

THE WASHINGTON OFFICE ON AFRICA

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Dear Friends,

The House and Senate versions of the foreign aid bill contain important provisions allocating funds for famine relief to the drought-stricken areas of West Africa and requiring Presidential reporting on the use of U.S. aid to Portugal. We need to urge House and Senate conferees to retain these sections in their strongest forms.

The West African famine is not on the front pages as much as it used to be, but international aid is still very much needed. It is true that some rains have come, but they have been far from adequate in many areas, particularly in the more northern countries of Mauritania, Chad, Niger and Mali, where immediate and long-term aid is desperately needed. The \$30 million in additional aid which is provided for in the House version will be used, mostly for short- and medium-term relief in areas of well-digging and irrigation, improvement of livestock, and rehabilitation of the road network which has been damaged by hard use from transport of disaster-relief supplies.

Section 639 (A) of the House version of the Mutual Development and Co-operation Act of 1973 affirms the response of the U.S. Government in providing relief and authorizes an additional \$30 million for relief, rehabilitation and assistance. Section 639 (B) expresses Congress' endorsement of long-term planning for the preservation and development of the Sahel region in co-operation with international and regional organizations. The House Foreign Affairs Committee approved these measures unanimously in July and the full House passed them as part of the foreign aid bill.

Section 20 of the Senate foreign aid bill, on the other hand, contains only a general recommendation that the President consult with international organizations to report to Congress on solutions to the famine and propose how they can be carried out by multilateral organizations. Senator Humphrey decided not to ask for additional relief funds when the bill reached the Senate floor because of fears that it would not gain sufficient support in the face of a strong Senate sentiment for cutting the bill and because of Nixon's recent veto of a domestic disaster relief bill.

We need to urge the House conferees to press for maintaining Section 639 as written in the House version as part of the conference report. Senate conferees need to be pressed to accept the additional allocation of \$30 million for immediate relief and the stronger statement on long-term aid.

The Senate passed the Tunney Amendment to the foreign aid bill on October 2nd, providing that the President make a report as soon as practicable after the passage of the bill on use by Portugal in its military activities in the African territories of aid, defense materials and services, agricultural commodities and items that have a military

application for which validated export licenses are granted. Aid, sales and licences would be suspended if the President determined that Portugal had used these items in its African wars.

For years Americans concerned about United States military support for the Portuguese Government against the people of Angola, Mozambique and Guinea-Bissau have been trying to strengthen the implementation of the arms embargo against Portugal. The Tunney Amendment is an important step in this direction, particularly because of the inclusion of goods requiring export licenses. The United States has exported on this basis to Portugal Boeing 707's, a 747, Bell helicopters and Rockwell light aircraft, and herbicides in spite of continued reports that the Portuguese military forces are using U.S. planes for troop transport and reconnaissance and U.S. herbicides to destroy food crops of villages suspected of aiding freedom fighters.

Andrew Young introduced a similar amendment to the House foreign aid bill in July, but it is not as forceful as the Tunney version on two counts: 1) the House amendment requires the President to report on aid to Portugal only once rather than annually, as the Senate version stipulates, and 2) the House version does not include the most important section on goods that have a military application which require export licenses

Please urge the House conferees to accept the Tunney Amendment in its entirety.

The Senate conferees on the Mutual Development and Co-operation Act are: William Fulbright (Ark.), Frank Church (Idaho), Hubert Humphrey (Minn.), George Aiken (Vt.), and Clifford Case (N.J.). The House conferees are Thomas Morgan (Penn. -22), Clement Zablocki (Wis.-4), Wayne Hays (Ohio-15), Dante Fascell (Fla.-5), William Maillard (Calif.-6), Peter Frelinghuysen (N.J.-5), and William Broomfield (Mich.-19).

Sincerely,

Christine Root