

ISSUE



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## Editor's Note

In an article which appeared on June 17 a correspondent for the *Washington Post* reported from Salisbury, Rhodesia, that "Thousands of blacks in this white-run nation are now willing to go along with a proposed 1971 settlement of Rhodesia's independence dispute with Britain." In this *Issue*, Tony Kirk gainsays that impression. His essay on the recently formed black pro-settlement groups focuses on the strategy behind their creation, and his description of their leaders as men of little standing within the black community is offset by a thorough report on the activities of white private enterprises in support of the black pro-settlement groups. These activities range from the donation of office space by private individuals to direct subsidies from the white-run Settlement Council, and they conform to the tactics chosen by the Rhodesian government to promote pro-settlement feeling among Blacks.

The interests of private enterprise as upheld by government policy also constitute part of Ross Baker's analysis of the various segments of America's African constituency. Professor Baker concludes that at present the business community wields the greatest political influence with respect to Africa, but he believes — along with Clement Keto — that as Blacks gain political power they will be instrumental in blotting out the racial tone which has for so long colored America's actions abroad as well as at home. As he points out, however, the achievement of an enlightened and progressive policy towards Africa is contingent upon far more than a vocal constituency.

In his essay on U.S. — African relations, Herbert Spiro places our Africa policy in a global context and demonstrates the sort of formal, professional approach to Africa which characterizes two important points of policy access: the State Department and the National Security Council. The extent to which American responses to African initiatives are entangled with African responses to American initiatives is offered as proof of the complexities of interdependence in a world where, thanks to the Nixon Doctrine, we are now able to respond to differentiated strategic concerns and relate them one to another. When Mr. Spiro becomes "issue-specific" he refers to the chrome issue, or, more specifically, the Byrd Amendment. He describes this issue as "hard to describe and even harder to analyze," but it is this very issue which Mr. Baker has chosen to analyze in support of his statement that, under the current Administration, the "initiative if not the advantage lies with the entrepreneurial sub-constituency."

In most of the articles there is some attempt to relate events in the 1960s with present policies — whether the policies of the U.S. in Africa (Spiro, Baker), the policies of the OAU vis-à-vis Southern Africa (Dunn), the policies of China in Africa (El-Khawas), or the policies of black America with respect to the struggle for the liberation of Blacks in South Africa (Keto). While China's more flexible approach to Africa in the years following the Cultural Revolution has had significant impact in Africa, it has also served, perhaps, to influence those governments in the West searching for some indication that China was not concerned solely with the export of revolution. It is interesting to note that in Africa, China's support of liberation forces is now confined to those movements opposing white-controlled governments in the south. As Mr. El-Khawas makes clear, China is following policies quite acceptable to the Western countries in their relations with Black Africa. This was particularly evident last January when President Mobutu of Zaire secured a \$100 million interest-free loan from the government in Peking. China granted an \$84 million interest-free loan to Ethiopia in 1971. It will be remembered that Ethiopia and Zaire were two of the four countries in Africa visited by Vice President Agnew in July 1971.

Mr. Baker contends that eclectic embrace followed by selective disengagement has been characteristic of the Nixon Administration in Africa. While the same words can be used to describe China's actions in Africa over the past decade, it may be that the 1970s will, as Mr. Spiro suggests, witness greater consistency in the application of certain principles on the part of those powers for whom the politics of interdependence take precedence over all else, including the politics of liberation. One wonders if the 1970s will also witness China join the West in subscribing to contradictory principles. Perhaps by watching Africa closely we shall begin to see.

P.S.B.

# ISSUE

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