

NEWS

AMERICAN COMMITTEE ON AFRICA

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New York, N.Y., January 10, 1975 ----

The American Committee on Africa today protested the expected appointment of Nathaniel P. Davis, U.S. Ambassador to Chile at the time of the overthrow of President Salvador Allende, to the top post on Africa at the State Department.

George M. Houser, Executive Director of the Committee said: "We don't want a new Chile in Africa, particularly at this sensitive moment when Portugal is relinquishing its colonies to the African majority". Mr. Houser urged Secretary of State Henry Kissinger to reconsider the appointment of Mr. Davis as Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs.

"The CIA was actively involved in the Chile coup" Mr. Houser continued, "and it is a natural conclusion to assume knowledge, if not complicity, by the American Ambassador in these events".

Mr. Davis was reportedly part of the "destabilization" team of persons sent to Chile shortly after Allende's election. He previously served as Ambassador to Guatemala from 1968-71, replacing John G. Mein who was killed by guerrilla forces there. This was during Guatemala's "pacification" program, in which thousands died. Two years prior, Mr. Davis was a senior member of the National Security Council in Washington. He had previously spent many years as a U.S. anti-communist expert, in the Moscow bureau 1954-56 and at the State Department's Soviet desk from 1956-60, at the height of the cold war.

The proposed Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs has no previous history of experience on African issues. He is replacing Donald Easum, who assumed the post only in early 1974.

The American Committee on Africa has supported African independence in the United States since 1953.

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