



NEWS from
U.S. Senator
Bob Dole

(R.—Kans.)

New Senate Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20510 (202) 224-6521

358

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
DECEMBER 27, 1977

CONTACT: BOB DOWNEN
STEVE KITTRELL

SENATOR BOB DOLE today released the text of a letter he has sent to President Carter urging his support for negotiations now underway in Rhodesia for establishing a transition government. Dole accused the Carter Administration of "playing favorites with those elements least interested in the emerging democratic process in Rhodesia," and urged support for the moderate groups working together towards peaceful transition to majority rule.

The text of the letter to President Carter follows:

"Your decision to continue the Ford Administration's effort to work with all interested parties for a peaceful solution of the problems confronting the peoples of southern Africa is reassuring. However, while some outside impetus may have been necessary initially to move the future black nationalist leaders and the current white regime in Rhodesia toward a just settlement, it is questionable whether dictation of Rhodesian policy by outsiders at this point is constructive and useful?

"Unfortunately, there appears to be a "pride of authorship" aspect in the Administration's policy toward Rhodesia. When the Anglo-American plan was presented to leaders throughout southern Africa, it was on a "take-it-or-leave-it" basis. This Administration posture seemingly ignores the fact that Mr. Smith and three leading nationalists are now involved in negotiating a peaceful settlement with empty seats at the table reserved for the two outside guerrilla leaders. Those Senators and Congressmen who recently met with one outstanding nationalist leader, the Reverend Ndabaningi Sithole, received assurances that those blacks willing to negotiate with Mr. Smith were prepared to take their chances at the polls on the basis of one-man, one-vote and support whoever won such an election. It is unclear why your Administration has not actively endorsed this American political principle.

"Indeed, certain high ranking members of your Administration continue to claim that the Soviet-supported guerrilla leaders must be installed as Zimbabwe's future leaders at all costs. Those officials postulate the threat of a possible civil war in Rhodesia if any black leader, except a guerrilla leader, accedes to power in a fair election. This fear of a future war is difficult to credit as the basis for a rational policy of the world's most powerful nation, especially when it means ignoring the attempts of those trying to stop the very real shooting war now going on in that troubled nation.

"Moreover, access within the Administration appears to be a matter of playing favorites with those elements least interested in the emerging democratic process in Rhodesia. Reverend Sithole, the American-trained founder of ZANU, unsuccessfully sought to present his moderate views to you, the Vice President and Mr. Brzezinski. Yet, Mark Chone, a Zambian who acts on behalf of Mr. Nkomo and President Kuanda, just received a high-level White House audience in order to repeat the threat of civil war if elections are allowed to be held on a one-man, one-vote basis in Rhodesia.

"At your press conference on December 16th, you handled an analogous situation regarding guerrilla forces in the Middle East in a forceful and sensible manner. In referring to the PLO's refusal to negotiate with Israel, you said that PLO leaders have "in effect, removed themselves from serious consideration in the peace process." Why then do Administration officials seem willing to reward the Patriotic Front guerrilla leaders in Rhodesia for precisely the same kind of intransigence?

-2-

"The strategic importance of southern Africa to the West is, of course, beyond dispute. To let Rhodesia fall into the hands of anti-democratic forces hostile to the United States would be a disaster from the standpoint of our own national interest. We owe it to the people of Rhodesia, the African Continent and, most importantly, ourselves to do what we can to further the possible peaceful solution of that country's problems.

"The time to act is now. The negotiations in Salisbury are moving ahead and there are definite indications that the British are prepared to accept the results of those negotiations. We cannot afford to be the stumbling block on the road to peace in Rhodesia.

"We have to make it clear to all concerned through every means at our disposal that we support these efforts and have little sympathy for those forces unwilling to either discuss peaceful solutions or submit themselves and their ideas to the people via free elections."

In a statement released with the letter text, Dole made these additional observations:

"Regrettably, there is a predominant tendency of outsiders to interfere in an internal Rhodesian settlement. The "Front-Line" Presidents of neighboring African countries have been consulted endlessly on Rhodesia by the Carter Administration, which is akin to presuming that the presidents of Canada and Mexico have some innate right to comment on America's internal policies simply by virtue of geographic proximity. Naturally, we should welcome peace-making efforts by everyone interested in a stable, multiracial, independent Zimbabwe, but some "Front-Line" Presidents have on occasion made uncompromising demands which unfortunately have gained merit within our Administration.

"For instance, President Nyerere demanded during his August meeting with President Carter that the guerrilla forces must be made the backbone of the future security forces of an independent Zimbabwe. President Nyerere claims privately that he was provided with personal assurances in writing. This ill-advised policy initiative, which would obviously panic many whites into leaving, came as a great surprise to the British who were forced to revise the so-called Anglo-American plan to fit the Nyerere view of law and order in independent Zimbabwe. It also came as a surprise to the South Africans, who had presented the previous version of that plan to Mr. Smith and obtained his confidential agreement to negotiate on the basis of the plan.

"President Kuanda's proposal that no elections be held in Rhodesia until some unspecified date, because his personal choice for President might not win, was startling, as was his suggestion that we should install his friend, Mr. Nkomo, as interim President with the proviso that he would call for elections in due course. Unfortunately, this proposal is not without recent precedent, because it is exactly the pattern which was followed in Mozambique and Angola when the Portuguese turned over power to guerrilla forces on the understanding that they would shortly call for elections--which, of course, the unelected Presidents of those one-party, Marxist states have never done.

"Further evidence of the Administration's intransigence on the Rhodesian settlement question is its handling of Rhodesians who have asked to present their views to the Administration. Not only have white Rhodesian moderates who have labored long for improved race relations, such as C. G. Tracey of the Rhodesian Promotion Council, been denied visas or even access to the President's emissaries, but a visa was also denied at the last moment to a moderate black leader, Senator Chief Chirau, leader of the nationalist ZUPO party and the Chief of the Council of Chiefs. One wonders if the Administration needs so much reassurance that it is only willing to listen to foreigners who present views which accord with official U.S. preconceptions?"