

TEXT OF CONGRESSMAN DIGGS PRESS STATEMENT
Thursday, September 16, 1971

I would like to comment briefly on my recent trip to Africa. Because of the significance of our visit to South Africa and to Guinea-Bissau, I felt that a statement was in order at this time.

In view of the conflicting reports by the Portuguese and the People's Movement for the Independence of Guinea and Cape Verde, the PAIGC, we found there was absolutely no substitute for direct, personal, on-the-ground observation of the situation in Guinea and Cape Verde. The observation proved most informative.

The racism of the Portuguese government was brought about in the differences of Portuguese administration for the coloreds in Cape Verde and Blacks of Guinea-Bissau.

In fact, the statement of Portugal of its philosophy towards these territories is strikingly similar to the thesis of the South African Government in explanation of its apartheid policy in Namibia.

Guinea-Bissau is an armed camp and the Portuguese are indeed beleaguered. At the same time, it is quite evident that the Portuguese will not lightly relinquish Guinea-Bissau and Cape Verde. A basic reason for their tenacious holding to territories which are not economically profitable to them is, of course, akin to the domino theory. This is re-enforced by the Portuguese concept of Portugal as a nation which includes its overseas territories. Portugal is determined to cling as long as possible to this myth of an empire. But again, direct observation makes clear that what the Portuguese are doing now in Cape Verde, and especially in Guinea-Bissau, is of recent vintage. Thus, a consideration of the effect of the PAIGC must include not only its military gains and concomitant efforts to improve conditions in the liberated areas, but the housing, health and educational programs currently being undertaken in the Portuguese-held areas in Guinea and on Cape Verde.

My long-awaited visit to South Africa afforded me an opportunity for firsthand observation and for meeting with people from all sectors of that society. The people I met represented varying viewpoints, strategies and goals, but they had a genuine interest in communicating with me.

When I arrived in South Africa, I discovered that the South African Government had reneged on its unconditional granting of the visa, and was interposing objections to my visit to Namibia. My first decision was to abort the trip.

After I received such a warm reception from the people of Soweto, the black

township near Johannesburg, I decided to continue the fact-finding trip as a people-to-people mission. This conveyed to me the real yearning of the people to see other Blacks from outside. I was particularly moved by the warm greeting sung to me by the children of Soweto.

Here is a black man, who is lion-hearted
and he is here with us today.

Perhaps he'll help us, --
the difficulties we have.

Amen

The essence of my visit was witnessing the unquenchable will of the people of South Africa to be free, to secure self-determination, and within the context of a multiracial society.

South Africa is not isolated from the tide of self-determination and freedom which has revolutionized the world in the middle of this century. Through the Charter of the United Nations, majority rule, self-determination and human rights have been recognized as legal obligations of all member countries, including South Africa. The international community has been transformed from independent powers and dependent areas to a community of sovereign and independent states. This tide of freedom is a surging undertow in South Africa that will overcome, notwithstanding the military and industrial might of South Africa.

There are, I found, some whites in South Africa who are beginning to realize that, whether they like it or not, their own self-preservation demands that they accept a multiracial society. But the ferment in the thinking which I observed, must be translated into action.

For, despite the considerable amount of questioning and rethinking that is presently going on in South Africa among some elements there, we found no evidence that either the inhuman, all-pervasive restrictions on the majority of the people, or the repressive laws are being mitigated one iota. In fact, the resettlement projects, the Terrorism Act trials, the detentions and the bannings by unchallengeable executive fiat continue.

In my opinion, the United States, as the leading power in the world, must act to avoid the holocaust which surely will come. The government must reform its own employment practices in its enterprises, including the embassy and consulates in South Africa.

There is positively no justification for present administration policy whereunder Black, Foreign Service Officers are not assigned to South Africa. Such assignments must be made without delay. The City of Soweto has nearly a

million Blacks. There should be a USIS office there.

In my visits to various business enterprises, as well as to NASA, I found an utter lack of realization that Blacks are human beings. The United States Government, in its own enlightened interest, must end its complicity with apartheid and work toward a peaceful and expeditious termination of minority rule in South Africa.

I have returned with the conviction that majority rule in South Africa is inevitable and that the rest of the world, in particular the United States, has no choice but to get on the side of freedom.

I am not prepared to start predicting when or how, but the countdown has begun.

Our Government at present decries violence as a means of liberation, without condemning the violence which the South African Government uses to enforce the subjugation of the majority of the people. The United States must recognize that any means are legitimate instruments, so long as the recalcitrance of the South African Government continues.

I feel strongly that there are at least three prerequisites to be met by U. S. business firms in South Africa. One is the principle of equal pay for equal work. Second, American business must get on with the task of training and whatever else is necessary so that blacks, colored, and whites are performing equal work. Third, United States business must throw off local coloration and give respect to all its employees and refuse to adhere in their plants to racial practices.

American business must either justify its presence in South Africa by an equitable sharing of its enormous profits with the majority of the people, or be called upon to disengage. They must establish fair employment practices; and the law of South Africa permits this, with respect to wages, fringe benefits, training and educational programs, and special services and programs for the African such as counselling, legal assistance and educational assistance to his family. And these must not be token programs.

American firms must push beyond the limits of the permissible. It is inconceivable to me that the South African Government -- as in the case of the Japanese -- would not find dispensations from its laws of discrimination in facilities and job opportunities, if that is the price of keeping American business. The sign -- Whites only -- and the segregated facilities and the discrimination in jobs which we witnessed, both in United States plants in South Africa and at the NASA facility, must be eliminated.

The United States Government must use every legitimate means to bring

United States business to dedicate itself to these principles and their effectuation. I shall urge that fair employment practices in their South African enterprises be a condition of eligibility of United States firms for Government contracts.

There is obviously a considerable communications gap between the South African subsidiaries and United States parents with the result that they are dependent upon field reports without being on the ground to understand all of the nuances of that society. Frankly, it was an emotional experience to walk into an American firm and to see it practicing apartheid. It is our plan to request meetings with the Boards of those major companies with involvement in South Africa.

I have long opposed the sugar quota for South Africa and yet frankly I was shocked when I visited the sugar estates and actually witnessed the blatant racism of the Sugar Association and the conditions of employment for the sugar workers -- the low wages, the housing, the diet and the long hours of work.

A sugar quota for South African can only be justified on humanitarian grounds, namely that the benefits of the quota inure to the majority of the people. Until this is the case, the quota should be terminated and under no circumstances should South Africa be eligible for an increased allocation by executive action.

The potential of South Africa, with its natural, industrial, and human resources for all of its people, and indeed for all of Africa, is unlimited. The very contemplation of such a country, an advanced, developed Black country, a multiracial society, is exciting.

We must utilize all of our resources for its early realization; for, although in the final analysis the solution is coming from the people themselves, external forces and external assistance can make a vast difference in the way in which the freedom will be won.

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DRAFT

Q - There was some upset in the community in Detroit. People were dissatisfied with your comments on the nature of business relations in South Africa

-Well I guess you sound ~~ix~~ as if you are talking about some garbling of a report which came through which suggested to some people that we may have changed our mind with respect to U.S. business in South Africa and whether they ~~ought~~ ought to continue there, or not continue there. I have not changed my mind with respect to U.S. business. I came back with the determination to concentrate on an area which received too little attention in this whole matter, and that is, what American enterprise can do as long as they are there. One must recognize the American free enterprise system. There is no law and no individual that can force American business enterprise to disengage from conduct of business in those countries. There are things that our government can do, and there are things that these in the private sector can do to make themselves unaccountable for them. In the final analysis, they cannot be forced to move. They must move out of ~~SA~~ ^{there} on a voluntary basis. Secondly, one must recognize that there is an unevenness with respect to the investments that are there. There are some businesses that ~~which~~ obviously can pull out tomorrow without any effect on their investment, namely some of the primary enterprises, some of the small/enterprises. ~~Many~~ You've got We're talking about some 300 businesses ~~enterprises~~, but they vary. The General Motors plant in Port Elizabeth ~~in~~ South Africa that's been there for 45 years and has a great deal of infrastructure and all the rest. The problems of disengaging there would be much different than the problems involving a smaller firm, or a firm that was merely involved in services and not in manufacturing. The ~~main~~ question is, what do you do in the meantime? The question is, will we permit American enterprise to hide behind apartheid and continue to exploit ^{these} workers in the interim period. This has not been explored. There is a reservation list, for example on wages in South Africa. There are also ~~reservations~~ a job reservation list, and Blacks cannot hold jobs that are on the job reservation list for whites, but there are only sixteen in this category. One gets the impression on the ~~outside~~ ^{job} that all the jobs are on the reservation list, or a great number larger than that, and that is not true. We found that plant managers we talked to, even suggesting that they weren't even aware that they could go further than

they did. I don't think this matter ~~has~~ has been properly researched number one, or properly pursued. There are many jobs that can be created outside the of/job reservation list - that ought to be pursued, There are fringe benefits which American enterprises are not extending the benefits of to black workers - that ought to be pursued. There are many institutions including the liberation movement itself to which contributions can be made. At the SA Race Relations Institute, there is an American secondary school, a private school operated by Americans that we visited that has had considerable difficulty in getting contributions from American enterprises. I could go on down the list citing instance after instance where the American enterprise can engage in democratic practices. As I pointed out in the opening statement, I think they ought to go beyond the permissible. I think that American business enterprise has been too cautious in this whole situation. I cannot believe what the GM corporation, for example wished to dispense with many of these practices, or any of these practices, that the SA would close down their plants. I just don't believe it. And I don't believe that the Ford will close down the Ford plant, or the Chrysler plant. There should be the same guideline for fair employment practices that we follow in the U.S. I think further that our own government has not been helpful in this matter, because they haven't set the proper kind of example. I think probably part of the reason ~~that~~ many of these American enterprises feel that the government is not serious is because of the example set in our own embassy there. They know as a matter of policy, blacks are not assigned which makes our own government hypocritical, or when they know that discrimination, in its most blatant form is practiced at the NASA tracking station. The influence of the

~~both of these sectors~~ influence other foreign investments is one of the reasons that we ended up our journey by visitations to the capitals serving European countries where there is considerable foreign investment. In each instance we came away with the impression that the U.S. government and the U.S. private enterprise had enough guts to go beyond its empty pronouncements that they are making in various quarters *that others are emulating*

Q - Congressman, we've been getting reports from the press here about the SA Blacks themselves who are fearful of anything that will take these plants out of the country for fear of losing what employment they have now. What reading did you get from talking with them?

A Well there is a mixed reaction. I would say that there is a great deal of concern about anything that might potentially affect their own economic well-being. There are those who believe that to the extent that American enterprise is there, to the extent that there are potential ~~jobs~~ jobs available, that they would like to see them remain there. But there are others who feel differently from that. ^{To a man} they all feel that American enterprise is in a position to resist the apartheid practices and ~~know~~ their main encouragement to ~~us~~ ^{us} to try to get the US both in the public and ~~public~~ ^{public} sector to exercise the influence that we believe ~~is~~ ^{is} available.

Q - Congressman, does the bill of cutting off the sugar quota now. It's been approved by both houses and senate and I think its in conference (?)

A I don't know precisely what the legislative situation is. In that connection I would have to be a little pessimistic in view of what has happened.

ON the other hand, while we were over there, it was announced that because of that was here, a strike, they were going to open up a 100,000 tons of sugar purchases on a first-come, a first-serve basis. We immediately dispatched a cablegram to the WH saying that under no circumstances should they by Executive action permit the SAG to participate in this allocation and identified that that extra allocation is not ~~to~~ ^{to} what happens in the conference committee

Handwritten notes:
for possible impact for Blacks. The British banks, two of them came out (last month or shortly next month) they will have equal pay for black workers (we)

A- There have been ~~stirring~~ stirrings in the past which indicated that some meaningful resistance from the inside was going to produce some results. The last time we had these kinds of ferment^s which gave us kind of encouragement was 1959 or just before ^{about} ~~Charlottesville~~ ^{Sharpville} and the government moved in an especially impressive fashion in response to the Sharpville situation

Also the head of the SA union called
for a deal for slaves saying there
are chances for revolution
M.C.B. beginning with the
toward many matters of the
suit of sales

*then made a
big fuss about
that you would
be wise to
blame*

I think and these kinds of encouragements just ~~are~~ evaporated. We are now in a much different situation. I think 1971 is much different than 1959, 1960, there ~~are~~ ^{are} a great deal more pressures that have been built up in Black Africa itself, in certain European capitals -- the whole gamut of ferment which has been operative in the international arena has taken focus to these last remaining vestiges(sp) of colonialism and racism in Africa. I think that the situation here in the United States in terms of the potentiality of building up pressures is much different than it was then. There has been an emergence, ^{in 1967} of a new awareness of identity with African concerns that is much more potent than it has in the past. All of these things are contributing to creating a much different situation among us much more so than inside and outside than we experienced before. I have the impression for example of the people in the South. The outside impressions were that they were afraid to express themselves. I found that there is a great deal of resistance in SA among student groups and among various aspects of Black society and also among certain supportive elements. I frankly believe the countdown ^{has begun} and there is no question in my mind that ^{the SA govt} we cannot maintain white minority rule in that country and at the same time continue the kind of repressive aspects OF THEIR policy they are pursuing ~~course~~ ^{that}

Q - You had an objection to the Am ~~Emb~~ Amb there holding a segregation

b. Rogers

~~_____ outcome?~~
~~_____ South Africa,~~
is disgraceful. They are doing a lot of agonizing about whether or not

Blacks ought to be assigned to our installation there. I think its ~~not~~ ridiculous. I think that they ought to dispense with all this agonizing /and get on ~~with~~ the proposition that it is an Am installation and that we ought to assign people there based upon what is considered to be the posture of our government and what is considered to be in the best interest of our government.

*I see no reason why they need to agonize
any further. ~~I see~~*

I see no reason why they should even think in terms of assigning one Black to the American installation there. They could assign several. Who says that they ought to be confined to one? One of the reasons they have been agonizing about it is because they raised certain questions about such questions as; Where ~~is~~ is the wife going to shop? Where are the children going to go to school? The government is already resolving that matter as it relates to the Ambassador from Malawi(sp?)

They have made arrangements for the Malowian ambassador's children to receive schooling and other matters pertaining to his personal life are also being resolved. ^{of} What we overlook in this whole proposition is the fact that South Africans happen to be Black, and that there are all manner of contacts that a Black Foreign Service Officer and a member of the embassy staff could be making ~~with~~ without any consideration as it relates to the government. I wouldn't worry about whether or not a Black FSO would have some problems communicating with the SA government. ^{Other people make those kind of contacts if its necessary.}

I am more concerned about an area that is not being the subject of concern, and that is, how do we relate to the majority of the people in SA who happen to be Black? That is one of the reasons I think we ~~should~~ ^{ought to} have a USIS installation out in Soweto. They have a USIS installation in downtown Johannesburg, and a few miles out, you've got a million people with no kind of U.S. presence at all. I think there are all kinds of things that could come of that kind of a concept to the extent that our mission in Johannesburg continues to agonize about it and continues to advise our government that they ought to go slow on this thing, ^{then} I think they are subject to criticism. There is no question that there are attitudes within the State Department ~~that~~ who are desirous of proceeding to democratize our embassy there. The one thing that is overlooked by ^{the fact} a lot of people is that questions pertaining to SA are decided in the White House. The South African Government is on the list of sensitive foreign areas

~~_____~~ I the final and ~~_____~~ relating to ~~_____~~ part of the block, ~~_____~~ have a ranking black at least, in our embassy in South Africa, the responsibility for that lies at the White House level.

Q - By the White House, do you mean Mr. Kissinger?

A - Well, that's the gentleman who is the President's Advisor on Foreign Policy and I would lay right at his feet.

Q - Sir, will you tell us how you felt about Dr. Banda being in South Africa?

* I could ^{you} tell ^{me} how
 7- ^{about} D. B

to 113 they made a
 big fuss about how
 he is also ^{to}
 be you ^{to}
 to go ^{to}
 a

