HOUSE MOVES SLOWLY ON SANCTIONS BILL

In the past month, the Subcommittee on International Organizations held hearings on the Rhodesian sanctions bill, HR 1287, and favorably reported it to the full House International Relations Committee (formerly the Foreign Affairs Committee).

Several new issues have emerged in this year's sanctions debate. The first is a controversy over the impact of US strengthening of sanctions on the political situation in Rhodesia. Mr. E.F. Andrews, Vice President of Allegheny Ludlum Industries and the main spokesman against the bill, asserted at the February 26 hearing that passage of the sanctions bill would "stiffen the right wing," "put ammunition" in the hands of ZANU, and damage the prospects for a negotiated settlement. The actual developments in Rhodesia suggest a different interpretation.

It is the Ian Smith regime which has damaged the possibility of a negotiated settlement. On March 4, the minority regime arrested the Rev. Ndabaningi Sithole, President of the Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU). On April 2, after a sham judicial review, a special court ruled that Sithole's detention was justified, on grounds that he had violated a December ceasefire agreement (to which he was not even a party), by charging him with responsibility for guerrilla activity since then. Sithole had been one of the principal leaders engaged in negotiations with Smith. He had forcefully advocated immediate majority rule. The Rhodesian Front thus is trying to split the unity of the ANC, under which all African Nationalist organizations joined for negotiations, by isolating Sithole from the somewhat more moderate Bishop Abel Muzorewa, President of the African National Council (ANC), and Joshua Nkomo, President of the Zimbabwe African Peoples' Union (ZAPU). This tactic did not meet with immediate success; the ANC stated that it would not continue negotiating for constitutional talks while Sithole remained in detention.

Even before the Sithole arrest, the Rhodesian Front regime was showing its intransigence. In January, Smith said that the government had no plans for handing over power to the country's black majority and would never "sell out the white man." Later that month, the regime banned all public meetings called by the African National Council.

The minority regime has been recalcitrant, in spite of the tremendous changes all around it (especially the coming independence in Mozambique) and the growing militancy of its own African population. In this context, Congressional passage of the sanctions bill could still play an important political role. As James Blake, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs, said in his statement on February 26, "By repealing the sanctions-breaking Byrd amendment, the Congress would tell the minority regime that the American people do not support..."
them in their intransigence and that we believe that the time for them to share
power in their country with the majority of the population is long overdue."

As the political merits of the sanctions bill move into the limelight, the
economic arguments surrounding it have received. Since the stainless steel in-
dustry is facing problems of declining demand due to the growing recession,
supplies of chrome and ferrochrome are no longer as immediate a concern. Instead,
at least part of the industry is looking toward the Byrd Amendment repeal as a
possible vehicle for challenging growing imports of Japanese specialty steel into
this country.

The Subcommittee on International Organizations voted on March 11 to accept
an amendment to the sanctions bill which would require certification of imports
of all steel mill products to insure that they contain no Rhodesian chromium.
Under this provision, "any interested person" could request the Secretary of the
Treasury to conduct an investigation with respect to the adequacy of the informa-
tion provided in the certificate. If the Secretary finds that the certificate does
"not adequately establish that the steel mill product does not contain chromium in
any form which is of Southern Rhodesian origin," the product will not be released
from customs custody except under bond.

The impetus for the amendment came from the Eastern Stainless Steel Company,
which decided to support the sanctions bill if it included the certification
amendment. The bill's sponsors were glad to find support from within the ranks
of the steel industry, which had up until then been unanimously opposed to the
bill. The United Steelworkers also supported the amendment.

It will probably be late April before the House International Relations
Committee acts on the sanctions bill. Since the Committee supported the bill last
session, it will likely do so again. Nevertheless, it is important to get max-
imum support, so renewed communication with members of the Committee urging their
support would be useful.

House Speaker Carl Albert has not yet decided whether to grant the Armed
Services Committee sequential jurisdiction over the bill. If jurisdiction is
denied, the bill could reach the House floor by mid-May. If the Armed Services
Committee considers the bill also, it would probably not reach the House floor
until June.

CONGRESSIONAL SANCTIONS OPPOSITION VISIT RHODESIA

Three members of Congress, Representatives John Dent, Richard Ichord and
Harold Runnels, have just completed an unusual one-week trip to Rhodesia, a
country whose minority regime the United States does not recognize and with which
the U.S. has no diplomatic relations. They made the trip against the urging of the
State Department that the trip could be perceived as an official U.S. dele-
gation which could give a considerable political boost to the illegitimate
Rhodesian Front regime. But the Congressmen seemed more interested in posing as
"experts" on the political situation in Rhodesia when they oppose the sanctions
bill in Congress in the next few months.
The group was invited to Rhodesia from March 27 to April 6 by the Rhodesian Promotion Council, a group composed mostly of Rhodesian businessmen, which seeks to promote trade with and investment in Rhodesia. In the context of the United Nations economic sanctions program against Rhodesia, the Council's work takes on an obvious political character which supports the isolated Rhodesian regime, with which it works very closely. The Chairman of the Promotion Council, Mr. C.G. Tracey, said recently that the Council is trying to "bring Congressmen and Senators to Rhodesia to help them reach a decision which would allow America to continue to have access to Rhodesia products." In other words, the Promotion Council encourages the United States to violate its commitment to the sanctions program.

That is exactly what this trip was set up to do. As the Rhodesian Herald of March 27 pointed out, at least two of the Congressmen on the trip are known opponents of the Rhodesian sanctions bill. More specifically, John Dent has been the principal House supporter of the sanctions-breaking Byrd Amendment since 1971. Mr. Dent claims to hold this position because it is in the interests of steelworkers in his southwestern Pennsylvania district, but it appears that he has no compunction about cooperating with the steel industry also: Mr. E.F. Andrews, the main steel industry spokesman against the bill, helped arrange the Rhodesian trip and accompanied the Congressmen there.

Representative Richard Ichord has also become an active opponent of the sanctions measure. It was he who took the initiative in February to have the sanctions bill referred to the conservative Armed Services Committee, of which he is a member. Ichord has made public statements against sanctions for the last year, calling them hypocritical and ineffective, and he testified against sanctions before the House Rules Committee last summer. Representative Runnels has not been as involved in the sanctions debate, but he has voted twice for the Byrd Amendment. He is also a member of the Armed Services Committee, so he may take on a larger role if the bill is referred to that Committee this year.

It is no accident that all of the Congressmen invited to Rhodesia oppose the U.S. sanctions program. Congressional supporters of sanctions, such as Congressman Charles Diggs, have been refused entry into Rhodesia in the past.

/Dent, Ichord and Runnels also made a brief stop in South Africa, at the invitation of Werner Ackerman, a sponsor of the recently-formed South African Foreign Affairs Association and the host of the six-person Congressional delegation to South Africa in January. The purpose of their South African visit was to investigate South African coal gasification techniques. South Africa has long encouraged U.S. businesses to use the process they have developed, in hopes of getting a loosening of the U.S. arms embargo as a return favor./

KISSINGER TRIES TO PACIFY AFRICAN DISTURBANCE AROUSED BY DAVIS APPOINTMENT

The gunsmoke has now cleared from the battle over Kissinger's choice of Nathaniel Davis to head the Africa Bureau. What began as a light skirmish ended up as a major confrontation over the direction of U.S. Africa policy. Black Africa, black Americans led by the Congressional Black Caucus, church and progressive groups took on Kissinger (who was embraced by the South Africans) and a Senate reluctant to challenge Kissinger or his appointee. Kissinger won the confirmation battle, but lost the publicity war.
On March 11, the Senate routinely, without recorded vote, confirmed Davis as Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs, and William Bowdler as the new Ambassador to South Africa. On the previous day, Senator Clark, the new chairman of the Africa Subcommittee, opposed the nomination in the Foreign Relations Committee, explaining: "In my judgement, the issue of the Davis nomination comes down to this: Mr. Davis, because of his association with U.S. policy in Chile, will have an extremely difficult time winning the trust and respect of the African leaders." The only Senator who opposed confirmation of Davis because he was culpable in Chile was Senator Abourezk. Percy withheld his vote. A number of liberals who had expressed sympathy with Africa in the past were understood to be alienated by an Organization of African Unity statement of support for the Palestinians.

In assessing the value of opposition generated to the Davis nomination, it should be borne in mind that the opponents never hoped to block confirmation. Rather, the objective was to draw press and public attention to the issue of possible U.S. intervention in the internal affairs of Africa on the Latin American model and to alert African nations to implications of the transfer of Latin American experts in counter-insurgency to the African scene. In these terms, the storm that built up was far beyond our fondest hopes.

On the day of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee hearing on the Davis nomination, the room was jammed with public spectators and the press. Congressman Harrington called for an investigation into Davis' role in the CIA activities that toppled Allende. Congressman Andrew Young called the Davis appointment an "insult to the African people." Other public witnesses included Father Robert Powell of the National Council of Churches, Peter Weiss of the American Committee on Africa, Ted Lockwood of the Washington Office on Africa, and Maryknoll Sister Janet McLaughlin.

When the hearing ended, it was clear that the Senators had agreed not to ask Davis questions about the CIA in Chile and that only Senators Biden and Clark were interested in exploring what the African nations thought of the appointment. Witnesses pointed repeatedly to President Mobutu's statement of deep concern about Easum's replacement by Davis at the African-American Institute conference of January 22. Javits ducked in and out. Pell spent a long time complimenting his old Foreign Service buddy on his distinguished career and assuring him that he would not stand for harassment of foreign service officers because they carried out policies obediently. Pell ended with a leisurely discourse on whether foreign service officers should get overtime pay. This infuriated witnesses who had flown in from New York only to find their remarks held to five minutes by Chairman Sparkman.

If any one felt that President Mobutu of Zaire spoke only for himself against the Davis nomination, they were quickly disabused the following day. The Organization of African Unity Council of Ministers declared on February 20, "African governments are bound to question what this appointment may portend," and vowed to resist the importation into Africa of "the odious practice" of destabilization, which had brought "untold harm to our brothers in Latin America."

Kissinger was furious. He fired off a personally drafted reply. The choice of Assistant Secretary of State for Africa was a "purely internal, domestic concern"; he was dismayed by the Africans' breach of international principles of decency. Not only had they "besmirched" unjustly the reputation of a brilliant professional and a civil rights activist, they had suggested that his mission was to "destabilize" Africa. This was "unacceptable and offensive."
This was some crust, as the Congressional Black Caucus pointed out two days later: "Are we to believe that the U.S. government plays no part in the selection process of government officials in other countries?... Are we to forget the Diem regime and the Thieu regime in Vietnam, the overthrow of President Allende...?"

The Caucus doubted that Davis could ever be trusted by or "credible" to the black African countries. But Kissinger is going to try. He let it be known to Columnist Carl Rowan that the Davis appointment may have been a blunder but he didn't want to ruin Davis' career by backing off. Then he had his Under Secretary Robert Ingersoll plead with the African Ambassadors to give Davis a chance. This did little to mollify the Africans and, so, after Davis was sworn in on April 4, Kissinger himself, with Davis, met with the African diplomatic corp in Washington on the 8th.

While Ken Owen of the Johannesburg Star speculates that Kissinger will now have to be tough with South Africa to show that the Davis appointment does not mean a break in opposition to Apartheid, all the evidence suggests that, while Kissinger is ready to assuage African diplomatic sensibilities, he will adhere to his tough line in giving full backing for the "detente" policy of Prime Minister Vorster. The state visit of Zambian President Kaunda to Washington on April 17-22 takes on added significance in this context. Kissinger probably hopes that Kaunda's advocacy of "detente" will legitimate as non-racial U.S. support for South Africa's initiatives toward a "moderate" settlement in Rhodesia and Namibia.

Clearly Kissinger is now going to have no more nonsense from the Africa Bureau. Davis is a cool, smooth, professional who is known to be one of the 10 or 12 who enjoy Kissinger's full confidence because he is a perfect executor of Kissinger's decisions. If he doesn't speak French or have experience in Africa, people will at least know that he speaks with the authority of Kissinger.