

Memorandum to: Concerned organizations and individuals

From: George M. Houser

Re: The Rhodesian crisis

The crisis brought about by the Unilateral Declaration of Independence in Rhodesia has again reached the critical point. The basis for the new phase has been triggered by the widely publicized resolution of the April 9th Security Council meeting which authorized the United Kingdom to use force if necessary to stop oil tankers from discharging their cargo in Mozambique for transshipment to Rhodesia through the pipeline. Up to this point action by the Security Council had called only for voluntary economic sanctions by member states.

This Security Council action is significant for at least two reasons: first, Chapter 7 of the U.N. Charter has in effect been invoked, although not explicitly so. Article 41 of Chapter 7 states that "the Security Council may decide what measures not involving use of armed force are to be employed to give effect to its decisions..." This resolution asks all member States to support the U.K. in her forceful action. Second, the possibility has been opened up for action against any countries involved in trade with Rhodesia, though at this point, only oil is in question. This means that, by extending the principle that has already been adopted, action can be taken by member States of the U.N. against South Africa and Portugal, if they continue trading with Rhodesia.

Although the U.N. Security Council action dealt specifically with oil, it must be borne in mind that economic sanctions against Rhodesia's regime cannot be made ultimately effective by just stopping oil trade. Rhodesia depends on oil for only 27 percent of her domestic power. The bulk of Rhodesia's power needs come from coal, of which Rhodesia has vast resources. Oil sanctions, however, symbolize the international will to end the rebellion.

More than symbolic intentions are needed, however. Effective action, in which the role of the U.S. is crucial, must be taken. Americans who feel deeply that the continued existence of a minority white regime in Rhodesia represents a threat to the peace must make their opinions known to their government now.

We recommend letters, telegrams, phone calls, or personal conferences with the White House and the Department of State along the following three lines:

1. The U.S. should vigorously support mandatory (rather than voluntary) economic sanctions by all member states against the Rhodesian regime.

2. The U.S. should invoke the U.N. Participation Act passed by Congress, authorizing the President to stop all trade with Rhodesia in cooperation with U.N. efforts under Chapter 7 of the Charter. Our government, although it has requested voluntary compliance from American private companies trading with Rhodesia, denies it has legal authority to make compliance mandatory. The U.N. Participation Act supplies this authority.

3. We should demand U.S. support for an extension of this mandatory action to include action against the South African and Portuguese governments which are cooperating with the Rhodesian regime. More specifically, the Security Council's April 9th Resolution should be extended to tankers going to South African ports. This action should continue until the evidence is clear that South Africa is not permitting oil to go overland to Rhodesia.

We hope that this position will be impressed upon our government without delay. The only possible next step, if this course of action is not adopted, would be the use of armed force under Article 42 of the U.N. Charter, Chapter 7.