

Congressional Black Caucus

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CONGRESSIONAL BLACK CAUCUS

STATEMENT ON MEETING WITH AMBASSADOR ANDREW YOUNG

WASHINGTON, D.C. ----- The Following statement was released by the Congressional Black Caucus after a meeting with U.N. Ambassador Andrew Young, one in a series of meetings with Cabinet officials:

The opportunity to meet with our former colleague and present United Nations Ambassador Andrew Young continues the close working relationship members of the Congressional Black Caucus have had with an individual who has been given a crucial and significant role in the formation and implementation of United States foreign policy.

Ambassador Young's willingness to speak out with candor, truthfulness and insight has brought a refreshing openness to the conduct of our foreign policy. It is a measure of his success in discussing with the public matters formerly debated behind closed doors that concerted efforts have been undertaken to undercut his position and strength. It is no wonder that there is consternation among those who have failed to speak out against racist regimes, who have subordinated human rights to "Realpolitik."

As a member of the Congressional Black Caucus, Ambassador Young was among the leaders of our efforts to move the United States government toward policies which would lead to majority rule for the people of southern Africa. He was an early leader of those who moved for a ban on the importation of Rhodesian Chrome, now part of our laws. He was among the Caucus members who met with former Secretary of State Kissinger to urge these and other positions on the government.

Today, when he has the position and the influence to make his views heard and to bring policy into conformity with what can only be described as elemental positions, his views are called into question by those who would have us forget their vigorous support for past foreign policy mistakes, including the war in Vietnam and the support of regimes in daily violation of the principles our nation espouses.

We are heartened that Ambassador Young has brought serious discussion about policies and practices which have been enmeshed in the inertia of the status quo. The President's support for his efforts is well-justified. The Congress, itself, is to be commended for soundly defeating just last week an attack on the Ambassador through an amendment to cut his staff. All decent Americans must speak out against scurrilous attacks on members of the Ambassador's staff on the floor of Congress. The attempt to red-bait leading national figures is a shocking reminder that we have not fully escaped the mentality that plagued the country in the 1950's.

We know, and Andy Young knows, that change comes only through struggle. His courageous efforts to bring about change in the nation's foreign policy and to better the condition of people throughout the world deserve the nation's respect and support.