
WASHINGTON NOTES ON AFRICA



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CABRAL IN WASHINGTON

Amilcar Cabral, Secretary-General of the African Party for the Independence of Guinea and Cape Verde (PAIGC), was the opening witness before Rep. Charles Diggs' House subcommittee on Africa on Feb. 26.

Cabral, one of Africa's most prominent revolutionary leaders, opened his testimony with a personal salute to Chairman Diggs for his activity in presenting to Congress the vital questions concerning African liberation movements.

"Our presence here today," he told Congressman Diggs, "is to salute you, and through you to salute that part of the American nation which supports our struggle..."

Concerning the seven year struggle for independence waged by the PAIGC in Guinea-Bissau, the revolutionary leader said: "We are not fighting the Portuguese people. We are fighting Portuguese colonial domination. We are fighting for our independence."

Exhibiting photographs showing the effects on the people of Guinea of the napalm attacks made by the Portuguese, Cabral told the subcommittee it appears that the U.S. supports Portuguese colonialism, "because the weapons used against us come, in large part, from the U.S. through NATO."

Some of the photos and film brought by Mr. Cabral showed captured napalm bombs with the inscription: property of the U.S. Air Force.

The liberation force, led by Amilcar Cabral, has won more than two-thirds of Guinea-Bissau, a country of 800,000 people sandwiched between Senegal and the Republic of Guinea. The Portuguese are concentrated in the urban centers and along the coast.

"We are going to win this fight," said Cabral. "We must win."

THE PAIGC POSITION

During his Washington visit, Cabral explained the position of his party in a series of public and private meetings, including a luncheon seminar for a group of Congressional aides and a meeting with Victor Reuther and members of the international affairs department of the United Auto Workers.

Cabral said the military operations of the liberation forces perform "continuous attacks against Portuguese intrenched camps and against occupied urban centers."

The main airport of the country, located at Bissau was attacked on Feb. 19, 1969. In the past year, a succession of guerrilla attacks forced the Portuguese to evacuate 19 permanent camps including the important installations at Sanconha, Medjo, Cocoa, Madina-Boe, Beli, Bandjara, Xexe, Contabane, Gangenia, and Gan-Carnes.

"To give an idea about the intensity and frequency of these attacks," Cabral outlined, "it is enough to point out that in 1969 alone, we have carried out 500 attacks on these bases." To date, he said in his Washington reports, only the cities of Bafata, Gabu, and Bissau have not yet been attacked.

In a 1969 report to the Liberation Committee of the Organization of African Unity, Cabral forecast a new operation against the urban centers which remain under Portuguese control. Commando operations against the Portuguese towns and cities have already occurred at Catio, Bula, Farim, at Bolama which is located on the island of Bolama, and in other urban centers.

Amilcar Cabral and the PAIGC believe these commando raids against the urban centers will be the knock-out blow in their war for liberation from Portuguese domination.

ROGERS IN AFRICA, NIXON AT HOME

During his recent tour of Africa, Secretary of State William P. Rogers gave the impression that the U.S. would initiate a policy favoring the liberation struggles underway on the Continent.

Speaking to a conference of U.S. ambassadors in Kinshasa on Feb. 17, Mr. Rogers said the U.S. would identify with the "unfinished business" of winning African liberation. But, in this speech which was also intended for African ears as well as the assembly of ambassadors, Rogers called upon the African peoples to achieve their freedom struggle through "peaceful" change.

It is reported that when Zambia President Kenneth Kaunda met Secretary Rogers in Lusaka, the African leader made a strong case for U.S. pressure on Lisbon, Salisbury, and Pretoria in the interests of black freedom, and also to bolster Zambia's position in southern Africa caught between the liberation struggles of Zimbabwe and Mozambique.

According to this report, Rogers countered that the U.S. could not solve the problems in southern Africa and would, under no circumstances, assist in a forceful solution to those problems. Meanwhile in Washington, President Nixon added some nice-sounding words about African aspirations for freedom. In his report to Congress on foreign policy, on Feb. 18, Nixon talked about, "our traditional support of self-determination and Africa's historic ties with so many of our own citizens..."

(This presidential pronouncement comes at the same time the Administration maintains a "southern strategy" in domestic affairs that includes a roll-back in government guarantees of citizenship rights for Americans of African descent.)

More important, it would seem, as an indication of a White House attitude toward the African future is what Mr. Nixon said about African economic development:

"There is much to be gained...if we and others can help devise ways in which the more developed African states can share their resources with their African neighbors," declared the President in his foreign policy message.

This official nod to Pretoria without serious expectation of a South African partnership with the emerging black African states must have been cheering to the white minority ruling cliques in southern Africa.

Reacting to the Nixon message, the Eastern Province Herald of Port Elizabeth, told South Africans on Feb. 19, the U.S. Chief Executive had "unveiled a southern Africa policy based on three principles --abhorrence of apartheid, implacable opposition to violence, and strong support for the Lusaka Manifesto of independent black states."

Still, contradictions between words and actions abound; for if the U.S. government believes that concessions to southern racists (Stennis, Eastland, Thurmond, and others) is a proper strategy at home, how can it even "identify" with African struggles for freedom in Guinea-Bissau, Angola, Zimbabwe, Mozambique, and in South Africa?

"RHODESIA" DECLARES REPUBLIC

Ian Smith announced in Salisbury, March 2, that his white minority regime was a republic, based on racial segregation,

and with no further ties to Britain.

On Feb. 27, White House press secretary Ronald L. Ziegler was asked by a reporter how the severance of Salisbury's last ties to London would affect the status of the U.S. Consulate. Ziegler replied: "We intend to maintain our mission in Rhodesia, but I would like to emphasize this does not and will not constitute recognition of the regime in Salisbury." Then, four hours later, Ziegler issued the following statement: "There has been no decision at present regarding the status of our consular mission in Rhodesia. We are reviewing the situation in light of rapidly moving developments in Rhodesia." When asked to clarify the reference to "rapidly moving developments..." he explained: "I mean the anticipated change of government on Tuesday."

(The declaration of the Republic became effective at one minute after midnight, Monday, March 2, 1970, Salisbury time, 5:01 pm, EST, Sunday, March 1.)

The proclamation from Salisbury dissolved the parliament and set April 10 as the date for new elections to the House of Assembly which will have 66 members, 50 of whom will be whites, and 16 black representatives.

The black population of the country is 4.5 million persons. The white minority numbers about 240,000.

The new "constitution" of the country also divides the land according to the apartheid philosophy: over 60 per cent of the land will be white-owned. Most of the Africans are farmers.

WILL NIXON RECOGNIZE RHODESIA?

The decision to maintain the U.S. Consulate in Salisbury beyond the proclamation of the "Rhodesian Republic" is certain to increase reports that the Nixon administration is going to recognize the Smith regime in time.

On Jan. 18, the London Sunday Telegraph reported that Washington was preparing to recognize the racist regime. Although the U.S. Embassy in London denied the report, the State Dept. does not deny that the subject was one of the few points of disagreement between Nixon and Prime Minister Harold Wilson during the British leader's visit to Washington on Jan. 27.

When a reporter asked Wilson about the Rhodesian issue following his conversations at the White House, Wilson would only reply: "We understand each other fully on this question."

Yet what is difficult to understand about U.S. policy regarding Rhodesia is why keep open the consulate after the last ties between London and Salisbury have been broken by Smith unless eventual recognition is planned? There is also the delicate diplomatic question, what government is the U.S. Consul, Mr. Paul O'Neil, accredited to after March 2, 1970?

Beyond all official "clarifications" and recitations is that the de facto result of the decision to maintain the mission in Salisbury means the U.S. has a representative to the Smith regime, a regime which is considered illegal by Britain, oppressive to the African majority, and offensive to the black independent states of the Continent.

Reports to Washington Notes indicate that a power struggle exists in this capital on the Rhodesia issue with Secretary Rogers and his principle advisers in favor of withdrawing the consulate from Salisbury, and Henry Kissinger and the White House strategists insisting that the U.S. should maintain its presence in that country.

"Our Consul remains to safeguard U.S. interests and to serve the American community in Rhodesia," announced U.S. Assistant Secretary of State Newsome at the time the British government withdrew its Governor General.

There are about 1,200 U.S. citizens residing in Rhodesia, over 80 per cent of whom are missionaries.

J. Murray MacInnes, director, Southern African Affairs, of the National Council of Churches, reported Mar. 2 that a joint meeting of missionary groups have issued a resolution calling upon the U.S. to withdraw the consulate from Salisbury.

Pressuring the White House to codify relations with Rhodesia are a group of U.S. corporations with mining investments in Rhodesia, and a camp of southern congressman.

Total U.S. investments in Rhodesia are approximately \$56 million, the major portion of which are held by Union Carbide and Foote Minerals. They operate chrome mines at Selukwe, 140 miles south of Salisbury. The latter is reported to be the biggest chrome deposit in the world.

The pro-Rhodesia lobby is considerably augmented by Corning Glass which extracts petalite, a substance used in making ceramic and glass products, from Rhodesian soil, and by the Goodyear Tire and Coca Cola companies.

Inside Congress, the pro-Rhodesia lobby is articulated by Louisiana Congressman John Rarick who describes the Salisbury regime as a buffer against Communism and a protectorate of western civilization in Africa.

Dean Acheson, former Secretary of State, is another friend of Rhodesia. He opposed sanctions against Rhodesia which, in his view, are "unprovoked and unjustified by a single legal or moral principle." To Mr. Acheson, Rhodesia, under the control of Ian Smith and his "Rhodesian Front" party, is "a country that has done us no harm and threatens no one."

And inside the White House, the pro-Rhodesia ball is reported to be carried by Henry Kissinger, Mr. Nixon's number one adviser on foreign policy affairs.

If Washington does extend recognition to Salisbury, such action will come at a time when the African liberation mechanism is moving into high gear.

MILITARY BUILD-UP 11

The Times of Zambia reported on Jan. 19, 1970 that "Thirteen Rhodesian and South African troops were killed in two freedom-fighter raids in the Victoria Falls-Wankie area by units of the Zimbabwe African People's Union."

According to the ZAPU report, two raids were carried out simultaneously. In one attack, the guerrillas attacked the airport at Victoria Falls, destroying a light plane and two helicopters, and disrupting communications. ZAPU claimed that five Rhodesian were killed.

The second attack, according to the ZAPU report, was on a South African military base in the Wankie district where eight South Africans were killed.

An official communique issued Jan. 17 in Salisbury confirmed that the raids had been carried out, but made no mention of any casualties.

Earlier, a guerrilla force, composed of combined units of ZAPU and the African National Congress (South Africa) crossed the Zambesi River from Zambia and established bases in a number of unspecified locations inside Rhodesia. Reporting on the ZAPU attack on the Victoria Falls airport, the London Guardian correspondent in Salisbury wrote: "The latest guerrilla threat is the most serious since the unilateral declaration of independence."

In an address to parliament on Jan. 29 Ian Smith warned Zambia that its "cooperation with the terrorists" could bring retaliation.

On Jan. 30, Zambia Home Affairs Minister Lewis Changufu replied: "In Rhodesia, the clashes between liberation guerrillas and the Smith regime are a direct result of the oppression of the majority of the Rhodesian people and the Zambian government cannot accept responsibility for such incidents."

AFRICAN LEADER ON TRIAL IN RHODESIA FOR SPEECH

Dr. Elisha Chambadzwa Mutusa, a London trained physician, went on trial Feb. 16 at Umtali in Rhodesia, charged with "contravening" four sections of the "Law and Order Maintenance Act of Rhodesia."

Dr. Mutasa made a speech to an African audience in Vengers Hall in the township of Rusape on Nov. 1, 1969. According to section 44 (2) (d) of the Rhodesian Law and Order Maintenance Act, it is a crime to "utter a subversive statement in the hearing of other person or persons." This is the first count of the four-part indictment. Other charges against the accused include the following: that "he did wrongfully and unlawfully, without lawful excuse, the proof whereof lies on him, utter words likely to undermine or impair the authority of any public officer or class of public officers..."

In his speech, Dr. Mutasa told his African audience: "When the roads are made for the European farms, the roads are well-made, and the money that is used to make these roads comes from the government. This is money that you and I are paying to the government, but the government only uses such monies for European areas of the country.

"Now the government proposes that we -- you and I -- establish (African) Councils, you see, and when we approach the government for necessary funds, they say, why don't you collect money and make your own roads.

"Well, what about the monies that we are paying which is not used for our benefit, which is allocated for European use only? What applies to the construction of roads also applies with regard to the schools. The government allocates 10 (Rhodesian) Pounds for the education of our children, most of which goes to pay the salary of teachers, while the allocation for each European child is 98 Pounds. And education for the European child is compulsory. Every European child must go to school, and there is no failing for the European student until he reaches form four (high school).

"...There is in this district (Makoni), a king, that is King Makoni, and I guess, for his own reasons, he has accepted the name, Chief, which is inferior to that of King or Mambo Makoni. It's not enough -- listen to me -- it's not enough to be called, King, unless you can rule your domain. It's not enough to be called King when you have to solicit from an outsider who gives you twenty pieces of silver per month. And then with these twenty pieces of silver you sell your own people. Some time ago, we had Rekayi Tangwena, Mambo Tangwena (a former ruler, deposed by the Smith regime). There is a man who was made ruler by the African themselves. He had no ring around his neck or marriage with Smith. (Applause)."

If convicted on all counts, Dr. Mutasa faces 10 years in prison for the speech, parts of which are quoted above.

The outline of Dr. Mutasa's speech and a copy of the court summons was provided by a white observer whose identity cannot be revealed since the individual currently resides in "Rhodesia"