formally make a Rhodesia, at least in its own eyes, an independent republic. This move would of course sever the last official ties to the UK and also come close to eliminating any remaining possibility of settlement. An intelligence note to Rogers from the Bureau of Intelligence and Research described this as a ‘Great Leap Rightward’ and suggested that Smith had moved right to counter his critics in the RF by pre-empting their positions but in the process had burned bridges to London. Smith’s position offered very little to Harold Wilson that he could square with his six principles for settlement.²⁶⁰

On June 20 1969, the Rhodesian electorate voted overwhelming in the nationwide referendum to formally break with the UK and become a republic. Eighty percent of the eligible voters opted for the new constitution, a level of support which, back in London, reportedly stunned both the Labour Government and the Conservative opposition. Four days later, on June 24, the UK withdrew the Governor-General and residual mission from Salisbury thereby ending all diplomatic ties with Salisbury.²⁶¹

Rhodesia was eager that Washington would not follow suit and sever its links with Salisbury especially after the formal declaration of republican status which would take place in March of 1970. As noted by the British, the continued presence of the U.S.

²⁵⁹ American Consul O’Neill, Salisbury, to Secretary of State, Washington DC. New British note on settlement resolutions. March 1969. NSC Country Files, Rhodesia (1969-1970) Box 743. Nixon Library.

²⁶⁰ 3. Intelligence Note From the Director of the Bureau of Intelligence and Research (Hughes) to Secretary of State Rogers. Southern Rhodesia: Smith’s Great Leap Rightward, Washington, February 18 1969. FRUS, 1969-1976, Volume XXVIII, Southern Africa and Smith, *Bitter Harvest*, 141.

²⁶¹ Memorandum for Henry Kissinger from Roger Morris. U.S. Consulate in Rhodesia July 21 1969. NSC Country Files, Rhodesia (1969-1970) Box 743. Nixon Library and Lake, *The “Tar Baby” Option*, 134-135.

Consulate could be construed as recognition and would be a massive boost to the international aspirations of the Rhodesians. As the leading Western power, the American lead would also be followed by many other nations.²⁶²

On June 27, NSC staffer Morris lunched with Kenneth Towsey of the RIO at the Occidental restaurant in Washington. This was the first of three meetings between the two men over the course of the summer and fall of 1969. Towsey apparently assured Morris that the Rhodesia would not raise the issue of the legal status of the consulate and the U.S. could stay as long as it wished. Furthermore, Towsey also inferred that the continued presence of the consular mission might place Washington in a position to effect a mediating role between Rhodesia and UK. In the words of Tony Lake; ‘Over martinis, steaks and baked potatoes they discussed the future course of American policy toward Southern Rhodesia.’²⁶³

The Rhodesians had good reason to feel optimistic over the chances of the consulate remaining in Salisbury. While the State Department, especially the Africa Bureau, and Ambassador Yost favored closure, this view was far from universal. Indeed, even Secretary of State Rogers was equivocal, due to the presence of 1,100 Americans in Rhodesia who needed consular representation. Other leading figures in Washington were far more vocal in support of maintaining the consulate. Influential presidential ‘adviser’ Dean Acheson argued that maintaining the consulate did not imply recognition of the regime and that to end all relations with Rhodesia was contrary to U.S. national interests and that the effect of sanctions, now that Salisbury had adopted a constitution precluding

²⁶² Department of State Telegram from Embassy London to Secretary of State Washington DC. March 6 1970. NSC Country Files, Rhodesia (1969-1970) Box 743. Nixon Library and 26. Telegram From the Department of State to the Consulate in Salisbury, Washington, February 28 1970, FRUS, 1969-1976, Volume XXVIII, Southern Africa.

²⁶³ Lake, *The “Tar Baby” Option*, 134-136.

majority rule, was to forment race war there. Kissinger also opposed closure and Nixon himself stated privately, regarding the consulate in Rhodesia, that 'If we have a mission in Hungary, we'll have one here. This is an order.'²⁶⁴

On July 17, Rogers, who had been reassured by the Legal Advisor's Office of alternate ways to provide consular services for the Americans in Rhodesia, recommended to the President that the consulate be closed. Kissinger, however, advised against this decision on the grounds that the consular presence had an intelligence function, protected U.S. citizens and served an important political role to influence the regime or push for further negotiations with the UK. In a telegram on August 14, the State Department informed the Embassies in London, Lusaka and Pretoria, as well as the U.S. Mission to the UN that Nixon had rejected the departmental recommendation to close the consulate in Salisbury.²⁶⁵

To put the presidential decision in context, it is worth noting that early in August, Consul O'Neill informed the State Department that he had conducted an informal survey of the views of the other foreign consuls in Salisbury following the Rhodesian vote to become a republic. While the Italian Consul General was lobbying for all posts to remain

²⁶⁴ Memorandum for John Walsh State Secretariat from Alexander M. Haig June 27 1969. NSC Country Files, Rhodesia (1969-1970) Box 743. Nixon Library, Memorandum for the President from the Secretary of State William P. Rogers. American Consulate General, Salisbury, Southern Rhodesia July 17 1969. NSC Country Files, Rhodesia (1969-1970) Box 743. Nixon Library, Memorandum for the President from Henry Kissinger. U.S. Consulate in Rhodesia July 22 1969. NSC Country Files, Rhodesia (1969-1970) Box 743. Nixon Library, 11. Memorandum from the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger) to President Nixon, Dean Acheson's views on our Consulate in Rhodesia, Washington, July 11 1969, FRUS, 1969-1976, Volume XXVIII, Southern Africa and Lake, *The "Tar Baby" Option*, 137.

²⁶⁵ Memorandum for the President from the Secretary of State William P. Rogers. American Consulate General, Salisbury, Southern Rhodesia July 17 1969. NSC Country Files, Rhodesia (1969-1970) Box 743. Nixon Library, Memorandum for Henry Kissinger from Roger Morris. U.S. Consulate in Rhodesia July 21 1969. NSC Country Files, Rhodesia (1969-1970) Box 743. Nixon Library, Memorandum for the President from Henry Kissinger. U.S. Consulate in Rhodesia July 22 1969. NSC Country Files, Rhodesia (1969-1970) Box 743. Nixon Library, Department of State Telegram to American Embassies in London, Lusaka, Pretoria and Blantyre as well as U.S. Mission to the UN. American Consulate Salisbury August 14 1969. NSC Country Files, Rhodesia (1969-1970) Box 743. Nixon Library and Lake, *The "Tar Baby" Option*, 137.

open the Swiss had long decided against closing and the consul even indicated a willingness to diplomatically recognize Rhodesia as a full nation state. There was of course no question that the South African and Portuguese posts would remain.²⁶⁶

As noted earlier, the question of the consulate was considered at the NSC meeting to discuss NSSM 39 on December 17, 1969. According to press reports at the time Nixon was being pressured by a number of southern Congressmen, representatives from the chrome industry and even Vice-President Agnew not to close the consulate.²⁶⁷

In NSDM 38, issued in late January, Nixon decided to keep the consulate in Salisbury so long as the legal question of U.S. recognition of the Rhodesian Government does not arise. If the question surfaced either through withdrawal of British accreditation or by the Rhodesians themselves raising the question of the consular status Nixon stated he would be forced to review policy. According to Lake, NSC staffer Morris reportedly informed Towsey of both the NSC meeting and the decision on the consulate in Salisbury.²⁶⁸

The Rhodesian Government, which had set March 2 as the date that the new republican constitution would come into force, was delighted with the decision but the British were less pleased by the continued American consular presence. While meeting with Nixon at the White House in January, Wilson had urged the President to close the consulate. The following month, the UK Minister to the Embassy in Washington, Guy

²⁶⁶ American Consul Salisbury to Secretary of State Washington DC. Present attitude of Foreign Representatives on Consulates remaining open or closing. August 1969. NSC Country Files, Rhodesia (1969-1970) Box 743. Nixon Library.

²⁶⁷ Lake, *The "Tar Baby" Option*, 138-139.

²⁶⁸ To the Vice President, Secretary of State, Secretary of the Treasury, Secretary of Defense, Attorney General, Secretary of Commerce, Director of Emergency Preparedness from Henry A. Kissinger. National Security Decision Memorandum 38. United States Policy Toward Southern Africa. January 28 1970. National Security Council Institutional ("H") Files, NSSM - 39 3 of 3 (2 of 4). Box H-145. Nixon Library and Lake, *The "Tar Baby" Option*, 138-139.

Millard, informed the Acting Assistant Secretary for African Affairs, G. Robert Moore, that London hoped the U.S. Government would come to an early decision to close the consulate. The British view, as put forward by Millard, was that such a decision would have a good political effect in Africa and at the UN, cause other countries with consulates in Rhodesia to follow suit and forestall any other countries who might wish to recognize the new republic.²⁶⁹

At midnight on March 1-2, Smith declared Rhodesia to be an independent republic thus formally severing its last ties to the Britain and Commonwealth. An examination of presidential correspondence reveals that the new Republic of Rhodesia certainly enjoyed the support of many Americans. In one notable letter to Kissinger, Mrs. Robert R. Wolf, a naturalized American from Albion, Nebraska, urged the administration that before severing all ties with Rhodesia, 'let us remember just who are our friends and who are our enemies.'²⁷⁰

At the higher echelons of international diplomacy, however, pressure was mounting on the President to remove the nettlesome diplomatic post. The UN Secretary General, U. Thant, called for an urgent meeting of the Security Council leading to possibility of a UN resolution requiring all nations to withdraw consulates from Rhodesia. The British Government also upped their demands that the U.S. withdraw its consulate. On March 5, Foreign Secretary Stewart met with U.S. Ambassador Walter

²⁶⁹ Memorandum for Henry A. Kissinger from Executive Secretary Theodore L. Eliot Jr. British Demarche on our Consulate in Rhodesia. NSC Country Files, Rhodesia Vol 2 (1970-1974) Box 743. Nixon Library, 26. Telegram From the Department of State to the Consulate in Salisbury, Washington, February 28 1970, FRUS, 1969-1976, Volume XXVIII, Southern Africa and Lake, *The "Tar Baby" Option*, 139-140.

²⁷⁰ Memorandum for the President from the Secretary of State. Status of U.S. Consulate General, Salisbury, Rhodesia. March 6 1970. NSC Country Files, Rhodesia Vol 2 (1970-1974) Box 743. Nixon Library, Letter to President Nixon from Curtis B. Dall, Chairman Liberty Lobby. March 4 1970. WHCF, CO 124 Rhodesia 1/1/70-4/30/70. Box 63. Nixon Library and Letter to Henry Kissinger from Mrs. Robert R. Wolf. March 3 1970. WHCF, CO 124 Rhodesia 1/1/70-4/30/70. Box 63. Nixon Library.

Annenberg and clearly signalled increasing British displeasure that Washington had not yet removed the post and wished for a firm announcement that the U.S. would not recognize the illegal regime. Lake states that the Foreign Secretary also threatened the possibility that the UK would withdraw exequatur if the consulate was to remain. Domestically, Secretary Rogers was increasingly insistent that the consulate must be removed.²⁷¹

On March 9, President Nixon issued NSDM 47 which determined that the U.S. Consulate in Salisbury would be closed and commented that the maintenance of the post had in no way constituted recognition of the Rhodesian regime. A Department of State press release, issued the same day, stated that in response to the establishment of the Rhodesian Constitution on March 2, which replaced the British Crown with a Rhodesian President as head of state the U.S. would close the consulate in Salisbury on March 17. This action was necessary as the Rhodesian action constituted a final formal break with the British Government which Washington regarded as lawfully sovereign in Rhodesia.²⁷²

While the decision delighted President Nyerere of Tanzania and was praised by the liberal American Committee on Africa it caused consternation in Salisbury and among American supporters of Rhodesia. Senator Strom Thurmond and Congressman H. R. Gross (R-Iowa) strongly condemned the decision. Indeed seventy-seven Congressmen

²⁷¹ Memorandum for the President from the Secretary of State. Status of U.S. Consulate General, Salisbury, Rhodesia. March 6 1970. NSC Country Files, Rhodesia Vol 2 (1970-1974) Box 743. Nixon Library, Telegram from Embassy London to Secretary of State Washington DC. March 6 1970. NSC Country Files, Rhodesia (1969-1970) Box 743. Nixon Library and Lake, *The "Tar Baby" Option*, 142.

²⁷² To The Vice President, The Secretary of State, The Secretary of Defense, The Secretary of the Treasury, The Attorney General, The Secretary of Commerce, The Director, Office of Emergency Preparedness from Henry A. Kissinger. U.S. Policy Toward Rhodesia. March 9 1970. NSC Institutional ("H") Files, NSDM - 47. Box H-214. Nixon Library and Statement by Secretary of State William P. Rogers. March 9 1970. NSC Country Files, Rhodesia Vol 2 (1970-1974) Box 743. Nixon Library.

signed a letter to Nixon expressing their shock and displeasure at his decision. The letter asked Nixon to reconsider his determination and further instruct the U.S. Mission to the UN to vote against any British effort to impede or harass the Republic of Rhodesia. On March 11, Senator Eastland introduced a resolution in the Senate calling for recognition of Smith government and stated that 'Once again...we are dancing to the tune of Whitehall's Pied Piper in a game of follow-the-leader diplomacy. We are courting disaster when we let tiny African nations, through London, dictate our decisions.'²⁷³

The criticism aimed at the administration did not only originate from political figures. An editorial in the Dallas Morning News on March 14 offered a damning indictment of U.S. policy on Rhodesia which reflected the views of many conservative Americans. 'If the black population had declared itself free March 2, the world would be laughing at any British pretensions of continued rule. If Salisbury had been burned in celebration of the new freedom, if half of the African born whites had been slaughtered to commemorate the event-if the new government immediately applied for handouts to keep itself afloat-we no doubt would have had a triumph of "democracy." Rhodesia's trouble is that there it has no immediate intention of turning over more than 50 years of achievement to a numerically superior but politically undeveloped people. Rhodesia exists, only because it was white-created and is largely white-governed.'²⁷⁴

It is worth noting, however, that the U.S. was still not willing to accede to the extremist demands of many African states at the UN. In early March, a number of

²⁷³ Letter to President Richard Nixon from Julius K. Nyerere of Tanzania. 13th March 1970. WHCF, CO 1-1 Africa (1969-70). Box 4. Nixon Library, Letter to President Nixon from George M. Houser, Executive Director of the American Committee on Africa. March 16 1970. WHCF, CO 124 Rhodesia 1/1/70-4/30/70. Box 63. Nixon Library, Letter to the Honorable Richard M. Nixon, President of the United States from Congressman Cowger et al. March 11 1970. NSC Country Files, Rhodesia Vol 2 (1970-1974) Box 743. Nixon Library, DeRoche, *Black, White and Chrome*, 166 and Lake, *The "Tar Baby" Option*, 143.

²⁷⁴ The Dallas Morning News. 'Independent' Rhodesia. Saturday March 14 1970. WHCF, CO 124 Rhodesia 5/1/70-8/31/70. Box 63. Nixon Library.

African delegates drafted a strict resolution which urged the UK to use force to end rebellion, called for the mandatory withdrawal of foreign consulates, extended sanctions to Portugal and South Africa and demanded the severance of all communication and transportation ties with Rhodesia. The British, in contrast put forward a milder resolution which merely called on all countries not to recognize the Rhodesian republic nor give it any assistance.²⁷⁵

On March 17, the very day that Consul O'Neill left Salisbury, the U.S. cast its first veto at the UN alongside the UK and subsequently voted for the resolution put forward by London. It was significant that the State Department recommended the veto as many officials there felt it was important that the African states realized that the use of force against Rhodesia, expansion of sanctions to South Africa and Portugal and severance of communications was unacceptable to Washington. The issue of the consulate in Salisbury had demonstrated the rifts within both the administration and the nation regarding future policy towards Rhodesia. The issue of chrome imports would exacerbate these divisions.²⁷⁶

Chrome: Economic and strategic interests lead to the open violation of UN sanctions

Chrome, specifically the importation of Rhodesian chrome ore and chrome alloys, became the major political issue for the Nixon Administration in terms of relations with Salisbury. Chromium which can be commercially produced from chromite ore was a metal of high economic value due to its corrosion resistance and strength. In the late 1960s, chrome and chrome based products including ferro alloys and stainless steel were

²⁷⁵ Lake, *The "Tar Baby" Option*, 144-145.

²⁷⁶ Lake, *The "Tar Baby" Option*, 144-146.

vital components of a number of American industries including electric power generation and chemical manufacturing. Chrome was also used by NASA in its space program and its strategic importance was reflected by its inclusion on the OEP Strategic and Critical List.²⁷⁷

Chrome ore, however, is not widely distributed in the earth's crust. The problem faced by Washington was that the U.S., indeed the whole Western hemisphere, contained no deposits of metallurgical chrome ore leaving the nation dependent on global imports. The primary deposits of ore were located in Southern Africa and parts of Asia. Prior to UDI, the U.S. imported the majority of its chrome and chrome alloys from Rhodesia, Turkey and the USSR. Indeed, according to industry insiders, Rhodesia was the source of the finest metallurgical chrome ore on the planet. American mining interests were some of the principal investors in the Rhodesian chrome industry.²⁷⁸

Executive Order 11322, signed by President Johnson, had incorporated UNSC Resolution 232 into domestic law. As a result, the U.S. was legally bound by the mandatory sanctions which prohibited the importation of Rhodesian chrome. This led to an increasing reliance on imports of chrome from the USSR. This dependency on the preeminent geopolitical rival for global hegemony was not only criticized on the obvious strategic grounds but also for economic reasons. The price of Soviet chrome swiftly rose

²⁷⁷ Statement of J. Clayton Stephenson, President, Mining and Metals Division, Union Carbide Corporation, October 31 1969 before Subcommittee on Africa of the House Committee of Foreign Affairs. NSC Country Files, Rhodesia (1969-1970) Box 743. Nixon Library and Statement of L.G. Bliss, Chairman of the Board and President of Foote Mineral Company, before the Subcommittee on Africa of the House Committee on Foreign Affairs October 31 1969. NSC Country Files, Rhodesia (1969-1970) Box 743. Nixon Library.

²⁷⁸ Statement of J. Clayton Stephenson, President, Mining and Metals Division, Union Carbide Corporation, October 31 1969 before Subcommittee on Africa of the House Committee of Foreign Affairs. NSC Country Files, Rhodesia (1969-1970) Box 743. Nixon Library and Letter to Tom Charles Huston, Staff Assistant to the President from L.G. Bliss, President of Foote Mineral Company. June 5 1969. NSC Country Files, Rhodesia (1969-1970) Box 743. Nixon Library.

and the quality proved to be far inferior to that of Rhodesian chromite. Furthermore, it was suggested other Western nations, despite sanctions, were not averse to purchasing Rhodesian chrome.²⁷⁹

By the time that Nixon took office in January 1969 the chrome issue had developed into a focal political question. In October of 1968, three months before Nixon's inauguration, Congressman Thomas B. Curtis (R-Missouri) had warned that the U.S. was becoming overly dependent on the USSR for its supply of chromite ore and noting the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia, queried as to whether Salisbury was a greater threat to global peace than Moscow. In his early years in office, Nixon was urged by a number a high profile political figures including Senators' Thurmond and Eastland, Congressman Howard R. Pollock and Acheson to repeal sanctions and allow the flow of Rhodesian chrome back into the U.S. Commerce and the OEP also advocated the importation of Rhodesian chrome on strategic and economic grounds.²⁸⁰

²⁷⁹ Memorandum from Director G. A. Lincoln, Executive Office of the President, Office of Emergency Preparedness for Henry A. Kissinger, Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs. Rhodesian Chrome. June 16 1969. NSC Country Files, Rhodesia (1969-1970) Box 743. Nixon Library, Memorandum for the President from Maurice H. Stans, Secretary of Commerce. Rhodesian Sanctions: Response to NSDM-47. May 15 1970. NSC Institutional ("H") Files, NSDM -47. Box H-214. Nixon Library, Memorandum for the President from Henry A. Kissinger. Rhodesian Sanctions. July 23 1970. NSC Institutional ("H") Files, NSDM -47. Box H-214. Nixon Library, Letter to Tom Charles Huston, Staff Assistant to the President from L.G. Bliss, President of Foote Mineral Company. June 5 1969. NSC Country Files, Rhodesia (1969-1970) Box 743. Nixon Library and Statement of J. Clayton Stephenson, President, Mining and Metals Division, Union Carbide Corporation, October 31 1969 before Subcommittee on Africa of the House Committee of Foreign Affairs. NSC Country Files, Rhodesia (1969-1970) Box 743. Nixon Library.

²⁸⁰ Congressional Record. Proceedings and debates of the 90th Congress, Second Session Vol. 114. Washington, Saturday October 12th 1968 No. 176. WHCF, CO 124 Rhodesia Begin--12/31/69. Box 63. Nixon Library, Paper to Henry A. Kissinger from Dean Acheson. U.S. Policies Toward Southern Africa Require Change. April 30 1969. WHCF, CO 135 South Africa, Republic of (1969-70). Box 63. Nixon Library, Letter to President Nixon from Congressman Howard W. Pollock (Alaska) July 23 1969. NSC Country Files, Rhodesia (1969-1970) Box 743. Nixon Library, Letter to Mr. Clark Mollenoff from United States Senator James O. Eastland (D-Mississippi) March 19 1970. WHCF, CO 124 Rhodesia 5/1/70-8/31/70. Box 63. Nixon Library, Letter to the President from U.S. Senator Strom Thurmond. April 15 1970. NSC Country Files, Rhodesia Vol 2 (1970-1974) Box 743. Nixon Library.

On April 16 1969, Union Carbide Corporation submitted an application to import 150,000 tons of chrome ore under the ‘hardship exemption’ which had accompanied the Executive Order of 1967. Two other companies, Foote Mineral and Corning Glass also applied for exemptions to import chrome and petalite respectively. The ‘exemption’ allowed Rhodesian goods that had been paid for but not exported before January 5 1967 to be licensed for import on the grounds of undue hardship. The application of Corning Glass did not fall under this criteria and was easily dismissed. The other two cases would prove far harder to decide.²⁸¹

Union Carbide had been active in Rhodesia since 1923. By 1969 the company had a gross investment of \$17 million dollars in the UDI state. It operated through two affiliated companies Rhodesia Chrome Mines Limited and Africa Chrome Mines Limited. On November 14 1966 Union Carbide paid \$2 million to Ruighoek Chrome Mines a subsidiary in South Africa. Ruighoek was responsible for the distribution of Rhodesia Chrome Mines. On December 16, a further \$1 million was paid to Ruighoek which then five days later transferred \$2,680,000 to Rhodesia Chrome Mines as payment for 150,000 tons of chrome ore for export to the U.S..²⁸²

The case of Foote Mineral was somewhat different. The company had been present in Rhodesia since 1932 as the sole owner of Rhodesian Vanadium Corporation. In January 1967, after the date of the Executive Order, the company orally requested the permission of the Treasury Department to transfer \$74,000 a month for the maintenance

²⁸¹ Memorandum for Henry Kissinger from Acting Secretary of Commerce K.N. Davis Jr. 24 December 1969. NSC Country Files, Rhodesia (1969-1970) Box 743. Nixon Library and Lake, *The “Tar Baby” Option*, 148.

²⁸² Memorandum for Henry Kissinger from Acting Secretary of Commerce K.N. Davis Jr. 24 December 1969. NSC Country Files Rhodesia (1969-1970) Box 743. Nixon Library and Statement of J. Clayton Stephenson, President, Mining and Metals Division, Union Carbide Corporation, October 31 1969 before Subcommittee on Africa of the House Committee of Foreign Affairs. NSC Country Files, Rhodesia (1969-1970) Box 743. Nixon Library.

of a mine owned by its subsidiary in order to keep minimum production going otherwise the mine would flood. The transfer of the funds was solely for the maintenance of the mine and the ore produced was kept stockpiled above ground. On January 2 1968, the Rhodesian Government took over the operation. On the grounds, that there would no further financial benefit to the Smith regime as the chrome had already been paid for, Foote Mineral submitted two applications, on September 27 1967 and August 28 1968 to the Treasury Department to import 57,000 tons of chrome ore mined after January 1967. Both were refused by Treasury.²⁸³

In the spring of 1969, on the advice of White House staffer, Patrick Buchanan, Nixon overruled State Department objections to the importation of the ore by Union Carbide and Foote Mineral and asked Kissinger to implement the decision. Kissinger, however, guided by the recommendation of Morris, successfully convinced Nixon that it would be more prudent to wait and only consider specific actions in light of the upcoming NSC review on Southern Africa. Morris and Kissinger were concerned that not only were the legal aspects of the case in dispute but that neither the black African nations nor the Rhodesians would see it as a simple deal. Morris described it as ‘not only an economic benefit to U.S. firms but a clear political windfall for Rhodesia.’ There were also fears acceptance would leave the administration open to domestic criticism from the political left.²⁸⁴

²⁸³ Memorandum for Henry Kissinger from Acting Secretary of Commerce K.N. Davis Jr. 24 December 1969. NSC Country Files, Rhodesia (1969-1970) Box 743. Nixon Library and Statement of L.G. Bliss, Chairman of the Board and President of Foote Mineral Company, before the Subcommittee on Africa of the House Committee on Foreign Affairs October 31 1969. NSC Country Files, Rhodesia (1969-1970) Box 743. Nixon Library.

²⁸⁴ Memorandum for Dr. Kissinger from Bob Haldeman May 1 1969. NSC Institutional (“H”) Files, NSSM - 39 1 of 3 (1 of 3). Box H-144. Nixon Library, Memorandum for Henry Kissinger from Roger Morris, Chrome Imports and Rhodesian Sanctions May 5 1969. NSC Country Files, Rhodesia (1969-1970) Box

The August report of the Interagency Group tasked with NSSM 39 concluded that the Union Carbide application was prohibited by the Executive Order and violated the intent of UN sanctions but could be justified under the hardship exemption. The Foote Mineral application, though, could not be granted under the terms of the Executive Order or hardship provision.²⁸⁵

Following the NSC Meeting in December 1969, Nixon agreed to a proposal from Kissinger that as the two cases involved potentially intricate legal issues then the application should be submitted to a further interagency group for study. In NSDM 38, Nixon ordered that representatives from State, Treasury and Commerce should study the Union Carbide case under the chairmanship of the Justice Department to clarify status under present regulations. On January 28, Deputy Attorney-General Richard Kleindienst submitted to the White House the opinion that Union Carbide should receive approval. The State Department, however, disagreed and submitted its own negative report.²⁸⁶

NSDM 47 which closed the U.S. Consulate also directed an urgent review of all existing regulations implementing UN sanctions against Rhodesia and all pending applications for imports especially chrome ore. The comprehensive review was

743. Nixon Library and Memorandum for Bob Haldeman from Henry A. Kissinger. Rhodesian Chrome Imports. May 7 1969. NSC Institutional ("H") Files NSSM - 39 1 of 3 (1 of 3). Box H-144. Nixon Library.

²⁸⁵ National Security Council Interdisciplinary Group for Africa. Study in Response to National Security Study Memorandum 39: Southern Africa. August 15 1969. NSC Institutional ("H") Files, NSSM - 39 2 of 3 (1 of 2). Box H-144. Nixon Library and Lake, *The "Tar Baby" Option*, 151.

²⁸⁶ To the Vice President, Secretary of State, Secretary of the Treasury, Secretary of Defense, Attorney General, Secretary of Commerce, Director of Emergency Preparedness from Henry A. Kissinger. National Security Decision Memorandum 38. United States Policy Toward Southern Africa. January 28 1970. NSC Institutional ("H") Files, NSSM - 39 3 of 3 (2 of 4). Box H-145. Nixon Library, Memorandum to Richard G. Kleindienst, Deputy Attorney General, Department of Justice from John R. Stevenson, Legal Advisor, Department of State. Union Carbide Application to Import Rhodesian Chrome. February 5 1970. NSC Institutional ("H") Files, NSDM 38. Records of the Staff Secretary NDSM Working Files. Box H-213. Nixon Library, Memorandum to Henry A. Kissinger Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs from Deputy Attorney General Richard G. Kleindienst RE: Paragraph No. 2 of National Security Decision Memorandum 38. NSC Institutional ("H") Files, February 9 1970. NSDM 38. Records of the Staff Secretary NDSM Working Files. Box H-213. Nixon Library and Lake, *The "Tar Baby" Option*, 151-152.

conducted by personnel from State, Defense, Treasury, Commerce, the Attorney General's Office, the OEP and the NSC. At the end of April, the group report was submitted to the White House by Secretary Rogers. The group concluded that that U.S. security was not adversely affected by sanctions at the present time and that observation of sanctions should be consistent with the anti-apartheid and pro-sanctions policy statements of the government.²⁸⁷

Regarding chrome imports and the Union Carbide application, State continued to oppose an exemption on the grounds that the company had paid the monies after the UN had passed mandatory sanctions and would also lead to accusations that Washington had brought about the collapse of the embargo. On the other extreme, Commerce and the OEP were opposed to the overall embargo on chrome imports as it left the U.S. excessively dependent on the USSR for chrome and vulnerable to Soviet manipulation of prices. Justice and the Treasury took a middle ground favoring the approval of the Union Carbide application as an exception to general approval of denying all license applications.²⁸⁸

The White House also began to feel increased pressure from key political allies to approve both the Union Carbide and Foote Mineral applications. On March 19, Senator Eastland in a letter to the White House expressed concern about the American refusal to

²⁸⁷ To the Vice President, The Secretary of State, The Secretary of Defense, The Secretary of the Treasury, The Attorney-General, The Secretary of Commerce, The Director, Office of Emergency Preparedness from Henry Kissinger. U.S. Policy Toward Rhodesia. March 9 1970. NSC Country Files, Rhodesia Vol 2 (1970-1974) Box 743. Nixon Library and Lake, *The "Tar Baby" Option*, 152-154.

²⁸⁸ Memorandum for the President from The Secretary of State. Rhodesian Sanctions: Response to NSDM 47. April 29 1970. NSC Institutional ("H") Files, NSDM -47. Box H-214. Nixon Library, Memorandum for Henry A. Kissinger Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs from G.A. Lincoln. Comment on the NSDM 47 Study. May 1 1970. NSC Institutional ("H") Files, NSDM -47. Box H-214. Nixon Library, Memorandum for the President from Maurice H. Stans, Secretary of Commerce. Rhodesian Sanctions: Response to NSDM-47. May 15 1970. NSC Institutional ("H") Files, NSDM -47. Box H-214. Nixon Library and Memorandum for the President from Henry A. Kissinger. Rhodesian Sanctions. July 23 1970. NSC Institutional ("H") Files, NSDM -47. Box H-214. Nixon Library.

protect its own strategic interests. He argued that strict compliance with sanctions was cutting U.S. off from an abundant and dependable source of high grade chrome ore in Rhodesia leaving Washington now heavily dependent on Moscow.²⁸⁹

One month later, Strom Thurmond informed Nixon that he would gain greater support from Republican voters by rescinding the Executive Order which banned chrome imports. According to the senator, the embargo threatened national security due to dependence on Moscow for chrome, it was imposed without sufficient basis in law as the UN Charter forbade interference in internal affairs of states and as the basis of embargo was to support the UK, now that Rhodesia was a republic there was no reason to accept crown jurisdiction over that nation. Finally, he argued that the embargo had only served to alienate Rhodesia leading to the adoption of more extreme policies.²⁹⁰

On August 7, the NSC reviewed the issue of chrome imports and specifically the two cases for hardship exemptions. Two days later on August 9, Nixon issued NSDM 75. On the advice of Kissinger, Nixon chose to take a middle ground on the issue of the chrome imports. The NSDM approved the Union Carbide application, contingent upon the confirmation by Treasury of the facts stated by the company on their application, and further approved licenses for U.S. firms to sell their assets in Rhodesia to any buyer.²⁹¹

The President, however, ordered a more active effort to ensure better compliance by other industrial nations with the UN sanctions and continued the embargo of the

²⁸⁹ Letter to Mr. Clark Mollenoff from United States Senator James O. Eastland (D-Mississippi) March 19 1970. WHCF, CO 124 Rhodesia 5/1/70-8/31/70. Box 63. Nixon Library.

²⁹⁰ Letter to the President from U.S. Senator Strom Thurmond. April 15 1970. NSC Country Files, Rhodesia Vol 2 (1970-1974) Box 743. Nixon Library.

²⁹¹ Memorandum for the President from Henry A. Kissinger. Rhodesian Sanctions. July 23 1970. NSC Institutional ("H") Files, NSDM -47. Box H-214. Nixon Library, 39. National Security Decision Memorandum 75. To The Vice President, The Secretary of State, The Secretary of Defense, The Secretary of the Treasury, The Attorney General, The Secretary of Commerce, The Director Office of Emergency Preparedness from Henry A. Kissinger, Rhodesian Sanctions, Washington, August 7 1970, FRUS, 1969-1976, Volume XXVIII, Southern Africa and Lake, *The "Tar Baby" Option*, 155.

importation of Rhodesian goods from any firm which entered into the transaction after the effective date of the Executive Order. Treasury was also to inform U.S. firms of tax relief provision if affected by sanctions or Rhodesian currency restriction. It is significant to note that Kissinger himself approved drafting of the NSDM in such a way as to minimize the possibility of the directive being misinterpreted as a liberalization or relaxation of the Rhodesian embargo ²⁹²

Treasury informed Union Carbide of the decision and subsequently granted the exemption on September 18 1970. Foote Mineral was notified of the failure of its own application but remained defiant, stating in the Johannesburg Star on September 26 that the company had no plans to sell its chrome assets in Rhodesia. It would not be long, however, before the Byrd Amendment allowed Foote Mineral, Union Carbide and any other American company to import as much chrome as they wished from their interests in Rhodesia. ²⁹³

As early as the fall of 1968, the question allowing the importation of Rhodesian chrome had been raised in Congress. This issue took on a new urgency in 1970 when Senator Eastland advocated for S.R. 367 which aimed to restore trading relations with

²⁹² 39. National Security Decision Memorandum 75. To The Vice President, The Secretary of State, The Secretary of Defense, The Secretary of the Treasury, The Attorney General, The Secretary of Commerce, The Director Office of Emergency Preparedness from Henry A. Kissinger, Rhodesian Sanctions. Washington, August 7 1970, FRUS, 1969-1976, Volume XXVIII, Southern Africa and Memorandum for Dr. Kissinger from Marshall Wright. NSDM on Rhodesia Sanctions. August 3 1970. NSC Institutional ("H") Files, NSDM-75. Box H-218. Nixon Library.

²⁹³ Letter to Henry A. Kissinger, Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs from Anthony J. Jurich, Special Assistant to the Secretary for National Security Affairs, Office of the Secretary of the Treasury. August 24 1970. NSC Institutional ("H") Files, NSDM-75. Box H-218. Nixon Library, Lake, *The "Tar Baby" Option*, 155 and Horne, *From the Barrel of a Gun*, 182.

Rhodesia. While the bill failed to pass, by early 1971, pro-Rhodesia supporters in Congress had devised a new formula to obtain Rhodesian chrome.²⁹⁴

On February 22, Representative Collins, introduced H.R. 4712 which sought to amend the UN Participation Act of 1945 to prevent the prohibition of the importation of any metal bearing ore from a free world country so long as the importation of the same ore from a communist country was not prohibited by law. In other words, Collins sought to legitimize chrome imports from 'free world' Rhodesia by a legal justification that the U.S. was importing chrome from the 'communist' Soviet Union. On March 3, the term 'metal bearing ore' was deleted and replaced by 'strategic and critical material'. Within weeks Senator Harry F. Byrd proposed a similar bill as S.R. 1404.²⁹⁵

In June, the House Foreign Affairs Committee met to consider H.R. 4712. Collins made an impassioned argument which not only noted the danger of the Russian monopoly on chrome but also observed that on the issue of race the proportion of blacks in the Rhodesian House and Senate was far higher than in the U.S. House or Senate. The Congressman further asked 'Why should Rhodesia be singled out when there is not a single democracy in the whole continent of Africa. If self-determination is a United Nations feature, why do we do business with Russia, Red China, Latin-American dictatorships or any other authoritarian country?' The committee, though, was unconvinced and the measure failed. On August 5, the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations also disposed of S.R. 1404.²⁹⁶

²⁹⁴ Congressional Record. Proceedings and debates of the 90th Congress, Second Session Vol. 114. Washington, Saturday October 12th 1968 No. 176. WHCF, CO 124 Rhodesia Begin--12/31/69. Box 63. Nixon Library and Lake, *The "Tar Baby" Option*, 199.

²⁹⁵ Lake, *The "Tar Baby" Option*, 199-200.

²⁹⁶ Economic Sanctions against Rhodesia. Hearings before the Subcommittee on International Organizations and Movements of the Committee on Foreign Affairs; House of Representatives Ninety-Second Congress June 17 and 22 1971. (Washington DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1971), 45,

It is important to note that the State Department strongly opposed the anti-sanctions bills and worked openly to defeat them. On May 14 and June 17, Assistant Secretary of State for Congressional Relations, David Abshire sent strongly worded letters to the Chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee opposing the legislation. Assistant Secretary of State, David Newsom and John Armitage, the Director of the State Department Office of UN Political Affairs testified at House Foreign Affairs subcommittees and Senate Foreign Relations subcommittees urging the defeat of the sanctions busting bills.²⁹⁷

The dual Congressional rejection should have ended the question but Senator Byrd proved to be a wily and determined political operator. Byrd was aware that the Military Procurement Act had already been passed by the House and was being considered by the Senate Armed Services Committee. Fellow conservatives Barry Goldwater (R-Arizona) and Strom Thurmond, as well as Byrd himself, were members of the committee. Byrd introduced most of the language of S.R. 1404 as an amendment to the act and successfully attached Section 503, or the Byrd Amendment, to the bill by a vote of 13-0. In the words of Lake, 'Byrd caught the liberals totally by surprise with a parliamentary masterstroke'.²⁹⁸

The appearance of the Byrd Amendment on the legislative scene divided the administration. On September 13, Secretary of State Rogers advised the President that

<http://www.aluka.org/action/showmetadata?doi=10.5555/AL.SFF.DOCUMENT.uscg005> and Lake, *The "Tar Baby" Option*, 204.

²⁹⁷ Economic Sanctions against Rhodesia. Hearings before the Subcommittee on International Organizations and Movements of the Committee on Foreign Affairs; House of Representatives Ninety-Second Congress June 17 and 22 1971. 45, <http://www.aluka.org/action/showmetadata?doi=10.5555/AL.SFF.DOCUMENT.uscg005> and Lake, *The "Tar Baby" Option*, 218.

²⁹⁸ Thomas Borstelmann, *The Cold War and the Color Line: American Race Relations in the Global Arena*. (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2003), 236-237, Lake, *The "Tar Baby" Option*, 204-205 and Schmidt, *Foreign Intervention in Africa*, 118.

‘adherence to the U.N. sanctions continues to be sound and in our national interest. It meets the basic considerations of maintaining our credibility in Africa, observing our international obligations, and upholding the authority of the United Nations.’²⁹⁹

In contrast, Nixon was determined that the amendment should succeed. On September 28, he told Kissinger; ‘I am for the Byrd Amendment...Don’t let State pucker out of this and sink the goddamn-we want to continue to buy that chrome.’ The President was urged, however, by Kissinger, to demonstrate, at least publicly, opposition to Section 503. While Kissinger was not enamored by the sanctions on Rhodesia and would have been pleased to be rid of them he felt that it could only happen at the right time and under the right circumstances. In his view, the Byrd Amendment could lead to excessive political costs both domestically and internationally. Kissinger felt that it was in Nixon’s best interests to indicate opposition and let Congress take the heat.³⁰⁰

Section 503 faced significant Congressional resistance from liberals and Africanists as well as opposition from the State Department. The bill, though, now had the backing of the powerful Armed Services Committee and its influential Chairman John C. Stennis (D-Mississippi), a man who held similar racist views as Byrd himself. Many believed business interests, including Union Carbide and Foote Mineral, as well as the RIO actively pressed on Capitol Hill for the passage of this legislation.³⁰¹

²⁹⁹ Memorandum for the President from Secretary of State William P. Rogers. Rhodesian Sanctions: Key Element in the Search for a Solution. September 13 1971. NSC Country Files, Rhodesia Vol 2 (1970-1974) Box 743. Nixon Library.

³⁰⁰ 57. Conversation Between President Nixon and the President’s Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger), Washington, September 28 1971, FRUS, 1969-1976, Volume XXVIII, Southern Africa and Memorandum for the President from Henry A. Kissinger. Byrd Amendment threatens U.S. Adherence to UN Sanctions on Rhodesia. September 1971. NSC Country Files, Rhodesia Vol 2 (1970-1974) Box 743. Nixon Library.

³⁰¹ Department of State H.G. Torbert, Acting Assistant Secretary for Congressional Relations to Honorable Thomas E. Morgan, Chairman of House Committee on Foreign Affairs. NSC Country Files,

On September 23, an amendment introduced by Senator Gale McGee (D-Wyoming), Chairman of the Subcommittee on Africa, which would have deleted Section 503 was defeated on the floor. A second proposal by Senator Fulbright (D-Arkansas) which would have given the President the power to refuse to implement the legislation if national interest or a treaty obligation required him to do was defeated on October 6. On November 5, a committee comprising of members from both the House of Representatives and the Senate filed a report in favor of the amendment highlighting the urgent national need for Rhodesian chrome. Five days later, on November 10, the Military Procurement Act was passed by the House and the following day was approved by the Senate.³⁰²

The White House, prior to the passage of the bill, had asked Senators' Peter H. Dominick (R-Colorado) and William E. Brock (R-Tennessee) to propose an amendment which would delay the execution of the Byrd Amendment. On October 28, the Brock Amendment, pushed the effective date of the Byrd bill to January 1 1972. The presidential action was done to aid the British in their upcoming negotiations with Ian Smith. British officials had signaled concern that the enactment and implementation of the Byrd Amendment could have a negative effect on the talks with the Rhodesians.³⁰³

The Military Procurement Act was signed by Nixon on November 17, 1971. Under Section 503, the act authorized the importation of seventy-two strategic and critical minerals from Rhodesia. The most important of these minerals were chrome,

Rhodesia (1969-1970) Box 743. Nixon Library, Crespino, *Strom Thurmond's America*, 71 and 151, Lake, *The "Tar Baby" Option*, 168-169, 201 and 205 and Schmidt, *Foreign Intervention in Africa*, 118.

³⁰² Lake, *The "Tar Baby" Option*, 206-213.

³⁰³ State Department for the President from Secretary of State William P. Rogers. Implementation of the Byrd Amendment Rhodesian Chromite. December 30 1971. NSC Country Files, Rhodesia Vol 2 (1970-1974) Box 743. Nixon Library and Lake, *The "Tar Baby" Option*, 224.

ferrochrome and nickel. Secretary of State Rogers had expressed concern, informing Nixon that 'It will be valid and effective legislation under the constitution but will constitute a clear violation of our international legal obligations'. At the suggestion of Rogers, endorsed by Kissinger, in an attempt to mitigate the harmful political impact of the provision, Nixon gave a public statement which explained the limited character of the chrome ore exemption and reaffirmed overall Rhodesia policy including support of sanctions pending a satisfactory negotiated settlement.³⁰⁴

The Department of State remained anxious at the potential international ramifications of Section 503. In late December, Rogers urged Nixon to circumvent the Byrd Amendment by using Section 5 (a) of the UN Participation Act to prohibit the import of Soviet chromite which in turn would allow the U.S. to continue to prohibit Rhodesian chrome. He also suggested the possibility of removing chrome from the list of critical and strategic minerals or asking Congress for a six month delay before implementation.³⁰⁵

The proposals by State were strongly opposed by other government agencies. The Treasury disputed the legality of using Section 5 of the UN Participation Act to prohibit importation of Soviet chromite. It also noted that there was no UN ban on Russian chromite. Commerce feared that such a move would put at risk overall trade with the USSR while the OEP condemned the concept of delisting chrome. The OEP insisted that

³⁰⁴Memorandum for the President from the Secretary of State, William P. Rogers. Statement on the Provision of Military Procurement Authorization Bill Permitting the Import of Rhodesian Chrome. November 16 1971. NSC Institutional ("H") Files, NSSM 142. Box H-188. Nixon Library, Memorandum for the President from Henry A. Kissinger. Statement to be made on the signing of the Military Procurement Authorization Bill. November 16 1971. NSC Country Files, Rhodesia Vol 2 (1970-1974) Box 743. Nixon Library and Lake, *The "Tar Baby" Option*, 198.

³⁰⁵State Department for the President from Secretary of State William P. Rogers. Implementation of the Byrd Amendment Rhodesian Chromite. December 30 1971. NSC Country Files, Rhodesia Vol 2 (1970-1974) Box 743. Nixon Library.

not only was chrome a strategic material but that tampering with the standards jeopardized the whole stockpile policy and furthermore was an evasion of Congressional intent. The third option, a delay in implementation was difficult logistically given that Congress was out of session.³⁰⁶

Kissinger also signaled his opposition to the State Department proposals and recommended the implementation of Byrd Amendment as Congress intended. Nixon concurred and instructed Treasury to draw up the necessary changes in regulations to allow the importation of Rhodesian chrome. On January 25, the Office of Foreign Assets Control at the Treasury Department issued a General License allowing the importation of Rhodesian chrome, ferrochrome as well as any other material deemed to be strategic and critical.³⁰⁷

The passage of the Byrd Amendment was celebrated by the Rhodesian Government. The legislation would not only provide much needed foreign exchange but was a huge psychological boost to the embattled Smith regime. In December 1971, the RIO held a Christmas party at which the invitees revelled in the success of Section 503. According to Lake, there was even a special festive song entitled the '503 Club Marching Song' to the tune of 'O Tannenbaum'. U.S. mining interests were also quick to take

³⁰⁶ Treasury Department Memorandum for Dr. Kissinger from Acting Secretary of Treasury Charles E. Walker. Implementation of the Byrd Amendment-Rhodesian Chromite. January 1972. NSC Country Files, Rhodesia Vol 2 (1970-1974) Box 743. Nixon Library, Memorandum for Henry A. Kissinger, Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs from Director General G.A. Lincoln, Executive Office of the President, Office of Emergency Preparedness. Implementation of the Byrd Amendment on Rhodesian Chromite. January 4 1972. NSC Country Files, Rhodesia Vol 2 (1970-1974) Box 743. Nixon Library and Memorandum for the President from Henry A. Kissinger. Rhodesian Chrome and the Byrd Amendment. January 17 1972. NSC Country Files, Rhodesia Vol 2 (1970-1974) Box 743. Nixon Library.

³⁰⁷ Memorandum for The Secretary of State, The Secretary of the Treasury, The Secretary of Commerce and The Director of the Office of Emergency Preparedness from Henry A. Kissinger. Implementation of the Provisions of the Military Procurement Act Relating to Rhodesian Chromite. January 21 1972. NSC Country Files, Rhodesia Vol 2 (1970-1974) Box 743. Nixon Library and Lake, *The "Tar Baby" Option*, 214.

advantage of the new law. The first chromite shipment of 25,000 tons arrived at Burnside, Louisiana in March 1972. The consignee was the Foote Mineral Company.³⁰⁸

African countries, however, expressed dismay and the UNSC approved a resolution which included clauses expressing deep concern over the Congressional action and urged Washington to co-operate fully in effective implementation of sanctions. Domestically, liberals and supporters of the UN were horrified that the U.S. would be doing business with the white controlled pariah regime. President Nixon was publicly critical although he laid the blame on Congress for passing the controversial legislation. In private, however, he remained supportive of the Byrd Amendment and was so infuriated by UN criticism that he even threatened to cut off financial support to the international organization.³⁰⁹

Congressional opponents of Section 503 moved swiftly to remove the amendment. As early as April 17 1972, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee voted to repeal the Byrd Amendment but the subsequent floor motion by Senator McGee was defeated by Byrd and his supporters. In July, an attempt by Representative Donald Fraser (D-Minnesota) to convince the House Committee on Foreign Affairs to amend the

³⁰⁸ Lake, *The "Tar Baby" Option*, 214 and 226.

³⁰⁹ Memorandum for the President from the Secretary of State, William P. Rogers. Statement on the Provision of Military Procurement Authorization Bill Permitting the Import of Rhodesian Chrome. November 16 1971. NSC Institutional ("H") Files, NSSM 142. Box H-188. Nixon Library, Memorandum for Henry A. Kissinger from Executive Secretary Theodore L. Eliot. UN Security Council Resolution on Rhodesian Sanctions 1972. NSC Country Files, Rhodesia Vol 2 (1970-1974) Box 743. Nixon Library, 62. Conversation among President Nixon, the White House Chief of Staff (Haldeman) and the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger), November 18 1971, FRUS, 1969-76, Vol. XXVIII, Southern Africa and "Six month record: Rhodesia...ACOA fights violations of UN sanctions", New York: American Committee on Africa. 1972, <http://www.aluka.org/action/showmetadata?doi=10.5555/AL.SFF.DOCUMENT.acoa000379>, 56. Third Annual Report to the Congress on United States Foreign Policy. February 9 1972. Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States. Richard Nixon, 1972, (Washington DC: United States Government Printing Office, 1974) and Lake, *The "Tar Baby" Option*, 219.

foreign aid bill to include a section which would have repealed the Byrd Amendment was also unsuccessful.³¹⁰

The attempts at repeal enjoyed strong support at the State Department but the White House, on the advice of Kissinger, while taking the public line that U.S. legislation should be in line with its international treaty obligations, also highlighted the fact that responsibility lay with Congress. In May, presidential spokesman Jerry Warren stated ‘The Congress enacted the Byrd Amendment. And the Congress is now reviewing the legislation to seek conformity with the United States’ international obligation. So it is up to the Congress.’³¹¹

In the words of Kissinger, such an approach ‘would relieve us of responsibility for the Byrd Amendment and its treaty violations, put the monkey squarely on the Senate’s back where it belongs and help defuse criticism in Africa and UN.’ The administration did not wish to antagonize Senator Byrd and the chrome lobby by supporting repeal but equally wished to evade any blame for the treaty violations. This approach evoked the ire of Senator McGee who claimed that he had been misled by the White House which had promised to call key senators to press for repeal but never did.³¹²

On May 25 1973, Senator Hubert Humphrey introduced repeal legislation which was then considered at the hearings of the Senate Subcommittee on Africa in September.

³¹⁰ Memorandum for the President from Henry A. Kissinger. The Byrd Amendment. May 10 1972. NSC Country Files, Rhodesia Vol 2 (1970-1974) Box 743. Nixon Library and Lake, *The “Tar Baby” Option*, 215-216.

³¹¹ Department of State Memorandum for the President from Secretary of State William P. Rogers. Legislation to Repeal the Byrd Provision on Rhodesian Sanctions. April 24 1972. NSC Institutional (“H”) Files, NSSM 142. Box H-188. Nixon Library, Memorandum for the President from Henry A. Kissinger. The Byrd Amendment. May 10 1972. NSC Country Files, Rhodesia Vol 2 (1970-1974) Box 743. Nixon Library and Lake, *The “Tar Baby” Option*, 220.

³¹² Memorandum for the President from Henry A. Kissinger. The Byrd Amendment. May 10 1972. NSC Country Files, Rhodesia Vol 2 (1970-1974) Box 743. Nixon Library and Lake, *The “Tar Baby” Option*, 217.

Both the U.S. Representative to the UN, and Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs Newsom testified in support of S.R. 1868. The motion moved to the floor where on December 18 despite a a 'silent filibuster' by Senator Byrd the bill successfully passed 54-37. The House Foreign Affairs Committee also approved the repeal legislation but the issue was not scheduled for action until August 1974.³¹³

By the fall of 1973, the administration had adopted a slightly stronger approach on repeal. On September 7, at his hearing for the nomination to be Secretary of State, Kissinger stated that the White House supported repeal legislation. Tangible actions on behalf of repeal remained lacking though and the new posture appears to have represented little more than lip service to ending the importation of Rhodesian chrome.³¹⁴

Following the Senate's approval of repeal the fight had moved to the House of Representatives. The legislation, however, did not reach a floor vote during Nixon's tenure in office. The Byrd Amendment, which allowed U.S. companies to openly violate UN sanctions, would become a problem for his successor in the Oval Office, President Gerald R. Ford.³¹⁵

³¹³ Statement of U.S. Representative to the United Nations, Ambassador Scali. Hearings before the Subcommittee on African Affairs, Senate Committee on Foreign Relations. September 3 1973. NSC Country Files, Rhodesia Vol 2 (1970-1974) Box 743. Nixon Library, Statement of David P. Newsom, Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs. Hearings before the Subcommittee on African Affairs, Senate Subcommittee on Foreign Relations. September 3 1973. NSC Country Files, Rhodesia Vol 2 (1970-1974) Box 743. Nixon Library, Memorandum for Bud McFarlane from Hal Horan. Rhodesian Chrome: Repeal of the Byrd Amendment. December 19 1973. NSC Country Files, Rhodesia Vol 2 (1970-1974) Box 743. Nixon Library and Lake, *The "Tar Baby" Option*, 272-275.

³¹⁴ Memorandum for the President from Henry A. Kissinger. Repeal of the Byrd Amendment. September 1973. NSC Country Files, Rhodesia Vol 2 (1970-1974) Box 743. Nixon Library.

³¹⁵ DeRoche, *Black, White and Chrome*, 202.

The Smith-Home Agreement: how to handle an independent but pariah Rhodesia?

In November 1971, the British and Rhodesian Governments' signed the Smith-Home Agreement which both parties hoped would lead to a fully independent Rhodesia. The White House, while supportive of the settlement, nevertheless fretted over the implications for the United States of any deal which allowed an independent Rhodesia to remain under white minority rule. It was feared that American support of the settlement and recognition of Rhodesia, as urged by London, would cause an hostile reaction in black Africa affecting U.S. strategic, political and economic interests and create an opening for Chinese and Soviet exploitation. Nixon therefore privately backed the British position but ordered a comprehensive review to gauge the probable international reaction and the options available to Washington in dealing with an independent but internationally ostracized Rhodesia.

On June 18 1970, the Conservative Party triumphed in the British general elections. The Conservatives, typically more amenable towards Rhodesia, stated that they sought a new initiative to solve the issue. It was also brought to the attention of President Nixon that the Conservative leaders were in favor of relaxing sanctions and the arms embargo. The new Prime Minister, Edward Heath, indicated to Salisbury that his Foreign Secretary, Sir Alec Douglas-Home, would be the key player in any future negotiations.³¹⁶

As early as April 1971, unofficial British emissaries Sir Max Aitken and Lord Goodman were in Rhodesia for informal negotiations with Smith and the RF. The tentative preliminary discussions on a potential settlement continued over the summer

³¹⁶ Memorandum for the President from Secretary of State William P. Rogers, Washington D.C. Rhodesia and the British Elections. May 22 1970. NSC Country Files, Rhodesia Vol 2 (1970-1974) Box 743. Nixon Library, Memorandum for President from Henry A. Kissinger. Southern African issues and British Election. June 8 1970. NSC Country Files, Rhodesia Vol 2 (1970-1974) Box 743. Nixon Library and Smith, *Bitter Harvest*, 153.

months and by early November British Ambassador Cromer informed Rogers that the British were confident the negotiations had reached a stage where a settlement on the basis of the five principles was possible.³¹⁷

On November 15, Douglas-Home flew into Salisbury to finalize the potential agreement. London informed Washington that two elements remained in dispute between the parties. First, the insistence that Rhodesia rolled back the racially discriminatory laws enacted since UDI and secondly the British wish to establish that they have independently confirmed that the settlement was acceptable to all Rhodesians regardless of skin color. Douglas-Home would not agree to any settlement that did not reflect the wishes of the population.³¹⁸

The Rhodesians were also confident of achieving a successful settlement. In September, while on a private hunting trip in Mozambique, NSC staffer Kent Crane was contacted by a senior Rhodesian Foreign Ministry official. The Rhodesian stated that Salisbury was confident of its ability to reach an agreement with UK and believed that most black ruled neighboring countries would accept a reasonable settlement. He expressed hope that the U.S. would not oppose any deal worked out.³¹⁹

Kissinger, however, believed that it was extremely naïve of London to consider that any agreement that the UK made with Smith would be satisfactory to the majority of UN members. He viewed the negotiations as an opportunity for the Chinese to assert

³¹⁷ Memorandum of Conversation. Sir Alec to visit Rhodesia. November 8 1971. NSC Institutional ("H") Files, NSSM 142. Box H-188. Nixon Library and Smith, *Bitter Harvest*, 153.

³¹⁸ Memorandum of Conversation. Sir Alec to visit Rhodesia. November 8 1971. NSC Institutional ("H") Files, NSSM 142. Box H-188. Nixon Library and Memorandum for the President from Henry A. Kissinger. Rhodesia: British seem close to an Agreement. November 17 1971. NSC Institutional ("H") Files, NSSM 142. Box H-188. Nixon Library.

³¹⁹ Memorandum for Brig. Gen. Alexander M. Haig from Kent Crane. Status of UK-Rhodesian Negotiations. November 17 1971. NSC Country Files, Rhodesia Vol 2 (1970-1974) Box 743. Nixon Library.

leadership among non-white states and allowed the USSR to be ‘super virtuous’ in supporting inevitable African criticism of the sell out. Nevertheless, the U.S. was in favor of a settlement and did not wish to place obstacles in the path of the British in achieving this goal. While keeping a low public profile on the negotiations, Nixon sent a message to the Rhodesian leadership via a South African intermediary stating that he believed a settlement was in Rhodesia’s interests.³²⁰

On November 21, the Home-Smith Agreement was formally signed in Salisbury. The settlement provided for unimpeded progress to majority rule albeit through a complex two phase formula. First, the creation of a new African voting roll with the same qualifications as for whites and more liberal procedures to permit Africans gradually to increase their representation in House of Assembly to parity. In the second phase, a ten additional seats created for representatives from the common voting roll making possible an African majority. The agreement also provided guarantees against retrogressive amendment to the constitution.³²¹

The settlement also demanded an immediate improvement in the political status of the African population through an expanded franchise. The UK would provide 50 million pounds in development aid over 10 years to be matched ‘appropriately’ by the Rhodesians for education, job opportunities and other resources to allow increasing numbers of Africans to meet educational and property qualifications to vote. There would also be progress towards ending racial discrimination through a new and stronger

³²⁰ Memorandum for the President from Henry A. Kissinger. Byrd Amendment threatens U.S. Adherence to UN Sanctions on Rhodesia. September 1971. NSC Country Files, Rhodesia Vol 2 (1970-1974) Box 743. Nixon Library, Memorandum for the President from Henry A. Kissinger. Rhodesia: British seem close to an Agreement. November 17 1971. NSC Institutional (“H”) Files, NSSM 142. Box H-188. Nixon Library and Lake, *The “Tar Baby” Option*, 156.

³²¹ Memorandum for Henry Kissinger from Marshall Wright. Rhodesian Agreement. November 27 1971. NSC Country Files, Rhodesia Vol 2 (1970-1974) Box 743. Nixon Library.

Declaration of Rights enforceable in the courts. Furthermore, a commission would review existing racially discriminatory laws and regulations including the notorious Land Tenure Act and recommend changes to the Rhodesian Government. Finally, London would need to be satisfied that any basis proposed for independence was acceptable to the people of Rhodesia as a whole.³²²

The British were pleased with the outcome of the negotiations. Prime Minister Heath wrote to Nixon that the UK believed that the agreement with Smith could be demonstrated to be in full accordance with the first four principles and we hope to show can be acceptable to the Rhodesian people under the fifth principle comprising of the test of acceptability. Heath stated that 'I am sure that the settlement offers the Africans in Rhodesia a real prospect of political, social and economic advance. It is moreover likely to be the last opportunity for achieving this.' The prime minister, though, highlighted the importance of gaining international acceptance and asked for American help in achieving this.³²³

British Minister of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs Joseph Godber was subsequently dispatched to Washington by Heath to explain the mechanics of the agreement and elucidate U.S. support. He met with both Under Secretary of State John N. Irwin and U.S. Ambassador to the UN George Bush. While noting that under the terms of the settlement it could take up to thirty years until majority rule, this could be accelerated if the Africans accepted the plan and the white Rhodesians lived up to their promises. The British realized that Sithole and Nkomo would reject the agreement but felt that many

³²² Memorandum for Henry Kissinger from Marshall Wright. Rhodesian Agreement. November 27 1971. NSC Country Files, Rhodesia Vol 2 (1970-1974) Box 743. Nixon Library.

³²³ Text of Message to President Nixon from Prime Minister Edward Heath via British Embassy, Washington D.C. November 24 1971. NSC Country Files, Rhodesia Vol 2 (1970-1974) Box 743. Nixon Library.

Africans realized that the deal was the only hope of preventing the slide of Rhodesia into the embrace of apartheid South Africa.³²⁴

In Rhodesia, Smith stated that, with the exception of the extreme right wing of the RF, both white and black Rhodesian communities were happy with the outcome of the Smith-Home Agreement. In his view, the settlement enshrined the principle of majority rule but ‘there would be no mad rush into a one man one vote with the resultant corruption, nepotism, chaos, and economic disaster which we had witnessed in all the countries around us.’ He noted, however, the danger of extremists mounting a ‘no’ campaign based on intimidation and urged that the test of acceptability take place before Christmas.³²⁵

President Nixon, upon the announcement of the Home-Smith Agreement, indicated American acceptance of the deal if all the Rhodesian parties agreed. The administration, however, was deeply concerned about the potential impact of the settlement on U.S. interests. In November, Nixon ordered NSSM 142 which directed that the NSC Interdepartmental Group for Africa prepare a review of the implications for Washington of a British-Rhodesian settlement that acknowledged independence and termination of sanctions. Specifically the NSSM was to assess the probable reaction at the UN, the legal, political and economic implications involved in U.S. recognition of an independent Rhodesia, identify alternate courses of action and the probable consequences

³²⁴ Memorandum for Henry Kissinger from Marshall Wright. Rhodesian Agreement. November 27 1971. NSC Country Files, Rhodesia Vol 2 (1970-1974) Box 743. Nixon Library and Telegram from Ambassador Bush, U.S. Ambassador to United Mission at the UN, New York to Secretary of State, Washington DC. Rhodesia in Security Council-Bush/Godber Meeting November 29. November 1971. NSC Institutional (“H”) Files, NSSM 142. Box H-188. Nixon Library.

³²⁵ Smith, *Bitter Harvest*, 153.

of each possible action on American interests at UN and bilateral relations with the countries concerned.³²⁶

On December 22 1971, the Interdepartmental Group for Africa sent Kissinger the NSSM 142 study on the Rhodesian settlement. The report noted that the UK believed that it had achieved the best possible settlement under the circumstances and that it would provide better prospects for the African population than if Rhodesia continues to follow the South African model. The Interdepartmental Group, though, warned that the proposals fell short of the standards set earlier by the British. The study also noted the widespread opposition among African states and at the UN condemning the settlement and calling on the UK to reassert control and grant independence only after majority rule.³²⁷

In terms of American interests the report observed that economically a Rhodesian settlement would allow the U.S. to resume control over \$56 million worth of U.S. investments. In addition, while the passage of the Byrd Amendment allowed the importation of chrome, only with a settlement would the American businesses actually gain access to the mines. On a strategic level, the U.S. would gain overflight and landing rights.³²⁸

Rhodesia, however, under continued minority rule, would remain a point of instability and racial conflict. This would also be in conflict with U.S. policy which

³²⁶ Memorandum to the Secretary of State, Secretary of Defense, Director of Central Intelligence from Henry Kissinger. National Security Study Memorandum. Rhodesia. November 1971. NSC Institutional ("H") Files, NSSM 142. Box H-188. Nixon Library and Lake, *The "Tar Baby" Option*, 156.

³²⁷ Memorandum for Henry A. Kissinger from David D. Newsom, Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs and Chairman of the NSC Inter-departmental group for Africa. December 22 1971. NSC Institutional ("H") Files, NSSM 142. Box H-188. Nixon Library.

³²⁸ Memorandum for Henry A. Kissinger from David D. Newsom, Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs and Chairman of the NSC Inter-departmental group for Africa. December 22 1971. NSC Institutional ("H") Files, NSSM 142. Box H-188. Nixon Library.

opposed continued white control and supported the earliest possible achievement of majority rule. American support of the settlement and recognition of Rhodesia would also cause an adverse reaction in black Africa affecting strategic, political and economic interests and create an opening for Chinese and Soviet exploitation. The study also pointed out that legally the U.S. needed to fulfill its obligations under the UN Charter regarding Security Council decisions already in force.³²⁹

The British Commission, led by Lord Pearce, arrived in Rhodesia in early January. As noted anxiously by the liberal American Committee on Africa, the Pearce Commission was an all white group made up of British lords and peers who were unlikely to sympathize with the black population. Smith, though, was also displeased as he had hoped that the whole agreement would be finalized by the New Year. He complained bitterly that British procrastination had allowed the African Nationalists to establish cells in all districts and create a nationwide campaign of intimidation. It was soon clear that the test of acceptability was not going as well as the British and Rhodesians had hoped. As early as January 20, the White House was receiving reports of riots in Rhodesia against the settlement.³³⁰

In May, the British Government published the official report of the Pearce Commission which stated that while most of white Rhodesians were in favor of the Home-Smith Agreement the majority of the black population opposed the deal. London honored the findings of the commission leading to the collapse of the settlement. White

³²⁹ Memorandum for Henry A. Kissinger from David D. Newsom, Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs and Chairman of the NSC Inter-departmental group for Africa. December 22 1971. NSC Institutional ("H") Files, NSSM 142. Box H-188. Nixon Library.

³³⁰ Memorandum for Henry A. Kissinger from Marshall Wright. Time for Presidential Decision on Byrd Bill. January 20 1972. NSC Country Files, Rhodesia Vol 2 (1970-1974) Box 743. Nixon Library, "Zimbabwe Rejects Sellout". (New York: American Committee on Africa, February 1972), <http://www.aluka.org/action/showmetadata?doi=10.5555/AL.SFF.DOCUMENT.acoa000370>, Baxter, *Rhodesia*, 375-376 and Smith, *Bitter Harvest*, 154-155.

Rhodesians blamed the failure of the test of acceptability on a small minority of activists who coerced the black population into opposing the agreement. In the words of an Air Rhodesia stewardess; 'It is all those bloody agitators. Africans wouldn't turn down all those schools we're offering them unless there was intimidation'.³³¹

For the White House, however, mired in the conflict in Vietnam and concerned with the upcoming presidential election, the failure of the the Home-Smith Agreement simply removed a potential headache from the international picture. Rhodesia would be of little significance to Nixon for the remainder of his term in office. For the beleaguered president, the controversy over the Watergate scandal would prove to be the time consuming and exhausting legacy of his second term. Furthermore, in terms of foreign policy, Nixon, facing conservative criticism over détente with the USSR, a crisis in the Middle East and the repercussions over the withdrawal from Vietnam had little time or interest to deal with Southern Africa.³³²

³³¹ Telegram from Secretary of State Washington to Embassy London and U.S. Mission to the UN in New York. U.S.-UK discussions on Rhodesia 3/8-9/72. March 1972. NSC Institutional ("H") Files, NSSM 142. Box H-188. Nixon Library, Memorandum for Richard T. Kennedy from Chester A. Crocker. Rhodesia. March 20 1972. NSC Institutional ("H") Files, NSSM 142. Box H-188. Nixon Library, Baxter, *Rhodesia*, 376 and Lake, *The "Tar Baby" Option*, 26.

³³² Tindall and Shi, *America*, 1374-1379, Nixon, *The Memoirs of Richard Nixon*, 761-1090, Henry Kissinger, *Years of Renewal*, (London: Simon and Schuster, 1999), 92 and Kissinger *Years of Upheaval*, 419-420.

The Nixon Years

The Nixon Administration came into office determined to formulate a new foreign policy based on a pyramid of cooperation and balance between the strongest nations with the United States at the apex. The Nixon years were further characterized by the solidification of alliances with regional powers who could voluntarily shoulder responsibility for their area of the globe. In the case of Southern Africa, the White House opted to develop closer relations with Pretoria and to a lesser extent ‘communication’ with Salisbury despite their racist policies. Both Nixon and Kissinger believed that the U.S. needed to prioritize the protection of its own strategic and economic interest and not worry about the domestic agenda of its global partners.

On a strategic level, the White House was concerned about potential communist expansion in the region and American access to the mineral wealth of Rhodesia notably reestablishing a steady supply of free-world chrome. Salisbury also enjoyed considerable support on Capitol Hill including a number of highly influential senators with close ties to Nixon himself. Furthermore, as noted by Horne, the ‘Southern Africa Strategy’ of closer relations with Pretoria and Salisbury both reflected and harmonized the domestic ‘Southern Strategy’ of public condemnation of racially discriminatory legislation but a private lack of vigor in pushing for meaningful change. On an electoral level, this dual approach had the perceived benefit of appealing to a large percentage of the American electorate especially in the southern states.

The apparent success of Rhodesia in continuing to prosper, albeit with South African support, despite the UN sanctions and the fact that the Rhodesian military appeared more than competent enough to defeat any internal or external security threat

also affected decision making. This of course led to the further line of argumentation from supporters of Rhodesia that as the whites would remain firmly in control for the foreseeable future then surely the U.S. should accept this and deal with them as the de facto government of that nation.

The White House, though, was also aware of the potential political costs of appearing too 'friendly' with white controlled regimes of Southern Africa. By 1969, The Afro-Asian bloc was becoming increasingly powerful at the UN and national interest dictated the avoidance of any actions which would overly aggravate these new nations. In addition, on a geostrategic level, closer ties with apartheid South Africa or Rhodesia would hand the moral initiative to the China or the USSR who were staunch supporters of the Nationalist movements. In the case of Rhodesia, overt American support would also antagonize ties with London, the de jure authority, potentially weakening the transatlantic alliance. At home, any association with the white minority governments would be taken as reflective of the administration's domestic stance on racism with the inevitable liberal backlash.

The White House was thus faced with three broad choices as identified in NSSM 39. First, a relaxation of relations leading to increased communication and involvement with the authorities in Pretoria and Salisbury in order to protect national strategic and economic interests as well as placating the domestic 'Rhodesia Lobby'. Secondly, limited association with both the white states and black Africa that which would protect some of the American interests in the white states but lead to only minimal damage politically. Finally, dissociation from the white regimes and closer ties to black Africa which would

give Washington greater credibility among the African states, at the UN, counteract Chinese and Soviet influence and avoid domestic criticism from liberal Americans.

Nixon, of course opted for the relaxation of relations with South Africa and Rhodesia. As the President himself observed at the NSC meeting of December 1969, the U.S. must focus on its own national interest and not worry about the domestic policies of other nations. It is significant, though, that the White House stopped short of the 'Acheson option' of full normalization of ties with the white states. Full diplomatic relations was considered too damaging in terms of political costs both globally and domestically.

When geostrategic and economic interests coincided, though, as was the case with obtaining access to Rhodesian chrome, then Nixon demonstrated no qualms in placing Washington in direct violation of UN sanctions and incurring the ire of the world community in order to achieve his objectives. In the geopolitics of the Cold War, the White House was troubled by the perception of a growing U.S. dependence of Soviet chrome both politically and commercially. For the Nixon Administration, ensuring a supply of free world chrome from a vehemently anti-communist nation trumped the domestic and international ramifications of doing business with the practitioners of white minority rule.

Nixon, however, like his predecessor Lyndon B. Johnson, continued to support the British efforts to return Salisbury to 'legality'. On the question of the U.S. Consulate, there was little doubt that Nixon on a personal level favored the continued presence of a consul in Rhodesia. The increasing diplomatic pressure from London, however, led to its closure. It is important to note that the continuing presence of the consulate would have

been a boost to the diplomatic aspirations of the Rhodesians as most Western nations looked to Washington to provide the lead on the potential recognition of the new republic. The private support that Nixon gave to the Home-Smith Agreement, despite concerns over the international reaction, further demonstrated that the administration was content to leave the political aspects of the Rhodesian issue in the hands of the former colonial power in London.

During the Nixon era, geostrategic Cold War concerns dominated presidential thinking on Southern Africa. While supportive of British efforts to achieve a political settlement, Nixon and Kissinger also sought closer ties with the vehemently anti-communist Rhodesians for both strategic and economic reasons. U.S. interest in a political solution for Rhodesia would change dramatically under his successor in the Oval Office, President Gerald R. Ford. The catalyst, though, was not the presence of a new Commander in Chief but events thousands of miles away in southwestern Africa.

CHAPTER 3. LAYING THE FOUNDATIONS FOR PEACE: PRESIDENT GERALD R. FORD

On August 9 1974, as a result of the widely publicized Watergate scandal, President Nixon resigned from office, his successor in the White House was Vice President Gerald Rudolph Ford. The new president had previously served as a congressman for Michigan and House minority leader before his elevation to the Vice Presidency following the resignation of Spiro Agnew due to criminal charges of tax evasion and money laundering. Ford remains to this day the only individual to assume the presidency without having been previously voted into either the presidential or vice presidential office.³³³

President Ford brought to the White House a fundamental sense of integrity, decency and morality that had been missing under his predecessor in office. A pleasant, engaging and honest man ‘Jerry’ Ford was, according to the Washington Post, ‘the most normal, sane, down-to-earth individual to work in the Oval Office since Harry Truman left.’ In his memoirs, Secretary of State Kissinger praised Ford for providing purpose and leadership to a nation in torment following the angst of Vietnam and Watergate.³³⁴

Kissinger himself remained a major influence on foreign policy decision making acting as both National Security Adviser, until November 1975, and Secretary of State for the duration of the Ford Presidency. The primary objective for Kissinger remained preventing of the growth of communist influence. Kissinger, though, as noted earlier, reacted to events on the ground and was quite prepared to revise his previous positions if circumstances dictated that it was in the American interest to do so.

³³³ Tindall and Shi, *America*, 1378-1380.

³³⁴ Kissinger, *Years of Renewal*, 17 and Tindall and Shi, *America*, 1380.

In the case of Southern Africa, the realities on the ground led the Secretary of State to become aware that on a pragmatic level the continued presence of the increasingly embattled Rhodesian regime, despite its vehement anti communism, weakened the U.S. on a geopolitical level. In the view of Kissinger, the changing situation in the region, notably the Cuban military intervention in Angola, demonstrated the necessity of ending white minority rule in order to prevent further communist gains in Africa.

The Ford era witnessed the first serious attempts by the U.S. to both actively engage in Southern Africa and resolve the longstanding issue of white minority rule in Rhodesia. In April 1976, in Lusaka, Zambia, Kissinger reiterated U.S. opposition to white domination of Rhodesia stating unequivocally that ‘We support self-determination, majority rule, equal rights and human dignity for all the peoples of southern Africa – in the name of moral principle, international law and world peace.’ The Secretary of State further laid out a detailed policy designed to end white control and provide a just and durable solution. The Lusaka speech symbolized a dramatic departure from previous American policy of merely supporting British attempts to end UDI.³³⁵

In September, following several months of shuttle diplomacy with the British, South Africans and Front Line leaders in black Africa, the Ford Administration was able to convince Smith to publicly commit to a constitutional settlement based on the principle of majority rule. While the subsequent conference in Geneva proved acrimonious and failed to produce an agreement, nevertheless, Smith’s public endorsement of majority rule denoted a first step along the road to ending the conflict. Furthermore, Kissinger’s

³³⁵ Address by Secretary of State Kissinger, Lusaka, Zambia, April 27 1976, CO 1-1 Africa 1/1/76-1/20/77, WHCF Country Files Box 4, Ford Library and DeRoche, *Black, White and Chrome*, 214.

personal involvement in the diplomatic mediation, the first time a Secretary of State had done so, represented the growing importance that the White House placed in resolving the Rhodesian issue.³³⁶

The stance adopted by the Ford Administration on Rhodesia was shaped by a number of factors. First of all, the new president entered the White House with a genuine commitment to moral principles that was notably absent from the agenda of his predecessor in the Oval Office. Ford was a man of integrity who possessed a sense of fairness and justice that on a moral level opposed any form of racial discrimination as fundamentally unjust. In the case of Rhodesia, the Smith regime represented a flagrant violation of the principles that Ford stood for.

It is worth noting that within days of taking office, Ford, at his own request, organized a meeting with the Congressional Black Caucus. In the words of its chairman, Charles Rangel (D-NY) the invitation was indicative of the seriousness of Ford to ‘open his administration to the advice and counsel of those of us who represent people whose views and needs were ignored by the Nixon administration.’ The new approach of the White House to engage with African-Americans on a meaningful level was observed by the press in Washington DC. It is also worth noting that the primary item on the agenda at the presidential meeting with the Black Caucus was American foreign policy in Africa.³³⁷

It is clear that Ford’s dedication to racial justice extended beyond America itself and constituted a new moral approach to the issue of white rule in Rhodesia. In March

³³⁶ Department of State Telegram from Embassy Pretoria to Secretary of State, September 1976, Zimbabwe (Rhodesia), April-September 1976, NSA/NSC Press and Congressional Liaison Staff: Files, 1973-1976 Box 8, Ford Library.

³³⁷ New White House mood seen. Ford to meet with Black Caucus. Washington Post, August 13 1974, Black Caucus – Meeting with the President, August 1974: General (1), Stanley S. Scott Papers 1971-1977 Box 3, Ford Library and White House Memorandum from Stan Scott, August 21 1974, Black Caucus – Meeting with the President, August 1974: General (1), Stanley S. Scott Papers 1971-1977 Box 3, Ford Library.

1976, in Illinois, Ford stated, regarding U.S. policy towards Salisbury; ‘We have to be on the right side morally, and the right side morally is to be for majority rule.’ A few weeks later in Tyler, Texas the president reiterated his commitment to ‘self-determination’ for Rhodesia. The public pronouncements were mirrored by a private determination to achieve a just settlement. At an NSC meeting on Rhodesia later the same year, the president stated that it was important to do what was morally right regardless of the domestic political consequences. The determination of the Ford Administration to ‘do the right thing’ and achieve majority rule in Rhodesia has been highlighted by Carl Peter Watts.³³⁸

The White House was also well aware of the continued need to maintain good relations with black Africa. Access to strategic resources and markets remained important but there was also growing concern over increasing communist interest in Africa, especially Southern Africa. The continued existence of white minority rule in Rhodesia was an irritant to maintaining good relations with prominent African countries such as Kenya, Nigeria and Zaire and further provided an opportunity for greater communist influence on the continent. The White House was well aware of the need to reinforce the message that America supported the aspirations of the black independence movements for self-determination and majority rule.³³⁹

³³⁸ Letter to Florence Lauckner from Press Secretary Ron Nessen, June 30 1976, TA 1, WHCF, Box 4, Ford Library, Gerald R. Ford: "Remarks and a Question-and-Answer Session at Tyler Junior College, Tyler, Texas.," April 28, 1976. Online by Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley, The American Presidency Project. <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=5886>, Minutes of NSC Meeting, May 11 1976, NSA/NSC Meeting File, 1974-1977, Box 2, Ford Library and Watts, “‘*Dropping the F-bomb*’: President Ford, the Rhodesian crisis, and the 1976 election.” (SHAFR Conference 2014).

³³⁹ White House Memorandum for the President from Henry A. Kissinger, Rhodesia, NSA Country Files for Africa 1974-1977, Box 5, Ford Library and National Security Council Memorandum of Conversation, May 12 1976, NSA Memoranda of Conversations, 1973-1977 Box 19, Ford Library.

These factors led to presidential support for repeal of the Byrd Amendment. Ford and Kissinger believed that repeal of the legislation was necessary on both moral and geopolitical grounds. As early as August 20 1974, the White House publicly advocated repeal and for the U.S. to cease the importation of Rhodesian chrome. While congressional attempts to pass legislation to revoke Byrd ended in failure, nevertheless, the adoption of a public posture in favor of repeal represented a marked shift from the policy of the previous administration.³⁴⁰

Broader active intervention in seeking a viable settlement to the Rhodesian problem, however, stemmed primarily from the course of the civil war that erupted in Angola as competing factions vied for power following Portuguese decolonization. Angola descended into vicious bloodletting as external powers including South Africa, with CIA support, and Cuba intervened militarily on behalf of their favored factions.

The White House feared the development of a similar situation in Rhodesia would have even broader geopolitical complications. Indeed, CIA reports at the time indicated that by 1978 the guerrilla forces would have effectively challenged white Rhodesian control causing an escalation in hostilities. Ford believed that this could lead to a major racial conflict in the region, including a potential South African invasion to prevent the establishment of a radical regime hostile to Pretoria, followed by Cuban intervention at the behest of the Front Line states.³⁴¹

³⁴⁰ White House Memorandum for the President from Henry A. Kissinger, Rhodesia, NSA Country Files for Africa 1974-1977, Box 5, Ford Library, Letter to Senator Harry F. Byrd from Press Secretary Jerald F. ter Horst, August 28 1974, CO 124 Rhodesia 8/9/74-5/31/76, WHCF, Box 43, Ford Library and White House Memorandum of Conversation, April 12 1976, NSA Memoranda of Conversations, 1973-1977 Box 19, Ford Library.

³⁴¹ Minutes of NSC Meeting, May 11 1976, NSA/NSC Meeting File, 1974-1977, Box 2, Ford Library, National Security Council Memorandum of Conversation, May 12 1976, NSA Memoranda of Conversations, 1973-1977 Box 19, Ford Library and White House Memorandum of Conversation, September 29 1976, NSA Memoranda of Conversations, 1973-1977 Box 20, Ford Library.

The victory of the communist sponsored MPLA, with Cuban military support, in Angola and the subsequent establishment of a Marxist oriented government under Agostinho Neto heightened anxiety in Washington regarding the Rhodesian situation. The White House feared that unless decisive action was taken to provide a negotiated solution to the conflict the end result could be the establishment of another radical black African state backed by Soviet support and Cuban military power. Such an outcome would place the U.S. in the unenviable position of intervening militarily on behalf of the white regimes or acquiescing to another communist take over in Southern Africa.³⁴²

During the Ford era, both the U.S. public and Congress continued to be deeply divided on the Rhodesian question and it is important to note that the approach adopted by Ford proved to be extremely controversial and damaging to the White House. While certain congressional figures such as Charles C. Diggs Jr. (D-Michigan) and the Black Caucus urged strong measures against Salisbury, presidential correspondence indicated widespread support for white Rhodesia and opposition to the imposition of majority rule. The attempt by Kissinger to achieve a viable settlement during the summer of 1976 gave a major boost to Ford's opponent in the Republican primaries, former California Governor Ronald Reagan, and invoked extreme suspicion among senior Republican leaders in Washington.³⁴³

³⁴² Minutes of NSC Meeting, May 11 1976, NSA/NSC Meeting File, 1974-1977, Box 2, Ford Library, National Security Council Memorandum of Conversation, May 12 1976, NSA Memoranda of Conversations, 1973-1977 Box 19, Ford Library, White House Memorandum of Conversation, September 29 1976, NSA Memoranda of Conversations, 1973-1977 Box 20, Ford Library and Kissinger, *Years of Renewal*, 908-909.

³⁴³ Letter to Florence Lauckner from Press Secretary Ron Nessen, June 30 1976, TA 1, WHCF, Box 4, Ford Library, Letter to Congressman Charles B. Rangel from Assistant to the President William E. Timmons, August 19 1974, Rhodesian Chrome, Stanley S. Scott Papers 1971-1977 Box 19, Ford Library, Letter to Special Assistant to the President Stanley S. Scott from Congressman Charles C. Diggs Jr. August 14 1974, Black Caucus – Meeting with the President, August 1974: General (1), Stanley S. Scott Papers 1971-1977 Box 3, Ford Library, Letter to President Ford from Chairman of the Harrison Republican Club, Harold P.

Overall, the Ford White House adopted a more humane and moral approach to the Rhodesian issue than the Nixon Administration. Within weeks of taking office Ford publicly announced his support for the repeal of the Byrd Amendment and officials from the Departments' of Commerce, State and Treasury testified at congressional hearings in favor of repeal. Both Ford and Kissinger publicly endorsed the principle of majority rule and called for an end to white control of Rhodesia. Nevertheless, White House interest in settling the Rhodesian question was primarily stimulated by the broader geopolitical implications of the communist triumph in Angola leading to the fear that the Rhodesian conflict could cause a full scale racial war in the region and the creation of a communist oriented bloc across Southern Africa.

Repealing the Byrd Amendment: Ford supportive but not prepared to risk Republican ire

As noted in the previous chapter, the so called Byrd Amendment, was an attachment to the Military Procurement Act that was passed by Congress in November 1971 and subsequently signed into law by Nixon. The amendment, provided for the importation of any metal bearing ore from a free world country so long as the importation of the same ore from a communist country was not prohibited by law. It essentially authorized the importation of seventy-two strategic and critical minerals from Rhodesia in direct violation of UN sanctions.

Stern, April 28 1976, CO 1-1 Africa 1/1/76-1/20/77, WHCF Country Files Box 4, Ford Library, Letter to President Ford from Tennessee State Representative Herbert J. Denton Jr., April 29 1976, CO 124 Rhodesia 8/9/74-8/31/76, WHCF, Box 43, Ford Library, Cable to Secretary of State, May 1976, April 23-May 7-Africa TOSEC (13), NSA Trip Briefing Books and Cables for Henry Kissinger, 1974-1976 Box 34, Letter to President Ford from Chas E. Thomson, May 6 1976, CO 1-1 Africa 1/1/76-1/20/77, WHCF Country Files Box 4, Ford Library and Evening Report, October 5 1976, NSA White House Situation Room, Evening Reports from the NSC Staff, 1976-77, August 24 1976 Box 2, Ford Library.

For liberals and advocates of majority rule in Rhodesia, the Byrd Amendment was perceived as a symbol of American support of white supremacy in Africa. Among ardent foes of the Rhodesian Government, including Congressman Diggs, the Chairman of the House Subcommittee on Africa, repeal of the amendment had become an issue of major importance.

On December 18 1973, while President Nixon was still in office, the Senate approved the passage of S.1868 to restore full U.S. compliance with UN sanctions by a vote of 63-26. Just over six months later, on June 27 1974 the House Foreign Affairs Committee voted 25-9 to report S.1868 to the House floor paving the way for a full vote on repealing the Byrd Amendment. In a strong speech the following month Congressman Diggs exhorted his colleagues to support the passage of S.1868 arguing that it was in the long term strategic interests of the U.S. due to the inevitability of political change in Southern Africa given the overwhelming black majority and the increasing importance of raw materials and other imports from black Africa. Furthermore, it would place Washington back in adherence with its international legal obligations which was important for a nation which argued for sanctions against other international law breakers.³⁴⁴

For the White House, the issue of taking a stance on the repeal of the Byrd Amendment was an immediate concern. A vote had been scheduled in the House of Representatives which would take place on August 20. Indeed, within days of assuming

³⁴⁴ House Committee on Foreign Affairs, June 28 1974, Black Caucus – Meeting with the President, August 1974: General (1), Stanley S. Scott Papers 1971-1977 Box 3, Ford Library, Proceedings and debates of the 93rd Congress 2nd Session, Congressional Record Vol. 120 No.113, July 30 1974, Rhodesian Chrome, Stanley S. Scott Papers 1971-1977 Box 19, Ford Library and DeRoche, *Black, White and Chrome*, 202.

office Ford received a telegram from the Congressional Black Caucus urging him to facilitate full administration support for repeal.³⁴⁵

Kissinger advised Ford that supporting repeal would be in the best interests of the U.S. especially in terms of maintaining good relationships with global partners and retaining legitimacy at the UN. Kissinger observed that the British Government was under increasing pressure to stop tolerating the U.S. violation of sanctions against Rhodesia while for black African countries the Byrd Amendment was seen as reflecting American support for white minority rule and was thus an increasing irritant in relations with prominent African nations such as Nigeria and Zaire.³⁴⁶

The Secretary of State also agreed with Representative Diggs that the continued violation of UN sanctions weakened U.S. credibility as a prominent supporter of the UN role in peacefully settling international disputes. Kissinger further pointed out that in terms of the strategic and economic implications, if the amendment was to be repealed the U.S. could meet its chrome requirements from other suppliers including South Africa and Turkey. He also noted that according to the Department of Defence the existing chrome stockpiles were fully adequate to meet security needs.³⁴⁷

Nevertheless, it is clear that Kissinger's support of repeal was purely rhetorical and aimed to deflect any potential international criticism of the White House. At this point he expressed no desire to end white political control of Rhodesia or even any great concern whether repeal actually succeeded. For Kissinger it was a question of how the

³⁴⁵ Letter to Special Assistant to the President Stanley S. Scott from Congressman Charles C. Diggs Jr. August 14 1974, Black Caucus – Meeting with the President, August 1974: General (1), Stanley S. Scott Papers 1971-1977 Box 3, Ford Library and White House Memorandum for the President from Henry A. Kissinger, Rhodesia, NSA Country Files for Africa 1974-1977, Box 5, Ford Library.

³⁴⁶ White House Memorandum for the President from Henry A. Kissinger, Rhodesia, NSA Country Files for Africa 1974-1977, Box 5, Ford Library.

³⁴⁷ White House Memorandum for the President from Henry A. Kissinger, Rhodesia, NSA Country Files for Africa 1974-1977, Box 5, Ford Library.

administration was perceived over what it might actually achieve. As he expressed to Ford, 'There is no question but that repeal of the Byrd Amendment would be well received in the international community. At the same time, were repeal to fail, there would be no critical damage either to our bilateral relations or to the role we seek to play in the United Nations.'³⁴⁸

On August 20, Ford publicly stated that he favored repeal, invoking the ire of Harry F. Byrd who reminded the White House that the Byrd Amendment enjoyed widespread national support as demonstrated by the fact that it had received the backing of Congressman and Senators representatives from forty-six of the fifty states. White House correspondence also indicated that the presidential decision proved divisive for the American public.³⁴⁹

Despite the public declaration of support from the White House the bill was never joined on the floor of Congress during the fall of 1974. On a number of occasions a vote was scheduled but the forces of repeal backed down fearing defeat. Finally, on December 19 1974, just minutes before the bill was due to be taken up it was suddenly withdrawn. Events in Southern Africa itself had provided a new argument for opponents of repeal. In December, under pressure from South Africa, which was engaged in a policy of détente with black ruled Africa, Rhodesia had released Ndabaningi Sithole, Robert Mugabe and

³⁴⁸ White House Memorandum for the President from Henry A. Kissinger, Rhodesia, NSA Country Files for Africa 1974-1977, Box 5, Ford Library.

³⁴⁹ Letter to Jerald F. ter Horst from Harry F. Byrd, August 22 1974, Byrd, Harry (1), Congressional Relations Office, Congressional Mail File, 1974-77 Box 13, Ford Library, Letter to John Harrington from Special Assistant to the President Roland L. Elliott, September 23 1974, CO 124 Rhodesia 8/9/74-8/31/76, WHCF, Box 43, Ford Library, Letter to Texan State Republican Executive Committeeman C. R. Dollinger Jr. from Special Assistant to the President Roland L. Elliott, December 16 1974, TA 1, WHCF, Box 4, Ford Library and DeRoche, *Black, White and Chrome*, 203.

Joshua Nkomo from detention leading to the prospect of serious negotiations with the black Nationalists.³⁵⁰

Supporters of the Byrd Amendment therefore argued that if the Rhodesian issue would soon be settled then why should Congress penalize American companies by forcing them to cancel contracts now which would then require them to compete for new contracts when sanctions were lifted. This line of reasoning, together with the increasing fears of both the Ford Administration and the Democratic leadership that the bill would be defeated causing a major diplomatic embarrassment, led to the brief abandonment of repeal.³⁵¹

The New Year, however, saw a resurgence of the efforts in favor of repeal legislation. On January 14, Representative Donald M. Fraser (D-Minnesota) introduced a new bill to prevent the importation of chrome and other strategic minerals from Rhodesia. The bill was bipartisan in nature and co-sponsors included Congressman Diggs. On March 18, the bill was approved by the Subcommittee on International Organizations of the House Foreign Affairs Committee. An additional amendment by Fraser, however, that required that any imports containing chrome include certification that the chrome did not come from Rhodesia caused the bill to be returned to the subcommittee for further consideration.³⁵²

On June 19, the Subcommittee on International Organizations held additional hearings which included testimony from the Departments' of Commerce, Defence,

³⁵⁰ DeRoche, *Black, White and Chrome*, 204, Lake, *The "Tar Baby" Option*, 275 and Smith, *Bitter Harvest*, 161-165.

³⁵¹ DeRoche, *Black, White and Chrome*, 204 and Lake, *The "Tar Baby" Option*, 275.

³⁵² H.R.1287 (Committee Print) 94th Congress 1st Session, March 18 1975, 6/19/75 – Hearings on Rhodesian Chrome (2), David R. MacDonald Papers, 1973-78 Box 18, Ford Library and DeRoche, *Black, White and Chrome*, 207.

Treasury and State. The testimony of the administration officials, however, was indicative of the reluctance of the White House to press the issue of repeal. While the Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs, Charles A. James, strongly endorsed both the proposed bill and the concept of a certificate of origin, the representatives of Commerce, Defence and Treasury, while officially advocating repeal, also highlighted U.S. reliance on Rhodesian chrome and criticised the idea of a certificate of origin as unenforceable and potentially damaging to trade interests. The weak testimony of administration officials infuriated supporters of House Resolution 1287 who observed that the spokesmen couldn't have been any worse in their testimony had they been opposed to repeal.³⁵³

Nevertheless, the Foreign Affairs Committee recommended the bill to the House in July where it met strong opposition from most Republicans as well as the powerful Armed Services Committee. During the deliberations, the White House, despite the press secretary reiterating support for repeal, made no demonstrable effort to sway Congress and Ford himself made no public statements regarding the issue of chrome. For the supporters of the H.R. 1287 the lack of support they received from the administration

³⁵³ Statement of Deputy Assistant Secretary of Commerce Alan Polansky before the Subcommittee on International Organizations of the House Committee on International Relations, June 19 1975, 6/19/75 – Hearings on Rhodesian Chrome (1), David R. MacDonald Papers, 1973-78 Box 18, Ford Library, Statement of Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs Charles A. James, before the Subcommittee on International Organizations of the House Committee on International Relations, June 19 1975, 6/19/75 – Hearings on Rhodesian Chrome (1), David R. MacDonald Papers, 1973-78 Box 18, Ford Library, Statement of Assistant Secretary of the Treasury, David R. McDonald before the Subcommittee on International Organizations of the House Committee on International Relations, June 19 1975, 6/19/75 – Hearings on Rhodesian Chrome (1), David R. MacDonald Papers, 1973-78 Box 18, Ford Library, White House Memorandum of Conversation, November 4 1975, NSA Memoranda of Conversations, 1973-1977 Box 16, Ford Library and DeRoche, *Black, White and Chrome*, 207.

raised further questions about the bona fide nature of presidential commitment for the legislation.³⁵⁴

On September 25, the House of Representatives rejected the proposed bill by a vote of 209-187. While a number of factors contributed to the non-passage of H.R. 1287 including concerns over access to chrome, the adverse trade implications of the certificate of origin and the continued presence of the Rhodesia Lobby on Capitol Hill, nonetheless, the lack of tangible White House support for the legislation was clearly a major factor in the failure of the bill. Congressman Edward Derwinski (R-Illinois), a prominent defender of the Byrd Amendment credited the White House for preserving Section 503 while Fraser and Diggs blamed the lack of presidential involvement for the failure of their bill.³⁵⁵

In early November, Ford consulted with Derwinski and later the same day held a meeting with opponents of Section 503 including McGee and Fraser regarding the feasibility of reopening repeal legislation in the existing Congressional session. When meeting the latter group Ford assured them that he still fully supported repeal but warned that the passage of such legislation would be unlikely in the existing Congress. Following the meetings the President requested that his aides conduct a check on the possibility of reviving the Byrd Amendment and any potential for opponents of repeal to switch votes. The subsequent report, however, noted that only four representatives would even

³⁵⁴ NSC Memorandum for Secretary Kissinger from Hal Horan and Les Janka, August 15 1975, CO 124 Rhodesia 8/9/74-5/31/76, WHCF, Box 43, Ford Library, White House Memorandum from Henry A. Kissinger, September 23 1975, CO 124 Rhodesia 8/9/74-5/31/76, WHCF, Box 43, Ford Library, White House Memorandum, November 4 1975, Rhodesia, Presidential Handwriting File Box 7, Ford Library and DeRoche, *Black, White and Chrome*, 208-209.

³⁵⁵ Memorandum for the President from Max L. Friedersdorf, November 3 1975, CO 124 Rhodesia 8/9/74-5/31/76, WHCF, Box 43, Ford Library, White House Memorandum, November 4 1975, Rhodesia, Presidential Handwriting File Box 7, Ford Library National Security Memorandum for Brent Scowcroft from Les Janka and Hal Horan, May 18 1976, CO 124 Rhodesia 8/9/74-5/31/76, WHCF, Box 43, Ford Library and DeRoche, *Black, White and Chrome*, 208-209.

consider changing their votes and more ominously the very mention of renewing the issue raised a red flag among the majority of Republicans. Based on these findings, the White House informed Fraser and the other co-sponsors that they hold off any further attempts at repeal until a more favorable congressional situation had arisen.³⁵⁶

In terms of the efforts to end the Byrd Amendment and prevent the continued importation of Rhodesian chrome the attitude of the Ford Administration is ambiguous. Both Ford and Kissinger clearly saw the moral, strategic, political and economic advantages of publicly favoring repeal legislation thus placing the U.S. not only back in compliance with UN sanctions but also sending the message that Washington shared the aspirations of the liberation movements in achieving majority rule in Rhodesia.

The White House, however, while openly stating that the administration backed H.R. 1287, was unwilling to exert any substantive influence on legislators to force through the passage of the legislation. While the documentary record provides no clear answer explaining this inaction it likely stemmed from a combination of factors including a degree of apathy, an unwillingness to press Republican representatives on a minor issue yet one that aroused strong feelings and the calculated recognition that an overt declaration of support for repeal would reap global political benefits for the White House whether the actual legislation secured passage or not.

³⁵⁶ White House Memorandum of Conversation, November 4 1975, NSA Memoranda of Conversations, 1973-1977 Box 16, Ford Library, Memorandum for Max Friedersdorf from Vern Loen, November 14 1975, Rhodesia, Presidential Handwriting File Box 7, Ford Library, White House Memorandum for the President from Max Friedersdorf, November 15 1975, Rhodesia, Presidential Handwriting File Box 7, Ford Library and DeRoche, *Black, White and Chrome*, 208-209.

The crumbling ‘White Redoubt’ sparks anxiety over the potential for communist expansion

While the efforts to end the importation of Rhodesian chrome continued to be frustrated in Congress, events far away in Portugal not only posed a far greater threat to continued white domination of Southern Africa but also directly stimulated U.S. involvement in the seeking a resolution to the Rhodesian problem.

As noted in previous chapters, the Portuguese Territories along with Rhodesia and South Africa formed a ‘White Redoubt’ against the rising tide of black nationalism. The Portuguese military and intelligence services collaborated closely with their Rhodesian and South African counterparts and Lisbon along with Pretoria played an integral role in assisting Rhodesia circumvent the UN sanctions. Portugal relied on her African possessions as an important source of trade for her economy and during the autocratic Estado Novo regime was determined to maintain control over the territories despite the cost in blood and treasure.³⁵⁷

On April 25 1974, the Portuguese Government was overthrown in a military coup subsequently supported by a public campaign of civil resistance. The so called ‘Carnation Revolution’ stemmed from military opposition to continuing the prolonged colonial wars in Africa and the revolutionary forces made an immediate announcement that the new government would pursue a negotiated path to independence with the black liberation groups. The coup not only brought democracy to Portugal itself but caused a major shift

³⁵⁷ Antony Best, Jussi Hanhimäki, Joseph A. Maiolo and Kirsten E. Schulze, *International History of the Twentieth Century and Beyond*, (London: Routledge, 2014) 449.

in the balance of power in Southern Africa and opened the door to far reaching changes affecting the entire region.³⁵⁸

Over the following months Portuguese representatives met with Samora Machel the leader of the Mozambican liberation movement FRELIMO. On September 7, in Lusaka, Zambia, an agreement was signed giving FRELIMO full power and setting an independence date for June 25 1975. On January 15 1975, following negotiations held in Portugal, the Alvor Agreement was signed by the Portuguese and the three main Angolan guerrilla groups (FNLA, MPLA and UNITA) establishing a transitional government and granting full independence on November 11 of that year.³⁵⁹

. In Rhodesia, the collapse of the Estado Novo regime and subsequent Portuguese retreat from empire, dramatically upped the pressure on the already embattled white controlled government. Salisbury not only lost a key ally in the fight against black nationalism but the new FRELIMO regime in Maputo allowed the Zimbabwe African National Liberation Army (ZANLA), the military wing of ZANU, a safe haven just across Rhodesia's porous eastern border. The Rhodesian military were aware of the threat and attempts to secure the border included the construction of a 'Cordon Sanitaire' comprising of a long fenced minefield fitted with an alarm system, however, the over 700

³⁵⁸ Southern African Issues, Southern Africa, NSA Kissinger-Scowcroft West Wing Office Files 1969-1977 Box 24, Ford Library, Sheila Walsh, Marilyn Meberg, Luci Swindoll, Patsy Clairmont, and Sandy Patti, *Africa Volume 1*, Adelphi Papers, International Institute of Strategic Studies, (London: Routledge, 2006), 21 and DeRoche, *Black, White and Chrome*, 204-205.

³⁵⁹ Donald S. Rothchild, *Managing Ethnic Conflict in Africa: Pressures and Incentives for Cooperation*, (Washington DC: Brookings Institution, 1997), 116, Inge Tvedten, *Angola: Struggle for Peace and Reconstruction*, (New York: Perseus Books, 1997), 36 and DeRoche, *Black, White and Chrome*, 204.

mile border was almost impossible for the military to secure and guerrilla units were able to cross the frontier with virtual impunity.³⁶⁰

The Portuguese withdrawal also left the white Rhodesians increasingly isolated in the global community and ever more dependent their southern neighbor across the Limpopo river. South Africa provided the sole conduit of note for Rhodesian trade including the vital oil supplies and Salisbury relied heavily on the financial and military aid provided by Pretoria. As noted by Smith, however, by the early 1970s the South African leadership, notably Prime Minister B.J. Vorster had concluded the necessity of accomodation with the black nationalists, outside of South Africa itself.³⁶¹

This policy of détente was given greater impetus following the Portuguese retreat from Mozambique and Angola. The South Africans sought the transition to power of moderate black nationalist leaders who could be controlled or manipulated by the more powerful apartheid state. In the case of Salisbury, Pretoria possessed both the desire and the leverage to bring about majority rule, albeit as a way to ensure the continued survival of white minority control in South Africa. Indeed, despite enjoying military success in containing guerrilla activity, South African pressure forced the Rhodesian Government to agreed to attend the ultimately futile conference with the Nationalists on the Victoria Falls bridge in August 1975.³⁶²

³⁶⁰ Ian F.W. Beckett, *Encyclopedia of Guerrilla Warfare*, (Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO, 1999), 48, Ronald Weitzer, *Transforming Settler States*, (Oakland: University of California Press, 1990), 83 and DeRoche, *Black, White and Chrome*, 205.

³⁶¹ Sue Onslow, "The Cold War in Southern Africa. White power, black nationalism and external intervention," in *Cold War in Southern Africa. White power, black liberation*, ed. Onslow, 14-15 and Smith, *Bitter Harvest*, 161-172.

³⁶² DeRoche, *Black, White and Chrome*, 205, Paul Moorcraft and Peter McLaughlin, *The Rhodesian War: A Military History*, (Barnsley: Pen & Sword Military, 2011), 39-40 and Onslow, "The Cold War in Southern Africa. White power, black nationalism and external intervention," in *Cold War in Southern Africa. White power, black liberation*, ed. Onslow, 14-15.

In Washington, the White House was aware that the Portuguese coup and Lisbon's subsequent decision to divest itself of its African territories opened the door to far reaching changes across Southern Africa. The primary concern of the Ford Administration was that the USSR and China would view it as an opportunity to develop and extend their influence in the region. In Mozambique, the FRELIMO liberation movement was avowedly Marxist while in Angola one of the most influential guerrilla groups, the MPLA, was backed by the USSR.³⁶³

It is worth noting, however, that while Ford and Kissinger were apprehensive over the spread of Marxism in Africa, the administration displayed even greater anxiety over the potential of intervention by Moscow and the projection of Soviet military power into the region. In spite of its ideologically leftist philosophy, once Mozambique gained independence under FRELIMO, Washington offered immediate recognition and began the process of establishing diplomatic relations. In contrast, in Angola, an escalating civil war and overt Soviet aid to the MPLA led to U.S. involvement in yet another guerrilla conflict in an attempt to thwart Moscow and reassert global authority in the aftermath of Vietnam. The fact that the White House failed to do so had major ramifications not only in Washington but also for white rule in Rhodesia.³⁶⁴

³⁶³ Southern African Issues, Southern Africa, NSA Kissinger-Scowcroft West Wing Office Files 1969-1977 Box 24, Ford Library and DeRoche, *Black, White and Chrome*, 205.

³⁶⁴ National Security Council Memorandum for Department of State Executive Secretary George S. Springsteen Jr. from Staff Secretary Jeanne W. Davis, May 8 1975, Tanzania-Presidential Correspondence with Foreign Leaders, Box 4, Ford Library Website, 115. Memorandum for the Record. Washington. July 14 1975. Foreign Relations of the United States 1969-1976 Volume XXVIII Southern Africa. Department of State (Washington DC: United States Government Printing Office, 2011) and Kissinger, *Years of Renewal*, 794-795.

Angola: Cuban military power changes the political realities of Southern Africa

American intervention in Angola stemmed from the geopolitics of the Cold War. The White House was troubled by the possibility that a Marxist government, backed by Soviet military strength, could seize political control in Luanda fundamentally altering the balance of power in a region that eighteen months before had seemed to be firmly in the Western orbit. The failure of the U.S. to prevent the Soviet and Cuban backed MPLA from gaining power made Washington appear weak globally and collusion with South Africa damaged American aspirations to be perceived as a supporter of black liberation.

The Angolan debacle also fundamentally altered U.S. policy towards Salisbury. The Ford Administration, notably Kissinger, was alarmed at the potential for further communist expansion in Southern Africa and believed that the continued existence of the increasingly beleaguered white minority regime could encourage Soviet or Cuban military intervention on behalf of the Nationalist factions. It was therefore imperative to bring an end to the Bush War and establish a moderate pro Western black led government in Salisbury.

From the late 1960s, as noted by Gerald Bender, Washington had pursued two mutually exclusive aims in Angola. First, to express sympathy for the aspirations of the right of the Angolan people to self-determination but secondly to support Lisbon which was a key NATO ally. Until the Portuguese coup in April 1974, the latter goal assumed far greater importance due to Lisbon's claim of facing a Soviet backed insurgency in its African territories and the American desire to maintain the strategically important air base on the Azores. Washington along with other NATO countries gave Portugal hundreds of millions in military and economic aid. While it was stipulated that U.S.

military hardware could not be used in Africa, Portugal routinely broke the agreement dispatching tanks, helicopters and planes to its territories while Washington turned a blind eye. Under the Nixon White House even this prohibition was relaxed by officially allowing the use of dual-use hardware in Portuguese Africa.³⁶⁵

In terms of aid to the liberation movements, the CIA had been supporting Holden Roberto, the leader of the anti-communist FNLA and brother in law of President Joseph-Desiré Mobutu of Zaire, a key U.S. ally in the region. Following the Carnation Revolution, the U.S. increased aid to the FNLA on the grounds that the group would provide the most stable pro Western government. On January 22, the 40 Committee approved a CIA request to increase support for FNLA to \$300,000 annually.³⁶⁶

On the ground in Angola, however, the Marxist oriented MPLA, armed by the USSR and aided by Cuban military instructors, was rapidly emerging as the dominant power. By April 1975, according to Kissinger, the MPLA possessed an army of 10,000 fighters equipped and trained by the communist nations. The level of Soviet intervention not only concerned the U.S. but also African nations troubled by the precedent of great power interference in the internal affairs of Angola. On April 19, Zambian President Kaunda travelled to Washington and urged the White House to oppose the Soviet intervention.³⁶⁷

³⁶⁵ Gerald Bender, "Kissinger in Angola: Anatomy of failure", in *American Policy in Southern Africa*, ed. Lemarchand, 69 and Schmidt, *Foreign Intervention in Africa*, 82-87.

³⁶⁶ Piero Gleijeses, *Conflicting Missions: Havana, Washington, Pretoria*, (Alberton, South Africa: Galago Press, 2003), 147, Bender, "Kissinger in Angola", in *American Policy in Southern Africa*, ed. Lemarchand, 73-76 and Kissinger, *Years of Renewal*, 794-795.

³⁶⁷ 116. Memorandum for the Record, Washington. June 5 1975. FRUS, 1969-1976, Volume XXVIII, Bender, "Kissinger in Angola: Anatomy of failure", in *American Policy in Southern Africa*, ed. Lemarchand, 82-83 and 90-91, DeRoche, *Black, White and Chrome*, 209, Gleijeses, *Conflicting Missions*, 285, Kissinger, *Years of Renewal*, 795-798 and Schmidt, *Foreign Intervention in Africa*, 93.

In May, Ford ordered NSSM 224, a comprehensive review of policy towards Angola which included the political, economic and military strengths as well as ideological orientation of the independence movements, the extent of Soviet involvement and the potential role that could be played by neighboring states including South Africa. The review reported that while the MPLA had not as yet achieved military superiority over the other factions, recent evidence suggested that the USSR had stepped up military aid to the movement.³⁶⁸

The administration, notably Kissinger, was convinced that American intervention in Angola was necessary in order to prevent the MPLA from gaining a military victory and thus expanding Soviet sway in Southern Africa. As formal involvement would not meet the approval of the black ruled nations, a covert operation backing the anti-communist groups was seen as the best approach. On July 18, Ford approved a six million dollar CIA plan for covert assistance to both the FNLA and UNITA. By November, the U.S. had contributed approximately \$32 million to ensure the failure of the MPLA.³⁶⁹

The primary rationale for intervention was Cold War realpolitik. The White House feared that establishment of an avowedly Marxist regime in Luanda would not only provide a communist sphere of influence in the region but also send a signal to neighboring countries that Washington did not possess sufficient interest or will power to

³⁶⁸ 105. National Security Study Memorandum 224, Washington, May 26 1975, FRUS, Volume XXVIII and 109. Paper prepared by the National Security Council Interdepartmental Group for Africa, Washington, June 13 1975, FRUS, Volume XXVIII.

³⁶⁹ 111. Memorandum of Conversation, Washington, June 20 1975, FRUS, Volume XXVIII, 115. Memorandum for the Record, Washington, July 14 1975, FRUS, Volume XXVIII, 118. Memorandum of Conversation, Washington, July 18 1975, FRUS, Volume XXVIII, Bender, "Kissinger in Angola: Anatomy of failure", in *American Policy in Southern Africa*, ed. Lemarchand, 83-87, DeRoche, *Black, White and Chrome*, 209, Gleijeses, *Conflicting Missions*, 258 and 293, Kissinger, *Years of Renewal*, 802-808 and Schmidt, *Foreign Intervention in Africa*, 95.

prevent the spread of communism globally. An even greater concern was that if the USSR was seen as being able to successfully intervene in a civil war thousands of miles from Moscow this would demonstrate the global reach of the Soviet military and increase the perception of a weakened U.S. in the aftermath of Vietnam. Angola also offered an opportunity to reassert American global authority following the morale sapping withdrawal from Southeast Asia.³⁷⁰

The U.S. was not the only nation which feared the implications of a MPLA victory. Pretoria not only opposed the movement on ideological grounds but also feared that the MPLA would provide a safe haven for SWAPO guerrillas to attack South-West Africa (Namibia) which was administered as a de facto South African possession based on a UN trusteeship. On July 14, Prime Minister Vorster approved \$14 million of aid to the FNLA and UNITA, a few weeks later South African troops crossed into Angola to protect the SA financed Cunene River hydroelectric project, this was then followed by a second incursion in pursuit of SWAPO fighters.³⁷¹

In July, U.S. intelligence agencies began to work closely with their South African counterparts in a joint endeavor to thwart the MPLA. Washington also pressed Pretoria to intervene militarily if the tide of battle continued to flow against their chosen factions. In early September, the South African Government authorized the South African Defence Force (SADF) to give military assistance and logistical support to the FNLA and UNITA. On October 22, Pretoria launched Operation Savannah which sought to eliminate the

³⁷⁰ 116. Memorandum for the Record, Washington. June 5 1975, FRUS, Volume XXVIII, 111. Memorandum of Conversation, Washington. June 20 1975, FRUS, Volume XXVIII, 115. Memorandum for the Record, Washington. July 14 1975 FRUS, Volume XXVIII, 118. Memorandum of Conversation, Washington. July 18 1975, FRUS, Volume XXVIII and Bender, "Kissinger in Angola", in *American Policy in Southern Africa*, ed. Lemarchand, 99.

³⁷¹ Bender, "Kissinger in Angola", in *American Policy in Southern Africa*, ed. Lemarchand, 90-91, Gleijeses, *Conflicting Missions*, 259 and 276 and Schmidt, *Foreign Intervention in Africa*, 95.

MPLA from the border region then move north to capture Luanda. The South African advance was initially a spectacular success but the SADF was halted by the dramatic and unexpected intervention of Cuban combat personnel.³⁷²

In the spring of 1975, the possibility of Cuban intervention did not occur to either policy makers or the CIA. As noted by Gleijeses, however, Havana had a history of military involvement in Africa dating back to the mid 1960s. Furthermore, Cubans had already fought alongside the MPLA against the Portuguese in Angola. He argues that Cuban African policy was driven by a messianic vision to lead revolution, protect Cuba itself by creating ‘Cubas’ elsewhere and a special empathy for the Third World. Schmidt also points out that Cuban engagement in Africa stemmed from both a desire to challenge imperialism but also an ‘emotional link to Africa’ due to nearly one third of Cubans boasting of African blood ties.³⁷³

On November 4, in response to the South African invasion, Cuban President Fidel Castro approved Operation Carlota which dispatched military personnel to Angola in support of the MPLA. The influx of Cuban troops, which reached between 3,500-4,000 by the end of the year, along with a massive increase in Soviet arms deliveries which dwarfed American aid, boosted the resistance of the MPLA and halted the South African advance. Indeed, as early as mid November, the Director of the CIA, William E. Colby observed the the tide had begun to turn in favor of the MPLA.³⁷⁴

³⁷² Gleijeses, *Conflicting Missions*, 295 and 300-306, Schmidt, *Foreign Intervention in Africa*, 95 and Westad, *The Global Cold War*, 230.

³⁷³ Gleijeses, *Conflicting Missions*, 8, 88, 175-177, 187, 197, 228 and 374-377 and Schmidt, *Foreign Intervention in Africa*, 29.

³⁷⁴ 132. Report prepared by the Working Group on Angola, Washington, October 22 1975, FRUS, Volume XXVIII, 137. Memorandum for Record, Washington, November 14 1975, FRUS, Volume XXVIII, Gleijeses, *Conflicting Missions*, 305-306, 316-317 and 325, Kissinger, *Years of Renewal*, 815-816 and Schmidt, *Foreign Intervention in Africa*, 95-96.

In November, evidence of the covert American involvement and collusion with South Africa, was leaked to the media causing a public uproar. A furious Kissinger raged that the 'Department is leaking and showing a stupidity unfit for Foreign Service.' The exposure led to criticism in many quarters but most significantly on Capitol Hill.³⁷⁵

On December 19, the Senate passed an amendment to the Defence Appropriations Bill, which prevented any further clandestine support in Angola. The amendment was endorsed by the House of Representatives on January 27. Ford described the legislation as 'deplorable' while Kissinger, in his memoirs, noted that Congress had been fully aware of the operation and was merely acquiescing due to the public outcry. As pointed out by Bender and Gleijeses, however, the Congressional decision stemmed from the belief that the U.S. backed factions could not win by simply providing them with a few million in arms especially when compared to massive Soviet aid and the arrival of Cuban combat troops.³⁷⁶

Pretoria, already concerned by the situation on the battlefield was dismayed by the Congressional decision. In December, the South African National Security Council decided to order the military to gradually withdraw from Angola. By early February, the South Africans had retreated to a line just north of the Namibian border and on March 27, following Angolan assurances not to sabotage the Cunene River hydroelectric project, the SADF crossed back into Namibia. Without the military backing of Pretoria, FNLA and

³⁷⁵ 152. Memorandum of Conversation, Washington, December 18 1975, FRUS, Volume XXVIII, Gleijeses, *Conflicting Missions*, 321 and Kissinger, *Years of Renewal*, 826-827.

³⁷⁶ 163. Minutes of a National Security Council Meeting, Washington, FRUS, Volume XXVIII, Bender, "Kissinger in Angola", in *American Policy in Southern Africa*, ed. Lemarchand, 102-104, Gleijeses, *Conflicting Missions*, 332 and Kissinger, *Years of Renewal*, 826-832.

UNITA resistance collapsed leaving the MPLA in control of Luanda and the majority of the country.³⁷⁷

The covert intervention in Angola was a costly failure for the White House. The inability of the U.S. to prevent the establishment of the Marxist government in Luanda made Washington appear weak especially when contrasted with the ability of Moscow and Havana to project their power on a global scale. The success of Operation Carlota gave Cuba a base of operations in Southern Africa from which to expand its influence while the exposure of American cooperation with apartheid South Africa undermined U.S. claims to be a supporter of majority rule. Paradoxically, the South Africans themselves, were also angered at being abandoned by Washington and left as the scapegoat to be denounced by the international community. The fiasco in Angola directly led to a reevaluation of policy towards Southern Africa with ominous implications for the embattled white regime in Salisbury.

The legacy of Angola: Ford and Kissinger take aim at Salisbury

In the aftermath of the Angolan debacle the Ford Administration radically changed its outlook on the situation in Southern Africa. The conflict in Angola brought the geopolitics of the Cold War into the heart of the region and the success of the MPLA, backed by Soviet military aid and Cuban combat troops, gave Moscow and Havana a vital foothold from which to expand their influence. In particular, U.S. policy makers and intelligence agencies feared that the Cuban success in Angola had strengthened Castro's

³⁷⁷ 165. Memorandum from Director of Central Intelligence Colby to Secretary of State Kissinger. Washington. December 23 1975. FRUS, Volume XXVIII, Gleijeses, *Conflicting Missions*, 340-345 and Piero Gleijeses, *Visions of Freedom: Havana, Washington, Pretoria and the Struggle for Southern Africa: 1976-1991*, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2013) 29.

belief that the global balance of power had shifted in the wake of Vietnam and reinforced his vision of Havana as a potential power broker in Africa.³⁷⁸

Thus, following Angola, the primary goal of the White House became the prevention of any expansion of Cuban and Soviet influence on the continent and especially their potential emergence as a decisive factor in Southern African affairs. In order to achieve this objective, Ford adopted a two pronged strategy of seeking to resolve existing or potential conflicts to avoid further Cuban military intervention and for Washington to demonstrate a greater identification with the black liberation movements to demonstrate solidarity with African aspirations for self government and majority rule, thus undermining the Soviet claim to be the principal supporter of African freedom.³⁷⁹

To Ford and Kissinger, Rhodesia appeared increasingly vulnerable following the collapse of Portuguese rule in Mozambique. Although militarily the Rhodesian Government remained in control and the war seemed restricted to the border regions, nevertheless, the growing guerrilla insurgency appeared to be the next viable mark for Cuban involvement in the region. In early March 1976, information from a Mozambican military source indicated that Havana had already established a base camp near Beira, supplied MIG aircraft to Maputo and combat troops would soon arrive. Furthermore, the State Department warned that the peculiar legal status of Rhodesia made it uniquely

³⁷⁸ National Intelligence Bulletin, Intelligence Documents February 27 1976, Dale Van Atta Papers 1975-1978-Intelligence Chron File Box 12, Ford Library and Kissinger, *Years of Renewal*, 908.

³⁷⁹ 179. Telegram from the Department of State to the Embassy in Zaire, Washington. February 18 1976, FRUS, Volume XXVIII, White House Memorandum of Conversation, February 26 1976, NSA Memoranda of Conversations, 1973-1977 Box 18, Ford Library, White House Memorandum of Conversation, March 4 1976, NSA Memoranda of Conversations, 1973-1977 Box 18, Ford Library, DeRoche, *Black, White and Chrome*, 209-210 and Kissinger, *Years of Renewal*, 903.

vulnerable to a Cuban attack due to the UNSC declaring Salisbury a threat to world peace and the widespread support Cuba could obtain to support its case for intervention.³⁸⁰

An active American role in achieving a settlement leading to majority rule would not only remove a potential target for Havana and Moscow but would also show the black African nations that the U.S. was vehemently opposed to continued white control in Southern Africa. As noted by DeRoche, however, it is likely Kissinger was also influenced by the realization that the clock was ticking on white rule in Rhodesia and it was therefore in the best interest of the U.S. to start supporting the black liberation movements who would eventually control the nation.³⁸¹

Kissinger also believed that Britain no longer possessed the requisite power and leverage to achieve a settlement without American support. In his opinion, this was clearly demonstrated by the swift Rhodesian rejection of the proposals put forward by Prime Minister Jim Callaghan. On March 22, Callaghan had publicly offered British assistance in reconvening the Rhodesian settlement negotiations under the preconditions that the Rhodesian Front accept the principle of majority rule, elections leading to a black African government within two years and no independence before this government took power. Privately, the proposals offered an 'entrenched clause' in the constitution to protect minority rights. For Kissinger, the fact that Smith dismissed the offer within less than a day highlighted the British inability to resolve the impasse and exacerbated the

³⁸⁰ National Intelligence Bulletin, Intelligence Documents February 27 1976, Dale Van Atta Papers 1975-1978-Intelligence Chron File Box 12, Ford Library, Department of State Briefing Memorandum to the Secretary of State from Monroe Leigh, March 5 1976, NSSM 241 – United States Policy in Southern Africa (1), U.S. National Security Council Institutional Files 1974-1977, Box 44, Ford Library, INR Afternoon Summary, March 8 1976, Rhodesia, NSA Country Files for Africa 1974-1977, Box 5, Ford Library, 186, Report prepared by the Working Group on Angola. Washington, April 21 1976, FRUS, Volume XXVIII and Moorcraft and McLaughlin, *The Rhodesian War*, 42.

³⁸¹ White House Memorandum of Conversation, February 26 1976, NSA Memoranda of Conversations, 1973-1977 Box 18, Ford Library, DeRoche, *Black, White and Chrome*, 210 and Kissinger, *Years of Renewal*, 903-904.

chances of Soviet or Cuban intervention. The U.S. appeared to be the only Western nation with the requisite strength and leverage to decisively alter the course of the Rhodesian crisis.³⁸²

The Ford Administration was also aware that sentiment among a number of black African leaders, including the Front Line states, favored a greater American role in resolving the Rhodesian impasse. Both Zambian President Kaunda and Tanzanian leader Nyerere urged the White House to take a strong stance against Salisbury to prevent a further escalation of Cold War rivalries in the region and a repetition of events in Angola.³⁸³

In Pretoria, the South African leadership, engaged in its own exercise of détente with black Africa, was also in favor of U.S. participation in formulating an acceptable Rhodesian settlement. On April 15, at a meeting with Kissinger, the South African Ambassador, Roelof 'Pik' Botha, agreed that Pretoria shared the concerns of the U.S. regarding a Cuban invasion of Rhodesia and that the RF government needed to accede to majority rule. Indeed, Botha bluntly stated that 'We agree that Smith is beyond recovery.' South Africa also possessed greater leverage over Salisbury following the Mozambican

³⁸² Department of State Briefing Paper-Rhodesia, 6/20-28/76 Briefing Book for HAK-Vorster Meeting (3), NSA Trip Briefing Books and Cables for Henry Kissinger, 1974-1976 Box 38 and Kissinger, *Years of Renewal*, 914-915.

³⁸³ Letter to President Ford from President Kaunda via Embassy Lusaka, January 28 1976, Zambia-Presidential Correspondence with Foreign Leaders, Box 5, Ford Library Website, National Intelligence Bulletin, Intelligence Documents March 16 1976, Dale Van Atta Papers 1975-1978-Intelligence Chron File Box 13, Ford Library, White House Memorandum for the President from Brent Scowcroft, April 26 1976, April 23-May 7 HAK Messages for the President, NSA Trip Briefing Books and Cables for Henry Kissinger, 1974-1976 Box 32195 and Memorandum of Conversation. Lusaka. April 27 1976. FRUS, Volume XXVIII.

decision to close its border with Rhodesia in early March as virtually all Rhodesian trade now flowed through south across the Limpopo.³⁸⁴

The White House decision to vigorously embark on a quest to slay the ‘Rhodesian Dragon’ was reflected in the public statements of the President himself. On March 13, in an interview with the Chicago Sun-Times, Ford publicly committed his administration to giving unequivocal support for majority rule in Rhodesia stating that ‘We have to be on the right side morally, and the right side morally is to be for majority rule.’ Over a month later, in Tyler, Texas, the President observed that the American people gained their freedom through self-determination and that America throughout its two hundred year history strongly believed in self-determination for the people of a country and this was certainly the case in supporting majority rule for the black Rhodesians.³⁸⁵

The most significant and well publicized pronouncement, however, was made by Kissinger on April 27 during an address in Lusaka, Zambia. In his speech, which was part of a broader trip through black Africa, Kissinger stated that the U.S. was committed to working with independent African nations to help build their countries, develop their economies, keep the peace and achieve racial justice. In a veiled warning to the communist world, he also stressed the importance for African solutions to African

³⁸⁴ White House Memorandum for General Scowcroft from the Situation Room, March 5 1976, NSA White House Situation Room Noon and Evening Notes, 1975-77, February 13 1976 Box 6, Ford Library, CIA Weekly Review, Intelligence Documents March 12 1976, Dale Van Atta Papers 1975-1978-Intelligence Chron File Box 13, Ford Library, White House Memorandum of Conversation, April 15 1976, NSA Memoranda of Conversations, 1973-1977 Box 19, Ford Library and Gleijeses, *Visions of Freedom*, 32.

³⁸⁵ 378-Remarks and a Question-and-Answer Session at Tyler Junior College, Tyler, Texas, April 28 1976, Gerald R. Ford 1976-77: Book II, Public Papers of the Presidents, <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=5886&st=&st1=>, Letter to Florence Lauckner from Press Secretary Ron Nessen, June 30 1976, TA 1, WHCF, Box 4, Ford Library and Kissinger, *Years of Renewal*, 914.

problems and highlighted the danger of outside powers pursuing hegemonial aspirations or bloc policies on the continent.³⁸⁶

In the case of Rhodesia, Kissinger strongly reaffirmed that the U.S. opposed minority rule, did not recognize the existing regime and both voted for and was committed to UN sanctions. He then revealed the basic elements of White House policy to achieve a just and durable solution; support for the Callaghan proposals, informing Salisbury that it would receive no American aid in the existing guerrilla war or any future conflict and stressed the need for a rapid negotiated settlement leading to majority rule. The U.S. would repeal the Byrd Amendment, would discourage its citizens from private travel or residence in Rhodesia, aid Mozambique due to hardship suffered by its border closure and offer help to any other neighboring nations which closed their borders to enforce sanctions as well as humanitarian assistance to refugees fleeing the conflict. Finally, Washington was ready to help fund a program of economic, technical and educational assistance to an independent Zimbabwe as well as assist in the development of a constitutional structure that protected minority rights as well as establishing majority rule.³⁸⁷

The Secretary of State highlighted the importance for all parties who wished for a negotiated solution to make clear to Salisbury that the world community was united in its determination to achieve rapid change. He declared that the U.S. Government was ready to work closely with the governments of Botswana, Mozambique, Tanzania and Zambia and urged that Pretoria showed its dedication and contribution to Africa by using its influence in Salisbury to push for a swift transition to majority rule. In a powerful

³⁸⁶ Address by Secretary of State Kissinger, Lusaka, Zambia, April 27 1976, CO 1-1 Africa 1/1/76-1/20/77, WHCF Country Files Box 4, Ford Library.

³⁸⁷ Ibid.

emotive statement the Secretary of State avowed that ‘the United States is wholly committed to help bring about a rapid, just and African solution to the issue of Rhodesia’ and stressed that facilitating a solution where ‘blacks and whites live together in harmony and equality is a moral imperative of our time. Let us prove that these goals can be realized by human choice, that justice can command by the force of its rightness instead of by force of arms.’³⁸⁸

The Lusaka address and the broader shift in policy towards an active U.S. role in attaining majority rule received widespread acclaim across the globe. In his first House of Commons appearance as Foreign Secretary, Anthony Crosland strongly endorsed the Lusaka statement on U.S. policy while black African leaders praised the American desire to play a more vigorous role in ending white control over Rhodesia. Indeed, President Kaunda warmly embraced Kissinger following the speech which, according to Zambian Foreign Minister Siteke Gibson Mwale, demonstrated his ‘total support’ for the American objectives. South African Foreign Minister Hilgard Muller noted with appreciation the increase in American interest in Southern Africa and concern with the ‘Russian-Cuban imperialism’. He also observed that Kissinger had left no doubt over the key role that South Africa could play and that détente efforts would not succeed without serious and intensive discussions with Pretoria.³⁸⁹

³⁸⁸ Address by Secretary of State Kissinger, Lusaka, Zambia, April 27 1976, CO 1-1 Africa 1/1/76-1/20/77, WHCF Country Files Box 4, Ford Library.

³⁸⁹ Telegram to President Ford from President Tolbert of Liberia via Embassy Monrovia, March 1976, CO 124 Rhodesia 8/9/74-5/31/76, WHCF, Box 43, Ford Library, White House Memorandum for the President from Brent Scowcroft, April 26 1976, April 23-May 7 HAK Messages for the President, NSA Trip Briefing Books and Cables for Henry Kissinger, 1974-1976 Box 32, White House Memorandum for the President from Brent Scowcroft, April 28 1976, April 23-May 7 HAK Messages for the President, NSA Trip Briefing Books and Cables for Henry Kissinger, 1974-1976 Box 32, White House Memorandum for General Scowcroft from the Situation Room, April 29 1976, NSA White House Situation Room Noon and Evening Notes, 1975-77, April 10 1976 Box 7, Ford Library, Unofficial translation of an extract from the statement by the Minister of Foreign Affairs in the South African Senate, May 1 1976, as attachment to letter to Brent

Interestingly, the actions of the Ford Administration also had the ironic effect of uniting the white Rhodesians and the USSR in mutual condemnation of U.S. policy. In Salisbury, Smith expressed dismay that Rhodesia not been given chance to explain its position and in his memoirs denounced the American use of Rhodesia to gain favor with the Organization of African Unity and compensate South Africa for Washington's abandonment of Pretoria in Angola. On the opposite side of the geopolitical spectrum Soviet Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko termed the speech a combination of 'political gimmickry and financial handouts' while the press in Moscow described it as an attempt to undercut and weaken the black liberation movements.³⁹⁰

While the international reaction was predominantly positive, domestically, however, the White House decision proved to be highly controversial. While the Republican administration was commended by Democrats including Congressman Rangel and diverse liberal groups such as the National Black Veterans' Organization and the United States Catholic Conference it also led to a torrent of criticism from American conservatives.³⁹¹

In the New York Times, former Nixon adviser and conservative commentator Patrick J. Buchanan observed that 'In Zambia, the Secretary placed the moral authority of the United States behind the militant Marxist regime of Mozambique, and against the beleaguered pro-Western Government of Rhodesia.' George F. Kennan, also writing in

Scowcroft from South African Ambassador R. F. Botha, May 19 1976, South Africa, NSA Kissinger-Scowcroft West Wing Office Files 1969-1977 Box 24, Ford Library and White House Memorandum for the President's File from Stephen Low, August 4 1976, NSA Memoranda of Conversations, 1973-1977 Box 20, Ford Library.

³⁹⁰ DeRoche, *Black, White and Chrome*, 214 and Smith, *Bitter Harvest*, 186.

³⁹¹ Letter to President Ford from Congressman Charles B. Rangel, March 15 1976, CO 124 Rhodesia 8/9/74-5/31/76, WHCF, Box 43, Ford Library, National Black Veteran Organization, Press Release, May 1976, CO 124 Rhodesia 8/9/74-8/31/76, WHCF, Box 43, Ford Library, Letter to President Ford from General Secretary of the United States Catholic Conference Most Rev. James S. Rausch, May 26 1976, CO 1-1 Africa 1/1/76-1/20/77, WHCF Country Files Box 4, Ford Library.

the Times questioned whether majority rule in Rhodesia would be beneficial noting the chaos following independence in other African states and critiqued the need for the ‘grudging approval by African leaders’ that policymakers seem to find so crucial to American interests.³⁹²

On May 13, an irate Harry F. Byrd confronted Kissinger at a Senate Foreign Relations Committee meeting and accused him of ‘embracing communist Russia with great vigor’. Republican presidential candidate Ronald Reagan decried the Ford policy as promoting a ‘massacre’ in Rhodesia, indeed reports from the South African Embassy in Washington informed Pretoria that Dr. Kissinger’s Africa trip swung the conservative wing of the Republicans in favor of Reagan. White House correspondence and media reports also reveal an overwhelming opposition to U.S. interference in Rhodesian affairs among the public.³⁹³

While the shift in the outlook of the White House towards Rhodesia in the spring of 1976 was primarily stimulated by the Angolan fiasco it is worth noting the differing rationale applied by Ford and his Secretary of State. For the President while it was imperative to prevent the expansion of further Cuban or Soviet influence the moral implications of achieving majority rule were also significant. Indeed, at the NSC meeting

³⁹² Cable to Secretary of State, May 1976, April 23-May 7-Africa TOSEC (13), NSA Trip Briefing Books and Cables for Henry Kissinger, 1974-1976 Box 34 and “Pie in the sky over Nairobi” by Patrick J. Buchanan, Special Features, New York Times, May 11 1976, Kissinger Trip to Africa, Michael Raoul-Duval Papers. Election Campaign Papers: Gergen, David Box 16, Ford Library.

³⁹³ Letter to President Ford from Dean A. Watkins, March 22 1976, CO 124 Rhodesia 8/9/74-8/31/76, WHCF, Box 43, Ford Library, Letter to President Ford from Chairman of the Harrison Republican Club, Harold P. Stern, April 28 1976, CO 1-1 Africa 1/1/76-1/20/77, WHCF Country Files Box 4, Ford Library, Letter to President Ford from Tennessee State Representative Herbert J. Denton Jr., April 29 1976, CO 124 Rhodesia 8/9/74-8/31/76, WHCF, Box 43, Ford Library, “Kissinger comments invite African strife”, by Bud W. Boyer, Sun-Sentinel, Boca Raton, Florida, CO 1-1 Africa 1/1/76-1/20/77, WHCF Country Files Box 4, Ford Library, “Kissinger in Africa”, The Indianapolis Star, May 1 1976, CO 1-1 Africa 1/1/76-1/20/77, WHCF Country Files Box 4, Ford Library, Letter to President Ford from Chas E. Thomson, May 6 1976, CO 1-1 Africa 1/1/76-1/20/77, WHCF Country Files Box 4, Ford Library, DeRoche, *Black, White and Chrome*, 214 and Gleijeses, *Visions of Freedom*, 36.

on May 11, Ford acknowledged that the administration had suffered a 'little political flack' due to its new approach towards Southern Africa but regardless of the effect on the outcome on Republican primaries the White House would 'continue to do what is right'.³⁹⁴

In contrast, Kissinger, the real architect of the new approach, was entirely motivated by geopolitical considerations. The human rights of the black Rhodesians or the morality of majority rule was of little consequence, indeed, the Secretary of State told Ford that 'Basically I am with the whites in southern Africa'. His empathy for the situation of white Rhodesians, however, was offset by the need to find a platform to resist the growth of communist power in the region. Ending minority rule in Rhodesia would arrest the armed struggle, stop the rationale for Cuban intervention and win the trust of the black African nations.³⁹⁵

The hopes of achieving a viable settlement were boosted by South African support for change in Rhodesia. As recognized by the State Department in NSSM 214, Salisbury had become an international liability for Pretoria and a drain on its resources. Prime Minister Vorster sought to install a moderate black government in Rhodesia both to advance his détente with black Africa and to stem the tide of radicalism before it reached South Africa's borders.³⁹⁶

³⁹⁴ White House Memorandum of Conversation, April 12 1976, NSA Memoranda of Conversations, 1973-1977 Box 19, Ford Library, White House Memorandum of Conversation, April 21 1976, NSA Memoranda of Conversations, 1973-1977 Box 19, Ford Library and Minutes of NSC Meeting, May 11 1976, NSA/NSC Meeting File, 1974-1977, Box 2, Ford Library.

³⁹⁵ White House Memorandum of Conversation, April 12 1976, NSA Memoranda of Conversations, 1973-1977 Box 19, Ford Library, White House Memorandum of Conversation, April 21 1976, NSA Memoranda of Conversations, 1973-1977 Box 19, Ford Library and Minutes of NSC Meeting, May 11 1976, NSA/NSC Meeting File, 1974-1977, Box 2, Ford Library.

³⁹⁶ NSSM 241. Southern African Contingencies and Options, Department of State, NSSM 241 – United States Policy in Southern Africa (1), U.S. National Security Council Institutional Files 1974-1977, Box 44, Ford Library, Statement by Secretary of State Henry A. Kissinger on Africa before the Senate Foreign

Black African leaders, despite their animosity towards Pretoria, urged the White House to enlist the help of the apartheid state to use its leverage to force a settlement on Salisbury. In his memoirs, Kissinger noted that ‘Incongruously, pariah South Africa, the citadel of apartheid, was emerging as the key to progress toward majority rule in Southern Africa. All black African leaders castigated it, and all of them urged us into a dialogue with South Africa’s leaders. Condemned as archenemy of African freedom, South Africa nevertheless provided the immediate hope for a rapid breakthrough toward majority rule...’³⁹⁷

On May 14, Kissinger met with Ambassador Botha and reminded him that it was in South Africa’s own interests to push for a negotiated settlement in Rhodesia as such an agreement would prevent Cuban involvement and buy time for Pretoria resolve its own racial question. Kissinger also offered to meet with Vorster or Foreign Minister Muller, itself a major incentive for the diplomatically isolated regime in Pretoria, to discuss the issue and suggested Europe as a neutral venue. Four days later Ford, in a television interview, stated he would be prepared to meet with Vorster and even Rhodesian Prime Minister Smith if it would help resolve the Rhodesian problem.³⁹⁸

The South Africans publicly welcomed the opportunity to work with the U.S. on a peace settlement although Foreign Minister Muller observed that the West needed to show more initiative than in the past and make any deal more attractive to both white and black Rhodesians. It was agreed that Kissinger and Vorster would officially meet in West

Relations Committee, Bureau of Public Affairs, Department of State, May 13 1976, CO 124 Rhodesia 9/1/76-1/20/77, WHCF, Box 43, Ford Library, Kissinger, *Years of Renewal*, 958 and Onslow, “The Cold War in Southern Africa”, in *Cold War in Southern Africa*, ed. Onslow, 15.

³⁹⁷ Minutes of NSC Meeting, May 11 1976, NSA/NSC Meeting File, 1974-1977, Box 2, Ford Library, White House Memorandum of Conversation, June 9 1976, NSA Memoranda of Conversations, 1973-1977 Box 19, Ford Library and Kissinger, *Years of Renewal*, 961.

³⁹⁸ White House Memorandum of Conversation, May 14 1976, NSA Memoranda of Conversations, 1973-1977 Box 19, Ford Library and Kissinger, *Years of Renewal*, 964.

Germany in late June. It was a measure of the importance of the meeting that despite the eruption of the Soweto Uprising on June 17, the black African states along with Britain, France and Germany urged Kissinger to go ahead with the talks. The U.S. did, however, censor Pretoria by voting for UNSC Resolution 392 which strongly condemned the incident and South African practices.³⁹⁹

On June 23-24, despite a terrorist threat from a group calling itself 'The United Black Liberation Committee', Kissinger met with Vorster and Muller in Grafenau. It was a historic moment as no Secretary of State had held talks with a South African Prime Minister since Edward Stettinius met with Jan Smuts in 1945 at the United Nations Conference on International Organization which created the UN Charter. Vorster agreed that if the U.S. could put together a package with sufficient guarantees offering a just and honorable solution for the economic prospects of the white community then Pretoria would use its influence with Salisbury to push for a settlement. The South Africans warned Kissinger, however, that morale was high in Rhodesia and that Salisbury would not accept a deal without viable guarantees for the future of the white population.⁴⁰⁰

The Rhodesian Government was well aware of the Kissinger-Vorster summit meeting and were cognizant of the fact Kissinger sought to achieve a negotiated solution

³⁹⁹ Unofficial translation of an extract from the statement by the Minister of Foreign Affairs in the South African Senate, May 17 1976, as attachment to letter to Brent Scowcroft from South African Ambassador R. F. Botha, May 19 1976, South Africa, NSA Kissinger-Scowcroft West Wing Office Files 1969-1977 Box 24, Ford Library, Extract from statement made by the South African Prime Minister before the Cape Town Press Club, May 18 1976, as attachment to letter to Brent Scowcroft from South African Ambassador R. F. Botha, May 19 1976, South Africa, NSA Kissinger-Scowcroft West Wing Office Files 1969-1977 Box 24, Ford Library, White House Memorandum for the President from Brent Scowcroft, June 23 1976, June 20-28 1976 - HAK Messages for the President, NSA Trip Briefing Books and Cables for Henry Kissinger, 1974-1976 Box 38 and Kissinger, *Years of Renewal*, 966-967.

⁴⁰⁰ Evening Report, June 23 1976, NSA White House Situation Room, Evening Reports from the NSC Staff, 1976-77, June 11 1976 Box 1, Ford Library, White House Memorandum of Conversation, June 23 1976, NSA Memoranda of Conversations, 1973-1977 Box 20, Ford Library, 196. Memorandum of Conversation. Grafenau, West Germany, June 24 1976, FRUS, Volume XXVIII and Kissinger, *Years of Renewal*, 964 and 967-969.

to end the Bush War and achieve majority rule. The South African Secretary of Foreign Affairs, Brand Fourie informed the American Embassy that the Rhodesians were desperate to find out what had taken place during the talks in Grafenau. Indeed, the Rhodesian Diplomatic Representative to South Africa, Harold Hawkins had told Fourie that if the 'moribund Rhodesian patient is to be disposed of, he has right to know what is to be done with his remains.'⁴⁰¹

The White House also sought the assistance of the British in obtaining a viable settlement. Kissinger was aware that London had limited leverage over the rebel colony but felt that a British role was crucial in aiding the transition to majority rule, working out the guarantees for the white community and reassuming the colonial administration to allow the successor regime to evolve in a moderate direction. According to Kissinger, the British, however, were initially unwilling to get involved as Prime Minister Callaghan and Foreign Minister Crosland possessed little enthusiasm for negotiations with Smith or playing a transitional role in Rhodesia.⁴⁰²

In May, though, London did reluctantly agree to the creation of a working group of high-level British and American officials charged with a constant review of African policy. On June 25, when Kissinger met with Callaghan in London, the British leader indicated that the UK would be willing to assume responsibility during the transitional period but expressed a fear of being drawn unwillingly into a military conflict. The British also distrusted Pretoria and urged the U.S. to consider a coup against Smith, an

⁴⁰¹ Department of State Telegram from Embassy Pretoria to Secretary of State, July 1976, South Africa-State Department Telegrams from SECSTATE-NODIS (1), NSA Presidential Country Files for Africa, 1974-1977 Box 6 and Smith, *Bitter Harvest*, 197.

⁴⁰² White House Memorandum of Conversation, July 15 1976, NSA Memoranda of Conversations, 1973-1977 Box 20, Ford Library and Kissinger, *Years of Renewal*, 965-966.

idea that was dismissed by Kissinger on the grounds that the Rhodesian leader was a 'bargaining chip' and his removal would complicate the situation.⁴⁰³

On July 5, Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs William E. Schaufele embarked on a trip through Africa to consult with key leaders including Front Line Presidents' Kaunda and Nyerere. Kissinger instructed Schaufele to play down the possibility of South African co-operation in order to gain greater flexibility from Dar es Salaam and Lusaka. During the talks Kaunda agreed to the general outline of a program of majority rule, a two year transitional government and minority guarantees. Nyerere concurred but stated the need for the transitional government to be backed by the 'freedom fighters' in order for the fighting to end. Both leaders also expressed the fear that Mozambican leader Samora Machel would be unwilling to end guerrilla operations.⁴⁰⁴

By the end of July, however, Nyerere had become increasingly negative about any peace settlement and informed U.S. Ambassador James Spain that he rejected the idea of British transitional rule in Rhodesia. As noted by Kissinger in his memoirs, the White House, faced by domestic Republican opposition and intransigence on the part of the Front Line leaders was strongly tempted to simply give up on the Rhodesian question and let nature take its course. Ford, however, was well aware that if the black Africans backed away from the idea of a peace settlement and refused to rein in the insurgents then

⁴⁰³ White House Memorandum of Conversation, July 15 1976, NSA Memoranda of Conversations, 1973-1977 Box 20, Ford Library, White House Memorandum of Conversation, July 13 1976, NSA Memoranda of Conversations, 1973-1977 Box 20, Ford Library, 197. Memorandum of Conversation, Washington, July 8 1976, FRUS, Volume XXVIII and Kissinger, *Years of Renewal*, 965-966 and 973-975.

⁴⁰⁴ Department of State Telegram from Secretary of State to Embassy Pretoria, July 1976, South Africa- State Department Telegrams from SECSTATE-NODIS, NSA Presidential Country Files for Africa, 1974-1977 Box 6, White House Memorandum of Conversation, July 13 1976, NSA Memoranda of Conversations, 1973-1977 Box 20, Ford Library, White House Memorandum of Conversation, July 27 1976, NSA Memoranda of Conversations, 1973-1977 Box 20, Ford Library and Kissinger, *Years of Renewal*, 975 and 979.

the whole process would fall apart with the likelihood of an escalating conflict and Cuban intervention. It was agreed that a new approach was required which involved producing a detailed proposal with the British, obtaining the support of South Africa who would pressure Smith to agree to the terms and finally presenting it to the black leaders for their approval.⁴⁰⁵

On August 5, Kissinger met with Callaghan and Crosland in London. A joint economic program for Rhodesia was agreed upon which included a system of financial assurances designed to maximize incentives for white Rhodesians to stay rather than leave, the development of foreign investment resources for Rhodesian private and public undertakings and benefits for the independence government from the European Development Fund and the World Bank to improve the situation of the black population with an emphasis on skill development and agriculture.⁴⁰⁶

In Southern Africa, however, it appeared as though the Front Line states, insurgent groups and the Rhodesian Government had little interest in a political solution. Both Lusaka and Maputo allowed insurgents to operate within their territory and cross the international frontier with impunity. On July 23, Mozambican troops invaded Rhodesia, but were repulsed south of Umtali. On August 9, the Selous Scouts, an elite Rhodesian counterinsurgent unit, struck the Nyadzonya guerrilla camp in Mozambique killing several hundred people. Furthermore, when presented with the economic program by Under Secretary of State William D. Rogers, both Kaunda and Nyerere while urging

⁴⁰⁵ White House Memorandum of Conversation, July 26 1976, NSA Memoranda of Conversations, 1973-1977 Box 20, Ford Library and Kissinger, *Years of Renewal*, 980.

⁴⁰⁶ 198. Memorandum from the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Scowcroft) to President Ford, Washington, August 5 1976 FRUS, Volume XXVIII, 199. Memorandum of Conversation. Washington, August 16 1976, FRUS, Volume XXVIII and Kissinger, *Years of Renewal*, 980.

the U.S. to proceed also expressed doubts that any settlement would work. Rogers also noted the apparent lack of unity among the Nationalist factions.⁴⁰⁷

In early September, Kissinger travelled to London to finalize the political program. The British had proposed a blueprint for a the transitional period which replaced a British governor with a two tiered government made up of a white dominated Council of State with a black blocking veto and a black controlled Council of Ministers with a white blocking minority. The Council of State would be responsible for implementing majority rule as well as defense and internal security, the cabinet would oversee day-to-day administration and London would handle foreign relations. The document became known as Annex C and was accepted as the working proposal by U.S. officials.⁴⁰⁸

On September 4, Kissinger met with Vorster for the second time in two months. The meeting place was the Dolder Grand Hotel near Zurich, Switzerland. The South African delegation approved the Anglo-American political and economic package, with the minor alteration that the Rhodesian community choose the members of the Council of State not the British Government (this was later approved by the UK) and assured the Secretary of State that Pretoria would press Smith to accept Annex C. In fact, the South African Government had already begun to exert its leverage over Salisbury demonstrated by the withdrawal of helicopter crews on August 26 and even forced Smith to dismiss

⁴⁰⁷ Department of State Briefing Paper-Rhodesia, 6/20-28/76 Briefing Book for HAK-Vorster Meeting (3), NSA Trip Briefing Books and Cables for Henry Kissinger, 1974-1976 Box 38, Evening Report, July 30 1976, NSA White House Situation Room, Evening Reports from the NSC Staff, 1976-77, June 11 1976 Box 1, Ford Library, Noon and Evening Notes, August 10 1976, NSA White House Situation Room Noon and Evening Notes, 1975-77, August 3 1976 Box 9, Ford Library, White House Memorandum of Conversation, August 30, 1976, NSA Memoranda of Conversations, 1973-1977 Box 20, Ford Library, DeRoche, *Black, White and Chrome*, 217 and Kissinger, *Years of Renewal*, 981.

⁴⁰⁸ 202. Memorandum of Conversation, London, September 4 1976, FRUS, Volume XXVIII, Kissinger, *Years of Renewal*, 983-984.

Rhodesian Defence Minister P.K. Van der Byl over his criticism of Pretoria following their removal.⁴⁰⁹

The Secretary of State, then embarked on the final phase of his shuttle diplomacy to obtain the agreement of the Front Line leaders and the guerrilla movements before presenting it to the Rhodesians as a *fait accompli*. On September 14, Kissinger arrived in Dar es Salaam for talks with Nyerere. Despite a hostile atmosphere and public criticism from the Tanzanian president, in private Nyerere encouraged the U.S. to continue the facilitation of an agreement. In Lusaka, Kissinger received a much warmer welcome from Kaunda who publicly praised the ‘humanistic policy’ of the Ford Administration towards Southern Africa. During private talks with Kissinger the Zambian leader agreed that the proposed settlement should move forward but warned Kissinger to be careful of Smith as he was ‘slippery and extremely dangerous.’ While in Zambia, Kissinger also met with the head of ZAPU, Joshua Nkomo who Kissinger described as ‘unquestionably the best and most moderate Rhodesian Nationalist leader.’⁴¹⁰

On the evening of September 17, Kissinger travelled to Pretoria to present the Anglo-American proposals to Ian Smith. Two days later, the Secretary of State met with Smith for the first time. In the words of Kissinger, ‘No senior American official had ever

⁴⁰⁹ White House Memorandum for the President from Brent Scowcroft, September 5 1976, September 3-7 1976 - HAK Messages for the President, NSA Trip Briefing Books and Cables for Henry Kissinger, 1974-1976 Box 38, 203. Memorandum of Conversation, Zurich, September 6 1976, FRUS, Volume XXVIII, Kissinger, *Years of Renewal*, 985-986 and Smith, *Bitter Harvest*, 195-197.

⁴¹⁰ White House Memorandum for the President from Brent Scowcroft, September 15 1976, September 13-24 1976 - HAK Messages for the President, NSA Trip Briefing Books and Cables for Henry Kissinger, 1974-1976 Box 42, Ford Library, White House Memorandum for the President from Brent Scowcroft, September 17 1976, September 13-24 1976 - HAK Messages for the President, NSA Trip Briefing Books and Cables for Henry Kissinger, 1974-1976 Box 42, Ford Library, White House Memorandum for the President from Brent Scowcroft, September 18 1976, September 13-24 1976 - HAK Messages for the President, NSA Trip Briefing Books and Cables for Henry Kissinger, 1974-1976 Box 42, Ford Library 205. Memorandum of Conversation, Lusaka, September 16 1976, FRUS, Volume XXVIII and Kissinger, *Years of Renewal*, 990-995.

met with Smith. British leaders detested him, and the front-line African Presidents resented him. Yet the eight Rhodesian leaders who appeared at the American Embassy looked more like British provincial middle-class businessmen or farmers than practicing Machiavellians.’⁴¹¹

The Secretary of State, warned the Rhodesian delegation that while they might find the proposals unappealing they were nevertheless represented the best offer they would receive. If Salisbury chose to reject the settlement the military situation would get worse, they could expect to receive no help from the West and any future agreement would be considerably less beneficial for the future of the white population. Vorster also urged the Rhodesians to sign the agreement and in a veiled threat stated that Pretoria was no longer willing to continue to support Salisbury either financially or militarily.⁴¹²

While the Rhodesians were dismayed by the proposals, the Salisbury delegation nevertheless recognized that they had little choice but to acquiesce to the Anglo-American plan. In the words of Smith, ‘Having a gun pointed at one’s head leaves no room for equivocation.’ The Rhodesians agreed, subject to the approval of their cabinet and RF parliamentary caucus, to what became known as the ‘Five Points’. These included a constitutional conference with the black Nationalists to create an interim government that would comprise of a black majority in the cabinet but give the whites parity in the Council of State that would draft the new constitution. The British would pass legislation allowing majority rule and independence. During the interim era, the U.S.

⁴¹¹ 206. Telegram from Secretary of State Kissinger to the President’s Assistant for National Security Affairs (Scowcroft), September 20 1976, FRUS, Volume XXVIII and Kissinger, *Years of Renewal*, 995-998.

⁴¹² 206. Telegram from Secretary of State Kissinger to the President’s Assistant for National Security Affairs (Scowcroft), September 20 1976, FRUS, Volume XXVIII, Kissinger, *Years of Renewal*, 999-1000 and Smith, *Bitter Harvest*, 201-204.

and UK would diplomatically press for an end to sanctions and the guerrilla struggle as well as economic aid for Rhodesia. Smith also requested that the portfolios of the ministers of defence and law and order would remain in white hands for duration of the interim government.⁴¹³

It is clear that Kissinger felt a great degree of empathy for the white Rhodesians. In a telegram to National Security Adviser Brent Scowcroft, Kissinger stated that ‘This outcome gives me no pleasure. It is extremely painful for me to be the instrument of their fate-which could turn out to be disastrous. That they have accepted it with good grace only makes it harder.’ In his memoirs, Smith recalled that Kissinger told him privately that his role in the demise of Rhodesia was one of the great tragedies of his life. In spite of his sympathy for white Rhodesia, however, the Secretary of State did not allow his personal feelings to interfere with the realpolitik of the Cold War. In his view, the geopolitical reality remained that unless the U.S. could force majority rule in Salisbury then the door stayed open for further Cuban and Soviet expansion in Southern Africa. If the white Rhodesians needed to be the sacrificial lamb to prevent the spread of communism then he was prepared to wield the knife.⁴¹⁴

On September 20, Kissinger flew to Lusaka where he informed a ‘grateful and astonished’ Zambian leader that Smith had agreed to majority rule within two years. Kaunda assured him that he would push the agreement with the other Front Line leaders but expressed anxiety whether Nyerere would go along with the deal. At a meeting the following day Nkomo also stated his concern that Nyerere favored ZANU and was

⁴¹³ 206. Telegram from Secretary of State Kissinger to the President’s Assistant for National Security Affairs (Scowcroft), September 20 1976, FRUS, Volume XXVIII, DeRoche, *Black, White and Chrome*, 220-221, Kissinger, *Years of Renewal*, 1000-1001 and Smith, *Bitter Harvest*, 201-207.

⁴¹⁴ 206. Telegram from Secretary of State Kissinger to the President’s Assistant for National Security Affairs (Scowcroft), September 20 1976, FRUS, Volume XXVIII and Smith, *Bitter Harvest*, 201.

determined to keep him from power. In Tanzania, according to Kissinger's memoirs, Nyerere acceded to the agreement but wanted to reduce the U.S. role in the negotiations so that the settlement would give greater credit as a 'moral victory extracted by radical Africa.'⁴¹⁵

On September 24, Smith, in a broadcast to the nation, announced that the Rhodesian Cabinet and RF parliamentary caucus had accepted the Anglo-American proposals including the principle of majority rule within two years. In the speech, he sought to assuage the anxiety of the white population by assuring them that under the interim government the conflict as well as international sanctions would end and that white ministers would hold the key positions of defence and law and order.⁴¹⁶

In response to the Rhodesian announcement, the White House issued a press release conveying satisfaction that Salisbury had accepted the proposals designed to avert escalating conflict and bring peace to Southern Africa. The statement also expressed pride that the U.S. had been able to contribute and praised the efforts of the British, South Africans and Front Line states in achieving this breakthrough. Ford also sent personal messages to Callaghan and Vorster thanking them for their assistance and in correspondence with the black African presidents voiced his hope that 'advantage will be

⁴¹⁵ White House Memorandum for the President from Brent Scowcroft, September 21 1976, September 13-24 1976 - HAK Messages for the President, NSA Trip Briefing Books and Cables for Henry Kissinger, 1974-1976 Box 42, Ford Library, 207. Telegram from Secretary of State Kissinger to the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Scowcroft), September 21 1976, FRUS, Volume XXVIII and Kissinger, *Years of Renewal*, 1003-1004.

⁴¹⁶ Department of State Telegram from Embassy Pretoria to Secretary of State, September 1976, Zimbabwe (Rhodesia), April-September 1976, NSA/NSC Press and Congressional Liaison Staff: Files, 1973-1976 Box 8, Ford Library.

taken of this unique opportunity by all the parties, and that the negotiations will be pursued in the spirit of magnanimity.’⁴¹⁷

Two days later, the Front Line leaders, attending a summit meeting in Lusaka issued a statement hailing and congratulating the heroic Zimbabwean fighters whose struggle has forced the white government to ‘recognize and accept the inevitability of majority rule.’ The statement dismissed the proposals as outlined in Smith’s speech as ‘tantamount to legalising the colonialist and racist structures of power’ and asserted that the details relating to the structure and functions of the transitional government should be left to the constitutional conference. The presidents, however, called on the UK to convene a conference immediately and declared that such an event would be a victory for all Africa and mankind.⁴¹⁸

In Washington, both the White House and the State Department released statements welcoming the acceptance of the Kissinger proposals by the Front Line leaders and highlighting the fact that the path to a negotiated solution to majority rule was now open. The Ford Administration also dispatched messages to both Smith and Vorster to placate the concerns raised by both Salisbury and Pretoria that the black Africans

⁴¹⁷ White House Statement by the President, Office of the White House Press Secretary, September 24 1976, Zimbabwe (Rhodesia), April-September 1976, NSA/NSC Press and Congressional Liaison Staff: Files, 1973-1976 Box 8, Ford Library, Department of State Telegram from Secretary of State to Embassy Dar es Salaam, September 1976, September 13-24 1976 – General (8), NSA Trip Briefing Books and Cables for Henry Kissinger, 1974-1976 Box 42, Ford Library, Department of State Telegram from Secretary of State to Embassy Lusaka, September 1976, September 13-24 1976 – General (8), NSA Trip Briefing Books and Cables for Henry Kissinger, 1974-1976 Box 42, Department of State Telegram from Secretary of State to Embassy Maputo, September 1976, September 13-24 1976 – General (8), NSA Trip Briefing Books and Cables for Henry Kissinger, 1974-1976 Box 42, Ford Library, Department of State Telegram from Secretary of State to Embassy Pretoria, September 1976, September 13-24 1976 – General (8), NSA Trip Briefing Books and Cables for Henry Kissinger, 1974-1976 Box 42, Ford Library and 210. Message from President Ford to British Prime Minister Callaghan, Washington, September 24 1976, FRUS, Volume XXVIII.

⁴¹⁸ Department of State Telegram from Embassy Lusaka to Secretary of State, September 1976, Zimbabwe (Rhodesia), April-September 1976, NSA/NSC Press and Congressional Liaison Staff: Files, 1973-1976 Box 8, Ford Library.

appeared to be backing away from the deal. The White House reminded the Rhodesians and South Africans that the Front Line states had agreed to a constitutional conference and assured them that the only way to avoid a more radical solution was to move forward with the conference and subsequent installation of a moderate government.⁴¹⁹

On September 29, British Foreign Secretary Crosland addressed the UN and stated that all parties had now accepted the objective of majority rule in Rhodesia within two years and that to consolidate this London was prepared to hold a conference to address the formation of the interim government and related matters. Crosland also named the British Ambassador to the UN, Ivor Richard as chairman for the conference. Over the following weeks it was agreed by the British, the Rhodesians and the black Nationalist groups that Geneva would serve as the location of the historic meeting.⁴²⁰

Kissinger's shuttle diplomacy had achieved the primary objective of a constitutional conference which it was hoped would lead to the creation of a black led moderate government in Salisbury and deny the communists the opportunity for a further foot hold in Southern Africa. Domestically, however, many Americans were aghast at what appeared to U.S. connivance in the destruction of a vehemently anti-communist pro-

⁴¹⁹ White House Statement on Africa, September 26 1976, Zimbabwe (Rhodesia), April-September 1976, NSA/NSC Press and Congressional Liaison Staff: Files, 1973-1976 Box 8, Ford Library, Statement by the Department of State, September 26 1976, NSA/NSC Press and Congressional Liaison Staff: Files, 1973-1976 Box 8, Ford Library, Department of State Telegram from Secretary of State to Embassy Pretoria, September 1976, South Africa-State Department Telegrams from SECSTATE-NODIS, NSA Presidential Country Files for Africa, 1974-1977 Box 6, Letter for President Ford from Prime Minister Vorster via Embassy Pretoria, September 1976, South Africa-State Department Telegrams from SECSTATE-NODIS (2), NSA Presidential Country Files for Africa, 1974-1977 Box 6 and 214. Telegram from the Department of State to the Embassy in South Africa. Washington, October 1 1976, FRUS, Volume XXVIII.

⁴²⁰ Statement by Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, Anthony Crosland, United Kingdom Mission to the United Nations, September 29 1976, USUN (11) 8/1/76-12/14/76, NSA Presidential Agency File 1974-1977, USUN (8) Box 21, Ford Library and Department of State Telegram from Assistant Secretary of State to Secretary of State via Embassy Pretoria, October 1976, South Africa-State Department Telegrams from SECSTATE-NODIS (2), NSA Presidential Country Files for Africa, 1974-1977 Box 6, DeRoche, *Black, White and Chrome*, 210-211 and Kissinger, *Years of Renewal*, 955-956.

Western government. In a particularly worrying development for the White House in an election year, many leading Republicans expressed dissatisfaction with the Secretary of State. A Ford campaign official, James A. Baker III publicly urged Kissinger to resign for the good of the president while an eminent Republican told the *Washington Star* that many in his party hoped the Secretary would be ‘eaten’ during his ‘safari’ through Africa.⁴²¹

The fact the White House was prepared to countenance a domestic backlash which would imperil Ford’s electoral campaign highlights how important the Rhodesian issue had become to the incumbent administration. Key figures including Kissinger, Director of Central Intelligence George Bush as well as Ford himself feared that the conflict if left unchecked could escalate into a broader war involving Pretoria and the communist powers and potentially could lead to the creation of a radicalized bloc in Southern Africa which would impact the geopolitical balance of power across the globe. The peaceful settlement of the Rhodesian problem had thus become a highest priority for the Ford Administration.⁴²²

The Geneva Conference and its aftermath: Kissinger’s dismay at British ineptitude but his foundations for peace remain in place

On October 28, Chairman Ivor Richard formally opened the Geneva Conference. In addition to the Rhodesian Government delegation, led by Smith, all the major Nationalist leaders attended the conference including ZAPU leader Nkomo and ZANU

⁴²¹ Letter to President Ford from John J. Schumann Jr., August 27 1976, CO 124 Rhodesia 9/1/76-1/20/77, WHCF, Box 43, Ford Library, Resolution of State Committee of the New York Conservative Party, September 18 1976, CO 124 Rhodesia 6/1/76-1/20/77, WHCF, Box 43, Ford Library, Evening Report, October 5 1976, NSA White House Situation Room, Evening Reports from the NSC Staff, 1976-77, August 24 1976 Box 2, Ford Library.

⁴²² White House Memorandum of Conversation, September 29 1976, NSA Memoranda of Conversations, 1973-1977 Box 20, Ford Library and Kissinger, *Years of Renewal*, 903-904.

Secretary General Robert Mugabe. Mugabe and Nkomo had formed a coalition known as the Patriotic Front (PF) just weeks earlier to present a united front during the negotiations. Other Nationalist leaders present included Bishop Abel Muzorewa, James Chikerema and Ndabaningi Sithole. The conference, however, proved to be an abject failure. On December 14, after nearly two months of fruitless and often tension filled discussions Chairman Richard formally adjourned the conference. It would never be reconvened.⁴²³

Kissinger blamed the British for the failure of the negotiations. He criticized Richard for beginning the conference with the question of the independence date when majority rule and independence within two years had already been agreed upon. He also observed that it would be politically impossible for Smith to agree on an exact date without an agreement on the composition of the transitional government. Kissinger along with other U.S. officials also grew increasingly frustrated by the apparent British catering to the radical Nationalist demands while ignoring the reality that any settlement would need to be accepted by all parties including the Rhodesian delegation. In December, during a conversation with Ford, Kissinger described the British behaviour as 'unbelievable' and 'a prescription for another Angola'.⁴²⁴

⁴²³ Department of State Telegram from U.S. Mission Geneva to Secretary of State, October 1976, Switzerland-State Department Telegrams to SECSTATE-NODIS (10), NSA Presidential Country Files for Europe and Canada Box 13, Ford Library and Department of State Telegram from U.S. Mission Geneva to Secretary of State, December 1976, Switzerland-State Department Telegrams to SECSTATE-NODIS (28), NSA Presidential Country Files for Europe and Canada Box 14, Ford Library.

⁴²⁴ Department of State Telegram from U.S. Mission Geneva to Secretary of State, November 1976, Switzerland-State Department Telegrams to SECSTATE-NODIS (13), NSA Presidential Country Files for Europe and Canada Box 14, Ford Library, Department of State Telegram from U.S. Mission Geneva to Secretary of State, November 1976, Switzerland-State Department Telegrams to SECSTATE-NODIS (18), NSA Presidential Country Files for Europe and Canada Box 14, Ford Library, White House Memorandum of Conversation, December 3 1976, NSA Memoranda of Conversations, 1973-1977 Box 20, Ford Library and White House Memorandum of Conversation, December 16 1976, NSA Memoranda of Conversations, 1973-1977 Box 20, Ford Library, Department of State Telegram from U.S. Mission Geneva to Secretary of

It is clear that the British presided over an exceptionally poor conference, indeed as pointed out by Mugabe, the choice of a relatively junior official in Richard to chair the conference was bizarre given the personal involvement of Prime Minister Wilson in the talks on both HMS Tiger and HMS Fearless. The failure of the talks, however, was not entirely due to British ineptitude but also stemmed from an inherent unwillingness to compromise on both sides of the negotiating table.⁴²⁵

The Rhodesian delegation came to Geneva with the view that the talks would be limited to a implementation of the 'Five Points' as agreed with Kissinger in Pretoria and specifically the establishment of the interim government. As observed by a U.S. diplomatic official in Switzerland, the Rhodesians were well aware that any concessions beyond the Kissinger agreement would prove very difficult to sell to the white community and security forces back home. He stated that as a result the 'Rhodesians are sticking like adhesive tape to the five points and have not developed any well-thought-out fallback positions.'⁴²⁶

In contrast, the black Nationalist delegations viewed the proposals as a mere starting point for the negotiations. The leaders, especially the PF, sought greater concessions and pressed the British to force Salisbury to acquiesce to their demands. The Botswanan Foreign Minister Archie Mogwe warned the U.S. that the PF and their Front

State, October 1976, Switzerland-State Department Telegrams to SECSTATE-NODIS (8), NSA Presidential Country Files for Europe and Canada Box 13, Ford Library.

⁴²⁵ Department of State Telegram from U.S. Mission Geneva to Secretary of State, November 1976, Switzerland-State Department Telegrams to SECSTATE-NODIS (12), NSA Presidential Country Files for Europe and Canada Box 14, Ford Library and DeRoche, *Black, White and Chrome*, 226.

⁴²⁶ Department of State Telegram from Secretary of State to U.S. Mission Geneva, October 1976, Switzerland-State Department Telegrams from SECSTATE-NODIS (3), NSA Presidential Country Files for Europe and Canada Box 13, Ford Library, Department of State Telegram from U.S. Mission Geneva to Secretary of State, November 1976, Switzerland-State Department Telegrams to SECSTATE-NODIS (15), NSA Presidential Country Files for Europe and Canada Box 14, Ford Library and Department of State Telegram from U.S. Mission Geneva to Secretary of State, December 1976, Switzerland-State Department Telegrams to SECSTATE-NODIS (26), NSA Presidential Country Files for Europe and Canada Box 14, Ford Library.

Line sponsors wished for an interim government that was a total transfer of power with nothing more than token white representation. In a meeting with Assistant Secretary of State Schaufele, Mugabe bluntly informed him that he sought full political and military power in an African dominated, not multi-racial society.⁴²⁷

The vast gulf in negotiating positions was exacerbated by inflammatory conduct from both sides. As early as the opening statements, the PF leaders engaged in political diatribes and offered no constructive contribution of how all sides could work together to achieve a settlement. The public behavior of the Rhodesian delegation, notably Foreign Minister Van der Byl, was also particularly unhelpful. On one occasion, Van der Byl informed the media that there was no point discussing the recent executions in Rhodesia as the individuals involved were already dead. In another memorable quote he described the Mugabe delegation as 'itinerant, temporarily unemployed terrorists'. The departure of Smith to Rhodesia leaving Van der Byl in charge of negotiations also heightened tensions. In December, during meetings on the interim government Mugabe labelled the foreign minister 'foulmouthed' and 'a bloody fool' while Van der Byl responded 'You don't deserve your independence until you learn some manners'.⁴²⁸

⁴²⁷ Department of State Telegram from U.S. Mission Geneva to Secretary of State, November 1976, Switzerland-State Department Telegrams to SECSTATE-NODIS (13), NSA Presidential Country Files for Europe and Canada Box 14, Ford Library, Department of State Telegram from U.S. Mission Geneva to Secretary of State, December 1976, Switzerland-State Department Telegrams to SECSTATE-NODIS (22), NSA Presidential Country Files for Europe and Canada Box 14, Ford Library and White House Memorandum of Conversation, December 4 1976, NSA Memoranda of Conversations, 1973-1977 Box 20, Ford Library.

⁴²⁸ Department of State Telegram from U.S. Mission Geneva to Secretary of State, November 1976, Switzerland-State Department Telegrams to SECSTATE-NODIS (11), NSA Presidential Country Files for Europe and Canada Box 14, Ford Library, Department of State Telegram from U.S. Mission Geneva to Secretary of State, November 1976, Switzerland-State Department Telegrams to SECSTATE-NODIS (12), NSA Presidential Country Files for Europe and Canada Box 14, Ford Library, Department of State Telegram from U.S. Mission Geneva to Secretary of State, December 1976, Switzerland-State Department Telegrams to SECSTATE-NODIS (23), NSA Presidential Country Files for Europe and Canada Box 14, Ford Library, Smith, *Bitter Harvest*, 215-217 and Wessels, *PK Van der Byl*, 215.

Among the Nationalist delegations themselves there existed a deep undercurrent of mistrust and tensions. The U.S. Mission in Geneva informed Kissinger that the more moderate figures of Muzorewa and Sithole were willing to compromise but the problem was the intransigence of Mugabe and the Front Line presidents. The PF itself despite the façade of unity remained bitterly divided. Indeed, during a squabble over the independence date Mugabe and Nkomo almost came to blows during a meeting with Richard. The Rhodesian representative in South Africa also complained to U.S. Ambassador Bowdler that the Mugabe deputation were bullying and intimidating the other Nationalist factions.⁴²⁹

While the Geneva Conference was primarily a British affair, the Ford Administration, nevertheless, played a crucial role behind the scenes. U.S. officials including Assistant Secretaries of State Schaufele and John E. Reinhardt met frequently with the Rhodesian and Nationalist delegations as well as other interested parties including the representatives from the Front Line states and other African nations urging the delegations to work toward a compromise. Kissinger also pressed Richard, much to his annoyance, to be more decisive and prevent the Nationalists from derailing the negotiations through excessive demands and radical posturing.⁴³⁰

⁴²⁹ Department of State Telegram from Embassy Pretoria to Secretary of State, November 1976, South Africa-State Department Telegrams from SECSTATE-NODIS (4), NSA Presidential Country Files for Africa, 1974-1977 Box 6, Department of State Telegram from U.S. Mission Geneva to Secretary of State, November 1976, Switzerland-State Department Telegrams to SECSTATE-NODIS (15), NSA Presidential Country Files for Europe and Canada Box 14, Ford Library, Department of State Telegram from U.S. Mission Geneva to Secretary of State, November 1976, Switzerland-State Department Telegrams to SECSTATE-NODIS (21), NSA Presidential Country Files for Europe and Canada Box 14, Ford Library, White House Memorandum of Conversation, December 13 1976, NSA Memoranda of Conversations, 1973-1977 Box 20, Ford Library and 233. Memorandum of Conversation, London. December 10 1976, FRUS, Volume XXVIII.

⁴³⁰ Department of State Telegram from Secretary of State to U.S. Mission Geneva, October 1976, Switzerland-State Department Telegrams from SECSTATE-NODIS (3), NSA Presidential Country Files for Europe and Canada Box 13, Ford Library, Department of State Telegram from U.S. Mission Geneva to Secretary of State, October 1976, Switzerland-State Department Telegrams to SECSTATE-NODIS (8), NSA Presidential Country Files for Europe and Canada Box 13, Ford Library, Department of State Telegram from U.S. Mission Geneva to Secretary of State, October 1976, Switzerland-State Department

Following the Geneva fiasco the prospects dimmed for a negotiated settlement. In the view of the Rhodesians, Salisbury had made a 'firm contract' with London and Washington that the conference would be held to a discussion of the Five Points. This had turned out to be not the case and Smith in particular felt misled and betrayed. As noted by Assistant Secretary of State Reinhardt the intransigence of the Nationalists had also buttressed the Rhodesian belief that 'you can't do business with this crowd.' In addition, in Rhodesia itself the security forces were enjoying increasing success against the guerrilla movements and there was a growing belief that the tide of the conflict was turning in their favor. As early as December 8, Smith warned Richard that if the conference was adjourned then all 'all will be up again for negotiation, even my commitment to majority rule.' The Nationalist movements, bolstered by the mass disaffection of blacks within Rhodesia, a growing flood of recruits and increasing aid from Mozambique and Tanzania also felt no need to return to talks.⁴³¹

In the aftermath the British Government proposed a new plan and dispatched Richard to Washington and then Southern Africa on a mission to revive the peace settlement. As observed by Kissinger, however, the deal went '95% of the way to blacks' and it was highly unlikely either Salisbury or Pretoria would find it acceptable. The package included a British appointee as chairman of the transitional administration and reduced Rhodesian Government

Telegrams to SECSTATE-NODIS (9), NSA Presidential Country Files for Europe and Canada Box 13, Ford Library, Department of State Telegram from Secretary of State to U.S. Mission Geneva, November 1976, Switzerland-State Department Telegrams from SECSTATE-NODIS (4), NSA Presidential Country Files for Europe and Canada Box 13, Ford Library and Department of State Telegram from U.S. Mission Geneva to Secretary of State, December 1976, Switzerland-State Department Telegrams to SECSTATE-NODIS (26), NSA Presidential Country Files for Europe and Canada Box 14, Ford Library.

⁴³¹ Department of State Telegram from U.S. Mission Geneva to Secretary of State, November 1976, Switzerland-State Department Telegrams to SECSTATE-NODIS (18), NSA Presidential Country Files for Europe and Canada Box 14, Ford Library, Department of State Telegram from U.S. Mission Geneva to Secretary of State, December 1976, Switzerland-State Department Telegrams to SECSTATE-NODIS (26), NSA Presidential Country Files for Europe and Canada Box 14, Ford Library, Department of State Telegram from Embassy Pretoria to Secretary of State, December 1976, South Africa-State Department Telegrams from SECSTATE-NODIS (4), NSA Presidential Country Files for Africa, 1974-1977 Box 6 and Baxter, *Rhodesia*, 450-452.

representation. It was a significantly worse offer for Salisbury than the terms which they had agreed to in September. In early January, Richard met with Vorster, whose electorate increasingly opposed any Rhodesian settlement, and the South African leader expressed great pessimism over the deal. Salisbury was equally unimpressed by the proposals and on January 24 they were publicly rejected by Smith.⁴³²

By this point, however, a new president was in the White House. In early November, Jimmy Carter had defeated Ford in a tight election. Kissinger believed that the Carter's electoral victory ended any hopes of achieving a settlement based on the the Five Points he had agreed with Smith. The Secretary of State was well aware that he had become a 'lame duck' and world leaders were waiting for the new administration to take office before committing to any initiatives launched by the previous White House. In private, Kissinger also expressed a fear to Ford that with the 'Carter people all catering to the blacks, it encourages the radicals' thus making any agreement far harder for the departing administration.⁴³³

The aim of the Ford Administration to achieve a viable Rhodesian settlement stemmed directly from the geopolitics of the era. The triumph of the Marxist MPLA in Angola owing to massive Soviet aid and Cuban military muscle brought Cold War rivalry into the heart of Southern Africa. For Kissinger, it was imperative that Moscow and Havana were prevented

⁴³² Department of State Telegram from U.S. Mission Geneva to Secretary of State, November 1976, Switzerland-State Department Telegrams to SECSTATE-NODIS (18), NSA Presidential Country Files for Europe and Canada Box 14, Ford Library, White House Memorandum of Conversation, December 13 1976, NSA Memoranda of Conversations, 1973-1977 Box 20, Ford Library, Department of State Telegram from Embassy Pretoria to Secretary of State, January 1977, South Africa-State Department Telegrams from SECSTATE-NODIS (4), NSA Presidential Country Files for Africa, 1974-1977 Box 6, Department of State Telegram from Embassy Pretoria to Secretary of State, January 1977, South Africa-State Department Telegrams from SECSTATE-NODIS (4), NSA Presidential Country Files for Africa, 1974-1977 Box 6 Memorandum for the President from Cyrus Vance, January 24 1977, Plains File, Secret Service 2/77-11/80 through State Department Evening Reports. 7/77, Box 37, Carter Library and Smith, *Bitter Harvest*, 222.

⁴³³ White House Memorandum of Conversation, December 3 1976, NSA Memoranda of Conversations, 1973-1977 Box 20, Ford Library and Kissinger, *Years of Renewal*, 1014.

from expanding their sphere of influence in the region. In the view of the White House, the continued existence of the embattled white minority regime in Salisbury provided an excuse for communist intervention and therefore it was essential that the U.S. broker a transition to a moderate black government.

While Kissinger ultimately failed in his quest, in part due to circumstances beyond his control, his actions nevertheless initiated a process that culminated in an end to UDI and the establishment of majority rule. Kissinger not only coerced Smith into accepting and publicly endorsing the principle of majority rule but for the first time brought the power and prestige of the U.S. Government into actively seeking a resolution to the Rhodesian problem. This high level mediation would continue under the subsequent administration and would eventually lead to an independent black controlled Zimbabwe. As observed by DeRoche, Kissinger had not slain the 'Southern Rhodesian Dragon' but he had 'led the Carter Administration to the dragon's lair'.⁴³⁴

The Ford Years

The Ford era represented a distinct shift in policy on Rhodesia. President Ford himself entered the White House with a sincere commitment to moral principles, including racial justice, both domestically and globally. Both publicly and privately the president stated unequivocally his commitment to majority rule in Rhodesia. This alone signified a major change from the calculating realpolitik of his predecessor. Even more importantly, under his leadership, the U.S. engaged, for the first time, in a serious diplomatic effort to resolve the longstanding Rhodesian question and achieve a just and peaceful settlement.

⁴³⁴ DeRoche, *Black, White and Chrome*, 228.

While Nixon strongly opposed, at least in private, any attempt to repeal the Byrd amendment, President Ford advocated repeal and the cessation of the trade in Rhodesian chrome. The White House decision to support the repeal legislation was both moral and strategic in nature. Ford was well aware that repeal would send a strong message to Salisbury that his administration opposed the continuation of white minority rule and that he shared the aspirations of the liberation movements. On a geopolitical level, repeal would place the U.S. back in compliance with UN sanctions and gain credit with black African leaders.

It is important to note, however, that while the Ford Administration was prepared to publicly back repeal legislation, the White House was not yet willing to exert any substantive pressure on Republican legislators or risk losing grassroots support over an issue that aroused strong feelings for many conservative Americans. Indeed, supporters and opponents of the Byrd Amendment attributed the failure of the repeal bill to the inaction of the President on the controversial issue. Eighteen months later, however, Ford was prepared to risk considerably greater conservative ire by embarking on a major diplomatic push to force a breakthrough in the Rhodesian problem.

The Lusaka Address and subsequent shuttle diplomacy signaled a dramatic change in the American approach towards the RF government in Salisbury. While previous administrations publicly condemned UDI and white minority rule in Rhodesia, LBJ had been content to primarily follow the British lead while Nixon had quietly sought closer ties to Salisbury on economic and strategic grounds. Under Ford, the U.S. became the key player in seeking a peaceful resolution of the Bush War and shaping the future of an independent Zimbabwe. Even though the Kissinger settlement ended in failure at the acrimonious Geneva Conference, nevertheless, the Secretary of State had successfully coerced Smith into a public

acceptance of majority rule and had firmly placed Washington behind the objective of achieving a black African government in Salisbury.

While the White House had consistently advocated majority rule in Rhodesia on moral grounds, broader involvement in formulating a viable Rhodesian settlement over the course of 1976 arose directly from the geopolitics of the Cold War. The victory of the leftist MPLA in Angola backed by Soviet aid and Cuban combat troops led to fears of further communist expansion in the region and the potential creation of a radicalized bloc in Southern Africa affecting the balance of power worldwide. It was the judgement of both Ford and Kissinger, that it was imperative to remove any pretexts for further Cuban or Soviet intervention and thus it became of the highest priority to end white rule in Rhodesia and assist in the establishment of a pro Western black government.

The importance to the President of resolving the Rhodesian issue was highlighted by the fact that the administration was well aware of the domestic repercussions of the Kissinger peace initiative. Presidential correspondence demonstrated considerable support for Ian Smith and extreme criticism towards U.S. involvement in any forced imposition of black rule on Salisbury. The fact that an incumbent administration in an election year was prepared to countenance a policy that would almost inevitably cause a voter backlash among key electoral supporters thus imperiling his reelection campaign underscores how crucial the attainment of a viable Rhodesian settlement had become to the White House.

Overall, the Ford years marked the beginning of an era of greater American involvement in ending UDI and achieving majority rule. In part this stemmed from Ford's own sense of compassion and humanity which pushed the White House away from the cold realpolitik of his predecessor. Ford believed that the U.S. should oppose

white minority rule in Rhodesia because it was the right thing to do on moral grounds. Nevertheless, greater intervention was directly fueled by the geopolitics of the Cold War specifically a desire to thwart further communist expansion in Southern Africa. While the Kissinger peace initiative failed to provide an immediate breakthrough, more importantly it set a precedent of high level American involvement in the Rhodesian crisis and laid the groundwork for a future settlement.

CHAPTER 4. HUMAN RIGHTS AND THE COLD WAR: PRESIDENT JIMMY CARTER

On November 2 1976, Jimmy Carter triumphed over Gerald Ford in a closely fought presidential election. The former peanut farmer and one term governor of Georgia revived the former New Deal coalition including African-Americans and urban labor to achieve a narrow electoral college majority of two hundred and ninety-seven to two hundred and forty. The folksy candidate who campaigned against the 'imperial presidency' broke with modern tradition by walking up Pennsylvania Avenue from the Capitol to the White House.⁴³⁵

For white Rhodesia, the election of Carter would prove to be a pivotal moment which heralded the end of minority rule. The new administration played a critical, perhaps even irreplaceable, role in bringing an end to the UDI era. Even before taking office, Carter had determined that he would not only seek to bring majority rule to Rhodesia but actively use U.S. power to achieve this objective. The Byrd Amendment was swiftly repealed and in partnership with the British, Washington pressured Rhodesia to accept the Anglo-American Plan which proposed immediate majority rule. The White House decision not to recognize the Internal Settlement or remove sanctions following the election of Bishop Abel Muzorewa sounded a death knell for Rhodesian hopes of a deal excluding what they labelled the 'terrorist' factions. In his memoirs, Ian Smith termed the election as the 'disaster of Carter'.⁴³⁶

The vehement opposition of President Carter to the continuance of the Rhodesian regime was shaped primarily by his deeply held ideological belief in the importance of

⁴³⁵ Tindall and Shi, *America*, 1382-1383.

⁴³⁶ Cyrus Vance, *Hard Choices. Critical Years in America's Foreign Policy*, New York: Simon and Schuster 1983 p.256-257 and Smith, *Bitter Harvest*, 221.

democracy and human rights. In his inaugural address, Carter stated that the 'commitment to human rights must be absolute' and that Washington had a special obligation to take on these moral duties which are invariably in its own best interests. This ideological commitment to human rights, racial equality and majority rule was shared by many leading figures in the Carter Administration including Secretary of State Cyrus Vance and U.S. Ambassador to the UN Andrew Young.⁴³⁷

The new president attached central importance to human rights when formulating foreign policy. This was demonstrated by the establishment of an Assistant Secretary of State for Human Rights and Humanitarian Affairs and concern over human rights abuses led the president to end or reduce aid to a number of vociferously anti-communist regimes including Argentina, Chile, South Korea and the Philippines.⁴³⁸

This policy shift had especially profound implications for the white dominated governments of Southern Africa. In the view of the White House, the refusal of the Smith regime to grant equal rights to all its citizens and its obduracy in rejecting majority rule was a flagrant example of racial discrimination and a violation of the basic human rights of the Zimbabwean people. The importance of this issue to Carter was reflected in the National Security Council Memorandum of February 5, 1977, which clearly stated that

⁴³⁷ Memorandum on South Africa, Rhodesia and Namibia for the Vice-President, Secretary of State, Secretary of Defence, Director of Central Intelligence, Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff and the United States Representative to the United Nations February 5th 1977, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-18-4-6-1-1, Inaugural Address of Jimmy Carter, Thursday January 20 1977. The Avalon Project Documents in Law, History and Diplomacy. Lillian Goldman Law Library, Yale Law School. avalon.law.yale.edu/20th_century/carter.asp, Vance, *Hard Choices*, 257 and Zbigniew Brzezinski, *Power and Principle. Memoirs of the National Security Adviser 1977-1981*, (New York: Farrar, Strauss, Giroux, 1983), 139.

⁴³⁸ Memorandum for the President from the Vice-President. May 12 1977, RAC Project Number NLC-128R-6-17-80-9, Carter Library, Presidential Review Memorandum NSC 28: Human Rights August 15 1977, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-132-44-6-1-9, Atwood Lawrence, "Containing Globalism. The United States and the Developing World in the 1970s," in *The Shock of the Global*, ed. Ferguson et al. 214-216 and Brzezinski, *Power and Principle*, 48.

the achievement of self-determination and majority rule in Rhodesia was a major foreign policy objective.⁴³⁹

The background of the new president was also of key importance in shaping his approach to foreign affairs. Carter grew up in rural Georgia during the depression era 1930s and witnessed the injustices of Jim Crow segregation in the Deep South. As a member of the 'New South' generation he came to the Washington with a sense of responsibility and a degree of guilt over the treatment of African-Americans. For President Carter, there was a direct correlation between the Civil Rights movement and black liberation struggle in Southern Africa.⁴⁴⁰

The influence of the president's domestic racial stance on foreign policy was reflected by his appointment of veteran civil rights campaigner, Andrew Young of Georgia, as U.S. Ambassador to the UN. Young, like the president, frequently drew comparisons between Southern Africa and his childhood experiences in the southern states. The White House further feared the detrimental impact that a prolonged and bitter racial war in Rhodesia would have on an American society still wracked by its own racial difficulties.⁴⁴¹

The new President was also concerned by the geopolitical Cold War realities of the late 1970s. In the view of Carter and National Security Adviser Zbigniew Brzezinski,

⁴³⁹ Memorandum on South Africa, Rhodesia and Namibia for the Vice-President, Secretary of State, Secretary of Defence, Director of Central Intelligence, Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff and the United States Representative to the United Nations February 5th 1977, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-18-4-6-1-1 and Brzezinski, *Power and Principle*, 139.

⁴⁴⁰ Nancy Mitchell, "Terrorists or freedom fighters? Jimmy Carter and Rhodesia," in *Cold War in Southern Africa. White power black liberation*, ed. Onslow, 178 and 191.

⁴⁴¹ Memorandum on South Africa, Rhodesia and Namibia for the Vice-President, Secretary of State, Secretary of Defence, Director of Central Intelligence, Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff and the United States Representative to the United Nations February 5th 1977, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-18-4-6-1-1, Mitchell, "Terrorists or freedom fighters?" in *Cold War in Southern Africa*, ed. Onslow, 191 and Bartlett C. Jones, *Flawed Triumphs: Andy Young at the United Nations*, (Lanham: University Press of America, 1996), 60.

the continuing conflict in Rhodesia created a volatile tinderbox in Africa providing fertile conditions for the steadily increasing Soviet and Cuban influence in the region. The Cuban military presence in Africa was of particular concern following Havana's successes in Ethiopia and Angola. In addition, as noted by Brzezinski, perceived U.S. indifference to communist involvement could lead to greater fear and intransigence on the part of the South Africans who were of course a key broker in any Rhodesian deal.⁴⁴²

The Cold War policy of the White House toward Southern Africa, however, differed greatly from the Ford era. The Carter Administration viewed the presence of white dominated governments in Southern Africa as the causal factor of the violence in the region and as providing a rationale for Soviet and Cuban intervention. The White House therefore sought to provide what it saw as a stable peaceful settlement to the Rhodesian problem believing that a only a fully democratic Zimbabwe under majority rule would curtail communist operations in the region.⁴⁴³

The White House was also swayed by the domestic factors of maintaining the increasingly important African-American vote. In the presidential election of 1976, Carter had won ninety-four percent of the black vote which proved critical in his electoral

⁴⁴² Memorandum on South Africa, Rhodesia and Namibia for the Vice-President, Secretary of State, Secretary of Defence, Director of Central Intelligence, Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff and the United States Representative to the United Nations February 5th 1977, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-18-4-6-1-1, Memorandum to the Secretary of State. Southern African Developments No.101 February 5 1977, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-18-4-6-1-1, Memorandum for the President from Cyrus Vance April 5 1977, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-128-12-7-4-5, CIA Bureau of Intelligence and Research Analysis July 2nd 1977, Jimmy Carter Presidential Library, RAC Project Number NLC-SAFE 17 A-13-26-1-2, CIA Report on Communist Aid to Less Developed Countries of the Free World in 1976, August 1977, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-31-23-4-2-6, Mitchell, "Terrorists or freedom fighters?", in *Cold War in Southern Africa*, ed. Onslow, 177-178 and 189 and Brzezinski, *Power and Principle*, 139-140.

⁴⁴³ Memorandum on South Africa, Rhodesia and Namibia for the Vice-President, Secretary of State, Secretary of Defence, Director of Central Intelligence, Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff and the United States Representative to the United Nations February 5th 1977, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-18-4-6-1-1, Anthony Lake, "Africa in a Global Perspective," Africa Report Volume 23, No. I (January-February, 1978), 44, Vance, *Hard Choices*, 256-257 and Mitchell, "Terrorists or freedom fighters?", in *Cold War in Southern Africa*, ed. Onslow, 189-190.

triumph. While Carter won every southern state except Virginia, the majority of white voters in those states had opted for Ford and the Democratic victory had been achieved on the back of the black vote. It is also important to note that black civil rights figures, including those close to the White House, were some of the most implacable foes of white Rhodesia.⁴⁴⁴

The new administration, though, did experience divisions in opinion over the approach to be adopted regarding the Rhodesian situation. Carter's primary ideological focus on human rights and specifically black majority rule was embraced by State Department figures including Cyrus Vance. In contrast, National Security Adviser Brzezinski and most of the NSC staff, while supportive of the idea of majority rule, argued that the U.S. should push for a slow transformation and also continue to oppose the USSR and insist black Africans join in that opposition to convince the white population that social change did not necessarily mean Marxist revolution.⁴⁴⁵

Congress was far more polarized by political differences over U.S. policy towards Salisbury. This division would also lead to tensions with the White House especially following the Internal Settlement and the establishment of the Rhodesian Government of National Unity (GNU). While Carter enjoyed the support of allies such as Congressmen Charles Diggs and Cardiss Collins (D-Illinois) as well as many members of both the House Subcommittee on African Affairs and the Congressional Black Caucus, a powerful

⁴⁴⁴ Memorandum on South Africa, Rhodesia and Namibia for the Vice-President, Secretary of State, Secretary of Defence, Director of Central Intelligence, Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff and the United States Representative to the United Nations February 5th 1977, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-18-4-6-1-1, Mitchell, "Terrorists or freedom fighters?", in *Cold War in Southern Africa*, ed. Onslow, 179, DeRoche, *Black White and Chrome*, 244-245, Flower, *Serving Secretly*, 198 and Smith, *Bitter Harvest*, 306.

⁴⁴⁵ R. Benneson DeJanes, "Managing Foreign Policy: Carter and the Regionalist Experiment toward Africa, January 1977-May 1978," in eds. Herbert D. Rosenbaum and Alexej Ugrensky, *Jimmy Carter: Foreign Policy and Post-Presidential Years*, (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1994), 258-259, Brzezinski, *Power and Principle*, 139 and 143 and Vance *Hard Choices*, 263.

pro-Rhodesia lobby nevertheless remained active on Capitol Hill. Leaders of the new right including Senators Jesse Helms (R-North Carolina), S.I. Hayakawa (R-California) favored better relations with Salisbury while Strom Thurmond and Harry F. Byrd remained strong supporters of Ian Smith.⁴⁴⁶

Presidential Directive 5: Increasing hostility towards Salisbury

President Carter, within days of taking office, made clear his intentions to shape a new approach to Southern Africa. On January 21, Carter issued Presidential Review Memorandum 4 which instructed the Policy Review Committee under the chairmanship of the Department of State to undertake a review of U.S. policy towards Rhodesia, South Africa as well as Namibia. The principal aims of the review were to examine the status of Rhodesia negotiations including the level of indigenous support for parties, the positions of the Front Line states, review relations with Pretoria, and identify the potential policy options open to Washington. The President also ordered that the committee assess the options to repeal the Byrd Amendment.⁴⁴⁷

In early February the Policy Review Committee submitted its report. The members of the committee argued that the primary goal of the U.S. must be the pursuit of self-determination and majority rule in Rhodesia and an end to the apartheid system in South Africa. This recommendation alone represented a major change from the focus on strategic and economic interests inherent in the days of the Nixon and to a lesser extent Ford

⁴⁴⁶ DeJanes, "Managing Foreign Policy," in *Jimmy Carter*, eds. Rosenbaum and Ugrensky, p.258, Brzezinski, *Power and Principle*, 142, Mitchell, "Terrorists or freedom fighters?", in *Cold War in Southern Africa*, ed. Onslow, 178 and 187 and Richard Deutsch, "A New Voice in the House," *Africa Report* Volume 25, No. 2 (March-April, 1980), 42.

⁴⁴⁷ Memorandum on South Africa, Rhodesia and Namibia for the Vice-President, Secretary of State, Secretary of Defence, Director of Central Intelligence, Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff and the United States Representative to the United Nations February 5th 1977, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-18-4-6-1-1.

Administrations. The committee concluded that American support for majority rule was necessary both for humanitarian reasons and to prevent the intensified violence that would encourage communist infiltration into the region. A successful settlement of the Rhodesian issue would also have an effect on the future of apartheid South Africa.⁴⁴⁸

The study noted that while the majority of whites were united behind Smith and the RF, morale was falling and significant numbers were emigrating. In the short term, though, this was not considered a significant problem regarding Salisbury's ability to fight the guerrilla insurgency. The committee observed that South Africa was the key to gaining white acceptance of any deal. Prime Minister Vorster wanted to end the conflict on his northern border and restore his 'outward' policies towards black Africa. Pretoria, however, desired a moderate black government and would not stand back if conditions severely deteriorated for the white population.⁴⁴⁹

Regarding the black Nationalists, the committee observed that they were divided on ideological differences, tribal lines and political ambitions for power. A failure to reach a negotiated settlement that included the major African groups would almost certainly lead to internecine warfare. It was also noted that while the Front Line states advocated the accomplishment of majority rule as peacefully as possible, if negotiations broke down they would continue to support the guerrilla insurgency. The Front Line and Nationalist movements accepted communist aid although were wary of provoking South Africa or causing a great power conflict in their region.⁴⁵⁰

In terms of U.S. policy, the study recommended three possibilities. The first option was to press actively and immediately for a new set of proposals in consultation with all

⁴⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁵⁰ Ibid.

parties as this would demonstrate continued U.S. commitment to the cause of majority rule. A second possibility would be to suspend efforts for a 'cooling off' period to allow the Rhodesians time to realize that time was against them but also show the Nationalists that independence through violence would be later rather than sooner. Finally, Washington could simply abandon the situation allowing the U.S. to extricate itself from an irreconcilable state of affairs and dissociate America from any solution which could eventually lead to civil war among black factions. The committee warned, however, that the latter two options could lead to escalating violence and increased potential for active Cuban combat involvement and greater Soviet influence.⁴⁵¹

As to the Byrd Amendment, the review committee postulated that a vigorous campaign by the White House for repeal would improve the prospects especially in the House. A successful vote for repeal would send a message to the Rhodesians that they could not expect any help from the U.S. and would also be symbolically important to black Africa reaffirming American commitment to majority rule. The study also suggested that if Washington could increase pressure on Salisbury by the closure of the RIO as well as the repeal of the Byrd Amendment then the White House could pursue a general tightening of international sanctions which had to this point only been slackly enforced.⁴⁵²

On March 3, the NSC met to consider the findings of the Policy Review Study. The minutes of the meeting reveal not only that Carter was determined that the U.S. would take an active role in ending white minority rule in Rhodesia but there was little NSC opposition to this approach whether on strategic or economic grounds. The President discussed his aim of providing U.S. power to aid the British and using leverage on Pretoria to pressure Smith

⁴⁵¹ Ibid.

⁴⁵² Ibid.

to make concessions. Vance urged the President to push for repeal of the Byrd Amendment and enquired what additional sanctions could be placed on Salisbury to encourage moderation. Both Carter and Ambassador Young drew a direct parallel between the success of the domestic civil rights movement in Georgia and the question of human rights, specifically political rights, in Southern Africa.⁴⁵³

Six days later, Carter issued Presidential Directive 5. The directive clearly represented a major shift in U.S. policy towards Southern Africa. Carter not only committed his administration to the repeal of the Byrd Amendment but also directed the intelligence community to study the effectiveness of any further sanctions which the U.S. could impose on Rhodesia to prevent oil shipments by U.S. subsidiaries or other nations. The directive further reflected a growing hostility towards the apartheid regime in South Africa. Carter called for a new focus in foreign policy regarding relations with Pretoria and explicitly stated that ‘Our aim will be to promote a progressive transformation of South African society.’⁴⁵⁴

Carter’s initial measures meet with limited success

The repeal of the Byrd Amendment was a key objective of the Carter Administration regarding policy towards Rhodesia. It was seen as not only ideologically important but also politically expedient and a psychological and economic strike against the Rhodesian regime. For President Carter and key advisers including Vance and Young it was symbolic as signaling an inherent commitment to majority rule and would also

⁴⁵³ National Security Council Meeting March 3 1977, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-17-1-5-4-3.

⁴⁵⁴ Presidential Directive/NSC-5 to Vice-President, Secretary of State, Secretary of Defence, ALSO Secretary of the Treasury, U.S. Representative to the UN, Director of Central Intelligence. Southern Africa March 9 1977, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-132-3-8-6-7.

appease black African leaders including Zambian President Kaunda who was increasingly vocal in his calls for American adherence to the UN sanctions.⁴⁵⁵

The White House was also aware that the repeal of the legislation would send a clear psychological message to white Rhodesia that Washington wanted an immediate end to white rule and Salisbury could not count on any American assistance to continue the status quo. In the words of Ambassador Young; 'I think a repeal of the Byrd Amendment is important in giving a signal to Ian Smith that he cannot count on U.S. support regardless of what he does.' The RF leadership also counted on the sales of chrome and ferrochrome to provide the country with badly needed foreign exchange, closing off this avenue would, it was hoped, lead to greater fiscal difficulty for the embattled government.⁴⁵⁶

In addition, as Vance pointed out to President Carter, the relative health of the Rhodesian economy was testimony to the fact that many other nations simply paid 'lip service' to UN sanctions but otherwise engaged in trade with Rhodesia. In addition to South Africa, which provided false certificates of origin and hidden trade channels, other sanctions busters included Belgium, France, Italy, Japan, Netherlands and West Germany. Vance advised the President, to continue to push for repeal of the Byrd

⁴⁵⁵ Memorandum on South Africa, Rhodesia and Namibia for the Vice-President, Secretary of State, Secretary of Defence, Director of Central Intelligence, Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff and the United States Representative to the United Nations February 5th 1977, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-18-4-6-1-1, Memorandum for the President from Cyrus Vance February 1 1977, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-128-12-5-9-2, Memorandum to the Secretary of State. Southern African Developments No.101 February 5 1977, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-18-4-6-1-1 and Jones, *Flawed Triumphs*, 60.

⁴⁵⁶ Jones, *Flawed Triumphs*, 60 and Lake, *The "Tar Baby" Option*, 240 and 248-249.

Amendment because unless ‘we get our own house in order then it will be difficult to persuade allies to observe sanctions’.⁴⁵⁷

On January 10, ten days before Carter took office, Congressman Young (D-Georgia), soon to be the Ambassador to the UN, introduced House Resolution 1746 which amended the UN Participation Act of 1945. The resolution sought to add the following language to the act; ‘Any executive order which is issued under this subsection and which applies measures against Southern Rhodesia may be enforced, notwithstanding the provision of any other law.’ In the Senate, Dick Clark (D-Iowa) introduced the same legislative proposals in Senate bill 174.⁴⁵⁸

Although widely viewed as repeal legislation, technically, and as noted by R. Sean Randolph, the proposed legislation did not actually repeal Section 503 but circumvented it so as to reimpose the embargo on Rhodesian chrome and other minerals. A secondary provision of the bill demanded a certification process in which all steel products entering the U.S. required a ‘certificate of origin’ stating that they contained no chrome from Rhodesia.⁴⁵⁹

The dual legislative resolutions received strong backing from the White House. On February 10, Vance stated in a speech to Senate Foreign Relations Subcommittee on Africa that ‘The Carter Administration attaches the highest importance to repeal. In testifying today, on behalf of the Administration, I speak for the President, who strongly supports this initiative. We welcome your bill and hope the Congress will give it the very

⁴⁵⁷ Memorandum for the President from Cyrus Vance February 1 1977, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-128-12-5-9-2, Memorandum to the Secretary of State. Southern African Developments No.101 February 5 1977, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-18-4-6-1-1.

⁴⁵⁸ R. Sean Randolph, “The Byrd Amendment: A Postmortem”, *World Affairs*, Vol. 141, No. 1 (Summer 1978), 59. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20671758>.

⁴⁵⁹ Randolph, “The Byrd Amendment: A Postmortem”, 57 and 59. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20671758>.

full measure of support it deserves. We will work with you to this end.’ Ambassador Young also heavily lobbied his former congressional colleagues describing the vote as a referendum on racism in America.⁴⁶⁰

Logistically, by introducing the bills as amendments to the UN Participation Act, the proponents of the proposed legislation had the benefit of being able to place the resolutions before the Senate Foreign Relations and House International Relations Committees. Both these committees were far less conservative than the Senate Armed Services Committee which had passed the original legislation.⁴⁶¹

In addition, as observed by Carter himself in a letter to Liberian President Tolbert, America was increasingly aware of the situation in Southern Africa and the absolute necessity to make steady progress toward majority rule. Economic circumstances also favored repeal. Rhodesian ferrochrome had flooded the American market and harmed domestic production. Ironically, Foote Mineral, a key sponsor of the Byrd Amendment, suffered heavy losses and was forced to close its ferrochrome plant in Steubenville, Ohio in 1973. Furthermore, Argon-Oxygen De-Carbonization (AOD), a technical innovation in the steel industry, allowed American companies to use lower grade ore from South Africa for a higher percentage of their total ferrochrome requirements.⁴⁶²

⁴⁶⁰ Memorandum for the President from Cyrus Vance February 14 1977, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-128-12-5-22-7, Borstelmann, *The Cold War and the Color Line*, 247, DeRoche, *Black, White and Chrome*, 247 and Randolph, “The Byrd Amendment: A Postmortem”, 59. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20671758>.

⁴⁶¹ Randolph, “The Byrd Amendment: A Postmortem”, 59. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20671758>.

⁴⁶² Telegram from Secretary of State to Embassy Monrovia. Message from President Carter to President Tolbert. April 1977. WHCF, CO 126 1/20/77 - 11/30/78 through CO 1/1/78 - 6/30/78, Box CO-50, Carter Library, Lake, *The “Tar Baby” Option*, p.259-261 and Randolph, “The Byrd Amendment: A Postmortem”, 61. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20671758>.

On March 14, the House of Representatives passed the repeal legislation by two hundred and fifty votes to one hundred and forty-six. The following day the Senate also voted in favor by a margin of sixty-six to twenty-six. On March 18, President Carter formally signed the legislation and officially placed Washington back in compliance with UN sanctions. On signing the bill Carter proclaimed 'This legislation has as high a symbolic importance in international affairs as anything that I will do this year...its puts us on the side of what is right and proper...It puts us in strategic position to help with the resolution of the Rhodesian question.' Later in March, during his address to the UN in New York, the announcement that the U.S. fully supported sanctions against Rhodesia was met with cheering by the UN delegates. At a UN sponsored conference on African liberation in Maputo, Mozambique, ZANU General Secretary Robert Mugabe also expressed appreciation for the repeal before paradoxically launching into a tirade against any American involvement in Rhodesia.⁴⁶³

While the White House was delighted at success of the repeal legislation, others doubted that the actual circumventing of the Byrd Amendment would have any strategic effect on Rhodesia. The Director of Central Intelligence, Admiral Stansfield Turner, observed that not only did numerous European nations, along with Japan, fail to enforce or simply ignored Rhodesian sanctions but with South Africa as a conduit it was almost impossible to identify products containing Rhodesian chromium. Both Rhodesia and South Africa exported chrome ore and ferrochrome and it was difficult to detect and

⁴⁶³ White House Bill Signing - H.R. 1746. An Act to Amend the United Nations Participation Act of 1945 to halt the importation of Rhodesian Chromium. Friday March 18 1977. WHCF, CO 126 1/20/77 - 11/30/78 through Executive, CO 1/1/78 - 6/30/78, Box CO-50, Carter Library, Memorandum for the President from Zbigniew Brzezinski. Information Items, May 19 1977, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-1-2-3-55-5, Randolph, "The Byrd Amendment: A Postmortem", 59. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20671758>, DeRoche, *Black, White and Chrome*, 247-248 and Jones, *Flawed Triumphs*, 61.

legally impossible to substantiate when Rhodesian chrome was mixed in with South African chrome. Turner also criticized the legislation on the grounds that it also removed the small remaining American economic leverage over Salisbury.⁴⁶⁴

The Department of Treasury also received strenuous complaints from key trading partners concerning the certification procedures leading to a dramatic reduction, at least initially, of the importation of chrome bearing products. Randolph observed that the legislation forced the U.S. to abide by dubious certificates of origin when nearly every other steel producing nation continued to covertly import chrome. State Department attempts to convince trading partners in Western nations and Japan to increase enforcement were stonewalled by polite responses stating full compliance already with the sanctions program.⁴⁶⁵

The Rhodesian Information Office was another early target of the White House in its desire to use all possible avenues of sanctions against the authorities in Salisbury. The organization had been legally established and registered with the Justice Department, under the Foreign Agents Registration Act since February 1966. The RIO had successfully avoided the financial provisions of Executive Order 11322 in 1968 by financing its activities though monies ostensibly paid by charitable groups.⁴⁶⁶

The RIO, a quasi-governmental organization with no official diplomatic status, was nevertheless actively engaged in lobbying on Capitol Hill, notably for the passage of the Byrd Amendment and distributed pro-Rhodesian propaganda including Rhodesian

⁴⁶⁴ Memorandum for the President from Director of Central Intelligence Admiral Stansfield Turner. Effectiveness of Sanctions against Rhodesia. 31 March 1977, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-15-47-13-3-7.

⁴⁶⁵ Memorandum to Zbigniew Brzezinski from William E. Schaufeler Jr. Status Report: Rhodesian sanctions. May 17 1977, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-15-44-1-12-3 and Randolph, "The Byrd Amendment: A Postmortem", 62 and 65. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20671758>

⁴⁶⁶ National Security Council Meeting March 3 1977, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-17-1-5-4-3 and Lake, *The "Tar Baby" Option*, 104 and 108.

Commentary and Rhodesian Viewpoint, both periodicals with a distinct bias towards Salisbury. The office also provided lists of goods and products available from Rhodesia. It was also alleged that employees of the RIO were actively involved in the recruiting and processing of American mercenaries to fight in the Rhodesian armed forces.⁴⁶⁷

In early March, at the UN, Washington together with the British, formulated and co-sponsored a Security Council resolution to expand sanctions against Rhodesia to include overseas offices of the RF Government. If able to secure its passage the White House intended to instruct the Treasury Department to take action to end the functioning of the RIO and to prevent establishment of any quasi-official Rhodesian offices in the future.⁴⁶⁸

On March 18, the Anglo-American resolution was adopted for consideration by the UN. Its passage was delayed, however, by an attempt by several black African states to impose a far more aggressive amendment which sought to direct all UN member states to apply against Rhodesia the full range of sanctions under Article 41 Chapter 7 of the UN Charter. If passed it would have cut off all forms of contact, communication, travel or commerce with Rhodesia. The U.S. opposed such an extreme measure on the grounds that it was contrary to a free flow of ideas and discussion as well as a poor precedent for UN.⁴⁶⁹

⁴⁶⁷ Memorandum for Zbigniew Brzezinski from Peter Tarnoff, June 23 1977, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-132-25-2-4-1, Lake p.104 and 167-169, Horne, *From the Barrel of a Gun*, 77-78 and 151 and Robert J. Janosik and Barbara E. Lawrence, "Southern African Pressure Politics in the U.S." in Issue: A Journal of Opinion, Vol 4 No.3 Autumn 1974 78.

⁴⁶⁸ Memorandum for Zbigniew Brzezinski from Department of State. Report of Interagency Group on Rhodesia, 16 April 1977, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-132-3-9-2-0, Memorandum to Zbigniew Brzezinski from William E. Schaufeler Jr. Status Report: Rhodesian sanctions. May 17 1977, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-15-44-1-12-3.

⁴⁶⁹ Memorandum to Zbigniew Brzezinski from William E. Schaufeler Jr. Status Report: Rhodesian sanctions. May 17 1977, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-15-44-1-12-3.

Finally, on May 27, after almost two months of wrangling, the UNSC passed Resolution 409. The U.S. sponsored resolution stated that ‘all states members of the United Nations shall prohibit the use or transfer of any funds in their territories by the illegal regime in Southern Rhodesia, including any office or agent thereof, or by other persons or bodies within Southern Rhodesia, for the purposes of any office or agency of the illegal regime that is established within their territories other than an office or agency so established exclusively for pensions purposes.’ In August, President Carter signed an executive order which authorized the Secretary of Treasury to enforce the provisions of UNSC Resolution 409.⁴⁷⁰

The presidential action against the RIO was criticized in Congress not only by supporters of Rhodesia but also on the grounds that cutting off avenues of communication with Salisbury made little sense given the American desire to open negotiations to bring about majority rule. In a letter to National Security Adviser Brzezinski, Congressman Derwinski and twelve of his colleagues noted the inconsistency of engaging in discussions with the socialist Republic of Vietnam and an exchange of low-level diplomats being worked out with Cuba yet issuing an executive order suppressing the RIO. The congressmen also noted that the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) and various other quasi-governmental entities maintained offices in the U.S.⁴⁷¹

The RIO, however, did not prove to be an easy entity for the White House to remove. While the documentary record does not provide a complete picture, it appears as

⁴⁷⁰ UN Security Council Resolution 409 (1977) UN Security Council 27 May 1977. WHCF, CO 126 1/20/77 - 11/30/78 through Executive, CO 1/1/78 - 6/30/78, Box CO-50, Carter Library.

⁴⁷¹ Letter to Zbigniew Brzezinski from Congressman Edward J. Derwinski et al. June 6 1977, WHCF, CO 126 1/20/77 - 11/30/78 through Executive, CO 1/1/78 - 6/30/78, Box CO-50, Carter Library.

though the RIO was able to remain open due to private donations from Rhodesian sympathizers in the United States thus avoiding a direct violation of UN Resolution 409 which called for states to prevent the transfer of funds from Rhodesia to any office or agent. The RIO would remain in Washington, in violation of the spirit if not the letter of the UN resolution, until the conclusion of the Rhodesian issue.⁴⁷²

The issue of American citizens fighting as mercenaries for the Rhodesian armed forces was also investigated by the White House. By the late 1970s the dwindling manpower available to the Rhodesian military had led to an increasing dependence on foreign mercenaries to bolster the strength of the security forces. The estimates of the number of American citizens serving in Rhodesia during the final years of the Bush War ranged from several hundred to over two thousand.⁴⁷³

One notable figure, known as ‘Big John’ Murphy, served with Rhodesian Light Infantry, SAS and eventually commanded the elite Selous Scouts strike force. The mercenaries were recruited openly in magazines such as *Soldier of Fortune*, *Shotgun News* and *Shooting Times*. According to Gerald Horne, the mercenaries, many of whom were veterans of Vietnam, came to Rhodesia to fight for the doctrines of anti-communism and white supremacy as well as a romanticized vision that linked fighting Native Americans in the Old West with battling black insurgents in Rhodesia. ‘Rhodesia evoked

⁴⁷² Memorandum for Tom Thornton from Henry Richardson. The Approaching Smith Visa Issue September 22 1978, NSA Staff Material-North/South Funk, Zimbabwe: 4-10/77 through Zimbabwe: 7-11/79, Box 119, Carter Library and Memorandum for the President from Zbigniew Brzezinski. Your Meeting with Muzorewa, July 10 1979. NSA Staff Material-North/South Funk, Zimbabwe: 4-10/77 through Zimbabwe: 7-11/79, Box 119, Carter Library.

⁴⁷³ Memorandum for Zbigniew Brzezinski from Department of State. Report of Interagency Group on Rhodesia, 16 April 1977, Carter Library, RAC Project NLC-132-3-9-2-0, Memorandum for Zbigniew Brzezinski from Peter Tarnoff, June 23 1977, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-132-25-2-4-1, Zimbabwe News, Vol. 10, No.4. Zimbabwe African National Union, Maputo, Mozambique August 1978, <http://www.aluka.org/action/showmetadata?doi=10.5555/AL.SFF.DOCUMENT.nuzn197807>, Southern Africa Vol. 11 No.8 November 1978 Southern Africa Vol. 11 No.8 November 1978 7, <http://www.aluka.org/action/showmetadata?doi=10.5555/AL.SFF.DOCUMENT.nusa197811>, and Horne, *From the Barrel of a Gun*, 28.

resonant nineteenth-century images of the forts of the Old West being besieged by Indians. It was difficult for the U.S. military to ride to the rescue, so U.S. mercenaries took their place.’⁴⁷⁴

The presence of U.S. citizens openly serving with the Rhodesian military was a potential political embarrassment for the White House as well as prolonging the life of the Smith regime. In the spring of 1977, the administration examined the legality of Americans enlisting in the Rhodesian forces. It was noted that while U.S. law prohibited any citizen from enlistment for service in foreign armed forces or the recruitment of an American citizen for such service this only applied within the United States. If a citizen wished to enrol in a foreign military while outside of the U.S. he or she could do so and remain immune from prosecution under the legal system.⁴⁷⁵

Furthermore, the Department of Justice reported that magazine advertisements, as found in *Soldier of Fortune*, concerning service in foreign armies, were permissible as long as they are purely informational in nature. Internationally, an attempt to persuade the British Government to jointly sponsor a UNSC resolution that every member state should take measures to prevent its citizens serving in the Rhodesian armed forces met with a tentative response from the UK which pointed out that large numbers of the Rhodesians possessed dual nationality. American mercenaries continued to serve in Rhodesia until the end of the Bush War.⁴⁷⁶

⁴⁷⁴ Southern Africa Vol. 11 No.8 November 1978 7-10, <http://www.aluka.org/action/showmetadata?doi=10.5555/AL.SFF.DOCUMENT.nusa197811>, and Horne, *From the Barrel of a Gun*, 24, 27, 210, 227 and 233.

⁴⁷⁵ Memorandum to Zbigniew Brzezinski from William E. Schaufeler Jr. Status Report: Rhodesian sanctions. May 17 1977, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-15-44-1-12-3 and Memorandum for Zbigniew Brzezinski from Peter Tarnoff, June 23 1977, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-132-25-2-4-1.

⁴⁷⁶ Memorandum for Zbigniew Brzezinski from Department of State. Report of Interagency Group on Rhodesia, 16 April 1977, Carter Library, NLC-132-3-9-2-0 and Memorandum for Zbigniew Brzezinski

During the presidential campaign of 1976, the Director of the American Committee on Africa, George M. Houser, had addressed the Democratic Party Platform Committee urging the closure of the Rhodesian trade outlet through South Africa. Ever since the imposition of sanctions South Africa had openly defied the UN by allowing oil to flow north into Rhodesia and it was suspected that many of the three hundred and fifty subsidiaries of American oil companies in South Africa, notably Caltex and Mobil, engaged in business as usual with Salisbury. Indeed, Caltex and Mobil, were named in a lawsuit by the Lonrho Corporation which alleged that both companies were in breach of contract by continuing to transport oil to Rhodesia via other methods after Lonrho closed its pipelines from South Africa in accordance with sanctions.⁴⁷⁷

At the NSC meeting on March 3, Carter instructed the intelligence community to consider all possible options to prevent oil deliveries to Rhodesia by U.S. subsidiaries. In the view of the White House this represented both an ideological statement reiterating support for majority rule and a practical means to pressure the Smith government. In addition, the closure of the South African pipelines would certainly have greatly increased U.S. standing in black Africa, indeed, President Kaunda had already urged the administration to stop the oil flow into Rhodesia.⁴⁷⁸

from Peter Tarnoff, June 23 1977, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-132-25-2-4-1 and Horne, *From the Barrel of a Gun*, 238.

⁴⁷⁷ George M. Houser "Testimony of before the Democratic Party Platform Committee", American Committee on Africa, May 1976 4, <http://www.aluka.org/action/showmetadata?doi=10.5555/AL.SFF.DOCUMENT.Acoa000436>, Memorandum to the Secretary of State. Southern African Developments, February 5 1977, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-18-4-6-1-1, Memorandum for Zbigniew Brzezinski from Peter Tarnoff, June 23 1977, Jimmy Carter Presidential Library, RAC Project Number NLC-132-25-2-4-1 and Horne, *From the Barrel of a Gun*, 184.

⁴⁷⁸ National Security Council Meeting March 3 1977, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-17-1-5-4-3, Memorandum to the Secretary of State. Southern African Developments, February 5 1977, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-18-4-6-1-1 and Memorandum for Zbigniew Brzezinski from Department of State. Report of Interagency Group on Rhodesia, 16 April 1977, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-132-3-9-2-0.

The White House discovered, however, that in the world of transnational corporate conglomerates and subsidiaries, enforcing sanctions according to U.S. law was no simple matter. The Department of State reported that under the existing regulations issued by the Departments' of Commerce and Treasury the restrictions prohibiting trade with Rhodesia did not apply to foreign subsidiaries. No action could be taken unless U.S. citizens or goods of U.S. origin were involved.⁴⁷⁹

While, theoretically, it could have been possible to amend the existing laws, State questioned the ability of the U.S. to realistically enforce the regulations and noted that non-American third party violations would be impossible to detect or prevent. Unenforceable regulations would of course make a mockery of the sanctions program. It was also noted that in the case of South Africa new stricter regulatory measures could force companies to choose between breaking South African or U.S. law. A recent Department of Treasury investigation regarding the alleged establishment of a covert series of corporate intermediaries by Mobil to supply oil to Rhodesia had been thwarted by the application of Official Secrets Acts in both Rhodesia and South Africa. As with the issue of American mercenaries, legal and logistical difficulties prevented the White House from fulfilling its aims.⁴⁸⁰

The first months of the new administration produced mixed results in terms of increasing the pressure on the rebel regime in Salisbury. While the Byrd Amendment was, for all intents and purposes, effectively repealed, the RIO was able to continue its

⁴⁷⁹ Memorandum to Zbigniew Brzezinski from William E. Schaefe Jr. Status Report: Rhodesian sanctions, May 17 1977, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-15-44-1-12-3 and Memorandum for Zbigniew Brzezinski from Peter Tarnoff, June 23 1977, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-132-25-2-4-1.

⁴⁸⁰ Memorandum to Zbigniew Brzezinski from William E. Schaefe Jr. Status Report: Rhodesian sanctions, May 17 1977, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-15-44-1-12-3 and Memorandum for Zbigniew Brzezinski from Peter Tarnoff, June 23 1977, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-132-25-2-4-1.

lobbying on Capitol Hill and the flow of American mercenaries and oil into white Rhodesia continued unabated. These actions did, however, send an important signal to Smith and the Rhodesian Front that the Carter Presidency was far more hostile to white Rhodesian rule than any of its predecessors. Meaningful change in Rhodesia and the attainment of majority rule, though, would only come from a renewed initiative with the UK to achieve a peaceful solution.

Conflicting Visions: The Anglo-American Initiative and the Internal Settlement

The inauguration of Carter as President had coincided with the failure of another British diplomatic initiative to resolve the longstanding Rhodesian issue. Following the shambles of the Geneva Conference, the British Government dispatched Ivor Richard to Salisbury on January 1 in an attempt to restart negotiations. Richard met with Ian Smith and advanced a new interpretation of the Kissinger agreement which proposed a British appointee as chairman of the transitional government as opposed to a black representative and also reduced Rhodesian Government representation in the transitional administration from half to one third of members. Unsurprisingly, perhaps, the RF was unimpressed by the new offer which was significantly worse, from their perspective, than the deal offered at Geneva. Justice Minister, Hilary Squires, commented that it placed the destiny of Rhodesia in the hands of the British Government which for over ten years had been their deadly enemy.⁴⁸¹

On January 24, in a radio and television address Smith rejected the latest British proposals and stated he would only negotiate on the basis of the deal conveyed to him by Kissinger. The Rhodesian leader also called for whites and blacks to produce a settlement

⁴⁸¹ Smith, *Bitter Harvest*, 222 and Vance, *Hard Choices*, 260.

among themselves but exclude those who ‘support terrorism’. This heralded a move toward what would become known as the Internal Settlement. By this point the British were at a loss on how to proceed with the Rhodesian question. London lacked both authority and credibility in the former colony. This was compounded by the fact that the newly independent black nations had lost confidence in the UK while the Afrikaner leadership in Pretoria remained inherently suspicious of any moves made by the British in the their sphere of influence. The issue was further complicated by the death of Foreign Secretary Anthony Crosland on February 19.⁴⁸²

On February 24, Labour Prime Minister James Callaghan appointed David Owen as foreign secretary. Owen was aware that it was time to act on the thorny problem but he believed he needed American power and diplomatic leverage. In his memoirs, Owen noted that U.S. influence was a necessity in obtaining a peaceful resolution. ‘Africa needed American strength and American commitment. The British attempt to keep responsibility for Rhodesia to ourselves had always been a mistake and the outcome of Wilson’s posturing on HMS Fearless and HMS Tiger only revealed our weakness.’⁴⁸³

The White House, welcomed the opportunity to work with Britain on the Rhodesian question. As early as the first week of February, Vance had met with Ivor Richard and agreed to work with British to develop a new set of ‘propositions’, based on the more generally accepted elements in previous British proposals, as a basis for a

⁴⁸² Memorandum for the President from Cyrus Vance, January 24 1977, Plains File, Secret Service 2/77-11/80 through State Department Evening Reports. 7/77, Box 37, Carter Library, Memorandum on South Africa, Rhodesia and Namibia for the Vice-President, Secretary of State, Secretary of Defence, Director of Central Intelligence, Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff and the United States Representative to the United Nations, February 5th 1977, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-18-4-6-1-1, Memorandum for the President from Cyrus Vance, February 22 1977, Plains File, Secret Service 2/77-11/80 through State Department Evening Reports. 7/77, Box 37, Carter Library, David Owen, *Time to Declare. Second Innings*, (London: Politico’s, 2009), 161-163, Mitchell, “Terrorists or freedom fighters?”, in *Cold War in Southern Africa*, ed. Onslow 180-181, and Vance, *Hard Choices*, 261-262.

⁴⁸³ Owen, *Time to Declare*, 173 and 186.

framework for a return to all party negotiations. These included a genuine transition period of limited duration from minority to majority rule, an interim government to be established by agreement between all the parties, free and fair elections before the granting of legal independence and a constitution guaranteeing the protection of property.⁴⁸⁴

On March 9 1977, Callaghan and Owen flew to Washington. During a series of meetings Carter agreed that the U.S. would work with the British in preparing a new basis for talks. Over the course of the next two months a basic strategy was formulated for the new Anglo-American peace initiative. The British, specifically Owen, had initially hoped that Washington would engage directly in a potential all parties conference. Black African leaders, however, urged Vance not to participate in a constitutional conference as they believed it would ease pressure on the UK, lead to the USSR demanding to be represented and feared Washington would try to impose a ‘moderate’ Western oriented government.⁴⁸⁵

In May, a compromise agreement was reached in which London and Washington would engage in bilateral consultations with the various factions on both constitutional and transitional arrangements. The White House made clear to all parties that the aim of the peace initiative was not to impose its own vision on the settlement but merely facilitate in moving all sides towards a common ground. Nevertheless, a distinct bias should be noted in the approach recommended by Vance and approved by President

⁴⁸⁴ Minutes of Cabinet Meeting February 7 1977, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-7-11-6-2-4 and Memorandum for the President from Cyrus Vance, February 8 1977, Jimmy Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-128-12-5-16-4.

⁴⁸⁵ Memorandum for the President from Cyrus Vance. Next steps on Rhodesia. May 3 1977, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-15-44-1-11-4, Owen, *Time to Declare*, p.184-187 and Vance, *Hard Choices*, 264-265.

Carter. Vance proposed building black African confidence by using solely the Nationalist views as the basis of proposals to take to Smith. Furthermore, no agreements were to be made with the Rhodesians that had not been previously approved by the Nationalists.⁴⁸⁶

The White House interest in assisting the British in the spring of 1977 was not solely motivated by a commitment to the cause of human rights. The administration was also concerned by the black African reaction to the Rhodesian rejection of the latest British offer and the growing communist presence in the region. In a letter to the State Department, Zambian President Kaunda argued for the necessity of violence and commented that 'We have no choice but to support the nationalists fully in their intensification of the war of liberation.' Tanzanian President Nyerere actually welcomed the failure of the talks as it allowed the insurgent groups to proceed with the military solution.⁴⁸⁷

U.S. concerns were heightened by the increased communist aid to the guerrillas in Rhodesia during the early months of 1977. By February, there were several hundred Cuban military 'advisers' in Mozambique whose role included assisting and training the Rhodesian guerrillas. On March 31, the USSR and Mozambique signed a friendship treaty which, as noted by Vance, could potentially allow Moscow to participate in any future Mozambican strategy on Rhodesia.⁴⁸⁸

⁴⁸⁶ Memorandum for the President from Cyrus Vance. Next steps on Rhodesia. May 3 1977, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-15-44-1-11-4 and Vance, *Hard Choices*, 264-265.

⁴⁸⁷ Memorandum for the President from Cyrus Vance, January 27 1977, Plains File, Secret Service 2/77-11/80 through State Department Evening Reports. 7/77, Box 37, Carter Library and Memorandum to the Secretary of State. Southern African Developments, February 5 1977, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-18-4-6-1-1.

⁴⁸⁸ Memorandum for Brzezinski from the Situation Room. Additional Information Items. February 7 1977, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-1-1-8-33-5 and Memorandum for the President from Cyrus Vance, April 5 1977, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-128-12-7-4-5.

President Carter and his key advisers were also aware of the important role that Pretoria would have to play in any Rhodesian settlement. Only South Africa possessed the necessary political and economic leverage over Salisbury that could pressure Smith to accept an agreement leading to majority rule. This salient fact was also recognized by the other players involved included the black African states, the UK and the white Rhodesians.⁴⁸⁹

The fact that Prime Minister Vorster, sought to end the destabilizing conflict on his northern border and restore his 'outward' policies towards the black ruled nations was also well known in Washington. America also possessed both 'political and psychological leverage' over Pretoria. The apartheid state was vehemently anti-communist and viewed the U.S. as the only power able to confront the USSR. In addition, Pretoria actively sought better relations with Western nations and American 'friendship' was extremely important to the South Africans.⁴⁹⁰

Nevertheless, Carter's highly publicized commitment to human rights and ultimate pursuit of majority rule in South Africa itself led to hostility from Pretoria. The president clearly viewed apartheid as inherently wrong and stated in Presidential

⁴⁸⁹ Memorandum for the President from Cyrus Vance, February 2 1977, Plains File, Secret Service 2/77-11/80 through State Department Evening Reports. 7/77, Box 37, Carter Library, Memorandum on South Africa, Rhodesia and Namibia for the Vice-President, Secretary of State, Secretary of Defence, Director of Central Intelligence, Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff and the United States Representative to the United Nations February 5th 1977, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-18-4-6-1-1, Memorandum for the President from Director of Central Intelligence Admiral Stansfield Turner. Effectiveness of Sanctions against Rhodesia. 31 March 1977, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-15-47-13-3-7, Owen, *Time to Declare*, 174, Smith, *Bitter Harvest*, 206-207 and 226 and Vance, *Hard Choices*, 262.

⁴⁹⁰ Memorandum on South Africa, Rhodesia and Namibia for the Vice-President, Secretary of State, Secretary of Defence, Director of Central Intelligence, Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff and the United States Representative to the United Nations February 5th 1977, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-18-4-6-1-1, CIA Report, March 23 1977, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-15-127-7-3-5, Memorandum for the Secretary of State, U.S. Ambassador to the UN, Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs from the Vice-President. Southern Africa--U.S. strategy and meeting with Prime Minister Vorster, April 4 1977, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-7-6-10-1-6, Smith, *Bitter Harvest*, 206 and 234 and Vance, *Hard Choices*, 262.

Directive 5, issued in March, that the goal must be a 'progressive transformation of South African society.' In addition, as laid out in an April memorandum by Vice-President Walter Mondale, Washington would not trade progress on Rhodesia for a 'free ride on apartheid'.⁴⁹¹

On May 19-20, Mondale met with Vorster and Minister for Foreign Affairs 'Pik' Botha in Vienna, Austria. In a bitter and tense meeting it became clear that there was a vast gulf of differences between Washington and Pretoria especially on South African domestic racial issues. On Rhodesia, Vorster acknowledged the need for majority rule and signaled that he would not support white Rhodesia indefinitely. The South Africans, however, resented being intimidated into pressuring Smith for concessions.⁴⁹²

The U.S.-UK Consultative Group was formed in May and comprised primarily of the U.S. Ambassador to Zambia, Stephen Low, and Deputy Under Secretary of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, John Graham. American involvement was privately encouraged by Smith and the Front Line presidents Machel and Nyerere.⁴⁹³

In early June, the Consultative Group completed a first round of talks with the the Rhodesian Government and the Nationalist factions. The group concluded that there

⁴⁹¹ Presidential Directive/NSC-5 to Vice-President, Secretary of State, Secretary of Defence, Secretary of the Treasury, U.S. Representative to the UN, Director of Central Intelligence. Southern Africa, March 9 1977, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-132-3-8-6-7, Memorandum for the Secretary of State, U.S. Ambassador to the UN, Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs from the Vice-President. Southern Africa--U.S. strategy and meeting with Prime Minister Vorster, April 4 1977, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-7-6-10-1-6 and Smith, *Bitter Harvest*, 230-231.

⁴⁹² From Embassy Vienna to Secretary of State and Brzezinski, May 20 1977. First meeting between Vice-President Mondale and Prime Minister Vorster, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-16-22-2-46-8, Discussions between the South African and American delegations on matters concerning Southern Africa: Vienna, May 19-20 1977, <http://www.aluka.org/action/showmetadata?doi=10.5555/AL.SFF.DOCUMENT.min19770519.035017.d1.18>, Smith, *Bitter Harvest*, 230-231 and Vance, *Hard Choices*, 265-266.

⁴⁹³ Memorandum for the President from Cyrus Vance, April 14 1977, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-128-12-7-12-6, Memorandum for the President from Zbigniew Brzezinski, Information Items, May 19 1977, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-1-2-3-55-5, Memorandum August 17 1977, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-1-3-4-25-6 and Owen, *Time to Declare*, 197-198.

was sufficient room for progress although the parties remained far apart. Smith informed them that if the settlement package included an end to hostilities and sufficient protection of minority rights then the RF might be prepared to accept universal suffrage. Specifically, Smith requested legal protections and constitutional guarantees to safeguard the position of the white community.⁴⁹⁴

The Patriotic Front, however, were opposed to any constitutional structure that permitted any special position for whites. It was also observed by the CIA that while the PF were participating in the discussions, in reality, both Mugabe and Nkomo were highly critical of the initiative for a negotiated settlement. The PF instead sought independence to be imposed on Zimbabwe following bilateral talks with the UK as Portugal had done with FRELIMO in Mozambique. The potential composition of the post independence Zimbabwean military also posed a serious difficulty for both sides.⁴⁹⁵

On July 23, Owen came to Washington to discuss progress with Carter and Vance. The basis of the Anglo-American Proposals (AAP) were agreed upon and a decision was reached to put forward the ideas to Tanzanian President Nyerere. Carter met with Nyerere in early August and to the dismay of the British agreed that the Zimbabwe National Army should be based on the forces of the PF. Owen feared that this agreement would cause the the AAP to fail as it would be rejected by both Salisbury and Pretoria. Indeed, South African Foreign Minister Botha would later comment that the plan

⁴⁹⁴ Memorandum for the President from Cyrus Vance, June 8 1977, Plains File, Secret Service 2/77-11/80 through State Department Evening Reports 7/77, Box 37, Carter Presidential Library and Vance, *Hard Choices*, 266-267.

⁴⁹⁵ Memorandum for the President from Cyrus Vance, June 8 1977, Plains File, Secret Service 2/77-11/80 through State Department Evening Reports 7/77, Box 37, Carter Library, CIA Intelligence Memorandum, Rhodesia: The Patriotic Front, Background and Prospects, 13 June 1977, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-6-88-4-50 and Vance, *Hard Choices*, 266-267.

‘amounted to unconditional surrender.’ The Tanzanian leader, though, reacted positively and in a letter to Carter expressed support for the Anglo-American initiative.⁴⁹⁶

In late August, Owen together with Ambassador Young engaged in a joint diplomatic tour of Southern Africa. The aim was to gain approval of the proposals from the Front Line states, the Nationalist groups and the South Africans before presenting to the Rhodesians in Salisbury. The principal difficulties remained the status of the Rhodesian army during the interim period and the composition of the future Zimbabwean military. The Front Line states along with the PF insisted that the Rhodesian security forces be dismantled and the new army be based on the liberation forces. The South Africans, however, insisted that the Rhodesian army remain intact and stated categorically that Smith could not accept a Zimbabwean National Army based on the liberation forces and remain in office. Vorster did not flatly reject the AAP but asserted that it was unlikely to provide enough security for Rhodesian whites to gain their acceptance.⁴⁹⁷

While the American and British had been laboring over the nature and scope of the AAP, Smith had been busy developing his own Internal Settlement. As early as January 1977, Washington had become aware that the RF were actively developing an internal option to resolve the conflict. The basic aim was to negotiate a settlement with

⁴⁹⁶ Memorandum for the President from Zbigniew Brzezinski. Your Meetings with President Nyerere, August 2 1977, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-5-13-4-14-3, Memorandum, August 17 1977, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-1-3-4-25-6, DeRoche, *Black, White and Chrome*, 251, Mitchell, “Terrorists or freedom fighters?”, in *Cold War in Southern Africa*, ed. Onslow 182-183 and Vance, *Hard Choices*, 267-270.

⁴⁹⁷ Memorandum for the President from Warren Christopher, August 27 1977, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-128-12-11-2-3, Memorandum for the President from Cyrus Vance, August 29 1977, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-128-12-11-20-2, Memorandum to the Acting Secretary of State from William C. Harrop and Harold A. Saunders. Southern African Developments, August 30 1977, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-SAFE 17 B-4-19-6-4.

moderate black leaders inside Rhodesia, notably Bishop Muzorewa, that would satisfy the broad majority of the Rhodesian white and black populations.⁴⁹⁸

In public statements, Smith claimed that the RF enjoyed the crucial support of Pretoria in building this solution to the Rhodesian conflict. It is certainly noteworthy that during bilateral discussions with the U.S., the South Africans repeatedly pushed for American approval of various configurations of this basic formula. President Carter, though, on the advice of Vance, opposed any internal solution on the grounds that it had already been rejected by the Front Line and the Patriotic Front and therefore would likely lead to an Angolan style civil war in Rhodesia.⁴⁹⁹

By late August, the CIA had noted that prospects of the Rhodesian Government reaching an agreement with moderates including Muzorewa and Ndabaningi Sithole had increased. The settlement proposals advanced by Smith included a constitution involving a multi racial, although white dominated, Council of State, and a predominantly black Council of Ministers with a black African Prime Minister. The civil service and military would remain under white control. Both Muzorewa and Sithole were showing interest but were not prepared to accept pre-conditions put forward by Smith specifically the rejection of one man one vote.⁵⁰⁰

⁴⁹⁸ Follow up to SNIE 72-1-1-77 'Rhodesia-Looking Ahead' (January 1977), 1977, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-6-2-6-11-5, Memorandum for the President from Cyrus Vance, February 11 1977, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-128-12-5-19-1 Memorandum for the President from CIA Director Stansfield Turner, 24 August 1977, Rhodesian General Election--and Beyond, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-6-83-5-2-2.

⁴⁹⁹ Memorandum for the President from Cyrus Vance, February 11 1977, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-128-12-5-19-1, Memorandum for the President from Cyrus Vance, February 12 1977, Plains File, Secret Service 2/77-11/80 through State Department Evening Reports 7/77, Box 37, Carter Presidential Library and Memorandum from Embassy Vienna to Secretary of State and Brzezinski, May 20 1977. First meeting between Vice-President Mondale and Prime Minister Vorster. Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-16-22-2-46-8.

⁵⁰⁰ Memorandum for the President from the CIA Director Stansfield Turner, 24 August 1977, Rhodesian General Election--and Beyond, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-6-83-5-2-2.

On September 1, Owen and Young presented the Anglo-American Proposals to a hostile RF cabinet in Salisbury. The core elements of the plan included a transfer of power to a British transitional administration, free and impartial elections on the basis of universal adult suffrage, an independence constitution for a democratically elected government and protection of individual rights, a UN presence including a military force during the transition period which would liaise with both the Rhodesian army and liberation forces and a development fund to revive the economy. The Rhodesians were also given a separate law and order statement regarding the composition of the transitional security forces as based on liberation movements. As noted by U.S. Ambassador to Zambia, Stephen Low, Salisbury was prepared to negotiate on the AAP but dismayed by the law and order statement.⁵⁰¹

The timing of the meeting did not bode well. One day earlier, on August 31, the RF had won every seat in the Rhodesian elections reinforcing their belief in an Internal Settlement. While Smith was impressed by the integrity of Ambassador Young he was less enthused by the British Foreign Secretary. In his memoirs, he described Owen as 'one of these petty little men trying to fill a job which is too big for him, using an arrogant posture in the hope that this will impress his audience.' Nevertheless, the Rhodesians, arguably under pressure from Pretoria, did not outright refuse the proposals. The Front Line states also gave their tacit acceptance to proceed and pushed the PF to avoid a public rejection. Nigerian President Olusegun Obasanjo also informed

⁵⁰¹ Rhodesia. Proposals for a Settlement. Her Majesty's Stationery Office, London, September 1977. NSA Staff Material-North/South Funk, Zimbabwe: 4-10/77 through Zimbabwe: 7-11/79, Box 119, Carter Library, DeRoche, *Black, White and Chrome*, 254 and Vance, *Hard Choices*, 270.

Washington that he essentially supported the proposals and was willing to contribute soldiers to a potential UN peacekeeping force.⁵⁰²

On September 29, the UNSC passed Resolution 415 which assigned a UN Special Representative to enter into discussions with all parties regarding support for the Anglo-American Proposals. UN Secretary General Kurt Waldheim appointed Indian Lieutenant General Prem Chand to the role. As noted by Owen, though, the negotiations at the UN had been no easy task and it was only after ‘extensive haggling’ that China and the USSR agreed not to veto.⁵⁰³

On November 1, Chand and British Resident Commissioner delegate Field Marshal Lord Carver opened a series of discussions with the Rhodesian Government and the Nationalists over the implementation of the Anglo-American Proposals. The talks, however, proved to be inconclusive. Salisbury and the Rhodesian military leaders did not directly rebuff the AAP but criticized the concept of a Zimbabwean Army based on the liberation forces and expressed concern over the ‘dictatorial powers’ of the British Resident Commissioner. The PF backed by Zambia also expressed displeasure with the proposals and demanded that power was directly transferred to the PF during the transition instead of the free and impartial election that the AAP had envisaged.⁵⁰⁴

⁵⁰² Memorandum for the President from Warren Christopher, August 25 1977, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-128-12-11-19-4, Memorandum for the President from Warren Christopher, September 1977, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-128-12-12-1-2, Memorandum for the President from Cyrus Vance, September 6 1977, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-128-12-12-3-0, Smith, *Bitter Harvest*, 232-234 and Vance, *Hard Choices*, 270.

⁵⁰³ Owen, *Time to Declare*, 200-201.

⁵⁰⁴ From Secretary of State to White House. Rhodesia Talks: Summary of Carver-Chand Salisbury visit, November 1977, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-16-18-3-9-3, Memorandum for the President from Cyrus Vance. Where we stand on the Rhodesia Negotiations. November 2 1977. NSA Staff Material-North/South Funk-Zimbabwe, 11/77-2/78, Box 119 Zimbabwe, Carter Library, Memorandum for Secretary of State from Zbigniew Brzezinski, Evening Report of November 5 1977 with the President’s comments, November 7 1977, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-15-89-8-6-9 and Memorandum for the President from Cyrus Vance, November 7 1977, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-128-13-2-6-7.

In a bid to reinvigorate the AAP, Owen and Vance invited the Rhodesian Government and the PF to hold military talks with the British, Americans and the UN on the Mediterranean island of Malta. To their displeasure, the internal black leaders Muzorewa and Sithole were not invited to the 'direct military talks', but were to be kept informed of the issues to be addressed. The Rhodesians refused to send any participants as Salisbury believed that successful political talks should come before a ceasefire and transitional arrangements. The 'all-parties' conference was held between January 30 and February 1, 1978. At Malta, Young developed a close personal rapport with the PF delegation helping to facilitate negotiations but overall the meeting achieved little of note. The PF appeared to be positive and requested another round of talks based on the AAP although both Mugabe and Nkomo continued to demand a power sharing agreement with the British commissioner during the transitional period.⁵⁰⁵

For Smith, however, the AAP was merely a distraction from his primary goal of building what he saw as a viable internal agreement to end the conflict. On November 24, Smith announced that that he had invited three 'internal' black leaders, Bishop Muzorewa, Sithole and Chief Jeremiah Chirau to participate in negotiations on a qualified basis of majority rule in order to achieve a peaceful settlement.⁵⁰⁶

The Rhodesian leadership had been eager to bring ZAPU leader Joshua Nkomo into the agreement. On September 25, Smith and Foreign Minister Van der Byl travelled to Lusaka where they gained the agreement of Kaunda. Under pressure from Mugabe and

⁵⁰⁵ Memorandum for the President from Cyrus Vance, Where we stand on the Rhodesia Negotiations, November 2 1977, NSA Staff Material-North/South Funk, Zimbabwe, 11/77-2/78, Box 119, Carter Library, Memorandum for the President from Cyrus Vance, November 7 1977, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-128-13-2-6-7, From Secretary of State to White House, Rhodesia Talks: Summary of Carver-Chand Salisbury visit, November 1977, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-16-18-3-9-3, Baxter, *Rhodesia*, 463, DeRoche, *Black, White and Chrome*, 258-259 and Vance, *Hard Choices*, 283-285.

⁵⁰⁶ Policy Review Committee Meeting December 1 1977, Rhodesia, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-15-44-2-15-9, Baxter, *Rhodesia*, 461 and Smith, *Bitter Harvest*, 234.

his sponsor, Tanzanian President Nyerere, however, Nkomo insisted Mugabe be brought in as his number two. This was totally unacceptable to the Rhodesians. If Nkomo had signed on to the settlement, though, it would have added an authenticity to the internal option which none of the other black politicians could bring. The Rhodesian historian, Peter Baxter, observed that Smith's partners were 'a C-team of political desperadoes who had nothing to lose and everything to gain by signing up.'⁵⁰⁷

In his New Year Message to the Nation on December 31 1977, Smith argued that the UK had been trying to settle the Rhodesian problem in a manner which would best serve its own interests and not the Rhodesians. Therefore, he concluded, the best approach for the country was to come to an agreement without outside help or interference. He further stated that the Rhodesian Government would accept majority rule in exchange for constitutional safeguards, including a bill of rights and an independent judiciary, which were necessary to retain the confidence of the white population.⁵⁰⁸

Vance, was less convinced that such an agreement offered a viable solution to the conflict. On November 29, in a memorandum to Carter, he stated that this offer was not likely to provide a practical solution. He further observed that a majority rule election which excluded the PF would stimulate further violence. In his opinion, the PF would claim to be justified in continuing the war against a black government that was merely a front for white power.⁵⁰⁹

⁵⁰⁷ Memorandum for the President from Cyrus Vance, October 17 1977, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-128-13-1-10-3, CIA Intelligence Memorandum, Rhodesia Some Thoughts on a Partial Settlement, 10 November 1977, NSA Staff Material-North/South Funk, Zimbabwe, 11/77-2/78, Box 119, Carter Library, Baxter, *Rhodesia*, 459-461 and Smith, *Bitter Harvest*, 238-240.

⁵⁰⁸ Baxter, *Rhodesia*, 462 and Smith, *Bitter Harvest*, 241.

⁵⁰⁹ Memorandum for the President from Cyrus Vance, Rhodesia, November 29 1977, NSA Staff Material-North/South Funk, Zimbabwe, 11/77-2/78, Box 119, Carter Library.

Carter rejects the Internal Settlement

In January 1978, the talks on an Internal Settlement began in earnest. Along with Smith, Muzorewa and Sithole, other participants included Dr. Elliot Gabellah, Chief Chirau, Chief Kayisa Ndweni and James Chikerema. The Rhodesian Prime Minister faced a severe challenge just maintaining this uneasy alliance let alone gaining accord on a draft agreement. Indeed, on January 27, Muzorewa stormed out of the discussions after being attacked for dishonesty by the other delegations. As noted by Baxter, 'It was only with considerable skill that Smith managed to keep the whole bipolar coalition together.'⁵¹⁰

On the morning of March 3, the Internal Settlement was formally signed into being. Bishop Muzorewa, who was noted roaming about singing 'I am in the mood for signing', drew a few smiles when he produced what Smith described as 'a colourful embroidered fancy-dress costume' which he then proceeded to wear as his signing outfit. Muzorewa would later inform Vance that he had only signed the agreement as a pragmatic way to ease Smith out of power while avoiding the destructive consequences of a mass exodus of the white community.⁵¹¹

The Internal Settlement itself created a two tier transitional government to oversee the development of a new constitution based on universal suffrage. The higher body was an Executive Council comprising Smith, Muzorewa, Sithole and Chirau. The second tier consisted of a Ministerial Council composed of an equal number of black and white

⁵¹⁰ Baxter, *Rhodesia*, 462-464 and Smith, *Bitter Harvest*, 242-246.

⁵¹¹ Baxter, *Rhodesia*, 464, Smith, *Bitter Harvest*, 247 and Vance, *Hard Choices*, 286.

ministers who would share ministerial portfolios. The Rhodesian Parliament would continue to operate during the transitional periods and serve limited functions.⁵¹²

The leadership of the PF were invited to take part provided they laid down their arms and participated peacefully. This of course was an anathema to Mugabe and Nkomo who refused to engage in the process. The agreement also protected white minority rights by reserving twenty-eight seats in a future one hundred seat parliament for whites, enough for a veto over any constitutional changes. In addition, whites were to remain firmly in control of the civil service, judiciary, military and other levers of power.⁵¹³

The Rhodesian agreement placed the White House in a policy dilemma. From one perspective, the Internal Agreement would potentially achieve the long sought after goal of majority rule. It was also believed that the majority of the American people supported the settlement and on Capitol Hill the President faced increasing pressure from Congressional conservatives to recognize the validity of the Rhodesian agreement. In a letter on February 28, U.S. Senators' Jake Garn (R-Utah), Orrin G. Hatch (R-Utah) and Robert Dole (R-Kansas) reminded Carter that the PF was supported by communist states and that 'The people of Rhodesia should be permitted the opportunity of solving their own problems without interference from the outside'. On March 3, Senator Harry F. Byrd advised the White House to assist the Rhodesians as the Internal Agreement would lead

⁵¹² Rhodesian Settlement: Analysis of an agreement signed by Prime Minister Ian Smith of Rhodesia, the Reverend Ndabaningi Sithole, Bishop Abel Muzorewa, and Senator Jeremiah Chirau on March 3, 1978 : A staff report to the Committee on Foreign Relations, United States Senate, Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office 1978 http://archive.org/stream/rhodesiansettlem00unit/rhodesiansettlem00unit_djvu.txt, and Michael Clough, "From Rhodesia to Zimbabwe," in *Changing Realities in Southern Africa: Implications for American Policy*, ed. Michael Clough, (Berkeley: University of California Institute of International Studies Press, 1982), 31.

⁵¹³ Rhodesian Settlement: Analysis of an agreement signed by Prime Minister Ian Smith of Rhodesia, the Reverend Ndabaningi Sithole, Bishop Abel Muzorewa, and Senator Jeremiah Chirau on March 3, 1978 : A staff report to the Committee on Foreign Relations, United States Senate, Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office 1978 http://archive.org/stream/rhodesiansettlem00unit/rhodesiansettlem00unit_djvu.txt, and Clough, "From Rhodesia to Zimbabwe," in *Changing Realities in Southern Africa*, ed. Clough, 31.

to a rapid transition to majority rule within a constitutional structure. He further observed that such a course of action accorded with the democratic traditions of the U.S. and deserves encouragement not obstruction.⁵¹⁴

The White House was, however, more than aware that the settlement would be unlikely to end the conflict due to the refusal of the PF to sign onto the deal. Furthermore, the continuation and possible escalation of the violence would present the communist states with further strategic opportunities including potential military involvement. Indeed intelligence reports suggested that the USSR and Cuba were steadily affirming their interest in Southern Africa through dramatic increases in military aid to the Zimbabwean insurgents, notably ZAPU, and the placement of military personnel in key areas of the Front Line states bordering Rhodesia. Brzezinski was especially concerned by the fact that the Internal Settlement could provide a pretext for full scale Cuban or Soviet intervention.⁵¹⁵

The White House also considered the agreement to be unrepresentative of the human rights of the black population as it continued to preserve white privilege and power. Domestically, the Carter was also being pushed by the Black Caucus and other

⁵¹⁴ Letter to the President from Congressman Edward J. Derwinski et al. January 19 1978, WHCF, CO 129 Box CO-50, Carter Library, Policy Review Committee Meeting on Rhodesia. Summary of Conclusions. February 17 1978. NSA Staff Material-North/South Funk, Zimbabwe, 11/77-2/78 Box 119, Carter Library, Letter to President Carter from U.S. Senators Jake Garn, Orrin G. Hatch and Robert Dole, February 22 1978, NSA Staff Material-North/South Funk, Zimbabwe, 11/77-2/78, Box 119, Carter Library and Letter to the President from U.S. Senator Harry F. Byrd, March 3 1978, WHCF, CO 129, Box CO-50, Carter Library.

⁵¹⁵ CIA National Foreign Assessment Center, USSR Weekly Review, March 23 1978, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-37-31-1-10-1, CIA National Foreign Assessment Center, Communist Military Support for the Rhodesian Insurgency, April 1978, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-31-75-5-7-3 Memorandum for the President from Brzezinski, February 21 1978, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-5-4-20-9, Memorandum for Zbigniew Brzezinski from Robert Gates, Soviets press forward in Sub-Saharan Africa, February 27 1978, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-17-73-8-9-6 Memorandum for the President from Cyrus Vance, March 15 1978, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-128-13-6-12-6 and Vance, *Hard Choices*, 284-286.

Congressional liberals to condemn the agreement and press for more meaningful change.⁵¹⁶

It is worth noting that during the negotiations between Smith and the internal leaders, Carter does appear to have given serious consideration to the possibility of acknowledging any potential agreement. Indeed, according to Vance, Carter told both Vance and Young not to reject it outright. Nevertheless, in a letter to Nigerian leader Obasanjo, Carter described the Internal Settlement as internationally unacceptable. On March 10, a joint U.S.-UK statement announced that the two nations would continue to work towards an all-party conference to achieve a lasting solution. On March 14, the U.S. refused to veto UNSC Resolution 423 which declared that the Internal Settlement was both ‘illegal and unacceptable’.⁵¹⁷

By early April, it was clear that the Carter was fully committed to advancing the basic elements of the AAP. On April 1, during a visit to Lagos, Nigeria, Carter stated that regarding any agreement in Rhodesia ‘Only a fair arrangement with broad support among the parties can endure’. The basic strategy was to draw the PF into the negotiating process while bringing together the ‘acceptable’, as termed by Vance, parts of the Internal Settlement into the AAP. The Front Line leaders were pleased at the continued

⁵¹⁶ Memorandum for the President from Cyrus Vance, March 15 1978, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-128-13-6-12-6 and Letter to President Carter from Congressman Cardiss Collins, Thomas J. Downey, Yvonne Burke, Andrew Maguire and Paul Tsongas, March 22 1978, NSA Staff Material-North/South Funk, Zimbabwe, 3-9/78, Box 119, Carter Library and Vance, *Hard Choices*, 285.

⁵¹⁷ Memorandum for Zbigniew Brzezinski and David Aaron from Henry Richardson, The Undesirability of “Internal” Solutions in Rhodesia and Namibia, January 5 1978, NSA Staff Material-North/South Funk, Zimbabwe, 11/77-2/78, Box 119, Carter Library, Letter from President Carter to General Obasanjo, March 1 1978, Carter Library, RAC Project Number, NLC-16-101-2-17-2, Memorandum for the President from Cyrus Vance, March 14 1978, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-128-13-6-11-7 and Vance, *Hard Choices*, 283-288.

British and American efforts to reach a solution involving all parties. Kaunda assured Carter that the PF was willing to be flexible on the AAP.⁵¹⁸

On April 14-15, Vance accompanied by Owen met with the PF leadership in Dar es Salaam. The principal goal of the meeting was to convince both Mugabe and Nkomo to approve the AAP as a preliminary to the potential all parties meeting on Rhodesia. The meetings proved to be difficult and unproductive. Both leaders failed to acknowledge the changes that had taken place in Salisbury and regarding the AAP sought to weaken the powers of the British commissioner to such a degree that he would be able to achieve little without PF approval. Furthermore, Mugabe retracted his support for internationally supervised elections and Nkomo refused to countenance the idea of the police, who would be responsible for law and order during transition, being based on Rhodesian forces not the Patriotic Front.⁵¹⁹

The Owen-Vance team then moved south to Pretoria before meeting with Smith in Salisbury on April 17. Once again, the meetings achieved little progress in advancing the AAP. The South Africans appeared skeptical over the possibility of the success of the Internal Settlement but indicated that Pretoria was not prepared to take any actions which would jeopardize the ability of the Executive Council to end the conflict.⁵²⁰

In Salisbury, Smith and Muzorewa stated that March 3 agreement satisfied the basic demands for democratic elections and majority rule and asked for the support of Washington and London in achieving this goal. In response to a request to engage in an

⁵¹⁸ Report of a Letter sent from Kaunda to Carter, April 15 1978, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-1-6-1-1, Zimbabwe-Rhodesia Economic Sanctions, Background Report, White House Press Office June 13 1979, WHCF, CO 129, Box CO-50, Carter Library and Vance, *Hard Choices*, 286.

⁵¹⁹ Telegram from Cyrus Vance to Embassy Cape Town, April 1978, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-15-33-6-11-1, Letter from President Carter to President Nyerere, April 12 1978, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-128R-4-13-96-8 and Vance, *Hard Choices*, 288.

⁵²⁰ Telegram from Cyrus Vance to Embassy Cape Town, April 1978, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-15-33-6-11-1 and Vance, *Hard Choices*, 289.

all-parties conference which would include the PF, they observed that there was no need as an agreement had already been reached. The PF were welcome to join the initiative as partners but not as preferential partners. Not long after Vance and Owen left Rhodesia, Muzorewa issued a statement that there would be no negotiations with PF and the Executive Council voted against attending an all-parties conference.⁵²¹

The failure of Owen and Vance to convince the internal leaders to reinvest in the AAP, lay in part due to the determination of the Executive Council, notably Muzorewa, to succeed with the Internal Settlement. In July, Bishop Muzorewa travelled to the U.S. at the invitation of Senator Garn and a number of his Senatorial and Congressional colleagues. Muzorewa met with Vance where he stated that an all-parties conference would be a waste of time and that the PF leadership was welcome to join the Executive Council. The bishop also criticized Washington for failing to support the Internal Settlement and pointed out that under the agreement there would be majority rule and free elections. He urged U.S. recognition as the conflict between Executive Council and Patriotic Front was a civil war between democracy and Marxism.⁵²²

Congressional challenges: The Rhodesia Lobby seeks to lift sanctions

Domestically, Carter was confronted by an increasingly vociferous Rhodesia Lobby which pushed for acceptance of the Internal Settlement and the subsequent lifting of sanctions. In the view of Vance though, the Smith supporters in Congress were 'painting a simplistic picture of an embattled multiracial anti-communist Executive

⁵²¹ Telegram from Cyrus Vance to Embassy Cape Town, April 1978, Carter Presidential Library, RAC Project Number NLC-15-33-6-11-1, Smith, *Bitter Harvest*, 251 and Vance, *Hard Choices*, 289.

⁵²² From Secretary of State Washington to Embassies London, Lusaka, Pretoria, Maputo, Gaborone, Dar-es-Salaam, Lagos and U.S. Mission to UN July 1978, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-16-112-6-36-5, Smith, *Bitter Harvest*, 259 and Vance, *Hard Choices*, 289.

Council under attack by a Communist-supported, radical Patriotic Front'. For the White House this was becoming a vision that was progressively difficult to counter.⁵²³

In June, Senator Helms proposed an amendment to the State Authorization Bill which would suspend U.S. compliance with UN sanctions against Rhodesia for up to 15 months as a demonstration of support for the Internal Settlement. On June 28, the amendment was narrowly defeated by forty-eight votes to forty-two. Only a few weeks after his initial defeat Helms once again put forward legislation that would have immediately lifted sanctions on Rhodesia on a temporary basis.⁵²⁴

The chances of the Helms Amendment passing at the second time of asking appeared to have improved significantly. Media coverage of a number of guerrilla atrocities and a pro-Rhodesian editorial in the Washington Post had increased support for Salisbury. In addition, Muzorewa, while in Washington, had lobbied heavily on Capitol Hill on behalf of the amendment. The Rhodesian internal black leaders also sent a letter, via Helms, to every member of the Senate asking for the U.S. to remove the sanctions. By July 18, Helms was able to claim the support of fifty-one senators including Senate Majority leader Robert Byrd (D-West Virginia).⁵²⁵

The White House vigorously lobbied against the bill as it viewed the Internal Settlement as unrepresentative of majority rule therefore denying the black population its

⁵²³ Vance, *Hard Choices*, 290.

⁵²⁴ Memorandum for the President from Frank Moore, July 15 1978, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-128-8-12-2-8, Letter to Reverend Ndabaningi Sithole from U.S. Senator S. I. Hayakawa et al. September 14 1978, WHCF, CO 129, Box CO-50, Carter Library.

⁵²⁵ Memorandum for the President from Frank Moore, July 15 1978, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-128-8-12-2-8, Weekly Legislative Report to Frank Moore from Rick Hutcheson, July 18 1978, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-126-13-23-1-1, Memorandum for the President from Frank Moore, July 22 1978, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-128-6-12-3-7, From Secretary of State Washington to Embassies London, Lusaka, Pretoria, Maputo, Gaborone, Dar-es-Salaam, Lagos and U.S. Mission to UN, July 1978, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-16-112-6-36-5, Baxter, *Rhodesia*, 466 and Smith, *Bitter Harvest*, 259.

basic human rights on a political level and furthermore did not believe that recognition of the Executive Council or lifting of sanctions would end the conflict. Carter was also well aware of the effect that the successful passage of the legislation would have on the global arena. In Britain, the opposition Conservative Party indicated that if the Senate passed the amendment then it would be under increasing pressure to support similar legislation in the British Parliament. President Machel, however, warned the U.S. Ambassador in Maputo that a victory for the Rhodesia Lobby would represent a serious problem for both Mozambique and the Organization of African Unity.⁵²⁶

In an attempt to resolve the issue, Senate Democrats and liberal Republicans proposed a compromise bill which became known as Case-Javits Amendment after its sponsors Jacob Javits (R-New York) and Clifford Case (R-New Jersey). The bill amended the International Security Assistance Act of 1978 to stipulate that the President would be required to lift sanctions by December 31 provided that two key conditions were met. First, that the upcoming Rhodesian elections were free, fair, open to all political and ethnic groups and conducted under international supervision. Secondly that the newly elected Rhodesian Government had demonstrated its willingness to attend an all-parties conference and discuss all relevant issues. The White House, though, was reluctant to support the potential legislation as it did not wish to appear to be acquiescing on the Rhodesian question.⁵²⁷

⁵²⁶ From the Situation Room for Dr. Brzezinski, July 1978, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-4-14-2-14-5, Memorandum for the President from Frank Moore, July 22 1978, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-128-6-12-3-7, To Secretary of State from Embassy Maputo, August 1978, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-16-19-2-21 and Andrew Young, "The United States and Africa: Victory for Diplomacy," *Foreign Affairs* 59 (3), 1981, 651-652.

⁵²⁷ Memorandum for the President from Warren Christopher, July 20 1978, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-128-13-10-12-1, Mitchell, "Terrorists or Freedom Fighters", in *Cold War in Southern Africa*, ed. Onslow 186 and Vance, *Hard Choices*, 290-291.

On July 26, the Helms bill, was defeated on the floor by fifty-four votes to forty-two. That same day, the Case-Javits Amendment was successfully adopted by the Senate by fifty-seven to thirty-nine. In one sense, the compromise offered a viable basis for continuing sanctions until the Rhodesian agreement had revealed itself as truly democratic via elections on the basis of one man one vote. In his memoirs, Vance observed that it provided a sound basis for maintaining sanctions at least until internal elections were held. It should be noted, however, that while the amendment granted Carter the decision making authority over the Rhodesian sanctions, nevertheless, the White House would now be forced to justify continued participation on the grounds of the Case-Javits criteria.⁵²⁸

The growing guerrilla conflict heightens concerns for the White House

For Salisbury the security situation remained grim. A guerrilla amnesty campaign was failing and the overstretched Rhodesian military, even bolstered with South African support, was struggling to contain the scope of the guerrilla operations. Insurgent activity was also expanding into the previously tranquil urban areas, in July 1978 Salisbury witnessed the first major gun battle within its city limits. White morale was also being dampened by the economic recession, an increasing tax burden, curtailed social services, the disruption in manpower and increased restrictions on goods. Although the Executive Council lifted some discriminatory legislation the failure to allow integration in the areas of education, medical care and residential housing combined with the refusal to repeal the Land Apportionment Act led to increased black disillusion with Muzorewa and the

⁵²⁸ Letter to Reverend Ndabaningi Sithole from U.S. Senator S. I. Hayakawa et al. September 14 1978, WHCF, CO 129, Box CO-50, Carter Library, Mitchell, "Terrorists or Freedom Fighters", in *Cold War in Southern Africa*, ed. Onslow 186 and Vance, *Hard Choices*, 290-291.

Internal Settlement. In August, CIO Director Ken Flower stated at a high level meeting in Salisbury that 'The security situation has never been so desperate.'⁵²⁹

The Rhodesian Government believed, however, that by incorporating Nkomo into the agreement then with his participation a workable solution would be possible. If necessary, the Rhodesians were willing to consider bringing Mugabe in as well if it brought an end to the fighting. On August 14, Smith met with Kaunda and Nkomo. At the meeting, according to U.S. sources, Smith offered to give up the presidency of the Executive Council to Nkomo if he accepted the Internal Settlement. In his memoirs, however, the Rhodesian leader merely stated that the discussion had produced a 'workable plan' to bring both Nkomo and Mugabe into the existing agreement.⁵³⁰

The 'workable plan', however, did not survive for more than a few days. According to Vance, Muzorewa and Sithole leaked word of the meeting and this led to outrage from the other Front Line leaders especially Nyerere who was unhappy at his exclusion. Mugabe, himself, was obstinate that he would not participate and at a meeting with Nkomo warned him that 'if he became one of Smith's puppets he would be treated accordingly.'⁵³¹

Any chance of further negotiations was abruptly ended on September 3 when ZIPRA fighters shot down an Air Rhodesia Viscount with a Russian SAM 7 missile and

⁵²⁹ CIA Intelligence Memorandum, July 1978, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-6-88-7-2-0, CIA Report: Zimbabwe: A Military Assessment, July 24 1978, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-15-44-4-4-8, Memorandum for the Secretary of State from William C. Harrop and William G. Bowdler, African Trends, July 28 1978, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-15-44-4-5-8, Memorandum for the President from Warren Christopher, August 9 1978, Plains File, State Department Evening Reports 8/78, Box 39, Carter Library, Mitchell, *Jimmy Carter in Africa*, 306-307, 447 and 469, Moorcraft and McLaughlin, *The Rhodesian War*, 42 and 152 and Smith, *Bitter Harvest*, 254 and 260.

⁵³⁰ CIA Report, June 26 1978, Rhodesia: Prospects for a Smith meeting with Nkomo and/or Mugabe, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-17-149-5-1-3, Memorandum for the President from Warren Christopher, August 30 1978, Plains File, State Department Evening Reports 8/78, Box 39, Carter Library, Baxter, *Rhodesia*, 468, Smith, *Bitter Harvest*, 263 and Vance, *Hard Choices*, 291-292.

⁵³¹ Baxter, *Rhodesia*, 469, Smith, *Bitter Harvest*, 264-265 and Vance, *Hard Choices*, 291-292.

massacred ten of the surviving passengers. The attack and subsequent boastful admission by Nkomo that ZIPRA were responsible, shocked and outraged white Rhodesia. On September 10, Smith declared qualified martial law, warned of strikes on neighboring states if they harbored terrorists and stated that Rhodesia would 'liquidate the internal working of those organizations associated with terrorism'.⁵³²

The deteriorating situation concerned the White House. According to CIA reports, direct Cuban protection of guerrilla camps in Mozambique was a real possibility. It was feared that an increased Cuban or Soviet role in the conflict would lead to a greater South African presence and heighten the chances of a great power conflict over Rhodesia. In a letter to Nyerere, Carter expressed concern over the expansion of the communist intervention and highlighted his fervent belief that African problems must be solved by the Africans themselves without outside interference.⁵³³

By early fall, it was becoming clear to that the prospects of a negotiated settlement were increasingly scarce and an escalation of hostilities appeared likely. The positions of the Executive Council and PF had also hardened. Smith and his black colleagues remained convinced that despite the ostensible failings of the Internal Settlement to bring peace, the war would wither away following the establishment and international acceptance of a Government of National Unity (GNU). The PF, however,

⁵³² To Secretary of State from Embassy Maputo, Rhodesia: Conversation with Gaylard, September 1978, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-16-19-3-1-0, Bureau of Intelligence and Research, Current Reports, September 11 1978, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-6-54-1-10-4, Baxter, *Rhodesia*, 469-470 and Smith, *Bitter Harvest*, 266.

⁵³³ CIA Intelligence Memorandum July 1978, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-6-88-7-2-0, CIA Report: Zimbabwe: A Military Assessment, July 24 1978, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-15-44-4-4-8, Memorandum for the Secretary of State from William C. Harrop and William G. Bowdler, African Trends, July 28 1978, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-15-44-4-5-8, Memorandum for President Carter from Zbigniew Brzezinski, Information Items, June 27 1978, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-1-6-7-13-3, Memorandum for Zbigniew Brzezinski from Tom Thornton, Rhodesia: State of Play, July 31 1978, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-15-44-4-4-9 and Letter from President Carter to President Nyerere, July 13 1978, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-128R-4-13-96-8.

despite being in disarray following the fall out of Smith's attempt to persuade Nkomo to join the Internal Settlement, remained intransigent and confident of an eventual military victory.⁵³⁴

The situation was exacerbated by the fact that both Moscow and Havana were clearly seeking larger roles in the Rhodesian conflict. On September 14, when addressing the International Conference of Solidarity with the African and Arab People in Addis Ababa, Castro denounced the U.S.-UK plan for Rhodesia in unprecedentedly harsh terms and indicated that Havana could increase military support to both wings of the PF. On October 4, CIA Director Turner warned the White House that Cuba had stationed over 1000 advisers or combat personnel in Mozambique and was likely to dispatch several thousand additional troops if negotiations continued to stall. Washington was also aware that the USSR was stepping up its support for both guerrilla groups and in the case of ZAPU had supplied heavy conventional weaponry including artillery and armored vehicles.⁵³⁵

The concerns over the increased communist activity were heightened by the fact that the Front Line states appeared to be increasingly receptive to the idea of a communist military presence within their territories. While Kaunda remained suspicious of Soviet-

⁵³⁴ Rhodesia. Paper for the National Security Council, October 4 1978, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-17-2-4-6-1, Memorandum for Director of Office of Management and Budget from Stansfield Turner, 4 October 1978, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-132-56-5-3-5 and Letter to President Carter from Bishop Abel Muzorewa, Chairman of the Executive Council of Rhodesia, October 28 1978, WHCF, CO 129, Box CO-50, Carter Library.

⁵³⁵ Morning Summary, September 11th 1978, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-6-54-1-10-4, Bureau of Intelligence and Research Analysis, September 18 1978, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-SAFE 17 B-13-71-10-1, Memorandum for the President from Zbigniew Brzezinski, My meetings with President Giscard, Chancellor Schmidt and Prime Minister Callaghan, October 4th 1978, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-128-9-15-12-1, Rhodesia. Paper for the National Security Council, October 4 1978, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-17-2-4-6-1, Memorandum for Director of Office of Management and Budget from Stansfield Turner, 4 October 1978, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-132-56-5-3-5, Soviet Military Policy and Communist Military Activities in Sub-Saharan Africa, October 18 1978, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-6-3-3-1-8.

Cuban intentions, the weakness of his military forces when confronted by Rhodesian cross-border raids was leading the Zambian leader to seriously consider asking for communist protection. Mozambique, it was believed was also prepared to request Cuban or Soviet assistance on the grounds of self-defence. On the other side of the spectrum, the South Africans, under the leadership of new hawkish Prime Minister P.W. Botha, made it clear that Pretoria would not tolerate a Cuban military presence in Rhodesia.⁵³⁶

On October 2, in an attempt to reinvigorate the AAP, Carter and British Prime Minister Callaghan wrote a joint letter to Presidents' Kaunda and Nyerere. The letter expressed deep concern over the course of events in Rhodesia and observed that it could soon prove to be impossible to find common ground for a just and fair settlement. It urged all parties to come together to work on their differences and Carter offered New York as a neutral venue to host such a conference. In a reply from Nyerere, however, the Tanzanian president stated that it was unacceptable to have a Rhodesian all-parties conference as the proposed 'preconditions' would strengthen the Smith government and weaken the common objective of bringing peace on basis of the AAP.⁵³⁷

⁵³⁶ Memorandum for the President from Warren Christopher, September 27 1978, Plains File, State Department Evening Reports 9/78, Box 39, Carter Library, Memorandum for Director of Office of Management and Budget from Stansfield Turner, 4 October 1978, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-132-56-5-3-5, Soviet Military Policy and Communist Military Activities in Sub-Saharan Africa, October 18 1978, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-6-3-3-1-8 and To Secretary of State from U.S. Del Secretary in Pretoria, October 1978, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-16-19-4-40-6.

⁵³⁷ Text of Letter from President Carter and Prime Minister Callaghan to President Nyerere, October 21 1978, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-16-113-5-3-1, Text of Letter from President Carter and Prime Minister Callaghan to President Kaunda October 21 1978, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-16-113-5-4-0 and Letter from President Nyerere to President Carter via Embassy Dar-es-Salaam, October 5 1978, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-16-103-1-29-8.

Mr. Smith comes to Washington

In the fall of 1978, the Rhodesia Lobby presented the White House with a new political headache. On September 14, Senator Samuel I. Hayakawa (R-CA) and twenty-seven other Senators, among them Thurmond, Helms, Garn, Barry Goldwater and Harry F. Byrd, invited the members of the Rhodesian Executive Council including Smith to visit the U.S. and present their case. In the invitation, the senators stated that the American people had not heard all sides of the Rhodesian issue. While Kaunda and Nkomo had appeared on national television the Executive Council had not and the senators felt that it was time for a Rhodesian Government delegation, especially Smith, to be able to put forward their hopes and plans for the future of their country. In a letter to Carter, Hayakawa informed him of the invitation and requested that the White House instruct the State Department to facilitate the entry of the members of the Executive Council.⁵³⁸

The invitation placed the White House in a difficult situation. On one hand, the issuance of visas to the Executive Council would violate UNSC Resolution 253 which prohibited the issuance of a visa to any member of an illegal regime. Furthermore, it was believed that Smith had survived so long at least in part by being ‘a master at manipulating international public opinion’. The American public, which was generally uninformed about Rhodesia would be heavily influenced by Smith’s oratorical skills while

⁵³⁸ Letter to Reverend Ndabaningi Sithole from U.S. Senator S. I. Hayakawa et al. September 14 1978, WHCF, CO 129, Box CO-50, Carter Library and Letter to President Carter from U.S. Senator S. I. Hayakawa, September 15 1978, WHCF, CO 129, Box CO-50, Carter Library and DeRoche, *Black, White and Chrome*, 269.

in superficially multi-racial company. It would also inevitably lead to condemnation in black Africa and the Third World.⁵³⁹

On the other side of the coin, Carter was committed to finding a solution to the Rhodesian issue and believed that this was an opportunity to engage in dialogue with the Executive Council. The White House also believed in the promotion of free speech in America and expected that Smith would be discredited in the harsh glare of the U.S. media. Carter commented that 'The views and proposals of Mr. Smith pose no threat when thoroughly exposed'. In addition, as noted by Vance, the refusal to issue visas to the Executive Council, could have played into the hands of the Rhodesian Lobby in the Senate who would have pushed even harder to lift sanctions. It is also worth noting that even Congressman Diggs, the Chairman of the House Subcommittee on Africa and proponent of the liberation cause in Southern Africa, wrote to Carter on September 20, urging presidential approval of the visas and even a direct meeting with the Executive Council to push the AAP.⁵⁴⁰

On October 4, the State Department granted the visas to the Rhodesian leadership. The White House, however, set up a Crisis Management Operation led by Deputy Secretary of State Warren Christopher to deal with issues relating to the visit. The issuance of the visas, especially to Smith, was condemned by the Front Line states. The

⁵³⁹ Memorandum for Zbigniew Brzezinski from North-South, September 18 1978, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-24-100-2-9-3 and Memorandum for Tom Thornton from Henry Richardson. The Approaching Smith Visa Issue, September 22 1978, NSA Staff Material -North/South Funk, Zimbabwe, 3-9/78, Box 119, Carter Library.

⁵⁴⁰ Letter to President Carter from Charles C. Diggs Jr. Chairman of the Subcommittee on Africa, September 20 1978, NSA Staff Material-North/South Funk, Zimbabwe, 3-9/78, Box 119, Carter Library, Letter from President Carter to President Nyerere, October 10 1978, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-128R-4-13-96-8 DeRoche, *Black, White and Chrome*, 269 and Vance, *Hard Choices*, 292-293.

Zambian Government stated that the decision eliminated the chance of an all parties conference until at least the spring of 1979.⁵⁴¹

At the UN, the African states along with India and the USSR condemned the decision. On October 10, the UNSC adopted Resolution 437 which called on the U.S. to observe the provisions of the Security Council and expressed hope that Washington would continue to exert its influence in Rhodesia so that majority rule could be achieved. Britain, Canada, the U.S. and West Germany abstained from voting. As noted by Vance, it was a comparatively mild UN reaction which took note of the American rationale for granting the visas.⁵⁴²

On October 7, the Executive Council, travelling on South African Airways, arrived in New York. During the their two week stay the Rhodesian delegation met with a number of pro-Rhodesian Congressmen and Senators including Hayakawa, Helms, Harry F. Byrd, and James Eastland. Ian Smith also met with both Henry Kissinger and Gerald Ford who, according to Smith, were highly supportive of the Internal Settlement. At an America-Rhodesian Association dinner in New York, described by the Southern Africa Committee as a 'triumph of illusion over fact for both Rhodesian and American racists', the Executive Council was confronted by a group of demonstrators outside the hotel. In his memoirs, Smith noted that much to the amusement of himself and his colleagues one of the protestors held 'a placard saying: 'Down with Smith', but he had forgotten his lines

⁵⁴¹ National Security Council Meeting, Africa., October 6 1978, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-17-2-4-12-4, To Secretary of State from Embassy Lusaka, Issuance of visa to Ian Smith and all parties conference October 1978, Carter Library, RAC Project Number, NLC-16-19-4-13-6 and Vance, *Hard Choices*, 292-293.

⁵⁴² Memorandum for the President from Warren Christopher, October 6 1978, Plains File, State Department Evening Reports 10/78, Box 39, Carter Library, Memorandum for the President from Cyrus Vance, October 10 1978, Plains File, State Department Evening Reports 10/78, Box 39, Carter Library.

and was shouting ‘Down with the Shah’’. Smith sardonically commented that had clearly been his ‘Rent-a-Crowd’ job for the previous week.⁵⁴³

On October 12, Smith told the Senate Foreign Relations Committee that the Executive Council would attend an ‘adequately prepared’ all parties conference. According to Vance, Muzorewa was opposed to this course of action although he relented a few weeks later. This indication of willingness to attend a meeting of course placed the Executive Council in compliance at least on paper with one of the two conditions required under the Case-Javits Amendment. If the Rhodesians were able to fulfill the second criteria of free and fair elections then the White House would be obligated to lift sanctions.⁵⁴⁴

At the meetings with U.S. officials including Vance and Young, however, no real progress was made in moving toward a new settlement. While the Rhodesians affirmed interest in a potential all parties meeting they also saw no reason to abandon their present course. Smith and Sithole argued that all the Internal Settlement needed to make it a success was Western support. Vance reported that no progress was achieved in getting the Executive Council to accept the Anglo-American Proposals as a framework for negotiations.⁵⁴⁵

Overall, in terms of the White House goals of advancing the AAP and incorporating the PF into a Rhodesian settlement the visit of the Executive Council

⁵⁴³ Memorandum for Zbigniew Brzezinski from the Situation Room, November 18 1978, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-1-8-5-38-8, Southern Africa Vol.11 No.8 November 1978, New York: Southern Africa Committee, 26, <http://www.aluka.org/action/showmetadata?doi=10.5555/AL.SFF.DOCUMENT.nusa197811>, and Smith, *Bitter Harvest*, 270-276.

⁵⁴⁴ Vance, *Hard Choices*, 292-293.

⁵⁴⁵ From Secretary of State To Embassies Dar-es-Salaam, Maputo, Lusaka, Gaborone, Lagos, U.S. Mission to UN NY, London, Pretoria, Rhodesia, October 1978, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-16-113-5-43-7 and Smith, *Bitter Harvest*, 270-271 and 277.

accomplished little of note. From the Rhodesian perspective, however, it had allowed the Executive Council to present the merits of the Internal Settlement and their aspirations for a future Rhodesia to both Congress and the American public. Brzezinski observed that the main achievements of the visit were that the Internal Settlement gained a fair hearing in the media and that the Rhodesia Lobby on Capitol Hill was strengthened. Smith himself commented that it had been a well planned visit with good media coverage.⁵⁴⁶

Hughes Mission reveals little hope of progress

In late 1978, London, with the support of the U.S., launched a new mission to test the willingness of all parties to attend a new conference and measure its prospects for success. Cledwyn Hughes, as the personal representative of Prime Minister Callaghan, toured Southern Africa visiting the Front Line capitals as well as Lagos, Pretoria and Salisbury. The PF indicated little willingness to compromise on its desire to dominate the transition militarily and politically. Nyerere indicated his willingness to co-operate on Rhodesia but insisted that Smith accepted the AAP as a pre-condition for a meeting. In Zambia, though, Kaunda seemed resigned to military action while Nigerian leader General Obasanjo told Hughes that the AAP had outlived its usefulness.⁵⁴⁷

In Salisbury, the Rhodesian Government appeared more determined than ever to proceed with the Internal Settlement. Smith told Hughes that if the UK and U.S. wanted to solve the situation they needed to cease trying to ‘appease the terrorists.’ Nevertheless,

⁵⁴⁶ Memorandum for Zbigniew Brzezinski from the Situation Room, November 18 1978, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-1-8-5-38-8 and Smith, *Bitter Harvest*, 270.

⁵⁴⁷ From Embassy Lusaka to Secretary of State, December 1978, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-16-19-6-9-9, To Secretary of State from Embassy Dar-es-Salaam, Young-Moose conversation with President Nyerere, December 1978, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-16-19-6-1-7 and Memorandum for the President from Warren Christopher, December 13 1978, Plains File, State Department Evening Reports, 12/78, Box 39, Carter Library.

the internal leaders were willing to participate in a conference although U.S. Ambassador to Zambia Low, suspected this was primarily to fulfill the obligations of Case-Javits. In Pretoria, the South Africans demonstrated concern over the situation but supported the Internal Settlement and were unlikely to end aid to Salisbury. The final report of the Hughes Mission concluded that while all parties would attend a conference there would be little chance of a breakthrough.⁵⁴⁸

The White House was thus faced with the choice of convening a conference which would be unlikely to achieve any meaningful settlement or to sit back and hope that a shift in events would provide a new opportunity for an initiative. Carter was aware, however, that a failed conference would not only undermine U.S. prestige but also open the way for pressure on Washington to take more drastic measures to end the conflict. It was also noted that it could lead to an intensification of the conflict and create a vacuum for further Soviet involvement.⁵⁴⁹

As 1978 drew to a close, while Carter was unable to succeed in his goal of obtaining majority rule under the auspices of the AAP, he was handed a brief reprieve by the Rhodesian Government itself regarding the Case-Javits determination. In November, the Executive Council had postponed the upcoming Rhodesian elections until April. This

⁵⁴⁸ From Embassy Lusaka to Secretary of State, December 1978, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-16-19-6-9-9, Memorandum for the President from Warren Christopher, December 11 1978, Plains File, State Department Evening Reports, 12/78, Box 39, Carter Library, Memorandum for the President from Zbigniew Brzezinski, Information Items, December 11 1978, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-SAFE 17 C-15-5-2-0 and Smith, *Bitter Harvest*, 283.

⁵⁴⁹ From Embassy Lusaka to Secretary of State December 1978, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-16-19-6-9-9, Memorandum for Zbigniew Brzezinski from North-South, December 21 1978, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-10-17-4-10-7 and Letter from Embassy Dar-es-Salaam to Secretary of State, December 29 1978, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-16-18-6-22-5.

decision took the immediate pressure off the White House in considering the lifting of sanctions under the stipulations of the amendment.⁵⁵⁰

Zimbabwe-Rhodesia: Salisbury gains ‘majority rule’ but the White House remains unmoved

For Rhodesia, 1979 would prove to be a pivotal year in its already turbulent history. The historic negotiations in the fall of that year at Lancaster House in London brought an end to the UDI era, returned Rhodesia to ‘legality’, as termed by the British, and normalized relations between Salisbury and the international community after fourteen years of diplomatic isolation. While the U.S. played no public role during the Lancaster House Conference the decisions made by the White House over the course of the year both facilitated the meeting and gave the new Zimbabwe-Rhodesian Government little choice but to attend.

At the dawn of the new year, however, there appeared to be little hope that any negotiated settlement would be forthcoming. In late November, the Executive Council had reached a final agreement on the new constitutional arrangements. On January 2, the Rhodesian Government produced a White Paper outlining the new draft constitution which provided for majority rule including a black prime minister and a government numerically dominated by black representatives. The white minority would retain a substantial influence over the levers of government for at least another ten years. In addition, the constitution would ensure continued white control over the military, police, judiciary and civil service for the foreseeable future. The nation would be renamed

⁵⁵⁰ Vance, *Hard Choices*, 293.

Zimbabwe-Rhodesia, a fact was strongly denounced by the Patriotic Front which opposed the symbolic retention of the European name.⁵⁵¹

On January 30, in a white-only referendum, the electorate voted overwhelmingly to endorse the new constitution. CIA reports indicated that most white Rhodesians were ambivalent about the prospect of black majority rule and realized that the Internal Settlement would be unlikely to end the conflict. Nevertheless, they rationalized that there was no alternative other than capitulation to the guerrillas. The faith of the white population in Smith remained mostly undiminished and they viewed him as the only individual able and willing to stand up for their interests during the difficult transition to majority rule. Among the black population, Bishop Muzorewa and Reverend Sithole appeared to still enjoy support despite the constitutional concessions given to Smith.⁵⁵²

The Patriotic Front, however, remained committed to guerrilla warfare. Indeed, ZIPRA, despite Nkomo being continually mooted as a potential internal partner, shot down a second Viscount on February 12 with no survivors. The Rhodesian military responded with raids into Zambian territory as well as a long distance strike on a ZIPRA camp near Luso, Angola. The Department of State noted that it was unlikely that large numbers of Rhodesian blacks would rally to support a regime that promised little change and a continuation of the conflict. The threat of potential Cuban or Soviet involvement

⁵⁵¹ Memorandum to the Secretary of State from William C. Harrop and David E. Mark, African Trends, January 5 1979, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-4-16-6-8-6, CIA National Foreign Assessment Center, Rhodesia Looking beyond the April election, April 2 1979, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-132-186-2-6-1 and Smith, *Bitter Harvest*, 282 and 288.

⁵⁵² Telegram from Embassy Pretoria to the Department of State, Rhodesia: Campaign for Referendum and Elections Begin, January 1979, NSA Staff Material-North/South Funk, Zimbabwe, 10/78-3/79, Box 119, Carter Library, To the Secretary of State from William C. Harrop and David E. Mark, African Trends, January 5 1979, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-4-16-6-8-6, CIA National Foreign Assessment Center, Rhodesian White Attitudes, 31 January 1979, Carter Presidential Library, RAC Project Number NLC-6-77-1-7-3, CIA National Foreign Assessment Center, Rhodesia Looking beyond the April election, 2 April 1979, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-132-186-2-6-1.

remained high. Castro, even warned UN Secretary General Waldheim of the possibility that Cuban combat troops might become involved along the Rhodesian-Mozambican border.⁵⁵³

The progression of the Internal Settlement continued to cause a major headache for the White House. On the one hand, the upcoming Rhodesian elections, which were scheduled for April, would undoubtedly produce a majority rule government headed by a black African prime minister. Moreover, to continue to oppose Salisbury would place the U.S. in the position of appearing to favor the Marxist guerrilla movements over a democratically elected government. Domestically, the White House, was also under increasing pressure on Capitol Hill to remove sanctions and recognize the new regime following the elections. Nevertheless, Carter was also well aware that the GNU would be unable to bring an end to the fighting thus heightening the opportunities for communist encroachment. On the level of human rights he also opposed the new constitution for its preservation of white Rhodesian privilege and power.⁵⁵⁴

On February 5, Bishop Muzorewa, on behalf of the Rhodesian Government, formally invited the U.S. to send official observers to the elections. The Rhodesians

⁵⁵³ To the Secretary of State from William C. Harrop and David E. Mark, African Trends, January 5 1979, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-4-16-6-8-6, Memorandum for the Secretary of State from Zbigniew Brzezinski, Southern Africa Initiatives, January 27 1979, NSA Staff Material-North/South Funk, Zimbabwe, 10/78-3/79, Box 119, Carter Library, Memorandum for the President from Cyrus Vance, January 29 1979, Plains File, State Department Reports, 1/79, Box 39, Jimmy Carter Presidential Library, Memorandum for the President from Cyrus Vance, February 12 1979, Plains File, State Department Reports, 2/79, Box 39, Carter Library, CIA National Foreign Assessment Center, Rhodesia: Looking beyond the April election, April 2 1979, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-132-186-2-6-1 and Smith, *Bitter Harvest*, 289.

⁵⁵⁴ Legislative Priorities 96th Congress, January 1979, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-20-45-1-7-2, Telegram from Embassy Pretoria to Department of State, Rhodesia: Campaign for Referendum and Elections Begin, January 1979, NSA Staff Material-North/South Funk, Zimbabwe, 10/78-3/79, Box 119 Carter Library, Memorandum for the President from Cyrus Vance, February 8 1979, Carter Presidential Library, RAC Project Number NLC-128-14-4-7-3, CIA National Foreign Assessment Center, Rhodesia: Looking beyond the April election, April 2 1979, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-132-186-2-6-1, Mitchell, "Terrorists or Freedom Fighters", in *Cold War in Southern Africa*, ed. Onslow, 189-191 and Vance, *Hard Choices*, 294.

believed that American political support was key to a peaceful settlement. In addition, if Salisbury was able to demonstrate compliance with the Case-Javits Amendment then the White House would be forced to lift sanctions thus invigorating the Rhodesian economy. On January 12, in Chiredzi, Smith had observed that obtaining U.S. recognition was the 'best bet' for the success of the Internal Settlement.⁵⁵⁵

The White House experienced increasing political pressure from Capitol Hill to acknowledge the progress that was being made in Rhodesia. On February 23, Vance received a letter from Congressional Majority Leader Jim Wright (D-Texas). The Congressman urged the White House to send American observers to the election. He noted that the U.S. had committed itself under Case-Javits to end economic sanctions if the Rhodesians was ready to negotiate in good faith at an all-parties conference and conduct free elections to be observed by impartial international observers. Wright stated that the bi-racial Executive Council had fulfilled both obligations. Regarding the fact that Mugabe and Nkomo had openly refused to participate, the majority leader commented that; 'Surely U.S. policy is not to be bound nor influenced by terrorist leaders who publicly assert that they intend to seize power themselves through the barrel of a gun'.⁵⁵⁶

It is important to note that Congressional interest in the Internal Settlement was no longer solely confined to the traditional Rhodesia Lobby. In March, Senator George S. McGovern (D-South Dakota), the former Democratic Party nominee for president and a

⁵⁵⁵ Telegram from Embassy Pretoria to Department of State, Rhodesia: Campaign for Referendum and Elections Begin, January 1979, NSA Staff Material-North/South Funk, Zimbabwe, 10/78-3/79, Box 119, Carter Library, CIA National Foreign Assessment Center, Rhodesian White Attitudes, January 31 1979, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-6-77-1-7-3 and Letter to Cyrus Vance from Congressional Majority Leader Jim Wright, February 23 1979, NSA Staff Material-North/South Funk, Zimbabwe: 4-10/77 through Zimbabwe: 7-11/79, Box 119, Carter Library.

⁵⁵⁶ Memorandum for the President from Cyrus Vance, February 8 1979, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-128-14-4-7-3 and Letter to Cyrus Vance from Congressional Majority Leader Jim Wright, February 23 1979, NSA Staff Material-North/South Funk, Zimbabwe: 4-10/77 through Zimbabwe: 7-11/79 Box 119, Carter Library.

noted liberal, proposed a concurrent resolution to send twenty-five to fifty Congressional unofficial observers to the elections. The resolution was co-sponsored by Senator Hayakawa. On March 14, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee passed a motion to dispatch the observers. Two weeks later the Senate voted 66-27 in favor of the concurrent resolution. The bill, however, would later fail to pass in the House Subcommittee on Africa due in part to the efforts from Congressman Solarz.⁵⁵⁷

While Carter instructed the State Department not to oppose or support the McGovern bill the White House clearly rejected the proposition of sending Congressional or Executive observers to the election. On March 7, Assistant Secretary of State Richard M. Moose, in testimony to the Senate Foreign Affairs Committee, stated that the administration was opposed to sending observers as the election was widely regarded both in Africa and internationally as illegal and unrepresentative. If Washington sent observers it could seriously undermine the international standing and prestige of the U.S. and its ability to work with parties on a lasting settlement.⁵⁵⁸

In spite of the vociferous support that the Rhodesians enjoyed in Congress the stance adopted by the White House also had its advocates on Capitol Hill. In early March, the President received a letter signed by twenty-nine Congressman and Senator Paul Tsongas (D-Mass) which expressed opposition to the bill and urged Carter not to send observers to Rhodesia. On April 9, the House of Representatives, in a close

⁵⁵⁷ Memorandum for the President from Cyrus Vance, March 15 1979, Plains File, State Department Reports, 3/79, Box 39, Carter Library, Letter to President Carter from Congressman Robert E. Bauman, May 4 1979, WHCF, CO 129, Box CO-50, Carter Library and DeRoche, *Black, White and Chrome*, 272-273.

⁵⁵⁸ Rhodesia. Testimony by Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs Richard M. Moose Before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, March 7 1979, NSA Staff Material-North/South Funk, Zimbabwe, 10/78-3/79, Box 119, Carter Library, Memorandum for the President from Cyrus Vance, March 15 1979, Plains File, State Department Reports, 3/79, Box 39, Carter Library, Memorandum to the President and Secretary of State from Andrew Young, Recognition of Angola, March 27 1979, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-132-74-4-6-3 and DeRoche, *Black, White and Chrome*, 272-273.

Congressional vote of one hundred and ninety to one hundred and eighty, defeated a proposed amendment which would have authorized Carter to send official observers and grant \$20 million in assistance to the new government of Zimbabwe-Rhodesia.⁵⁵⁹

The first Rhodesian elections to choose the GNU took place in April. While held under the rules of universal suffrage, nevertheless, there were two separate ballots based on race. On April 10, the white population voted overwhelmingly for the RF who picked up all twenty seats. The RF received a further eight seats following a vote by both black and white parliamentarians. The black Rhodesians voted between April 17-21 and the UANC of Bishop Muzorewa swept up 51 of the 72 black parliamentary seats. The PF, deploying nearly ten thousand guerrillas, failed to disrupt the process, although as pointed out by Vance, there were indications of voter intimidation by forces loyal to internal black leaders.⁵⁶⁰

On June 1, Muzorewa formally took office as prime minister, somewhat bizarrely arriving at his official residence in a replica pioneer ox wagon, clad in West African robes and clutching a spear in his hand. Smith, who according to Baxter, ‘cringed at the ghastly spectacle’, was named in the new cabinet as Minister without Portfolio.⁵⁶¹

American media outlets were well represented in Salisbury during the course of the election by as many as fifty journalists. Overall, the news coverage of the election

⁵⁵⁹ Letter to the President from Congressman Thomas J. Downey et al. March 7 1979, NSA Staff Material-North/South Funk, 10/78-3/79, Box 119, Carter Library and Memorandum for the President from Cyrus Vance, April 9 1979, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-128-14-6-7-1.

⁵⁶⁰ Memorandum for the President from Cyrus Vance, The Rhodesian Elections, March 30 1979, NSA Staff Material-North/South Funk, Zimbabwe, 10/78-3/79, Box 119, Carter Library, CIA National Foreign Assessment Center, April 2 1979, Rhodesia Looking beyond the April election, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-132-186-2-6-1, Memorandum for David Aaron from Jerry Funk, Rhodesian Elections Status Report, April 19 1979, NSA Staff Material-North/South Funk, Zimbabwe, 4/79, Box 119, Carter Library, Memorandum for the President from Cyrus Vance, April 23 1979, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC 128-14-6-17-0 and Baxter, *Rhodesia*, 480.

⁵⁶¹ Baxter, *Rhodesia*, 480 and Smith, *Bitter Harvest*, 305-306.

carried positive reports, noting the high election turnout, estimated at sixty-five percent by the New York Times, and the lack of violence. A Freedom House delegation observed that Rhodesia had never seen so free and fair an election. The American Conservative Union Delegation also stated that the 'Zimbabwe Rhodesian elections of April 1979, were conducted on a free and fair basis.'⁵⁶²

The elections and establishment of the black majority GNU placed the White House in the position where a crucial decision on recognition needed to be made under the terms of Case-Javits. Presidential recognition and the removal of sanctions would have represented a massive boost to Salisbury. If the U.S., the most powerful and influential nation of the free world, recognized the government in Salisbury and lifted sanctions, then it was highly likely that other Western countries would follow the lead of Washington. According to the CIA, American recognition would also induce Rhodesian whites to fully support the GNU and militarily defend it, would stem the financial decline thus allowing economic improvements which could even tempt guerrillas to peacefully return. It would have also of course provide a major psychological boost for the new government.⁵⁶³

⁵⁶² Memorandum for David Aaron from Jerry Funk, Rhodesian Elections Status Report, April 19 1979, NSA Staff Material-North/South Funk, Zimbabwe, 4/79, Box 119, Carter Library, Memorandum for the President from Cyrus Vance, April 23 1979, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC 128-14-6-17-0, Memorandum for Zbigniew Brzezinski from Jerry Funk, Rhodesian Elections: Now What? April 23 1979, NSA Staff Material-North/South Funk, Zimbabwe, 4/79, Box 119, Carter Library and Preliminary Report of the American Conservative Union Observer Delegation to the Rhodesian Elections, April 25 1979, WHCF, CO 129, Box CO-50, Carter Library.

⁵⁶³ CIA National Foreign Assessment Center, April 2 1979, Rhodesia Looking beyond the April election, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-132-186-2-6-1, Policy Review Committee Meeting, April 5 1979, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-132-186-2-2-5, Policy Review Committee Meeting, Rhodesia and Angola, April 12 1979, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-15-44-5-23-7, Memorandum for Zbigniew Brzezinski from Jerry Funk, Rhodesian Elections: Now What? April 23 1979, NSA Staff Material-North/South Funk, Zimbabwe, 4/79, Box 119, Carter Library and Memorandum for the President from Zbigniew Brzezinski, Secretary Vance on the Rhodesian Elections, NSA Staff Material, North/South Funk, Zimbabwe, 4/79, Box 119, Carter Library.

On May 10, Muzorewa, via telegram, urged President Carter to officially recognize the GNU and lift sanctions. The bishop reminded Carter of the massive public support he had received and that on a humanitarian level the removal of sanctions would alleviate suffering, provide opportunities for the advancement of the black population and end the guerrilla conflict. In the telegram Muzorewa clearly acknowledged the need for U.S. recognition and stated unequivocally that; ‘I have no doubt at all that if you, as the acknowledged leader of the free world, were to give an immediate and positive indication of your intention to recognize my government as soon as it takes office and, at the same time, to lift sanctions, it would have a dramatic effect on the situation.’⁵⁶⁴

In Britain, the new Conservative Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher stated that there was no sense in dwelling on the past and the UK would now ascertain whether Zimbabwe-Rhodesia was in compliance with the six principles of NIBMAR. As noted in Washington, however, Thatcher, made no firm commitment on British policy towards Salisbury. In her memoirs, Thatcher herself commented that while the British observer, Viscount Baird of Merton, had deemed the Rhodesian election to be free and fair ‘what the people of Rhodesia needed above all was peace and stability’ and this required the support of both the U.S. and the Front Line states.⁵⁶⁵

⁵⁶⁴ Telegram from Embassy Cape Town to Department of State, Message from Bishop Muzorewa to President Carter, 10 May 1979, NSA Staff Material -North/South Funk, Zimbabwe, 5/79, Box 119, Carter Library.

⁵⁶⁵ Memorandum for David Aaron from Jerry Funk, UK Election and Rhodesia Policy, April 26 1979, NSA Staff Material-North/South Funk, Zimbabwe, 4/79, Box 119, Carter Library, Summary of Margaret Roberts Thatcher, Prime Minister UK, May 1979, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-31-127-4-10-2, Memorandum on Lord Carrington, Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs UK, May 11 1979, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-28-16-1-1-2, and Memorandum of Conversation. Rhodesia, Foreign and Commonwealth Office, May 21 1979, NSA Staff Material-North/South Funk, Zimbabwe, 5/79, Box 119, Carter Library, Margaret Thatcher, *The Downing Street Years*, (London: Harper Collins, 1993), 72, Baxter, *Rhodesia*, 480-481, DeRoche, *Black, White and Chrome*, 276 and Smith, *Bitter Harvest*, 298-299.

The White House was also not unaware of the negative international implications of a positive finding under Case-Javits. On April 26, the Organization of African Unity had declared the Rhodesian election to be invalid and four days later UNSC Resolution 448 condemned the elections as illegal. Washington, along with Paris and London had abstained from voting. Carter was certainly conscious of the vociferous hostility that would be directed at the U.S. from black Africa if he was to recognize the new government. This would have been damaging both politically and economically. Indeed, on May 24, Nigeria, which exported fifty percent of its oil to the United States threatened to cut off its supply if Carter recognized Zimbabwe-Rhodesia.⁵⁶⁶

Carter also believed that the Internal Settlement and the establishment of the GNU would fail to end the conflict and indeed would stimulate further communist military intervention. In April, the CIA had reported that Cuban and Soviet involvement was likely to grow in the foreseeable future regardless of the Rhodesian elections. In early May, President Nyerere of Tanzania informed the U.S. Ambassador that Moscow and Havana had proposed the formation of a 'Provisional Government of Zimbabwe' based on the PF. The Department of State believed that the creation of such a provisional government could provide a pretext for full military intervention at the behest of a friendly government even if not located in Rhodesia.⁵⁶⁷

⁵⁶⁶ CIA National Foreign Assessment Center, April 2 1979, Rhodesia Looking beyond the April election, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-132-186-2-6-1, Memorandum for the President from Cyrus Vance, April 27 1979, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-128-14-6-21-5, To Secretary of State from Embassy Lagos, May 1979, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-16-104-2-2-5, Memorandum for the President from Warren Christopher, May 31 1979, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-128-14-7-21-4, Memorandum for Zbigniew Brzezinski from Jerry Funk, Obasanjo's Letter on LNG, June 4 1979, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-24-122-3-9-8-3252 and Vance, *Hard Choices*, 294-295.

⁵⁶⁷ CIA National Foreign Assessment Center, April 2 1979, Rhodesia looking beyond the April election, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-132-186-2-6-1 and State/INR Morning Summary, May 4 1979, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-17-52-6-5-5.

In Havana, Cuban Vice-President Rodriguez informed the British Ambassador that if London and ‘others’ accepted the GNU then all hopes for peace in Rhodesia were gone. In the view of Brzezinski, it was obvious that ‘Havana is still not ready to abandon threat or use of military intervention as an instrument of policy.’ Furthermore, the administration was aware that if Havana did intervene then there was a strong possibility that Pretoria would invade her northern neighbour to combat the Cuban actions. Such a turn of events could lead to a massive racial war with the inevitable tragic consequences. In addition, if Havana was to prevail over the South Africans it would mean another strategic communist victory in Southern Africa.⁵⁶⁸

Domestically, Congressional and public opinion remained strongly divided on the issue of recognition. On Capitol Hill, a powerful group of senators led by Helms and Hayakawa put pressure on the White House to recognize the GNU and lift sanctions. Supporters of this policy included Thurmond, Garn, Goldwater and Harry F. Byrd. Former Congressman Howard Pollock (R-Alaska), a member of the American Conservative Union Delegation to the elections, informed Carter that it would be unconscionable not to recognize this ‘grand experiment in democracy in Southern Africa’. The White House was also aware of considerable public support for the Zimbabwe-Rhodesian Government.⁵⁶⁹

⁵⁶⁸ Memorandum for the President from Zbigniew Brzezinski, May 17 1979, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-2-19-6-1-2 and Mitchell, “Terrorists or Freedom Fighters”, in *Cold War in Southern Africa*, ed. Onslow, 189-190.

⁵⁶⁹ Memorandum for the President from Cyrus Vance, April 26 1979, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-128-14-6-20-6, Memorandum for Zbigniew Brzezinski from William E. Griffith, U.S. Policy on Rhodesia, May 4 1979, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-17-52-6-5-6, Memorandum for the President from Zbigniew Brzezinski, Secretary Vance on the Rhodesian Elections, NSA Staff Material-North/South Funk, Zimbabwe, 4/79, Box 119, Carter Library, Letter to President Carter from Howard W. Pollock, April 25 1979, WHCF, CO 129, Box CO-50, Carter Library, Letter to President Carter from Robert Winchell, April 30 1979, WHCF, CO 129, Box CO-50, Carter Library, Letter to the President from William S. James, May 14 1979, Carter Presidential Papers: Cabinet Secretary and Intergovernmental

A number of political figures including Senators' Tsongas and Edward Kennedy (D-Mass), the Chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, Clement Zablocki (D-Wisconsin), Congressmen Thomas J. Downey (D-NY) and Cardiss Collins, as well as members of the House African Subcommittee and the Congressional Black Caucus continued to oppose the Internal Settlement and the GNU regarding it as a fraud designed to perpetuate minority control under the auspices of a black-led government. It was argued that as the process fell short of true majority rule the White House should therefore find negatively when considering Case-Javits.⁵⁷⁰

Presidential correspondence also reveals strong opposition to recognition from important groupings such as the AFL-CIO and the National Bar Association. The black political community was especially vocal in its opposition to recognition. In a letter to Carter, Coretta Scott King, wrote that 'In the interests of achieving full human rights for the people of Rhodesia, I urge you to maintain sanctions against the Rhodesian government.'⁵⁷¹

Affairs, Rhodesia (Zimbabwe) and Human Rights, International Box 40, Carter Library and Letter to President Carter from Donna S. Richardson, June 6 1979, Carter Presidential Papers: Cabinet Secretary and Intergovernmental Affairs, Rhodesia (Zimbabwe) and Human Rights through Trade, International Box 40, Carter Library.

⁵⁷⁰ Letter to the President from Congressmen Thomas J. Downey et al. March 7 1979, NSA Staff Material-North/South Funk, Zimbabwe, 10/78-3/79, Box 119, Carter Library, Memorandum from Louis Martin to President Carter, May 29 1979, Robert Lipshutz's Files, Rhodesia: 9/78 to Rhodesia: 5/79, Box 44, Carter Library and Statement against lifting Rhodesian Sanctions, the Office of Senator Edward M. Kennedy, June 12 1979, NSA Staff Material-North/South Funk, Zimbabwe, 6/79, Box 119, Carter Library.

⁵⁷¹ Letter to President Carter from Julius W. Williams, March 27 1979, WHCF, CO 129, Box CO-50, Carter Library, Letter to the President from Tuskegee Mayor Johnny Ford, May 11 1979, Carter Presidential Papers: Cabinet Secretary and Intergovernmental Affairs, Rhodesia (Zimbabwe) and Human Rights, International Box 40, Carter Library, Letter to President from Craig A. Washington, May 18 1979, Carter Presidential Papers: Cabinet Secretary and Intergovernmental Affairs, Rhodesia (Zimbabwe) and Human Rights, International Box 40, Carter Library, Letter to President Carter from Samuel W. Hudson, May 23 1979, Carter Presidential Papers: Cabinet Secretary and Intergovernmental Affairs, Rhodesia (Zimbabwe) and Human Rights, International Box 40, Carter Library, Letter to President Carter from Coretta Scott King, May 25 1979, WHCF, CO 129, Box CO-50, Carter Library, Letter to President Carter from Oakland City Mayor Lionel J. Wilson, May 29 1979, Carter Presidential Papers: Cabinet Secretary and Intergovernmental Affairs, Rhodesia (Zimbabwe) and Human Rights, International Box 40, Carter Library, Letter to President Carter from Horace L. Buckley, June 1 1979, Carter Presidential Papers:

On June 7, Carter found negatively against recognition under the terms of Case-Javits. The President argued that the elections were not free and fair as only whites could vote on the constitution and not all political parties could participate in the ensuing elections. Equally, he noted that the authorities in Zimbabwe-Rhodesia had claimed to be willing to attend an all-parties meeting but they were not prepared to negotiate all relevant issues. As this was the case he deemed it to be neither in the best interests of the U.S. nor Zimbabwe-Rhodesia to lift sanctions though he was prepared to review this decision if further progress was made.⁵⁷²

A number of factors clearly influenced the presidential decision not to lift sanctions. The White House was certainly aware that domestically a positive recognition could have alienated liberals and jeopardized African-American support for the administration. Equally, given that world opinion was largely against the Internal Settlement a unilateral lifting of sanctions by the U.S. would not only violate international law but meant that America could suffer economic repercussions especially an increase in oil prices.⁵⁷³

Cabinet Secretary and Intergovernmental Affairs, Rhodesia (Zimbabwe) and Human Rights, International Box 40, Carter Library and Letter to Jimmy Carter from George Meaney, June 7 1979, NSA Staff Material-North/South Funk, Zimbabwe, 6/79, Box 119, Carter Library.

⁵⁷² Trade Sanctions Against Rhodesia, June 7 1979, Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States, Jimmy Carter, 1979, Book I: January 1 to June 22 1979, (Washington DC: United States Government Printing Office, 1980), and Department of State, Bureau of Public Affairs, Current Policy No.70. Sanctions: Zimbabwe-Rhodesia Decision Explained, Washington D.C. June 1979, NSA Staff Material-North/South Funk, Zimbabwe, 6/79, Box 119, Carter Library.

⁵⁷³ Policy Review Committee Meeting, Rhodesia and Angola, April 12 1979, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-20-22-2-9-4, To Secretary of State from Embassy Lagos, May 1979, Carter Library, RAC Project Number, NLC-16-104-2-2-5, Memorandum of Conversation, Rhodesia, Foreign and Commonwealth Office, May 21 1979, NSA Staff Material-North/South Funk, Zimbabwe, 5/79, Box 119, Carter Library, Memorandum for Zbigniew Brzezinski from Jerry Funk, Obasanjo's Letter on LNG, June 4 1979, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-24-122-3-9-8-3252, Memorandum for Zbigniew Brzezinski from The Situation Room, June 19 1979, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-1-11-2-12-3 and Baxter, *Rhodesia*, 481-482.

The primary rationales behind Carter's decision, however, remained his belief that the GNU did not represent majority rule or satisfy the human rights of the black population and the fear of an escalating civil war with increased communist intervention. The President and his advisers, noted that the constitution under which elections occurred was voted on only by whites and entrenched white control of the civil service, police and army plus a blocking vote in a new parliament against changing the white entrenchment for ten years. Furthermore, while some steps had been taken to repeal racial discrimination they had only a limited impact on the situation of the black population and continued white controls within the legislative process would mean the new government could only proceed cautiously in implementing social change.⁵⁷⁴

The White House also believed that the Internal Settlement even with international support would prove unable to end the conflict. The PF remained determined to seize power and with the continued support of the Front Line states would carry on the war. The situation would remain a highly volatile stalemate and the longer the guerrilla struggle continued the greater the chances of cross-border Rhodesian raids into Zambia and Mozambique who could potentially request greater Cuban or Soviet support. It was believed that the internal solution merely played into the hands of Havana and Moscow who could only profit from the increasing instability in the region.⁵⁷⁵

⁵⁷⁴ Memorandum for the President from Zbigniew Brzezinski, Secretary Vance on the Rhodesian Elections, NSA Staff Material-North/South Funk, Zimbabwe, 4/79, Box 119, Carter Library, Memorandum of Conversation, Rhodesia, Foreign and Commonwealth Office, May 21 1979, NSA Staff Material-North/South Funk, Zimbabwe, 5/79, Box 119, Carter Library, Memorandum for the President from Zbigniew Brzezinski, May 17 1979, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-2-19-6-1-2 and Vance, *Hard Choices*, 296-297.

⁵⁷⁵ CIA National Foreign Assessment Center, April 2 1979, Rhodesia: Looking beyond the April election, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-132-186-2-6-1, Memorandum for Zbigniew Brzezinski from William E. Griffith, U.S. Policy on Rhodesia, May 4 1979, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-17-52-6-5-6, State/INR Morning Summary, May 4 1979, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-17-52-6-5-5 and Mitchell, "Terrorists or freedom fighters?", in *Cold War in Southern Africa*, ed. Onslow, 189-190.

The decision of the White House not to lift sanctions under Case-Javits received widespread support from black Africa. The Tanzanian Ambassador, Paul Bomani, congratulated Carter on his 'wise and timely decision' that would strengthen Tanzanian resolve to resist Soviet actions against Rhodesia. In Salisbury, the GNU was dismayed by the decision and Muzorewa issued a strong condemnatory statement. In his memoirs, Ian Smith stated that 'Carter's hypocrisy and rank dishonesty was unbelievable and unforgivable. He advanced the reason that the removal of sanctions would be to the prejudice of our country - an absolutely infantile argument which nobody could credit, as the truth was the complete reverse.'⁵⁷⁶

On Capitol Hill, Congressional opinion was very much divided on the issue of the continuation of sanctions. As early as May 4, Representative Richard H. Ichord (D-MO) introduced House Concurrent Resolution 116 which stated that Rhodesia was in compliance with the International Security Assistance Act and that sanctions should be lifted, the bill though was eventually defeated. On June 28, the House of Representatives voted 350-37 in favor of a compromise resolution, H.R. 4439, proposed by Representative Solarz which called for a termination of sanctions by October 15, unless Carter felt it was not in the national interest to do so.⁵⁷⁷

On July 8, Muzorewa travelled to Washington to press for recognition and the lifting of sanctions. Carter met with Muzorewa at Camp David despite the opposition of Brzezinski, who believed that the bishop's visit was controlled by the RIO and Senator

⁵⁷⁶ Memorandum for the President from Cyrus Vance, June 9 1979, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-128-14-8-7-9 and Smith, *Bitter Harvest*, 306.

⁵⁷⁷ To Secretary of State from J. Brian Atwood, Rhodesia in the House and Where We Go From Here, June 30 1979, NSA Staff Material-North/South Funk, Zimbabwe, 6/79, Box 119, Carter Library, Letter from President Carter to Congressman Stephen Solarz, July 1 1980, WHCF, CO 129 7/1/79 through 1/20/81, Box CO-51, Carter Library and Vance, *Hard Choices*, 297.

Helms and was concentrating on public relations at the expense of substance. It was feared that meeting Muzorewa at the country retreat would not only legitimize him as a leader of a respected government but lead to condemnation domestically from liberal and black factions and cause a backlash internationally. At the meeting, however, Muzorewa failed to persuade Carter to offer recognition or lift sanctions.⁵⁷⁸

In an interesting twist to the discussions, though, Rhodesian figures including Smith, Van der Byl and CIO Chief Flower have claimed that prior to the prime minister's trip to America the Rhodesian CIO had arrested three CIA agents caught spying in Rhodesia. Flower was reportedly assured by American contacts that if Muzorewa agreed to release the spies then Carter would not oppose the lifting of sanctions by Congress. In his memoirs, Smith claimed that upon his return to Rhodesia, Muzorewa stated that he had received the necessary undertaking from Carter and the spies were released. The Rhodesians then claim that Carter simply reneged on his word as if the incident had never happened.⁵⁷⁹

Muzorewa, also visited London between July 12-14 in the hope of convincing the Conservative government to recognize Zimbabwe-Rhodesia and end sanctions. According to U.S. sources, however, Thatcher informed Muzorewa that all party participation was necessary for recognition and the removal of sanctions. Arguably, Carter's decision not to recognize the Muzorewa government had played a major role in changing British thinking on Rhodesia. Thatcher was an avowed advocate of the 'special relationship' between London and Washington making Carter's position on Zimbabwe-

⁵⁷⁸ Memorandum for Zbigniew Brzezinski from Jerry Funk, President's Meeting with Muzorewa, July 9 1979, NSA Staff Material-North/South Funk, Zimbabwe, 7-11/79, Box 119, Carter Library and Memorandum for the President from Zbigniew Brzezinski, Your Meeting with Muzorewa, July 10 1979, NSA Staff Material-North/South Funk, Zimbabwe, 7-11/79, Box 119, Carter Library.

⁵⁷⁹ Flower, *Serving Secretly*, Smith, *Bitter Harvest*, 308-310 and Wessels, *PK Van der Byl*, 249.

Rhodesia of great importance. On a pragmatic level, the prime minister was also aware that U.S. support was vital for any settlement.⁵⁸⁰

For Thatcher, the Rhodesian question was proving to be a baptism of fire. On May 6, 1979, a mere two days after her electoral victory, Thatcher received a letter from virtually every Commonwealth ambassador warning against recognition. In July, the Organization of African Unity designated the PF as the 'sole legitimate and authentic representative' of the people of Zimbabwe. The threat to London's interests was not merely political in nature. In May, Nigerian leader Obasanjo announced that public contracts would be denied to British firms until majority rule was established in Rhodesia. In July, Abuja nationalized BP Nigeria in protest against the sale of oil to South Africa and sending a warning to the politicians in London.⁵⁸¹

At the August Commonwealth meeting in Lusaka, Zambia, Thatcher informed the delegates that she had every intention of formally recognizing Zimbabwe-Rhodesian independence but not under the terms of the Internal Settlement which had given a disproportionate amount of power to the white minority. The Prime Minister also sought to emphasize that the situation remained a British responsibility and that London was prepared to reassume authority and supervise elections. The Front Line states welcomed the change in direction and demonstrated a willingness to work towards a solution. Nyerere even acknowledged that the April elections had created a 'political change in Rhodesia'. It was agreed that any settlement must provide for genuine majority rule,

⁵⁸⁰ Memorandum for the President from Cyrus Vance, July 17 1979, Plains File, State Department Reports, 7/79, Box 39, Carter Library, Baxter, *Rhodesia*, 482, DeRoche, *Black, White and Chrome*, 281 and Thatcher, *The Downing Street Years*, 72-73.

⁵⁸¹ Memorandum for the President from Cyrus Vance, July 21 1979, Plains File, State Department Reports, 7/79, Box 39, Carter Library, Carol B. Thompson, *Challenge to Imperialism: The Frontline States in the Liberation of Zimbabwe*, (Boulder: Westview Press, 1986) 66, Baxter, *Rhodesia*, 482 Thatcher, *The Downing Street Years*, 73 and Wessels, *PK Van der Byl*, 258.

minority safeguards, all parties involvement to end conflict and free and fair elections under British control and Commonwealth supervision.⁵⁸²

In order to achieve this objective, Thatcher committed the British Government to hosting an all-party conference in London. On August 14, Foreign Secretary Lord Carrington issued an invitation to all factions to attend a conference at Lancaster House with the aim of amending the Zimbabwe-Rhodesia Constitution, organizing a cease-fire and defining arrangements for elections. In an address to parliament on August 22, Bishop Muzorewa informed that he had accepted the invitation to attend. Smith also agreed to represent the Zimbabwe-Rhodesian delegation. The PF also consented to participate and was represented by Mugabe and Nkomo.⁵⁸³

In his memoirs, Smith noted that the Rhodesians had little choice but to accept as the military situation had become untenable and that the Western leaders would be unlikely to accept a solution which conflicted with the views of the black African states. Indeed, by the fall of 1979, the Nationalists had four times more insurgents in Zimbabwe-Rhodesia than in 1976 and the official white emigration rate had reached 2,000 a month. Smith himself bluntly stated at a town hall meeting in 1979 that ‘To think we can mount an operation and defeat terrorism is moonshine...We simply haven’t got enough men...’,⁵⁸⁴

The PF also faced pressure to achieve a negotiated settlement. The escalating conflict was proving costly for their Front Line patrons. Observing sanctions on Salisbury

⁵⁸² Memorandum for the President from Cyrus Vance August 4 1979, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-128-14-10-4-9, Baxter, *Rhodesia*, 484, Thatcher, *The Downing Street Years*, 76 and Vance, *Hard Choices*, 298-299.

⁵⁸³ Report To Congress on Zimbabwe-Rhodesia, August-September 1979, NSA Staff Material-North/South Funk, Zimbabwe, 7-11/79, Box 119 Carter Library, Baxter, *Rhodesia*, 484-485, Thatcher, *The Downing Street Years*, 76 and Vance, *Hard Choices*, 299.

⁵⁸⁴ Mitchell, *Jimmy Carter in Africa*, 648, Moorcraft and McLaughlin, *The Rhodesian War*, 131 and 163 and Smith, *Bitter Harvest*, 313.

was costing Mozambique and Zambia hundreds of millions of dollars annually while hosting the growing guerrilla armies posed a threat to the stability of their own regimes. Salisbury was also escalating its cross border raids to include the economic infrastructure of the Front Line states to induce Lusaka and Maputo to force the PF towards a more conciliatory position.⁵⁸⁵

The Lancaster House Agreement: American ‘quiet diplomacy’ helps to achieve a settlement

On September 10, the Zimbabwe-Rhodesia Constitutional Conference formally opened at Lancaster House. The conference comprised of over two months of difficult diplomatic wrangling and the use of considerable British direct and indirect pressure on both sides to reach a compromise. Smith commented that the British diplomacy comprised of ‘no-holds-barred all-in-wrestling’ while Mugabe actually broke away from the conference and was narrowly intercepted by the Mozambican ambassador at the behest of Lord Carrington. The British also faced accusations of bias from all sides.⁵⁸⁶

In a triumph, however, at least for the British, on December 21, after forty-seven long plenary sessions, the Lancaster House Agreement was accepted by all parties. The settlement included an outline of the independence constitution which included

⁵⁸⁵ Mitchell, *Jimmy Carter in Africa*, 647-648 and Moorcraft and McLaughlin, *The Rhodesian War*, 163-164.

⁵⁸⁶ Report To Congress on Zimbabwe-Rhodesia, August-September 1979, NSA Staff Material-North/South Funk, Box 119, Carter Library, CIA Foreign Assessment Center, Zimbabwe-Rhodesia: Meeting Patriotic Front concerns in the London Talks, October 1979, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-8-89-3-3-2, Memorandum for Zbigniew Brzezinski from the Situation Room, November 10 1979, Carter Presidential Library, RAC Project Number NLC-1-13-1-31-1, To Secretary of State from Embassy Lusaka, November 15 1979, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-16-20-5-10-6, To Secretary of State from Embassy Maputo, November 15 1979, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-16-20-5-29-6, To Secretary of State from Embassy Dar-es-Salaam, November 15 1979, RAC Project Number NLC-16-20-5-3-4, Baxter, *Rhodesia*, 488-495, Thatcher, *The Downing Street Years*, 77 and Smith, *Bitter Harvest*, 314.

twenty percent of parliamentary seats to be reserved for the white population, arrangements for the pre-independence period and a cease-fire agreement. All participants also undertook to accept the authority of the British governor, to abide by the constitution, to comply with the pre-independence arrangements, to adhere to the cease-fire agreement, to campaign peacefully and without intimidation and to accept the outcome of the elections.⁵⁸⁷

On December 11, ten days earlier, the Zimbabwe-Rhodesian parliament had in a historical vote rescinded UDI and agreed to return the country to British rule prior to the upcoming elections. The newly appointed governor, Lord Christopher Soames, arrived in Salisbury the following day and London declared a return to legality. On December 21, in response to the events at Lancaster House the UNSC passed Resolution 460 which terminated its sanctions against Rhodesia. In the view of Thatcher, 'Britain had demonstrated her ability, by a combination of honest dealing and forceful diplomacy, to settle one of the most intractable disputes arising from her colonial past.'⁵⁸⁸

Ostensibly, the U.S. played no prominent function during the negotiations in London. The White House, nevertheless, played an important role in assisting the UK in attaining the final agreement. The U.S. ambassador in London, Kingman Brewster was instructed to maintain contact with all sides and insisted on the important condition that all parties be treated equally during the ceasefire. One notable contribution related to the possibility of financial aid to an independent Zimbabwe. When the conference turned to

⁵⁸⁷ *Southern Rhodesia. Report of the Constitutional Conference, Lancaster House, London, September-December 1979*, London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, January 1980
http://peacemaker.un.org/sites/peacemaker.un.org/files/ZW_791221_LancasterHouseAgreement.pdf, Baxter, *Rhodesia*, 488-495 and Vance, *Hard Choices*, 301.

⁵⁸⁸ Memorandum for the Vice-President from Denis Clift, Zimbabwe: Moment of decision on sanctions, December 11 1979, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-133-115-3-12-0, Thatcher, *The Downing Street Years*, 78 and Smith, *Bitter Harvest*, 325.

the controversial question of potential land redistribution and how it could be financed the discussions became a deadlocked impasse. Notably the PF vehemently rejected the idea that a majority rule government would be required to compensate white property owners for land that it believed had been stolen from the indigenous African population.⁵⁸⁹

As observed by Jeffrey Davidow, although Carter was reluctant to commit to this issue, the fact that Washington offered the possibility of aid to pay off the white landowners allowed the PF to end the stalemate as opposed to merely backing down. Ambassador Brewster, also assured Lord Carrington that the U.S. would co-operate in a multi donor development effort for Zimbabwe subject to a successful settlement. This position was made clear to the Front Line states.⁵⁹⁰

Earlier, in September, Vance had been required to mediate in a dispute between Lord Carrington and Senator Helms. Helms had dispatched two aides, John Carbaugh and James Lucier to attend the Lancaster House Conference as observers. The British believed that they were making promises to both Smith and Muzorewa, allegedly on behalf of the U.S. Congress, and their presence was endangering the negotiations. Lord Carrington contacted Vance and asked him to take steps to facilitate their removal. The matter was made more complicated though by the British refusal to supply a written

⁵⁸⁹ Jeffrey Davidow, *A Peace in Southern Africa: Lancaster House Conference on Rhodesia, 1979*. (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1984), 65 and DeRoche, *Black, White and Chrome*, 284.

⁵⁹⁰ Memorandum for the President from Cyrus Vance, October 15 1979, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-128-14-12-9-2, Davidow, *A Peace in Southern Africa*, 65 and DeRoche, *Black, White and Chrome*, 284.

request apparently due to domestic political reasons. Vance, however, was able to persuade Helms to order his aides back to Washington.⁵⁹¹

The White House was also prepared to offer logistical aid to London to ensure a smooth implementation of the settlement. It had been agreed by all parties that during the transitional period the ceasefire would be enforced by the presence of Commonwealth peacekeeping troops. In addition to British soldiers, Australia, New Zealand, Fiji and Kenya agreed to send forces. On an operational level, this created logistical difficulties for London especially regarding transportation of the peacekeepers and the necessary military equipment and supplies. In order to assist the British and bolster their negotiating position, Carter offered the use of C5A Galaxies to transport land rovers and helicopters from the UK to Rhodesia as well as a Kenyan troop contingent from Nairobi to Salisbury. Brzezinski further advocated this action as a declaration of U.S. will and capability to act in a way to preclude Soviet or Cuban expansion in Southern Africa.⁵⁹²

The most significant issue, however, related to the lifting of sanctions. Carter was required by Section 408 of State Department Authorization Act to lift sanctions by November 15 1979 unless he determined that it was not in the national interest to do so. The British had determined to end sanctions on December 12 when the governor took office in Salisbury which meant that, in the view of London, Rhodesia had therefore returned to legality. The British felt that it was crucial that the White House state that the U.S. would lift sanctions at the same time. London argued that even if the PF was

⁵⁹¹ James Reston, "The Chaos in Foreign Affairs", New York Times, September 21 1979, 27, R.W. Apple Jr. "British Accuse Senate Aide on Rhodesia", New York Times, September 20 1979, 3 and Vance, *Hard Choices*, 300.

⁵⁹² Memorandum for Zbigniew Brzezinski from Jerry Funk, Z-R Settlement "Breakthrough", November 15 1979, NSA Staff Material-North/South Funk, Zimbabwe, 7-11/79, Box 119, Carter Library, Memorandum for the President from Zbigniew Brzezinski, British Request for Zimbabwe-Rhodesia Cease-Fire Airlift Assistance, November 23 1979, NSA Staff Material-North/South Funk, Zimbabwe, 7-11/79, Box 119, Carter Library and David Ottaway, "Africa: U.S. Policy Eclipse," *Foreign Affairs* 58 (3), 1980, 642.

excluded and UNSC maintained sanctions the restoration of legality to the UK removed all basis for the enforcement of sanctions.⁵⁹³

The White House, however, feared the impact of a hasty decision to lift sanctions. Both Vance and Brzezinski, were concerned that if Washington was linked too closely to the British position this could lead to less influence over the settlement and less credibility with the black Africa potentially jeopardizing any potential agreement. Furthermore, it would be almost impossible to justify under international law a lifting of sanctions prior to Britain officially 'returning Rhodesia to legality' or a UNSC action terminating sanctions.⁵⁹⁴

On November 14, Carter determined that that it was in the national interest of the U.S. to continue sanctions against Salisbury. Carter, though, indicated a general intent to lift sanctions when the British governor arrived and the process to impartial elections began. The White House would maintain flexibility regarding the final decision and timing over the lifting of U.S. sanctions. The carefully worded announcement was accepted by the British who recognized that it essentially supported their hand in negotiations and was also well received by the black African states. In Pretoria and Salisbury, however, the determination was met with degrees of consternation.⁵⁹⁵

⁵⁹³ Memorandum for the President from Cyrus Vance, November 7 1979, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-128-14-13-5-5, Memorandum for the President from Cyrus Vance, November 10 1979, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-128-14-13-7-3, Memorandum for the President from Cyrus Vance, Rhodesian Sanctions, November 13 1979, NSA Brzezinski Material, Presidential Determinations 8/79-5/80, Box 50, Carter Library.

⁵⁹⁴ Memorandum for the President from Cyrus Vance, Rhodesian Sanctions, November 13 1979, NSA Brzezinski Material, Presidential Determinations 8/79-5/80, Box 50, Carter Library, Memorandum for the President from Zbigniew Brzezinski, Your Determination on Zimbabwe-Rhodesian Sanctions, November 13 1979, NSA Staff Material-North/South Funk, Zimbabwe, 7-11/79, Box 119, Carter Library and Memorandum from Cyrus R. Vance, Rhodesian Sanctions, November 13 1979, NSA Staff Material-North/South Funk, Zimbabwe, 7-11/79, Box 119, Carter Library.

⁵⁹⁵ Memorandum for the President from Cyrus Vance, Rhodesian Sanctions, November 13 1979, NSA Brzezinski Material, Presidential Determinations 8/79-5/80, Box 50, Carter Library, Memorandum for the President from Zbigniew Brzezinski, Your Determination on Zimbabwe-Rhodesian Sanctions, November

It is worth noting that the domestic reaction to the presidential determination was predominantly positive. It was commended in the media and well received by the black community. On Capitol Hill, the House Congressional leaders responded encouragingly to the decision. The Senate, notably, Senator Helms was initially more circumspect. On December 6, the Senate passed the Church-Javits legislation, which required sanctions to be lifted following the arrival of the British governor in Salisbury or not later than January 31 1980, by ninety votes to zero. The overwhelming victory had been made possible due to the support of Helms who had indicated that in view of White House assurances that sanctions would be lifted not later than one month after assumption of British authority then he would back the legislation.⁵⁹⁶

Overall, during the Lancaster House negotiations the White House carefully followed developments and played an important supporting role as an advising party to the British, the Front Line States and the PF. The British looked to the U.S. to support her constitutional position and Washington also vouched for UK sincerity to the African

13 1979, NSA Staff Material-North/South Funk, Zimbabwe, 7-11/79, Box 119, Carter Library, Memorandum from Cyrus R. Vance, Rhodesian Sanctions, November 13 1979, NSA Staff Material-North/South Funk, Zimbabwe, 7-11/79, Box 119, Carter Library, Memorandum to the Secretary of State from President Carter, Maintenance of Sanctions Against Zimbabwe-Rhodesia Under Section 408 (b) of the Department of State Authorization Act, November 14 1979, NSA Brzezinski Material, Presidential Determinations 8/79-5/80, Box 50, Carter Library and Memorandum for the President from Cyrus Vance November 16 1979, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-128-14-13-12-7.

⁵⁹⁶ Office of the Vice-President for Dick Moe from Denis Clift, Talking Points for Vice-President's Luncheon with President, November 13 1979, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-133-115-2-14-9, Memorandum for the President from Cyrus Vance, November 15 1979, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-128-14-13-11-8, Memorandum for the Vice-President from Denis Clift, Foreign Policy Breakfast, November 15 1979, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-133-115-2-19-4, Memorandum for the President from Cyrus Vance, December 6 1979, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-15-74-7-49-4 and Memorandum for the Vice-President from Denis Clift, Zimbabwe Moment of decision on sanctions, December 11 1979, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-133-115-3-12-0.

states. The Front Line and PF viewed America as a more impartial party who would press London into making concessions when such ‘nudging’ was required.⁵⁹⁷

The British were well aware of the significant contribution that the White House made to the successful outcome of the Lancaster House Conference. On December 17, at a State Dinner in Washington, Thatcher offered her gratitude to Carter and Secretary of State Vance and observed that without their stalwart aid the ‘whole process would have been incomparably more difficult, and we may never have reached success.’⁵⁹⁸

The President was delighted at the outcome of the talks in London. In correspondence with Presidents’ Kaunda and Nyerere, Carter expressed his ‘personal satisfaction...that the goals of majority rule and independence that we have pursued together during the past three years can at last be achieved’ and thanked them for their support in this endeavor. In the view of the White House, the settlement represented not only a step forward in terms of human rights via the implementation of free elections leading to majority rule but also greatly diminished the potential threat of Cuban or Soviet intervention due to the support of the Front Line and PF for the British brokered agreement.⁵⁹⁹

⁵⁹⁷ Report To Congress on Zimbabwe-Rhodesia, August-September 1979, NSA Staff Material-North/South Funk, Zimbabwe, 7-11/79, Box 119, Carter Library, CIA Foreign Assessment Center, Zimbabwe-Rhodesia: Meeting Patriotic Front concerns in the London Talks, October 1979, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-8-89-3-3-2, Memorandum for the President from Cyrus Vance, November 10 1979, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-128-14-13-7-3, Memorandum for Zbigniew Brzezinski from the Situation Room, November 10 1979, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-1-13-1-31-1, To Secretary of State from Embassy Maputo, November 15 1979, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-16-20-5-29-6, To Secretary of State from Embassy Dar-es-Salaam, November 15 1979, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-16-20-5-3-4 and Vance, *Hard Choices*, 299.

⁵⁹⁸ Visit of Prime Minister Thatcher of the United Kingdom, Toasts at the State Dinner, December 17 1979, Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States, Jimmy Carter, 1979, Book II June 23 to December 31 1979, (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1980).

⁵⁹⁹ Letter from President Carter to President Nyerere, December 29 1979, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-128R-4-13-96-8, and Telegram from Secretary of State to Embassy Monrovia, Presidential Message, January 1980, WHCF, CO 129, Box CO-50, Carter Library.

Elections and Independence: Carter welcomes the dawn of the Mugabe era

While the President had expressed elation at the outcome of the settlement the situation on the ground in Zimbabwe-Rhodesia remained fraught with tension and potential pitfalls. On December 21, at the signing ceremony of the Lancaster House Agreement, Lord Carrington had stated that ‘Any party which systematically breaks the ceasefire, or indulges in widespread intimidation, will be disqualified from the election.’ Smith, ever suspicious of British intentions, questioned whether this implied that ‘breaches of the ceasefire which were not systematic, and intimidation which was not widespread, would be in order?’⁶⁰⁰

On December 24, ZANLA military commander Josiah Tongogara had been killed, ostensibly in a traffic accident while travelling on a road north of Maputo, Mozambique. Tongogara, a comparative moderate who had once worked as a garden hand for Agnes Smith, the mother of the future Rhodesian leader, believed in reconciliation to allow all parties to work together to build the new nation. Many white Rhodesians, including Smith and Van der Byl, suspected foul play due to his moderate views which did not fit with the vision of the extremists within ZANU-PF. Vance also noted the suspicions regarding the so called accidental death. He was replaced by Rex Nhongo, who in the words of Baxter, was a ‘far less scrupulous man’ who had no compunction with using the ZANLA guerrillas as a tool for political violence.⁶⁰¹

Governor Soames had given the PF guerrillas until January 2 to gather at the assembly points for monitoring. By January 4, approximately eighteen thousand

⁶⁰⁰ Smith, *Bitter Harvest*, 329.

⁶⁰¹ Memorandum for the President from Cyrus Vance, December 27 1979, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-128-14-14-18-0, Baxter, *Rhodesia*, 502-503, Smith, *Bitter Harvest*, 335 and Wessels, *PK Van der Byl*, 267.

insurgents had arrived at the camps, which according to the ZANLA and ZIPRA commanders, Nhongo and Lookout Masuku, accounted for the majority of their combatants. It was obvious, however, that large numbers of armed guerrillas remained at large to politicize and coerce the rural black population. This clear violation of the ceasefire arrangements was acknowledged by ZANU Press Secretary Edison Zvogbo several years later.⁶⁰²

The PF, however, was not the only group that actively violated the Lancaster House ceasefire. Auxiliaries loyal to Bishop Muzorewa and Sithole were permitted by the British to roam freely and were alleged to have been involved in political violence. The British also allowed the deployment of the Rhodesian security forces which permitted some factions to engage in various attacks including a February 3 assault by the Selous Scouts on a civilian bus which killed sixteen Africans and was intended to be blamed on ZANLA. Rhodesian elements also made several assassination attempts on the life of Mugabe.⁶⁰³

South Africa was also once again meddling in the affairs of its northern neighbor. At Lancaster House, according to Onslow, the decision of Prime Minister Muzorewa to step down from his office was primarily due to a promise from Pretoria to extensively support his campaign in the ensuing elections. As early as November 15, Smith was informed of the presence of South African troops accompanied by Puma helicopters and transport aircraft to ‘support’ the Muzorewa campaign. UNSC Resolution 460 had

⁶⁰² Memorandum for the President from Cyrus Vance, January 3 1980, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-128-15-1-2-0, Memorandum for Zbigniew Brzezinski from North-South (Funk), February 14 1980, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-13-27-9-1-7 and Baxter, *Rhodesia*, 499.

⁶⁰³ To Secretary of State from Embassy Lusaka, January 10 1980, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-15-82-7-50-2, Memorandum for the President from Cyrus Vance, January 30 1980, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-128-15-1-15-6, Jim Parker, *Assignment Selous Scouts: Inside Story of a Rhodesian Special Branch Officer*, (Alberton, South Africa: Galago Publishing, 2006), 276 and Baxter, *Rhodesia*, 500-504.

specifically directed the UK, as the administering power, to remove any foreign forces from Zimbabwe-Rhodesia. The South African military presence, however, comprising of six thousand soldiers with airpower and heavy artillery and operating up to one hundred kilometers from the border remained in place until late January.⁶⁰⁴

While playing no direct role in the process, the White House, though, worked diplomatically to ensure the success of the transitional period. Carter strongly urged London to abide by the Lancaster House settlement and pressed the Front Line leaders to ensure the success of the agreement. Carter stated that despite the enormous contribution the Front Line had already made it was necessary to ‘redouble collective efforts to ensure process moves to a successful outcome.’ The President also advised South African Prime Minister Botha that Pretoria should view the settlement as an opportunity to improve stability and build a long term peaceful future in the region. On February 2, the U.S. voted in favor of UNSC Resolution 463 which called on all parties to abide by Lancaster House and for Britain to fully implement the agreement.⁶⁰⁵

The transitional elections took the form of two separate ballots. On February 14, the white community voted for the twenty reserved seats all of which were won by the RF. Approximately two weeks later, between February 27-29, the black population went

⁶⁰⁴ To Secretary of State from Embassy Lusaka, January 10 1980, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-15-82-7-50-2, Memorandum for the President from Warren Christopher, January 25 1980, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-126-15-1-14-7, Memorandum for the President from Cyrus Vance January 30 1980, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-128-15-1-15-6, United Nations Security Council, *S/RES/460 (1979)*, December 21 1979.

http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/RES/460%281979%29, Sue Onslow, “The South African factor in Zimbabwe’s transition to independence,” in *Cold War in Southern Africa*, ed. Onslow, 120-121 and Smith, *Bitter Harvest*, 322.

⁶⁰⁵ To Secretary of State from Embassy Lusaka, January 10 1980, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-15-82-7-50-2, Letter to Prime Minister Botha from President Jimmy Carter, January 21 1980, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-128R-4-8-92-8, Memorandum for the President from Warren Christopher, January 25 1980, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-126-15-1-14-7, Letter from President Carter to President Nyerere, February 5 1980, Carter Library, RAC Project Number NLC-128R-4-13-96-8 and United Nations Security Council, *S/RES/463 (1980)*, February 2, 1980 http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/RES/463%281980%29.

to the voting booths. The elections were marred by violence and intimidation notably by supporters of ZANU-PF. A delegation from Freedom House observed that ‘the climate of fear permeating much of the country significantly reduced the freedom with which the voter cast his or her ballot.’ Nevertheless, the group also stated that the election represented a further step forward toward democracy.⁶⁰⁶

On March 4, it was announced that ZANU-PF had achieved a spectacular electoral victory. Mugabe had won an outright majority with a total of 57 seats in the new parliament. In comparison Nkomo possessed twenty and Muzorewa a mere three seats. The election results stunned the white population but British Election Commissioner Sir John Boyndon, however, felt that the election results were in general a reflection of the wishes of the population, this thought was also aired by Governor Soames. Despite pressure from leading white Rhodesians including Smith and General Peter Walls the British refused to disqualify Mugabe.⁶⁰⁷

Elements of the Rhodesian military had conspired to prevent Mugabe taking office in a bold plan known as Operation Quartz which would have involved the destruction of the ZANLA assembly points and attacks on ZANU-PF leaders including Mugabe himself. Indeed, according to Smith, on March 2, General Walls had assured him that ‘In the final event we will not allow Mugabe to win.’ For reasons that are still not

⁶⁰⁶ Memorandum for Zbigniew Brzezinski from The Situation Room, February 22 1980, Carter Library, RAC Project, Report of the Freedom House Mission To Observe The Common Roll Election in Southern Rhodesia (Zimbabwe), February 1980, WHCF, CO 129, Box CO-50, Carter Library, Lowry, “The impact of anti-communism on white Rhodesian political culture.c. 1920s-1980,” in *Cold War in Southern Africa*, ed. Onslow, 103, Baxter, *Rhodesia*, 504-505 and Smith, *Bitter Harvest*, 336-337.

⁶⁰⁷ Memorandum for Zbigniew Brzezinski from North-South (Funk), January 15 1980, Carter Library, RAC Project, Common Roll Election 1980 Interim Report by Sir John Boyndon M.C. British Election Commissioner, WHCF, CO 129, Box CO-50, Carter Library, Baxter, *Rhodesia*, 505, Lowry, “The impact of anti-communism on white Rhodesian political culture”, in *Cold War in Southern Africa*, ed. Onslow, 103, Onslow, “The South African factor in Zimbabwe’s transition to independence,” *Cold War in Southern Africa*, ed. Onslow, 123-125, Smith, *Bitter Harvest*, 340-344, Vance, *Hard Choices*, 301.

clear the operation never went ahead. Pretoria, was also actively plotting to thwart ZANU-PF from taking power. In a particularly audacious plan, South African military intelligence aimed to assassinate Mugabe along other international dignitaries including Prince Charles and Lord Soames during the April independence celebrations. The cynical intention was to provoke a brutal backlash against the white community which would then provide an excuse for the SADF to move in and restore order. The attempt was discovered and scotched by Rhodesian intelligence who were horrified by the prospect of the potential bloodbath.⁶⁰⁸

On April 18, Zimbabwe formally gained independence from Britain and Mugabe was appointed prime minister of the new nation. At the independence celebration guests included international figures such as Prince Charles and UN Secretary-General Waldheim while reggae legend Bob Marley entertained the crowds at the Rufaro Stadium. Smith, however, travelled to South Africa during the handover of power. In his memoirs the former Rhodesian prime minister stated that ‘The thought of being confronted by a scene where they (British politicians) would be wringing their hands in apparent pleasure, and fawning around a bunch of communist terrorists who had come into their position through intimidation, corruption and a blatantly dishonest election, was a situation against which my whole system would revolt.’⁶⁰⁹

Carter formally extended diplomatic recognition to Zimbabwe immediately after independence on April 18. The same day the White House also announced that Robert V.

⁶⁰⁸ Baxter, *Rhodesia*, 504-507, Onslow, “The South African factor in Zimbabwe’s transition to independence,” *Cold War in Southern Africa*, ed. Onslow, 125-126 and Smith, *Bitter Harvest*, 339.

⁶⁰⁹ Baxter, *Rhodesia*, 508 and Smith, *Bitter Harvest*, 356-359.

Keeley, formerly the Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs, would serve as the first U.S. Ambassador to Zimbabwe.⁶¹⁰

Shortly before the granting of independence, Prime Minister elect Mugabe expressed his gratitude to Carter for the key role that Washington had played in bringing peace to his country. African leaders were equally aware and appreciative of the American actions to bring majority rule to Zimbabwe. In a personal letter, Nyerere praised Carter for his assistance and leadership in aiding Zimbabwean independence and for his respect for other peoples and nations even when infinitely smaller and weaker than his own.⁶¹¹

The White House was clearly elated at having finally resolved the longstanding Rhodesian problem. In his memoirs, Vance expressed great encouragement at the outcome and praised Mugabe for his 'statemanship' and ability to swallow his 'repugnance of Smith and the Rhodesian Front.' U.S. Ambassador to the UN, Young, was to later observe that making a contribution to the creation of political and racial harmony in Zimbabwe was his most gratifying achievement during his tenure at the UN.⁶¹²

President Carter, himself, stated that the arrival of majority rule would bring a sense of dignity to a people who had for too long been subjugated to racial oppression and been deprived of their basic human rights. He also observed, at a White House briefing for civic and community leaders, that Mugabe who had been previously regarded as a Marxist and an enemy of the U.S. had become 'one of our strong and potentially

⁶¹⁰ United States Ambassador to Zimbabwe: Nomination of Robert V. Keeley, April 18 1980. Public Papers of the Presidents, Jimmy Carter, 1980-81, Book I January 1 to May 23 1980.

⁶¹¹ Letter from President Nyerere of Tanzania to President Carter via Embassy Dar-es-Salaam 19 November 1980, Jimmy Carter Presidential Library, RAC Project and Vance, *Hard Choices*, 301.

⁶¹² Jones, *Flawed Triumphs*, 73 and Vance, *Hard Choices*, 301.

very good and loyal friends.’ On August 27, Carter hosted a White House reception for the new Zimbabwean leader and praised Mugabe for his leadership of the now legally independent nation.⁶¹³

The Carter Years

The election of President Carter led to a fundamental change in U.S. policy towards Southern Africa which rang the death knell for white minority rule in Rhodesia. The new administration held little sympathy for the views of Smith and the RF viewing them as colonial era racists who wished to maintain political control at the expense of the indigenous black majority and in so doing were destabilizing an entire region. Even before his arrival in the Oval Office, Carter was determined to use American power as a lever to end UDI and white minority rule.

As early as March 1977, the importance of this issue to Carter was reflected in Presidential Directive 5 which focused on ways in which the U.S. could progressively transform both Rhodesian and South African society in order to achieve majority rule. In his first months in office Carter clearly demonstrated his intention to coerce Salisbury into making meaningful political changes. The White House aided the repeal of the Byrd Amendment, pressed allies to enforce sanctions and attempted to close the RIO.

The AAP, developed in coordination with London, insisted on a transfer of power to a British transitional administration and free and impartial elections on the basis of universal adult suffrage. The White House insisted that Washington would accept

⁶¹³ Democratic Congressional Campaign Dinner, Remarks at the Dinner, March 26 1980. Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States, Jimmy Carter, 1980-81, Book I January 1 to May 23 1980, and White House Briefing for Civic and Community Leaders. Remarks and a Question-and Answer Session, April 30 1980. Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States, Jimmy Carter, 1980-81, Book I January 1 to May 23 1980 and DeRoche, *Black, White and Chrome*, 287.

nothing less than an end to UDI and the immediate implementation of black majority rule. Carter's rejection of the Internal Settlement and active opposition to the Helms Amendment further reinforced this view and also made clear that any constitutional arrangements needed to involve the PF.

In June 1979, the presidential determination on Case-Javits, which found negatively against recognition or the lifting of sanctions, ended any chance that the new Zimbabwe-Rhodesia Government had of attaining international recognition or assistance. The decision was devastating to Salisbury not only diplomatically but also economically and psychologically. The success of the subsequent Lancaster House Agreement was due to a large extent to the groundwork laid by the AAP in preceding years as well as political assistance from Washington, both overt and covert, during the course of the negotiations.

Overall, the Carter era reinvigorated the prospects for peace by permanently injecting the diplomatic authority and credibility of the U.S. into the Rhodesian issue which had bedevilled Britain and the UN for almost fifteen years. American diplomatic leverage combined with a vehement resolve to end minority rule provided the sorely needed impetus to bring an end to the UDI era.

The fervent opposition of the White House to the continuation of white minority rule in Rhodesia stemmed chiefly from three principal factors. First of all, Carter held a deep ideological commitment to the doctrine of human rights which was shared by many of his principal advisers including Vance, Young and to a degree Brzezinski. The president was determined that human rights would attain a central importance in foreign policy decision making. In the opinion of the White House, minority rule and racial

inequality in Rhodesia deprived the black citizens of their basic humanitarian rights and needed to be ended as soon as possible.

Carter's commitment to racial equality in Rhodesia was heightened by his own childhood in the Jim Crow era South. As a young man he had personally observed the discrimination suffered by African-Americans in rural Georgia. As president he felt a responsibility, even perhaps a culpability, for the persecution of blacks in the southern states and was determined to push forward an agenda of civil rights and opposition to racism. In the judgment of the White House, there was a direct correlation between the domestic racism that had existed in the South and the white controlled governments of Southern Africa.

Finally, the White House was also motivated by the Cold War realities of the late 1970s. In the opinion of the administration any prolongation of the conflict would offer increasing opportunities for the advancement of Cuban and Soviet power in Southern Africa. The continued existence of the white controlled states in the region was not only the underlying cause of the bloodshed but also provided a validation for intervention by Havana or Moscow. Carter believed that the only way to end the war and rein in communist involvement was to develop a formula for free and fair elections, in which all parties could participate, followed by independence and genuine majority rule.

The Carter Presidency, indisputably played a crucial role in ending both the UDI era and white minority rule in Rhodesia. The president's sense of morality combined with Cold War rationale fully committed the diplomatic and economic might of the U.S. to the resolution of the Rhodesian question. The naissance of a black controlled and internationally recognized Zimbabwe was to a large extent due to the determination of

the White House to use American global power to achieve for indigenous Zimbabweans the goals of majority rule and independence.

CONCLUSION

The Rhodesian UDI, in the words of Ian Smith, ‘a blow for the preservation of justice, civilisation and Christianity’, presented a strategic, political, economic and moral quandary for U.S. policymakers. The ability of Salisbury to endure despite international condemnation, the open hostility of neighboring states and comprehensive UN sanctions meant that the Rhodesian question would remain a nettlesome issue for four successive presidential administrations.⁶¹⁴

Examining U.S. relations with Rhodesia, through the lens of the Oval Office, provides us with a better grasp and awareness of the pressure points which guided foreign policy during the 1960s and 70s. White House decision making regarding Salisbury demonstrates the changing geopolitics of the Cold War, the shifting patterns of global power, the rise of human rights, domestic race relations, economic concerns and the importance of strategic raw materials on foreign policy. Moreover, an analysis of American actions towards Rhodesia reveals the broader struggle between pragmatism and morality in U.S. foreign relations during the UDI era as well as the differing interpretations of what constituted a pragmatic or moral approach.

The Cold War, on both strategic and ideological levels, was a major element determining the nature of the approach to the Rhodesian rebellion. Washington, was engaged in a broad struggle for supremacy with the communist powers and was well aware of the importance of the Third World in potentially determining the outcome of the global contest. Indeed, Southern Africa was both economically and militarily vital to the

⁶¹⁴ From Salisbury to Commonwealth Relations Office, No.1707, 11th November 1965, PREM 13/545, National Archives, London, From Salisbury to Commonwealth Relations Office, No.1708, 11th November 1965, PREM 13/545, National Archives, London.

West and the CIA along with other organs of national intelligence frequently warned of the need to combat the growing Chinese, Cuban and Soviet influence in the region.

Cold War geopolitics, though, provided conflicting visions of how to approach the racial struggle in Southern Africa. On one hand, the vehement anti-communism, military strength and strategic location of the white minority regimes meant that the pragmatic if somewhat distasteful solution was to support Pretoria and Salisbury, covertly if necessary, as a bulwark against the global communist threat. The counter-argument, however, stated that the continued existence of white regimes, provided an opportunity for Moscow, Peking and Havana to align themselves with black African aspirations and therefore the continued existence of the white regimes facilitated communist gains in the region. By the mid 1970s, the increasing intensity of the Rhodesian Bush War combined with the expanding Cuban military presence in Africa lent further credence to the contention that the pragmatic approach was to accelerate the process of majority rule to prevent further communist meddling.

Trade, in particular, the strategic need for critical raw materials for both commercial and military purposes was also a pressing issue for policymakers during this era. Questions of pragmatism, however, also entered into economic considerations. The mining industry of Southern Africa not only offered a highly lucrative source of investment for a number of major U.S. corporations but also provided the American economy with a range of resources deemed critical to national security, most specifically chrome. Trade with the profitable markets of black Africa, however, was also burgeoning and in order to maintain these trade ties the U.S. needed to avoid the perception that Washington supported continued white rule in the region.

The changing constellations of power in international forums, notably the UN, also provided a conundrum for policymakers. The increasing power and influence of the Afro-Asian bloc, meant that the U.S. sought Third World support to advance its global objectives, including the containment of communism. Given that the issue of continued white political control in Rhodesia was of utmost importance to black Africa, Washington needed to be seen to support effective measures to end UDI. Policy makers, however, sought to avoid radical actions that could lead to an economic or military confrontation with South Africa to the detriment of Western interests.

By the mid 1970s the rise of the global human rights movement had become a potent force in U.S. foreign policy. The growing importance of human rights, specifically the right of a population to choose how it is governed stimulated greater American participation in seeking a resolution to the Rhodesian problem. Nevertheless, within the U.S. differing moral interpretations existed of how the question of human rights applied to Rhodesia. From one point of view not only did Salisbury suppress the political rights of its citizens, but the racial discrimination experienced by black Rhodesians also violated their basic human rights. An opposing standpoint, though, highlighted the fact that the white Rhodesians also had human rights and would potentially suffer social, economic and political injustices in a black ruled Zimbabwe.

On a pragmatic level, domestic race relations, specifically the rise of African-American political power also impacted foreign relations with Africa. Civil rights groups and liberals, including leading political figures such as Martin Luther King and Andrew Young linked the liberation of black Africans from white minority rule with the struggle for racial justice in America itself. As African-American influence grew in importance

the occupants of the White House became ever more conscious of the need to develop foreign policies which would not provoke a backlash from a large domestic minority. Nevertheless, the occupants of the Oval Office were also cognizant that white voters remained an electoral majority and that Rhodesia enjoyed considerable public support among white Americans especially in the South.

White House policy towards Salisbury encapsulated the U.S. approach to foreign relations during the 1960s and 1970s and revealed the broader factors that shaped decision making. These international and domestic dynamics at times intersected with each other but equally often competed and jockeyed for supremacy. The case of Rhodesia, further highlights the struggle between morality and pragmatism when formulating policy as well as the competing views of how to develop a pragmatic or moral approach to foreign relations. The various presidential administrations, however, differed greatly in how they prioritized and sought to manage the confluence of these determinants.

The LBJ Administration opposed UDI on both moral and pragmatic grounds. President Johnson, a strong supporter of the Civil Rights movement, possessed an inherent moral commitment to racial equality that opposed the continuation of white political supremacy whether in the cotton fields of the Deep South or the veld of Southern Africa. On a practical level, the White House was also aware that Washington needed unequivocally to oppose UDI in order to retain Third World support for its Cold War aims as well as to protect its economic interests in black Africa.

Pragmatic considerations, however, also dictated that the U.S. avoided radical actions against Rhodesia. Washington possessed close geopolitical and economic ties to

Salisbury's de facto allies in Lisbon and Pretoria. LBJ was not prepared to support any measures that would lead to a direct confrontation with NATO ally Portugal or countenance the possibility of an economic or military confrontation with South Africa. Johnson was also deeply concerned that any actions that escalated racial conflict in Southern Africa would intensify tensions in the U.S. itself and undermine the progress his presidency had achieved through the passage of the Civil Rights and Voting Rights Acts.

The LBJ years, therefore, represented a balancing act between the moral and pragmatic rationale behind opposing UDI and a rational awareness that extreme measures against Salisbury would be detrimental to American interests internationally and domestically. The U.S. while remaining publicly critical of UDI and supportive of British diplomacy nevertheless adopted a cautious and guarded stance on the Rhodesian problem. .

Under President Nixon, White House thinking on Rhodesia was dominated by hard-headed calculations relating to Cold War rationale and economic interest. For Nixon and National Security Adviser Kissinger the vehement anti-communism of Salisbury and the vast mineral wealth, notably chrome, within Rhodesia ordained the necessity of closer ties with the white minority regime. The Cold War, though, also dictated an avoidance of full normalization of relations with Salisbury which would have aggravated ties with the British and allowed the communists to portray themselves as the friends of black liberation. The White House, however, had little interest in the moral question of majority rule and indeed, on racial grounds, Nixon expressed greater sympathy for the white Rhodesians than the black population.

During the Nixon era, White House policy towards Rhodesia embodied pragmatic considerations of real politik with little concern for the moral questions raised by UDI or the continued existence of white minority rule. The Nixon Administration, therefore, adopted a policy of 'limited association' with Salisbury, while avoiding official American recognition, and overtly violated international law by formally allowing the importation of strategic and critical Rhodesian minerals into the U.S.

The Ford Administration signified the first occasion when pragmatic and moral considerations came together to shape American relations with Rhodesia. On a moral level, President Ford, possessed a deep sense of humanity and commitment to achieving racial justice that led to his public and private opposition to white minority rule. The escalation of the Cold War in Southern Africa brought a less altruistic rationale for seeking a transition to majority rule. The MPLA victory in Angola, supported by Cuban combat troops, led to fears in Washington of the creation of a radical anti-Western bloc in the region. It was deemed essential to facilitate the establishment of a moderate black government in Rhodesia in order to thwart further intervention by Moscow or Havana.

The Ford years, consequently, marked the beginning of significant American involvement in the Rhodesia problem and by the time that Ford left office, the power and prestige of the U.S. had been firmly positioned behind the objective of majority rule. Indeed, it is highly noteworthy that by 1976 Ford was prepared to alienate his electoral base in the Republican primaries during an election year in an attempt to bring peace and stability to Rhodesia. The importance accorded to this issue by the White House represented the significance of the confluence of both moral and pragmatic determinants to end UDI.

. Under President Carter, relations with Rhodesia were characterized by a vehement hostility towards the regime in Salisbury. The vociferous opposition towards white Rhodesia adopted by the Carter Administration stemmed from the alignment of international and domestic pressure points, both moral and pragmatic in nature, behind the goal of achieving majority rule in an independent Zimbabwe. For Carter, a deeply held ideological commitment to human rights, shaped in part by his childhood in the Deep South witnessing the injustices of Jim Crow segregation, meant that on moral grounds it was imperative that U.S. power was used to end the vestiges of racial discrimination in Southern Africa.

The geopolitics of the Cold War, continued to offer a more pragmatic rationale for greater U.S. intervention. The Rhodesian Bush War was escalating in intensity, providing a pretext for greater involvement by Moscow or Havana and the White House believed that only a genuine transition to majority rule would end the potential for communist expansion. Domestic dynamics also shaped Carter's approach, specifically the necessity of maintaining the African-American vote which had proved critical in his electoral triumph further stimulated the need for a strong approach against Salisbury. This combination of geopolitical, moral and electoral factors led the Carter Administration to implement a course towards Salisbury that unquestionably brought an end to UDI.

Rhodesia, during the UDI era, was in many ways a unique case for American policy makers. A tiny landlocked Southern African country whose white minority had engaged in an anti-colonial rebellion in order to continue to suppress the political rights of the indigenous majority and thus remain in political control of the nation beyond the end of formal colonial rule. Rhodesia, however, was representative of the broader racial

struggle for political power that dominated the region until the dismantling of apartheid in the early 1990s.

U.S. policy towards Salisbury was therefore indicative of the approach adopted by Washington towards the other members of the 'White Redoubt'. Both Lisbon and Pretoria were fervently anti-communist and while Portugal was a NATO ally, the strategic location of South Africa fueled the argument, oft repeated by the National Party leadership, that South Africa was a vital Western partner in the fight against global communism. Overt American support, however, for continued white rule, would as with Rhodesia, hand the moral advantage to the communist nations who backed the liberation movements.

The close economic ties between South Africa and the U.S. further complicated relations with the apartheid state. South Africa, like Rhodesia, possessed large deposits of valuable or strategic minerals, including gold, diamonds and chrome, and American companies were prominent investors in the profitable mining industry. At the UN, however, as with Salisbury, Lisbon and Pretoria were frequent targets of the Afro-Asian bloc and Washington needed to strike the correct balance between appeasing the black African nations and avoiding diplomatic measures that would damage geopolitical or trade relations with white ruled Africa.

As was the case with Rhodesia, the rise of the human rights movement placed further pressure on Washington to take stronger measures against South Africa and the Portuguese Territories. Indeed, frequently Pretoria not Salisbury was the principal object of criticism. The rise in African-American political influence also pressured the White

House to adopt a far tougher line against all the remaining defenders of the laager in Southern Africa.

By examining U.S. relations with Rhodesia, one can also glean a picture of the role that Africa played during the wider Cold War struggle for supremacy between Washington, along with its Western allies, and the communist world. In the geopolitics of the Cold War, the military balance of power, especially the possession of nuclear weapons on both sides, meant that direct confrontation between Washington and Moscow was not only unwinnable but would serve to assure the mutual destruction of both superpowers.

The Third World, therefore became increasingly important as both the Americans and Soviets sought to gain the balance of power by attaining greater influence in the periphery through diplomacy, economic aid and proxy wars. The vast natural resources of the African continent which included large deposits of critical and strategic minerals along with the increasing strength of the independent black nations at the UN led both the Western powers and the communist bloc to seek a regional order which catered to their interests.

In the case of Washington, the successive presidential administrations sought to prevent the spread of communism especially in Southern Africa, a region that seemed firmly in the Western orbit. During the Sixties and early Seventies, the occupants of the Oval Office sought to counter Marxist influence through the promotion of free market capitalism as well as financial assistance and support for anti-communist regimes that opposed radicalism and were willing to act as regional policemen to maintain the status

quo. The internal practices of such de facto allies, including Zaire and South Africa, were of less consequence than a mutual loathing of international communism.

In the mid 1970s, there was a marked shift towards the achievement of racial justice in the region as a means to combat the growth in communist power and prevent further overt intervention by Moscow or Havana. Thus Ford and Carter sought an end to the Rhodesian impasse and the latter championed the right of the guerrilla groups to participate in the electoral process. It is worth noting, however, that the White House continued to utilize the authority of Pretoria to pursue its anti-communist agenda. Both Ford and Carter enlisted the help of the apartheid regime to bring about majority rule in Rhodesia and Ford colluded with the pariah state in its invasion of Angola. Indeed, over a decade later President Ronald Reagan was vocal in his support for the white South Africans. Until the end of the Cold War, Pretoria remained for many Americans a stronghold of anti-communism in a region filled with untrustworthy Marxist despots.

From their perspective, the communist nations viewed Africa as a fertile battleground to challenge Western interests and compete for the allegiance of the Third World. Unlike the Western nations, the communist bloc possessed few economic or political ties with the colonial administrations or white minority regimes and could portray themselves as the supporters of freedom. Policymakers in Havana, Moscow and Peking, for both ideological and pragmatic reasons, sought to align themselves with the cause of black liberation. By the early 1960s, the Chinese and Soviets were increasingly active in cultivating diplomatic ties with the newly independent black states and offering tangible aid to the insurgent movements. Havana, motivated by its own sense of cultural,

racial, and ideological solidarity with the anti-imperialist black guerrillas, dispatched Cuban soldiers to train and fight alongside their African comrades.

By the mid 1970s, Moscow and especially Havana felt secure enough to intervene militarily in support of favored leaders or movements who were considered to espouse Marxist ideals. Cuba was particularly active in Africa dispatching advisers or combat troops to Equatorial Guinea, Ethiopia, Mozambique and most notably Angola. While portraying themselves as the true supporters of African liberation both Cuba and the USSR supported repressive socialist regimes or radical nationalist dictators so long as the governments in question displayed sufficient anti-Western credentials.

It is important to note, however, that African nations were not merely passive actors in the Cold War struggle. In the decades following their independence many black African leaders were more than cognizant of their ability to play off the opposing powers in order to achieve their own national objectives. The growing power of the Afro-Asian bloc at the UN and its role in other international organizations, including the Non-Aligned Movement, strengthened the ability of black Africa to pressure both Moscow and Washington on diplomatic, economic and psychological levels.

For their part, the defenders of the 'White Redoubt' used Cold War rhetoric, especially the threat posed by communism to Southern Africa, in order to garner Western support, discredit the black liberation movements and divert international focus from the question of the legitimacy of white minority rule. It is significant, however, to note that while this was in many ways a self-serving propaganda tool, both the Rhodesian Front government in Salisbury and the National Party leadership in Pretoria were fervently anti-

communist and in their worldview saw their nations as bastions of Western civilization under siege from the forces of international communism.

At the broadest level, Rhodesia also set a precedent of how the U.S. would respond to the presence of 'rogue' or 'pariah' states both during the Cold War and in the post Cold War era. Rogue states are excluded from international society because they subscribe to standards of behavior that are considered egregious violations of the salient values of the existing international system. The most common determinants for exclusion are the pursuance of weapons of mass destruction, sponsoring of terrorism or most pertinently in the case of Rhodesia, a lack of democratic governance and violations of human rights. For American policy makers such regimes may not present a direct threat to the U.S. itself but to the security of regions vital to Washington and as threats that jeopardize international stability in a fundamental way.

Rhodesia, condemned as a pariah state, indeed a threat to international security, at the UN and by the vast majority of the global community, due to Salisbury's refusal to accept the value system of the post World War Two era, helped to shape the American approach in dealing with future rogue states. Official condemnation, the imposition of bilateral and UN sanctions while avoiding excessive damage to strategic interests has been representative of U.S. policy towards other pariahs including Iran, North Korea and apartheid South Africa. It should be noted, however, that the stance adopted towards Salisbury, especially the question of the use of force, was moderated for both racial and geopolitical reasons and is thus reflective of Washington's approach towards apartheid South Africa and to a degree Israel as opposed to the more aggressive line taken with other international 'rogues' such as Iraq and Syria.

Overall, White House policy towards Rhodesia during the UDI era reveals the core determinants which guided foreign relations during the 1960s and 1970s. The choices made by the occupants of the Oval Office demonstrate the influence of Cold War geopolitics, the shifting constellations of global power, the importance of maintaining access to strategic raw materials, domestic race relations and the human rights movement on decision making. Furthermore, using Rhodesia as an illuminative lens exposes the interaction between pragmatism and morality in formulating foreign policy during the UDI era as well as the competing visions of what constituted pragmatism or morality.

Analyzing policy towards Salisbury also reveals the U.S. attitude towards the presence of the broader 'White Redoubt' in Southern Africa as well as other international pariahs and highlights the role that Africa played in the global strategic game of the Cold War. Rhodesia offers an interpretive prism through which one can view the changing nature of the American approach to global relations and the dynamics which shaped that process.

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CHAPTERS

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