KEY
LIST
MEMO

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HOUSE DENIES AID TO MOZAMBIQUE AND ANGOLA

The right wing appears to be consolidating its strength as
the 95th Congress gets into full swing, and it is beginning to take
on southern Africa as one of its targets. Their move to deny aid to
certain countries in southern Africa is only part of an attack on
socialist governments abroad, as well as scapegoats at home: black
children who are being denied bussing to better schools, poor women
being denied legal abortions, and Vietnam veterans with upgraded
discharges being denied benefits.

We need to act now to support the principle of giving assistance
to all majority-ruled countries in southern Africa, and to attack
this entire punitive trend.

On June 23rd the House agreed by voice vote to prohibit any appropriated
funds from going "directly or indirectly" to Mozambique and Angola. This
amendment was offered by Illinois Republican Phil Crane, a long-time supporter
of Portuguese colonialism and the Rhodesian and South African regimes. The
day before, the House had voted 295 to 115 to adopt a similar amendment
sponsored by Bill Young of Florida denying aid to Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia,
Cuba and Uganda.

The House prohibition of aid to Mozambique and Angola and the five other
countries is far-reaching. It affects appropriations not only for FY 1978
economic and military bilateral aid, but also for all international financial
institutions (such as the African Development Fund), United Nations agencies,
and the Export-Import Bank. It supersedes an earlier amendment to the authoriz­ing
bill which gave the President discretion to permit aid to these countries
(as well as to Zambia and Tanzania) if he determines that such aid is in the
U.S. foreign policy interest. Exactly how this broad amendment would operate
is unclear. The Administration is arguing that such restrictions could make it
difficult for the U.S. to contribute to these international institutions, and
would certainly cause political problems within the funds. It is therefore
opposing the Crane and Young amendments.

Passage of these amendments was based on the sweeping principle that the
United States should give no assistance to third world socialist countries.
In Washington, liberals have not yet seriously challenged this assumption.
Many members, especially freshmen, fear that a "pro-socialist" vote will hurt
them in next year's election. The 180-vote margin against aid to Indochina
had already demonstrated that anti-communism could carry the day, and Crane
said that his amendment was simply an extension of this idea to "two African
nations that have come under the control of the Soviet Union."
The conservatives' focus on southern Africa at this time is not surprising. With the end of the Vietnam war, the right wing sees southern Africa as the next likely scene for a confrontation between the United States and the "Communists." The Carter strategy is to negotiate with all parties, and to increase aid programs to the front-line states to encourage their support for the western-initiated diplomatic initiatives. Conservatives say this amounts to selling out to the "radicals" and rewarding their supporters.

Congressman Bauman claimed that their attack on Mozambique and Angola was based on the principle of denying aid to governments which violate human rights. The House had cut funds to Argentina the previous day, and "a standard for human rights ... should apply across the board." But the only evidence he gave for human rights violations in Mozambique was from a press conference in Salisbury by former draftees of the Portuguese colonial army. The New York Times' June 9 report of their allegations pointed out that they "differed sharply" from reports of American and other foreign journalists that Mozambicans remained favorably disposed to the Machel regime, comparing it positively with conditions under the Portuguese.

WE NEED TO LET THE SENATE, AND ESPECIALLY THE RELEVANT COMMITTEE MEMBERS, KNOW THAT WE OPPOSE THE CRANE AMENDMENT, for the reasons listed in the attached arguments sheet. Senate offices have received almost no mail against this amendment. If the Senate deletes the amendment, we can hope to get it thrown out in conference. If not, the prohibition will become part of the foreign aid law.

The Senate Appropriations Foreign Operations Subcommittee will mark up the foreign aid appropriations bill after it returns from recess on July 11. Final Senate action may come at the end of July or early in September.

PLEASE SEND LETTERS, TELEGRAMS, PETITIONS AND PHONE CALLS NOW TO ALL MEMBERS OF THE SUBCOMMITTEE AND TO YOUR OWN SENATORS. Let us know how they intend to vote.

Members of the Foreign Operations Subcommittee are: Daniel Inouye (D-Ha.) (chairman), William Proxmire (D-Wisc.), Lawton Chiles (D-Fla.), J. Bennett Johnston (D-La.), Patrick Leahy (D-Vt.), Dennis DeConcini (D-Ariz.), Richard Schweiker (R-Pa.), Edward Brooke (R-Mass.), Mark Hatfield (R-Ore.), and Charles Mathias (R-Md.).

Additional copies of this alert and the arguments sheet are available from the Washington Office on Africa.