

Rep. Diggs Resigns As a U.N. Delegate

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By TERENCE SMITH
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UNITED NATIONS, N. Y., Dec. 17—A black member of the House of Representative resigned from the United States delegation to the United Nations today to protest what he called the "stifling hypocrisy" of the Nixon Administration's policy toward black Africa.

Representative Charles C. Diggs Jr., Democrat of Michigan, is the first member of an American delegation ever to have resigned to protest United States policies.

He was immediately criticized for doing so by George Bush, the chief United States delegate, and by Representative Edward J. Derwinski, Republican of Illinois, who is also serving on the delegation. A number

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Diggs Quits U.N. Delegation Over Africa Policy

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of Congressmen and prominent Americans are customarily appointed to the delegation each year as "public members" during the General Assembly session.

Azores Accord 'Watershed'

Mr. Diggs said he had accepted his role as an "instructed delegate" at the outset of the session, but that a series of Administration actions had finally brought him to a public break.

The "watershed," he said, came last week when the United States announced that it would provide Portugal with up to \$436-million in economic credits in return for the continued use of military bases in the Azores.

Speaking at a news conference here today, Mr. Diggs denounced this agreement as an "open alliance with Portugal," which, he said, would use the money to "wage war against the black peoples" in its African territories. He charged that the Azores pact amounted to an American "partnership in the subjugation of the African people."

He also objected to a series of recent votes in the General Assembly in which the United States either opposed resolutions critical of South Africa's policy of apartheid or abstained from supporting them.

In a statement issued later, Mr. Bush said he was disappointed by Mr. Diggs's resignation and added: "It is regrettable that a delegate should use his position to hold a press conference in order to publicly disavow U. S. Government policy."

He charged that this was using "a diplomatic forum for political purposes."

"Men of great stature have served for years on U. S. delegations and have achieved accommodation despite differ-

ences in personal opinions," Mr. Bush said, "in recognition that U. S. national interests were of paramount importance."

"I specifically asked Representative Diggs not to do this and I regret that he was not able to comply."

Mr. Bush's statement was read by Representative Derwinski, who added the observation that, given his political differences with the Administration, Mr. Diggs should have decided "either to live with them as an instructed delegate or not accept the assignment."

See Diggs as Naive

"I think Representative Diggs was perhaps almost naive in thinking that in 13 short weeks you would be allowed as a delegate to make many major changes," he said.

"I think he would have served far more effectively had he remained in his normal capacity as chairman of the African Subcommittee and not been inhibited for the time he was here," Mr. Derwinski said.

Mr. Diggs, who is also chairman of the Congressional Black Caucus, said in his statement that he was not alone in his dismay over the Administration's African policy.

"Many people at the mission, including the Ambassador [Mr. Bush]," he said, "have been frustrated in their desires for a more enlightened policy because of the instructions that have come down. They have fought for a more enlightened position and have lost."

Mr. Diggs said he had objected privately three weeks ago when the United States voted against, or abstained from, a series of resolutions reaffirming the arms embargo against South Africa and providing financing for the work of the Special Committee on Apartheid.

The Administration voiced objections to the language of the resolutions and also to the additional funds for the committee.

Mr. Diggs said he found these objections "tenuous and inadequate," and had written a letter of protest to Secretary of State William P. Rogers.

He also cited the following recent "failures" of American policy toward Africa as reasons for his disenchantment:

☛—The relaxation of the arms embargoes to permit the sale of light planes bell helicopters to the Portugese.

☛—"The erosion of our policy here at the United Nations on African questions, beginning in 1969, first to abstaining on important issues on African policy and, finally, to actually voting against such resolutions."

☛The Administration's failure

to vigorously oppose the amendment to the Military Procurement Act of 1971 authorizing the purchase of Rhodesian chrome, in violation of a United Nations embargo, which the President signed last month.

The net effect of these steps, Mr. Diggs said, has been a "sub rosa alliance with the forces of racism and repression in southern Africa."