Dear Colleague,

As a fellow lawyer dedicated to the promotion of the rule of law in international affairs, I think you will be interested in the attached memorandum, analyzing the legal obligations accruing to the United States from the International Court's judgement on Namibia last June.

As you know, Congress recently voted to lift the ban on the importation of chrome from Rhodesia, in clear violation of U.S. treaty obligations. No doubt you will agree that this action set an alarming precedent for those of us interested in a world order based on law.

The Namibia issue is still a "sleeper". However, it is not too early to begin to ask ourselves seriously what legal consequences should flow from the fact that there is now on record an International Court opinion, officially welcomed and endorsed by the United States, which holds that South Africa is occupying Namibia illegally, while American contacts with Namibia, both political and economic, continue to be conducted through the old (i.e. South African) channels.

The enclosed memorandum, which has been presented to Ambassador Bush by the American Committee on Africa, is the beginning of an attempt to examine this issue and to deal with it in an imaginative way.

Obviously, however, it is an issue which should concern not only Africanists, but also international lawyers, regardless of their views on the related political issues.

We therefore earnestly solicit your attention, your comments and your suggestions for action, both with respect to the steps which may be taken to familiarize the legal community with the issue, and with respect to legal and other steps which might be taken to give effect to the International Court's judgement and thus move us an inch or so along the road to our desired goal.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Peter Weiss
President