

Congressional Black Caucus

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The Honorable Henry A. Kissinger
Secretary of State
U.S. Department of State
2201 C Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20520

Dear Mr. Secretary:

Your proposed trip to Africa comes at a delicate period in African-American relations. The ending of factional strife in Angola will probably be followed by intensified armed conflict to obtain majority rule in Southern Rhodesia, and the methods used to obtain this objective will undoubtedly serve as a model for the subsequent liberation of Africans in Namibia and in South Africa itself.

The perception of your general indifference to Africa and relative inaccessibility to the African diplomatic community in Washington, except when there is a public relations advantage to be gained, has created skepticism about the timing and substance of your visit, particularly during this election year.

Therefore, we urge you to give full consideration to the following issues that we believe constitute the elements of a purposeful trip.

We are concerned that certain Africans should sense a change in their bilateral relations with the United States since the creation of the Office of Multilateral Affairs. We are opposed to a policy that would delay or end foreign assistance to those African countries whose votes are not consistent with those of the U.S. in international forums. President Ford publicly has eschewed withholding grain to express displeasure with the Soviet Union's votes and actions and continues to engage in bilateral negotiations with the Kremlin government on matters of mutual interest. Appeasing powerful adversaries and punishing weak potential allies is not an even-handed policy.

We are deeply concerned about the deterioration of U.S. relations with Nigeria as reflected by their inability to accommodate your desire to visit them on this trip. The stated reason that they are unable to guarantee

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your security has grave implications that cut across the whole fabric of U.S. relations, not only in Nigeria, but in the entire African continent. As a result of its size, resources and quality of its leadership, Nigeria has become a pivotal state in the African continent and in world affairs.

Nigeria is our leading African trading partner, our principle supplier of oil and a fertile area for U.S. investment--the transfer of equity in U.S. petroleum firms to the Nigerian government notwithstanding. Consequently, U.S. relations with the Lagos government should be accorded greater priority. Three major areas of concern should be expressed:

- (1) Although Nigeria continued to supply oil to the U.S. during the Arab oil boycott, Nigeria cannot benefit from generalized special preferences under the 1974 Trade Act, because of congressionally imposed prohibitions against OPEC members. The Administration should make a commitment to seek an amendment to the Trade Act exempting Nigeria and Gabon from these special restrictions.
- (2) A greater investment should be made in fellowship support for Nigerians who seek specialized advanced technical training in such fields as engineering and oil technology.
- (3) Recognizing its crucial role in West Africa, the U.S. should explore ways of assisting the development and consolidation of the Nigerian-initiated Economic Community of West Africa.

Although Liberia was founded by leading citizens of the United States, it remains one of the least developed countries in Africa. Liberia should have been the showcase of West Africa. Much remains to be done in basic infrastructure, agricultural production and the full integration of all elements into the economic and political life of that country. The visit to Liberia presents an opportunity to lay the groundwork for a comprehensive plan to transform that country, with its rich iron ore and agricultural resources into a thriving, dynamic economy.

Few questions are as important to Senegal, Niger, Mali, Upper Volta, Chad and Mauritania as the U.S. commitment to a multi-billion dollar comprehensive development program for the Sahel to be financed by the international community. Since your schedule will not permit you to visit those landlocked countries most seriously affected by the drought, we urge you to reaffirm U.S. commitment to this program while you are in Senegal.

Since the most critical questions for Tanzania are a resolution of the compensation issues and an affirmative decision on the eleven-month-old request for 100,000 tons of corn under Title I PL 480 assistance, your visit should result in a rapid conclusion of these outstanding matters.

The key question at the UNCTAD meeting will be the U.S. position on the Integrated Commodity Scheme proposed by the group of 77. Some accommodation must be reached between the U.S. preference for a case-by-case approach and the stabilization of earnings through an expansion of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) compensatory financing facility, and the LDC's comprehensive scheme to stabilize prices. At a minimum, we hope you will announce the U.S. intention to enter into negotiations on the integrated scheme and pledge support for an international financing mechanism that will not only underwrite buffer stock for key commodities, but also invest in resource development and expansion.

In a related area, the Administration should make a concerted effort to find a way to join the international cocoa agreement. A stabilization mechanism using both buffer stock and a revised system of export quotas might better accommodate the concerns of such traditional producers as Ghana who want to retain a fair share of the market, and the interest of more substantial producers like the Ivory Coast and Brazil who seek a larger share of the market.

The People's Republic of Angola government has expressed interest in normalizing relations with the United States. One way to counter U.S. concern about undue Soviet-Cuban influence on the PRA government is to recognize the incumbent regime, establish a diplomatic mission in Luanda, and provide postwar relief and rehabilitation assistance. Zaire has agreed to recognize the PRA; Zambia and the Angola government are continuing efforts to recognize Angola prior to your departure, or during

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the course of the visit would go far to improve America's image in Africa.

The U.S. must take a strong unequivocal stand for majority rule in southern Africa and undergird this policy with concrete actions. We commend the Administration for its support in the Security Council for expanded economic sanctions against Rhodesia, and its commitment to compensate Mozambique for losses incurred following the closure of its border with Rhodesia. In addition, we believe it is critical to accelerate plans to provide a comprehensive economic support package to Zambia, whose economy has been severely impaired by Rhodesian sanctions, and to offer compensatory assistance so that Botswana can give positive consideration to closing its border with Rhodesia.

The President, himself, should aggressively seek the repeal of the Byrd Amendment by Congress. Those of us who have been in the forefront of congressional efforts to end chromium imports will not support that objective until there are assurances that division within the Executive Branch on this question has ended, and that all relevant branches of government: the Departments of State, Treasury, and Commerce will work vigorously toward that end.

We strongly recommend that you make time while in Maputo, Lusaka and Dar Es Salaam to meet with leaders of the liberation movements from Zimbabwe, Namibia and South Africa. Not only would such an encounter be instructive but also, it would give belated encouragement to these veterans of the independence movement and give a signal to the Salisbury and Pretoria governments of a tilt in U.S. policy.

We regret that you could not accommodate the suggestion to include South Africa on your itinerary. Since you will not be talking to Mr. Vorster directly, we believe that you can salvage some of the benefits of direct contact by addressing the South African question during the course of your trip from a country like Botswana. Living in the shadow of South Africa, President Seretse Khama has struggled valiantly to maintain his country's independence; consequently, a stopover there would be an appropriate tribute to his courageous statesmanship and symbolism.

Several messages could be communicated to the South African government. In the aftermath of the reaffirmation of the Administration's policy of curtailing

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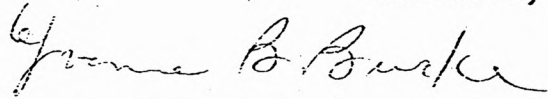
Export-Import Bank exposure in the Republic, you could let it be known that U.S.-South African cooperation will be suspended until there is evidence of progressive steps toward majority rule in that country. In addition, it should be clear that the United States will not give legitimacy to South Africa's separate development policy by recognizing the Transkei when it accedes to "independence" this October. Finally, you should stress that the U.S. will support enforcement action, if South Africa fails to adhere to Security Council and General Assembly resolutions calling for its withdrawal from Namibia by this August.

In summary, the Administration must take advantage of this opportunity provided by your trip to improve U.S.-Africa policy.

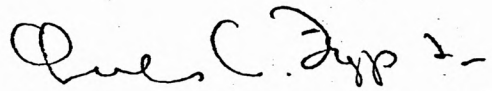
In your first trip to Africa it is important to include in your entourage a Black foreign service officer whose expertise and professionalism in African affairs is widely respected. Since you will be going to franco-phone countries, Ambassador Rudolph Aggrey, who is bilingual, is highly regarded and has wide contacts throughout Africa would be an excellent choice. In addition we urge you to include elements of the Black communications media in the delegation so that the story of your trip can be properly told to all Americans.

Mr. Secretary, this chapter in your distinguished career should not be closed without the initiation of some concrete new positive directions in U.S.-African relations similar to the creative imprint you have left on U.S. policy in other areas of the world.

Sincerely,



Yvonne B. Burke
Chairperson



Charles C. Diggs
Member of Congress