

American Committee on Africa

-Position Paper for the 1972 Campaign-

United States policy towards southern Africa must become a major issue in the 1972 campaign.

The present Administration, often with the support of Congress, is leading the American people toward new Vietnams in Africa with the cataclysmic potential of race war.

In the past four years the direction of United States policy has shifted from a period of criticism of the colonial and racist regimes of southern Africa to a de facto alliance with them.

The people of southern Africa are in revolt against the conditions under which they live: 35 million Africans in South Africa, Namibia (formerly South West Africa), Zimbabwe (Rhodesia), Angola, and Mozambique (and Guinea-Bissau further north) are oppressed by a white minority of five million. They are denied the most basic human right to live in their own homes with their families; to have a voice in their conditions of work and wages; to equal training, educational and vocational opportunities; to unsegregated access to public facilities and cultural and athletic events; to freedom of person, speech, and press; and to participation in the government that rules them.

In Angola, Guinea-Bissau, and Mozambique, liberation forces have gained control of from one-fifth to two-thirds of their countries while they face some 150,000 Portuguese troops with NATO training and supplies.

In Namibia, a prolonged general strike of contract workers and a nation-wide protest led by church and ethnic leaders against South African control have demanded world action to match world promises of independence.

In Zimbabwe, Africans have united to defy bannings, arrests, and death to say "No" to British-Rhodesian settlement terms designed to keep the white minority in control indefinitely.

In South Africa, continuous political trials reveal that opposition cannot be crushed even by terror. Student protest, spreading from the black colleges to the white, is confronting the government with the fact that the coming generation will not be intimidated.

Position Paper-2

We therefore propose

- * that the United States end all forms of support for the unjust and unrepresentative regimes of southern Africa;
- * that no candidates for office in 1972 be supported unless they agree to end such support.

The United States and the Portuguese Empire

Although the Senate is challenging President Nixon's unilateral agreement with Portugal for the lease of naval and air bases in the Azores, it is clear that Portugal will still receive at least \$400 million in credits which its war-strained economy greatly needs. Previously the Administration had authorized the sales of 707s and 747s, used for troop transport, to Portugal and of Bell helicopters for use in Mozambique. The U.S. sends \$2.4 million in direct military aid to Portugal each year, and both directly and through NATO it provides training for Portuguese forces and exchange of military missions and information, including anti-guerrilla strategy. With government sanction, Gulf Oil's investment in Angola has provided more than \$30 million in taxes and credits for Portugal's war budget, and the U.S. remains Angola's best customer for coffee.

We propose

- * ending the U.S.-Portugal military alliance and evacuating the Azores;
- * discouraging U.S. investment in Portuguese-held territory;
- * assistance to the liberation movements in Angola, Guinea-Bissau, and Mozambique;
- * support for the anti-colonial policies of the United Nations.

The United States and the Sell-Out of Zimbabwe (Rhodesia)

The United States at first supported economic sanctions against the illegal minority regime in Rhodesia voted by the United Nations at the request of Britain. By 1971, sanctions had weakened the Rhodesian economy so much that the regime reopened negotiations with Britain. At this crucial point, lobbying efforts led by Union Carbide and Foote Mineral Company, which control 90 per cent of Rhodesian chrome output, persuaded Congress to permit importation of the chrome despite a large stockpile.

African spokesmen repeatedly requested continuation and strengthening of sanctions to keep the pressure on the ruling minority. Yet as the people of Zimbabwe organized to reject the British-Rhodesian settlement, the United States joined Portugal and South Africa as the only open violators of U.N. sanctions.

Position Paper-3

We propose

- * re-imposition of the embargo on chrome and other Rhodesian products while minority rule continues;
- * U.S. assistance to the U.N. in enforcing the embargo;
- * no support for a British sell-out; no independence before majority rule;
- * support for the African majority in the struggle for majority rule.

The United States and the Independence of Namibia

The United States has accepted the Advisory Opinion of the International Court of Justice (June 21, 1971) that South Africa occupies Namibia illegally and that states have a duty to refrain from actions that help South Africa maintain its illegal control. But U.S. actions have been limited to a warning (prior to the Court statement) that new U.S. investments in Namibia would not be protected against the claims of a future government. This, of course, did not help strikers at U.S.-owned Tsumeb, largest base mineral mine in the territory.

In Namibia, despite ruthless police-state rule, widely representative African leaders have called for independence for a united Namibia, rejecting the Bantustans and apartheid of South African rule. Early in 1972, South Africa moved in massive military forces to crush an insurrection in Ovamboland which followed the general strike of contract labor throughout the territory.

We propose

- * U.S. action to implement the International Court's opinion starting with full support for U.N. resolutions on Namibia and for the U.N. Council on Namibia as the transitional administering authority for the territory;
- * insistence on independence and majority rule for an undivided Namibia;
- * discouragement of U.S. corporate activity in Namibia through refusal of credits for taxes paid to South Africa; denial of claims arising under Namibian franchises granted by South Africa, and similar measures;
- * aid to Namibians seeking education and training in preparation for independence; to strikers and others in need of legal and material assistance; and to the liberation movement.

The United States and the Stability of Apartheid

Despite U.S. verbal condemnation of apartheid, support for the South African regime has grown more open under the Nixon Administration.

The U.S. favors South Africa by granting it a sugar subsidy of about \$5 million a year; by close scientific ties with South Africa's all-white atomic set-up; by maintaining three space-tracking stations there, and similar beneficial relations.

The highest level contact in a decade between the two nations involved Vice-President Agnew and Assistant Secretary of State Newsom.

Licenses were granted in 1971 for the sale in South Africa of light aircraft and helicopters, easily convertible for military use. About \$3 million a year in military spare parts goes to South Africa. And more than 300 U.S. corporations continue to strengthen the South African economy by their participation and knowhow.

The U.S. calls for "communication" to promote change in South Africa with the implication that the destiny of the African majority can be determined by increasingly close relations between white officials of the two countries. It accepts official violence as a means of maintaining ruthless racist power; yet it insists that violence is not acceptable as a method of change in southern Africa.

We propose

- * an end to all U.S. government support for South Africa, as indicated above;
- * discouragement of private investment and other relationships with South Africa;
- * support for the anti-apartheid policies of the United Nations including financial support for the Trust Fund, refugee programs, etc.;
- * aid for political prisoners; assistance to refugees and the southern African countries that shelter them;
- * material and political support for the opponents of apartheid.

Neutrality in Southern Africa

The claim that the U.S. is "neutral" in southern Africa is sometimes made in Washington. That claim must be examined in the light of the misuse of U.S. power in Southeast Asia, starting from a far smaller stake than Americans already have in southern Africa, and as part of a pattern of U.S. support for reaction, monarchies, and dictatorships around the world.

Position Paper-5

The U.S. is not neutral in southern Africa. Its economic and political power, and increasingly its military power, is aligned with the status quo. Vested economic interests are growing, and increasing their pressure for support of things as they are. Nor can the United States, because of the financial, industrial, and military power concentrated in it, fail to influence events either by action or by inaction.

U.S. policy should reflect the understanding that the future of southern Africa lies in the hands of the people of southern Africa.

All military support should be withdrawn from the colonial and racist regimes; this should be interpreted realistically, not technically, so as to include planes, spare parts, electronics.

Legislation in Congress to stop special favors for South Africa, to limit the activities of U.S. corporations in southern Africa, and to support the anti-colonial, anti-apartheid policies of the United Nations, should be supported.

The U.S. must support majority rule and national independence in practice as it does in theory.

Every candidate for office in 1972 must be measured by his/her willingness to change U.S. policy in Africa.

American Committee on Africa
164 Madison Avenue
New York, N.Y. 10016

June, 1972