In 1966, the United States joined with Great Britain and other United Nations Security Council members in support of a resolution imposing mandatory economic sanctions against Rhodesia. The sanctions program is an international nonviolent attempt to put economic pressure on the white minority Rhodesian regime to accept a settlement for majority rule. The 95% African majority is denied political and economic rights by a regime which has gained no international recognition because it represents only the 5% white minority.

In 1971, Congress decided to violate sanctions to import "strategic and critical materials" from Rhodesia. Now as Congress considers S. 1868 and H.R. 8005 to renew United States compliance, we must state strongly our reasons for supporting the sanctions program. The United States has a treaty obligation to comply with sanctions. Because we believe in the principle of government by the consent of the governed, we support this effort to gain majority rule in Rhodesia. We must also counter false arguments opposing sanctions.

False argument: The U.S. must import "strategic and critical materials" from Rhodesia to meet national security needs.
Fact: Peter Flanigan, Assistant to the President for International Economic Affairs, stated in a letter of June 26: "Access to Rhodesian chrome and other minerals is not... an important element in U.S. national security or in our overall foreign economic policy given: 1) the substantial excess of our stockpile resources and 2) the comparatively minor amounts we actually import from Rhodesia." In fact, on April 16, the President proposed disposal of 4,669,000 excess tons of chrome ore and 768,400 excess tons of ferrochrome from the national stockpile.

False argument: Adhering to sanctions would make the U.S. overly dependent on the Soviet Union for our chrome ore needs.
Fact: In 1972, after the breaking of sanctions, the Soviet Union retained the 58% of the market which it had on the average maintained in the previous four years. If there was a dangerous dependence on the Soviet Union, breaking sanctions against Rhodesia did not eradicate it.

False argument: Sanctions did not effectively halt U.S. imports of chrome from Rhodesia, since Rhodesian chrome was being transshipped to the U.S. through the Soviet Union.
Fact: As Congressman Donald Fraser pointed out on July 10, 1973, "The contention that the Soviet Union is transshipping Rhodesian ore to the United States was conclusively disproven by the U.S. Geological Survey two years ago. Those who persist in claiming other wise are simply ignoring scientific evidence."

False argument: The U.S. must keep the door open to importing chrome from Rhodesia for lack of alternative sources.
Fact: While the world's largest deposits of high-grade chrome are in southern Africa and the Soviet Union, deposits are also found in Turkey and Pakistan. In the first five months of 1973, the U.S. imported 9,944 tons of high-grade chrome from Pakistan and 37,281 tons from Turkey, while we imported only 2,550 tons from Rhodesia, out of a total of 78,127 tons.
False argument: Sanctions were causing economic hardship to the U.S. specialty steel industry.
Fact: In a letter to members of Congress of May 30, the United Steelworkers of America said, "Contrary to allegations which have been made ever since this issue first arose, jobs for American specialty steelworkers were never jeopardized by the embargo... Indeed, job loss to American ferrochrome workers has accelerated since the passage of the 1971 amendment." Foote Mineral Company announced it would close its ferrochrome plant in Steubenville, Ohio because it could not compete with low-priced imports (primarily from Rhodesia and South Africa). 307 jobs will be lost. Rhodesian ferrochrome can be produced more cheaply because of the use of forced labor and government subsidies.

Most miners are migrant workers who work far from their homes on annual contracts. Under the Rhodesian Industrial Conciliation Act, collective bargaining by Africans is severely limited. Strikes by Africans are specifically prohibited in the mines. The African Affairs Amendment (No.2) severely restricts gatherings of Africans for any purpose. The disparity between black and white mining wages is about 1:13.

False argument: The sanctions program is not very effective, and renewing U.S. compliance would have little impact in Rhodesia.
Fact: U.S. sanctions-breaking provided the illegal Rhodesian regime with $13 million of badly needed foreign exchange in 1972, when their trade deficit was $30 million. An additional $8 million has been provided during the first five months of 1973. The possibility of renewed U.S. compliance with sanctions is causing alarm in Rhodesia. A front-page story in the July 13 Rhodesian Financial Gazette says: "... Government and mining industry officials are extremely concerned about the latest moves in Washington to block Rhodesian chrome imports."

False argument: The United Nations sanctions program is not legally binding on the United States.
Fact: The Senate ratified the Charter of the United Nations as a treaty on July 28, 1945 by a vote of 89 to 2. When, under section 41 of the Charter, the Security Council decides to impose sanctions, all member states are bound under section 25 to abide by the decision. Congress recognized this obligation by adopting section 5 of the U.N. Participation Act of 1945, which specifically empowers the President to adopt measures to carry out the sanctions program.

False argument: The breaking of sanctions has caused little concern in the United States, so renewing U.S. compliance is unimportant.
Fact: The effort to re-instate sanctions has already gained significant support in both houses of Congress; S. 1868 has 31 co-sponsors and H.R. 8005 has 109 co-sponsors. On August 7, twenty-six national groups including labor unions, religious groups, civil rights groups, world law groups, groups concerned about Africa, and other public interest groups announced their joint support for the current Congressional effort. Citizens are increasing their public expression of the importance of the sanctions program to support the struggle of the African people for majority rule in Rhodesia.

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