

Kaunda: 'Dismayed' by America

Departing from customary expressions of praise delivered at White House state dinners, President Kenneth D. Kaunda of Zambia last week asked President Ford's forgiveness for "candor" as he spoke strongly in a toast about conditions in southern Africa and United States policy. Following are excerpts of his remarks, based on a White House transcript.

By Kenneth D. Kaunda

We seek American understanding of Africa's objectives and America's fullest support in the attainment of these objectives.

The relations between Zambia and the United States cause me no concern because they are cordial, although there is room for improvement through more sound cooperation. What gives Zambia and Africa great cause for concern is America's policy toward Africa—or it is the lack of it, which, of course, can mean the same thing.

I have not worked at the U.N., but I have been told that at the U.N. sometimes there are tricks in which an abstention in a vote can be a vote for or against. A no-policy position may not be a neutral position indicative of a passive posture, but a deliberate act of policy to support the status quo or to influence events in one direction or the other at a particular time.

We have, in recent years, been most anxious about the nature and degree of the United States participation in building conditions for genuine peace, based on human equality, human dignity, freedom and justice for all—particularly in southern Africa.

You will forgive us, Mr. President, for our candor if we reaffirm on this occasion our dismay at the fact that America has not fulfilled our expectations. Our dismay arises from a number of factors.

We are agreed that peace is central to all human endeavors. We are agreed that we must help strengthen peace wherever it is threatened. There has been no peace in southern Africa for a very long time, a very long time, indeed, even if there was no war as such. The absence of war does not necessarily mean peace. The threat of escalation of violence is now real. It is our duty to avoid such an escalation.

To build genuine peace in southern Africa, we must recognize with honesty the root causes of the existing conflict. First, colonialism in Rhodesia and Namibia. The existence of a rebel regime in Rhodesia has since compounded that problem. Second, apartheid and racial domination in South Africa. Over the last few years, a number of catalytic factors have given strength to these forces of evil.

External economic and strategic interests have flourished colonial and apartheid regimes. Realism and moral conscience dictate that those who believe in peace must join hands in promoting conditions for peace. We cannot declare our commitment to peace and yet strengthen forces which stand in the way of the attainment of that peace.

The era of colonialism has ended. Apartheid cannot endure the test of time. To achieve our aim, we need America's total commitment to action consistent with that aim.

So far, American policy, let alone action has been low-keyed. This has



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given psychological comfort to the forces of evil.

We become, Mr. President, even more dismayed when the current posture of America toward Africa is set against the background of historical performance in the late fifties and early sixties.

We cannot but recall that America did not wait for, and march in step with, colonial powers, but rather boldly, boldly marched ahead with the colonial peoples in their struggles to fulfill their aspirations: an America undaunted by the strong forces of reaction against the wind of change, whose nationals helped teach the colonial settlers about the evils of racial discrimination: an America whose Assistant Secretary for African Affairs, "Soapy" Williams, could be slapped in the face by a white reactionary on our soil and yet, undaunted, still smile, still stand by American principles of freedom, justice and national independence based on majority rule.

Yes, the reactionaries hated Americans for spoiling the natives, as they would say, for helping dismantle colonialism.

We ask and wonder what has happened to America. Have the principles changed? The aspirations of the oppressed have not changed at all. In desperation, their anger has exploded their patience. Their resolve to fight, if peaceful negotiations are impossible, is born out by history.

So, their struggle has now received the baptism of fire; victories in Mozambique and Angola have given them added inspiration.

Can America still end only with declaration of support for the principles of freedom and racial justice? This, I submit, would not be enough. Southern Africa is poised for a dangerous armed conflict. Peace is at stake. Urgent action is required.

At this time, America cannot realistically wait and see what administering powers will do or pledge to support their efforts when none are in plan. America must heed the call of the oppressed.

Can America stand and be counted in implementing the Dar es Salaam strategy adopted by Africa? In Dar es Salaam early this month, Africa reaffirmed its commitment to a peaceful solution to the crisis in southern Africa as a first priority.

We call upon America to support our efforts in achieving majority rule in Rhodesia and Namibia immediately, and the ending of apartheid in South Africa.

If the oppressed peoples fail to achieve these noble ends by peaceful means, we call upon America not to give any support to the oppressors. Even now we call upon America to desist from direct and indirect support to minority regimes, for this puts America in direct conflict with the interests of Africa — peace deeply rooted in human dignity and equality and freedom without discrimination. We wish America to understand our aims and objectives. We are not fighting whites, we are fighting an evil and brutal system. On this there must be no compromise, none at all.