

The African-American Contribution to the Liberation Struggle in Southern Africa: The Case of the African Liberation Support Committee, 1972-1979

by

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Abstract

The internationalization of the struggles for the liberation of southern Africa played a deceive role in its eventual outcome. However, often not appreciated is the very tangible role Africans in the Diaspora played in this regard, especially those in the United States. Hence, African-Americans as individuals or through organizations mobilized support for the African cause in the U.S. They were inspired by the spirit of consanguinity, which was anchored on a feeling of “racial Pan-Africanism”. The African Liberation Support Committee (ALSC) of the 1970s was one such organization that provided a veritable forum for African-American to support the liberation of Africa. This paper examines among other issues the main objectives for the organization’s establishment and its activities, and offers a critical evaluation of the contributions of the organization to African liberation. Using original documents, interviews of some participants in the activities of the organization and relevant secondary materials, it is established that the ALSC epitomizes one of the credible ways African-Americans lent their support to African liberation efforts. The paper also establishes that beyond the intellectual support which diasporan Africans have always been credited with in their contribution to the liberation of Africa, they also contributed financially to African liberation which constitutes a testimony to ‘pragmatic Pan-Africanism’.¹

Keywords: African-Americans, African Liberation Support Committee (ALSC), African Liberation Day Co-ordinating Committee (ALDCC), Pragmatic Pan-Africanism.

Introduction

At different times and for varied reasons, African-Americans had had cause to address the issue of their relationship with Africa². The nineteenth century witnessed an increase in the articulation of programs that would enable them to contribute to Africa's development. For them, this was informed by their belief that they and African people on the continent were fighting a common racial battle against white oppression and exploitation.³

Evidence shows that even before the 1970s, African-Americans had for a long time been involved in the articulation and execution of plans that were meant to help the home of their early forebears. Such plans came within the context of emigration, colonization and back-to-Africa projects of African-Americans in the 19th and early 20th centuries (Shepperson, 1960; Staudenraus, 1961; Essien-Udom, 1962; Redkey, 1969; Ullman, 1971; Harris, 1972; Weisbord, 1973; Contee, 1974; Griffith, 1975; Miller, 1975; Jacobs, 1982; Painter, 1988; and Erhagbe, 1996).

The Italo-Ethiopian Conflict of 1935-1941 that saw Italy invade and occupy Ethiopian territory also stirred new African-American interests in African affairs; and African-Americans showed solidarity with the Ethiopians and mobilized to assist them in their struggle (Ottley, 1943; Shepperson, 1953; Harris Jr., 1964; Drake, 1966; Asante, 1977, Chukuba, 1979 and Erhagbe and Ifidon, 2008). This development, as observed by Franklin and Moss (1988:56), caused "even the most provincial among American Negroes (to) become internationally minded." It was in this tradition of being interested in developments in Africa that organizations were established in the African-American community, with the main objective of assisting the African population on the continent.

Unlike the back-to-Africa movements that envisaged a return to Africa in order to help re-build Africa, the new organizations believed in assisting African people in Africa by working in their locations in the Diaspora. Among these latter groups were the Council on African Affairs, (CAA) which was active in the 1940s and 50s (Contee, 1974: 117 – 133; Lynch, 1978), the American Society of African Culture (AMSAC) (see Drake, 1966 and Davis, 1966), and the American Negro Leadership Conference on Africa (ANLCA), (Davis, 1966, and Erhagbe, 1991). Hence, there was a renewed interest of African-Americans in the struggle for the liberation of the last bastion of colonialism and white-minority regimes in Africa in the early 1970's, and in this context of trying to actualize their objective of aiding the liberation of Africa, some African-Americans established the African Liberation Support Committee (ALSC).

Through the activities of the ALSC, a good number of African-Americans got to identify with African causes in the New World. These activities of the ALSC clearly show that African-Americans were deeply interested in the plight of the African in Africa. Thus, beyond the intellectual influences on African liberation, Blacks in the United States also lent material, financial and other forms of concrete support to the African struggle. Furthermore, the ALSC emerged as an organization in the 1970s that directed Black nationalist organizations' attention to the issue of lending support to African liberation struggle; and the activities of the ALSC and like groups offer ample evidence of African people outside of Africa and continental African co-operation in the struggle for the liberation of the African continent.

Theoretical Framework

There has been a burgeoning of African Diaspora studies in recent times, especially in the United States and Africa⁴. A major theme of these studies has been the issue of the varied and multi-dimensional ramifications of the relationship between Africans abroad and the African continent and its people⁴. These studies have also surfaced within the broader theme of Pan-Africanism. Thus, this study is situated both within African Diaspora studies, and more especially Pan-Africanism.

Different strands and concepts of Pan-Africanism are identifiable (Geiss, 1974:3-4). For this study, Pan-Africanism is seen first as the concept that seeks to capture what Geiss describes "as intellectual and political movements among Africans and Afro-Americans (including other Diasporan blacks) who regard or have regarded Africans and people of African descent as homogenous"⁵. Because of this, the groups believe they have a responsibility to work for the improvement of the plight of African people everywhere.

At another level, however, because the issue of belonging to the same Black race played a major role in the African-American identification with Africa south of the Sahara, this study takes note of the subtle distinction drawn by St. Clair Drake (1959:6-10) between 'continental' and 'racial' Pan-Africanism. Essentially, while continental Pan-Africanism tends to generally capture people in Africa, racial Pan-Africanism tends to tie together only black Africans. Pan-Africanism as a framework for this study is also qualified by the term 'pragmatic'. Thus, the concept of 'pragmatic Pan-Africanism' is central to this work.

The concept of 'pragmatic Pan-Africanism' tends to focus more on those practical things that have been done to demonstrate African/African Diasporan co-operation, as against the theoretical expositions of plans to do the same or sentimental identification by Diasporan blacks with Africa.⁶ This framework of study enables us to argue that by the 1970s African-Americans had decidedly come to the awareness that they had close affinity with Africans in the continent, not just racially but also because of their common exposure to White racist and capitalist exploitation. They saw themselves and the African people on the continent as the "source of super-profits, the victims of physical oppression, social ostracism, economic exclusion and personal hatred."⁷ This was why they found it necessary to form an international Black vanguard to fight against racism in America and for the liquidation of European colonialism in Africa. This study of the ALSC helps to show the practical ways Africans in the Diaspora could and did contribute to Africa's political liberation, and in a special way, addresses some questions asked previously by some writers (Weil, 1974; Frazier, 1958). Hence, Weil (1974) had asked a question in the title of his article, "Can the Blacks Do for Africa What the Jews Did for Israel?" and Frazier (1958), had asked the question, "What Can the American Negro Contribute to the Social Development of Africa?" In the same vein, Barrett (1969) even asked a more fundamental question: "should Black Americans be involved in African Affairs?"

The historical approach of highlighting the ways in which Black people in the Diaspora had been involved in Africa before the 1960s and after goes a long way in answering the above questions. Nonetheless, it is fair to say that African-Americans have continued to pragmatically and practically identify with Africa, as will be shown through the efforts of the African Liberation Support Committee (ALSC), the kernel topic of this study.

Establishment and Objectives of the Organization

A major strand of the growth of African consciousness among African-Americans in the 1960s was the identification with Africa, culturally, and politically (Weisbord, 1973; Duignan and Gann, 1984:342). As part of their political orientation, there was a marked new identification by African-Americans with those areas of Africa still under European domination. Hence, Black nationalists of different ideological persuasions started emphasizing in their rhetoric and activities the commonality of the struggle against white oppression which African-Americans and those Africans still under white domination were waging.⁸ Thus, some African-American leaders of the late 1960s and the 1970s now identified with the struggle for Black majority rule in Southern Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe); the independence movements in Guinea Bissau, Angola, and Mozambique, and the efforts to end the apartheid system of government in South Africa. The ALSC was established in order to put into practical terms this identification with African liberation in Africa.

The machinery for the setting up of the ALSC was set in motion by Owusu Sadaukai, an African-American that had visited Africa, he had visited Tanzania in September, 1971 and that visit provided the impetus for the establishment of the organization (at the time, he was the director of Malcolm X Liberation University in Greensboro, North Carolina). During his visit, he visited the liberated areas of Mozambique as a guest of the Frente de Libertacao de Mozambique (FRELIMO: Front for the Liberation of Mozambique). And according to Sadaukai, this experience was a tremendously inspiring one because it offered him the opportunity to discuss with the leadership of FRELIMO the kind of support that could be mobilized among the African-American people in the U.S.⁹ Hence, FRELIMO leaders indicated that the best way African-Americans could help African liberation was to organize support in the form of organized protests and mass demonstrations, along the lines of the anti-Vietnam discordance of the 1960s in the U.S., and furthermore, FRELIMO suggested that African-Americans put pressure on the U.S. government to stop dealing with Portugal and that they didn't necessarily need African-Americans to come over and fight.¹⁰

Inspired by the FRELIMO request, Sadaukai called a meeting of leaders of different Black nationalist groups that were then functional in the African-American community. Participants at the first meeting decided that their support for the African struggle would be organized around mass demonstrations to be held on African Liberation Day in the month of May.¹¹ Thus, the meeting set up an African Liberation Day Co-ordinating Committee (ALDCC) to put together plans for the demonstrations.

The ALDCC involved leaders of several shades of political opinion, including members of the Congressional Black Caucus, leaders of mainstream civil rights organizations, and those of the Black liberation movement, that is, the 'Black Power militants'.¹² It was this broad coalition that organized the first African Liberation Day demonstration.

After the first demonstration, militant elements in the ALDCC coalition decided to call a meeting to establish the African Liberation Support Committee. The inaugural meeting was held at Malcolm X Liberation University in Greensboro, North Carolina, on July 25, 1972. At this meeting, a decision was taken to establish a permanent organization to lead the growing support for African liberation movements. It was also decided to trim off those leaders that belonged to the political centre or who weren't revolutionary; this was because these "... former ALDCC politicians, stars, etc... did no productive ongoing work throughout the whole mobilization process."¹³

And as a result, those who formed the new core of the proposed ALSC were “mainly the nationalists and Pan-Africanists who served as the core group for organizing the demonstration, plus some new people (students and community activists), advanced elements, who had been active at the local levels in bringing people to the demonstration, and had been won to ALSC.”¹⁴ These individuals belonged mainly to the left in their ideological persuasion. The meeting appointed a National Steering Committee to formulate a comprehensive political statement to guide the work of the ALSC.

The National Steering Committee met on a number of occasions to clarify and produce a more comprehensive political statement to guide the nascent organization. The most important of the meetings was held at Frogmore, South Carolina between June 28 and July 1, 1973. The Committee produced a “Statement of Principles” (SOP) which the ALSC adopted at the Frogmore meeting. The SOP named racism and imperialism as the major enemies facing African-American people; it argued that the basis for unity in the Black liberation movement had to be anti-capitalist in character; it also acknowledged the existence of classes in the African-American Community, and called for working class leadership in the Black liberation movement.

The SOP adopted at Frogmore laid out seven basic objectives of the future activities of the ALSC, and the program of action showed the attempts to combine the struggle both in the United States and Africa.¹⁵ The ALSC’s objectives were to:

- raise money for liberation groups in southern Africa and Guinea-Bissau;
- conduct educational seminars and programs on racism, feudalism, imperialism, colonialism, and neo-colonialism, and its effect on the continent of Africa, especially southern Africa and Guinea Bissau;
- develop and distribute literature, films, and other educational materials on racism, feudalism, imperialism, colonialism, neo-colonialism and its effects on the continent of Africa;
- participate in and aid Afro-American community and Afro-American workers in the struggles against oppression in the U.S., Canada, and the Caribbean;
- engage in efforts to influence and transform U.S. policy as regards its imperialist role in the world;
- engage in mass actions against governments, products, and companies that are involved in or are supportive of racist, illegitimate regimes in southern Africa and Guinea Bissau;
- support and spearhead ALD demonstration in conjunction with the International African Solidarity Day.¹⁶

These objectives defined some of the activities of the ALSC by 1973, and those that it carried out before its demise.

The ALSC also adopted an organizational structure at the July 1973 meeting which consisted of the National Steering Committee with an Executive Committee and special units to handle research and development; production and distribution, fund raising and investigation. In addition, regional, state, and local committees were to be established. The four regions within the ALSC were the Southern, North East, Mid West, and Western Regions.¹⁷ From July 1973 to August 1974, the ALSC had expanded to include fifty-five chapters. By 1974, however, the ALSC's national structure was decentralized "to allow for greater local autonomy and initiative due to differing local conditions and different political lines which led various chapters."¹⁸ This decentralization of the organization led to the lack of a central headquarters to help direct the local chapters, a situation that led to a further disintegration of the ALSC into an "amoebic form".¹⁹

The subsequent history of the ALSC shows an organization within which disagreements were very prominent in its attempts to define its direction.²⁰ In spite of these disagreements, it was still able to execute some of its programs. This was partly possible because in its projects, involving mass mobilization, the ALSC tended to underplay the ideological differences among its supporters. When the ideological differences widened and became more intensified, the ALSC activities suffered. Nonetheless, their practical work included campaigns, demonstrations, and promotion of educational and agitational programs, which were geared towards assisting African liberation.

Activities of the African Liberation Support Committee

A major means by which the ALSC mobilized its support for African Liberation struggles in southern Africa was through the organization of demonstrations to coincide with African Liberation Day, on May 25, of every year. To ensure maximum participation by workers, students and those engaged in weekday commitments, the ALSC always moved the activities to the first Saturday after May 25, if that date wasn't on a weekend. The ALSC succeeded in organizing two well-publicized and well-attended demonstrations on African Liberation Day in 1972 and 1973. In terms of scope and attendance, other demonstrations in other years were not as elaborate and well attended as these first two.

The first African Liberation Day demonstrations were held on May 27, 1972, in Washington, D.C., San Francisco, Toronto, Grenada, Dominica, and Antigua. The main purposes of the demonstrations were to “show the world our support for the struggle our brothers are waging; protest U.S. involvement in Southern Africa; and protest European settler colonies’ suppression of liberation movements.”²¹ The activities for African Liberation Day were put together by the Steering Committee of ALDCC. This body was chaired by Owusu Sadaukai; other members included Mayor Richard G. Hatcher of Gary, Indiana; U.S. Representatives Charles Diggs Jr. and Louis Stokes; Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) President Ralph D. Abernathy; Black Panther Party Prime Minister Huey P. Newton and the Rev. Lucius Walker, Director of the Inter-religious Foundation for Community Organisation.²²

There were different estimates on the number of people that attended the demonstrations. The African-American community-based newspapers tended to report higher figures as against the White newspapers that gave lower figures. The estimates of the Washington demonstrators ranged from 12,000, according to the *Washington Post*, to 25,000, as reported by *The Black Panther* and the *African World*.²³ In the case of San Francisco, the *Washington Post*, put the attendance at 200 persons, whereas the *African World* put the figures at 10,000; the *California Voice* put the number at approximately 3,000 Black men, women and children.²⁴ The *African World* estimated that in all, sixty thousand Black people in the Western Hemisphere demonstrated in Washington, D.C., San Francisco, Toronto, Grenada, Dominica, and Antigua.²⁵

While there is disagreement on the attendance figures, there is agreement on the fact that the demonstration was an all-Black event.²⁶ *The New York Times* report indicated that the whole event was planned and run by Blacks.²⁸

According to Sadauki, “if we had wanted to get off into an integrated thing, and there was a lot of pressure on us to do that, yeah, we could have had 75,000”.²⁷ He went on to emphasize the significance of the non-integration of the movement:

the 25,000 to 30,000 Black folks, ... said a whole lot more in many ways than 75,000 integrated groups. Because it said that Black people, stood solidly with Black people, that we had reached a point where we could pull that many people there without any kind of white support, in terms of the press, and all that.²⁸

Newspaper reports on the demonstrations also indicate that there was a “strong Black nationalist tone” in the speeches made at the rallies. *The Washington Post* reported that “Black nationalist flags of red, black, and green dotted the monument assembly (The Washington Monument, renamed for the day Lumumba Square after the slain Congolese premier, Patrice Lumumba), as well as the march, and the marchers, dressed in fatigues, denims and African clothing, shouted black nationalist slogans and chants”.²⁹ Some of the marchers carried signs saying “Africa for the Africans’, ‘Black People Must Unify’, and ‘Arm Yourself or Harm Yourself’. Their chants included, “Power to the People/Black, Black Power to the African People, who will survive in America/Very Few Niggers and No Crackers at All”.³⁰

Both the demonstrations in Washington, D.C. and San Francisco were marked by protest marches and speeches delivered by prominent leaders in the African-American community. The speakers expressed their solidarity with the African struggle, emphasizing the fact that, no Blackman is free anywhere until all Africans are free. They also condemned the U.S. for its support of the oppressive Rhodesian, Portuguese, and South African governments that were enslaving Black people in Africa.³¹ Speakers at the rallies represented the broad spectrum of political opinion in the Black community, including, in the D.C. rally, George Willey; Congressman Charles Diggs, Jr.; Imamu Baraka (formerly LeRoi Jones of the Congress of African People); Essiah Zhuwarara (representative of the Front for the Liberation of Zimbabwe (FROLIZI); Elaine Brown, Minister of Information of the Black Panther Party, Roy Innis, Director of the Congress of Racial Equality; Owusu Sadaukai; and Congressman Walter Fauntroy. A message from Stokely Carmichael, the former head of Student Non-Violent Co-ordinating Committee (SNCC) then living in Guinea, was also read. The San Francisco gathering was addressed by Charles Koen; Mayor Richard Hatcher; Bobby Seale, Chairman of the Black Panther Party; California Assemblyman Willie Brown; Walter Rodney (then teaching in Tanzania); Donald Williams of the Black Workers Congress; David Sibeko of the Pan-Africanist Congress of South Africa; and Nelson Johnson, head of the Student Organisation for Black Unity (SOBU). Despite the fact that many speakers differed in ideological perspectives, a fact noticeable in the many presentations was that “most speakers followed the general theme of denouncing the U.S. government foreign and domestic policy toward African people and illustrating the identity of struggle between Africans in America and Africans on the continent”.³²

Different speakers emphasized the significance of the demonstration, and they agreed that it marked an historic event for so many African-Americans to come together for the fundamental purpose of showing their concern for Africa, and solidarity with the African liberation struggles being waged in southern Africa.

Lu Palmer stated in an article in the *Chicago Daily News* that, “The significance of the May 27th demonstrations lies in the fact that it marks the first time since Marcus Garvey’s Back-to-Africa Movement in the 1920s that masses of U.S. Blacks will have come together as a commitment to Africa as their ancestral home”.³³ Sadaukai, in his speech, saw the importance of the demonstration in the fact that it showed that African-Americans were concerned about what was happening in Africa.³⁴ Sadaukai, in his address to the crowd, went further to say:

Your presence demonstrated that we are no longer buying the argument that Africans on the continent are different from us. We are moving to the point where we understand that this racist capitalist monster, that we are struggling against here, is the same one that oppresses our people in Africa, and all over the world.³⁵

Writing in a similar vein, *The Black Panther* in an editorial, stated that “we had shown, in our single effort on May 27th, that many thousands of our people (a greater number than our enemies would have dared dream) are conscious and concerned about the liberation of the Motherland from which we were torn centuries ago”.³⁶

The May 1972 demonstrations marked a period when African-Americans of varying political and ideological leaning came together to show solidarity with the African liberation struggle in Africa. Apart from the marches and rallies that formed the core of these demonstrations, nothing more was done during this early stage to concretely support the struggle. It was with the formal establishment of the ALSC in the period following the May 27, 1972 demonstration that other forms of support, including material support, were now added to the program of action.

When the ALSC was formally established after the 1972 demonstrations, it was decided that the body be organizationally separate from the African Liberation Day (ALD) sub-committee, the latter to be subordinate to the former. This decision was made with the hope that the ALSC would be built into “an organization which was more than just a structure designed to mobilize large numbers of people and raise some money during only one day in May of each year.”³⁷ In accordance with this decision, state and local ALD planning committees were established. These committees were to include the broadest possible organizational representation, while the ALSC was to remain in control of all policy decisions.³⁸ It was under this arrangement that plans for the African Liberation Day for 1973, were worked out. Demonstrations were to be held in thirty cities in the U.S., co-ordinated with activities in Canada, the West Indies, London, and several African capitals.³⁹

There was a major tactical shift made at the fourth national ALSC meeting held in Washington, D.C., on December 23, 1972. It was decided that “African Liberation Day 1973 was to consist of local demonstrations and fund-raising activities in areas where there was a committee strong enough to mobilize a significant number of people and was in a position to raise a significant amount of money”⁴⁰ Local communities were expected to raise two thousand dollars, and forty thousand dollars was set as an international figure to shoot for, in the drive to raise money for a ‘United African Appeal Fund’ to support the liberation movements in southern Africa.

The ALSC made other tactical decisions before the demonstrations of 1973. It was decided at a February 10, 1973 meeting in Chicago that “local and state committees were to extend invitation to non-black organisations (that would take or have taken similar stands against imperialism) to participate in the demonstration under the guidelines devised by the Support Committee.”⁴¹ This decision did not mean an integration of the ALSC, because it was further decided that “the committee will remain all Black and the organizing efforts for local demonstrations will focus on the Black community. The other organizations invited to participate will organize in their own communities.”⁴² The ALSC also decided that, after the demonstrations, local committees were to work for a boycott of “Gulf Oil, Lancans Wine, and Portuguese sardines and freeze-dried coffee that comes out of Angola.”⁴³

In its final meeting before the African Liberation Day demonstration on May 26, 1973, the national ALSC outlined the official position of the committee concerning the distribution of funds to designated liberation movements and groups in Africa. Its policy was that:

In line with our stated goals of giving financial and material support to liberation groups struggling in Southern Africa, Guinea Bissau and Cape Verde Islands, the National African Liberation Support Committee in Greensboro, North Carolina, on April 28, 1973 voted to give support in 1973 to the following liberation groups: PAIGC in Guinea Bissau and Cape Verde Islands; FRELIMO in Mozambique; UNITA in Angola; and the Joint Command of ZANU-ZAPU in Zimbabwe (Rhodesia). These groups will be supported out of the money raised during the United African Appeal effort during the month of May. The National African Liberation Support Committee will divide equally 80 percent of the money collected between the four groups. The other 20 percent of the money will be set aside for additional funding in 1973 of groups based on the recommendations of a special sub-committee appointed at the meeting. This sub-committee will make recommendations to the National African Liberation Support Committee when it has compiled its investigation.⁴⁴

At this meeting, the ALSC voted not to give any money to the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) to distribute to the liberation movements, since the ALSC was willing to set its own criteria for judgement on the issue.

Reports of the actual activities of May 26, 1973 indicate that the African Liberation Day (ALD) for 1973 was relatively successful. Demonstrations were held in more than thirty-five cities of Africa, the United States, the Caribbean and Canada. In the United States, demonstrations were held in Washington, D.C., New York and Oakland, California. In New York, Manhattan Borough President, Percy Sutton, designated the month of May as "African Liberation Month" and the intersection of 125th St. and Seventh Ave. as "African Liberation Square".⁴⁵ The ceremonies of the day were identical to those of 1972. *The Washington Post* reported that the 1973 demonstration in Washington was local and drew smaller crowds than that of 1972, and it estimated that about 4,500 Washington Blacks marched in a chilly and wet weather.⁴⁶ In all, the ALD 1973 demonstration was able to mobilize some 80,000 people.⁴⁷ Unlike the first ALD of 1972, money was collected for selected liberation movements in Africa.⁴⁸ The ALSC was able to raise some funds in its drive, and gave this to the selected liberation movements to help them purchase military equipment such as walkie-talkies.⁴⁹

African nations and liberation movements sent representatives to a number of ALD sites. The delegates came to explain the need for support. Some of the Africans present at the Washington, D.C., rally were Ahmed Sekou Toure, nephew of the President of the Republic of Guinea, Sekou Toure; Simpson V. Mtambanengwe, Secretary for Political Affairs for the Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU); Sikhanyiso Ndlovu, Secretary of the Zimbabwe African Peoples' Union (ZAPU); Salvino D'Luz of the African Party for Independence of Guinea (Bissau) and Cape Verde Islands (PAIGC) and Ambassador Alhaji Abdulaye Toure of the Republic of Guinea.⁵⁰

The 1973 ALD was the high point in the mobilization efforts of the ALSC. This was because, after this demonstration, the ideological falling-out within the committee developed into a major conflict. This ideological conflict within the ALSC was a reflection of the major disagreement among Black intellectuals and activists within the Black civil rights movement in the 1970s. Basically, there were those who believed that the solutions to the African-American problem in America should be based on class and not on blackness or race and thus prescribed socialist solutions. They tended to emphasize the class struggle against capitalism and neo-colonialism. On the other hand, there were those who believed that the problem was not capitalism or mercantilism rather it was purely and simply a problem of colour, hence the solution laid in Black nationalism.⁵¹

This now caused a split in the ALSC, since those of the first persuasion tended to dominate affairs within the organization, consequently those of the latter order, the Black nationalists now quit the ALSC.⁵² The leader of the ALSC Owusu Sadauki, Amiri Baraka, Maulana Karenga, S.E. Anderson, Mark Smith and Abdul Aikalimat were prominent Black intellectuals and activists who critiqued the new ‘scientific socialism’ as the solution to the Black problem.

In the ideological debates that marked this era the various peculiarities of the various shades of socialism were ignored, hence those of the socialist persuasion now coalesced into what they called “Marxist – Leninist – Mao-Tse Tung” ideology, arguing that they were all basically socialists. This group became quite distinct from those who saw themselves as ‘Black nationalist Pan-Africanists’. This group disparaged and criticized socialism/communism and capitalism, saying that they were two sides of a bad coin, hence, two ideologies which the Whites use to oppress and exploit the Black man throughout the world.⁵³ Subscribers to this latter viewpoint were Haki Madhubuti (formerly Don L. Lee), John Oliver Killens, Ronald Walters, John Henrik Clarke, Jitu Weusi, Kalamu ya Salaam and Mwanza (Charles Ross). Notable members of this latter group, including Madhubuti and Mwanza resigned from the ALSC.

Between the 1973 ALD and 1974, the ALSC was able to organize other activities that were related to aiding the African struggle. The Committee joined the campaign to repeal the U.S. Senate Byrd Amendment which wanted to authorize the U.S. government to continue to import chrome from Rhodesia in contravention of the UN sanctions against Rhodesia for the latter’s unilateral declaration of its independence and its racial policies.⁵⁴ The ALSC, through its various chapters, went on a signature-campaign to get people to sign a petition that was to be sent to the U.S. Congress through congressman Charles Diggs, Jr., and Senator Edward Brooke.⁵⁵ Successful demonstrations, protesting the amendment, were held in Washington, D.C., Baltimore, New York City, Newark, and Rochester, New York during July and October of 1973.⁵⁶ At least 15,000 signatures were collected on the petition demanding the repeal of the Byrd Amendment.⁵⁷

The ALSC also organized the International Week of Solidarity Against Portuguese Imperialism (November 18-24, 1973) in which at least twenty local chapters were involved in mass activity, including demonstrations, forums, rallies and fundraising educational programs. This campaign included the call to boycott Gulf Oil which was accused of being “the largest single investor in Africa (with more in Angola, Mozambique, and Guinea Bissau than the other combined 29 U.S. companies) and pays over \$50 million to Portugal each year – over half of the military budget for fighting African Liberation Struggles”.⁵⁸

The ALSC also carried out an active campaign in support of the new Republic of Guinea Bissau. It collected signatures which were sent to the U.S. Congress demanding recognition of the newly independent country of Guinea-Bissau by the United States government.⁵⁹

Between 1973 and 1974 the ALSC also incorporated into its programs national and local issues. These issues included the “energy crisis”, and end to police repression (Nashville and Atlanta), prison reform (Texas), and capital punishment (North Carolina). The ALSC also often gave support to strikes, demonstrations and rallies by workers. This was meant to “bring a greater awareness of imperialism as the basic cause of oppression and exploitation inside the U.S. as well as throughout the world.”⁶⁰

The ALSC was also unable to continue as a united front after the Washington D.C. conference of May 1974. This was because of the acrimonious disagreements over what the dominant ideology of the organisation should be: Black nationalism or scientific socialism. From the time of the 1974 meeting, “dogmatism” took over from “activism” in terms of the direction of the ALSC, and this greatly undermined the effectiveness of the organization.⁶¹

Although ALSC went into a hiatus after 1974, in 1977 it came alive again under a new name, the Organizing Committee for a New African Liberation Support Committee (OC-ALSC). This was based mainly in Chicago but had local chapters in Atlanta, Oakland and Milwaukee, Wisconsin. The OC-ALSC survived for a brief period, and succeeded in carrying out an effective campaign to stop the sale of the South African gold coin, the Krugerrand, in targeted stores such as the Carson Pirie Scott Company. The OC-ALSC also held ten demonstrations in a period of ten weeks that led Carson Pirie Scott’s board of directors to vote on November 25, 1977, to remove the Krugerrand from all its stores.⁶²

Ronald Bailey, then a professor at Northwestern University, co-ordinated the ‘Ban the Krugerrand Coalition’ in Evanston, Illinois. Apart from the Carson Pirie Scott and Co. department store, the First National Bank and the State National Bank, both in Evanston, also decided not to sell the coin.⁶³ Thus, the anti-Krugerrand campaign led to major regional demonstrations that were held on December 3, 1977 in New York City, Atlanta and California.⁶⁴

While the OC-ALSC adopted as its main slogan “Fight Imperialism from USA (United States of America) to USA (Union of South Africa)” its activities were limited and the efforts shortly petered out. The march and protest that it organized at the White House on African Liberation Day, 1977 attracted barely fifteen hundred people. The new mobilization of support for the southern African liberation struggle by this period had been taken over by a new group – Trans Africa, Inc.

Contributions of the ALSC to the African Liberation Struggle

Historically, apart from the CAA (Council on African Affairs) and later the ALSC, there was no other African-American organisation in the post-Second World War period that was able to mobilize the masses to express their support for African liberation struggles and send material aid to help the struggle. The ALSC and CAA were different from the American Negro Leadership Conference on Africa (ANLCA) and the American Society of African Culture (AMSAC), especially in terms of membership and the methods of operation, the two other organizations that focussed on assisting Africa.⁶⁵ The ANLCA and AMSAC were elite bodies that did not involve the masses of African-Americans in their activities. The ALSC, like the CAA, on the other hand, centred its activities round mass mobilization; students, workers and members of the middle class that participated in ALSC demonstrations; the leadership and membership of both AMSAC and ANLCA could be described as “conservative”, but those of the ALSC tended to belong to the Black radical group. As stated earlier, by 1974 the leadership of the ALSC had succeeded in decidedly pushing the ALSC to adopt a “Marxist-Leninist-Mao Tse Tung” ideology as its guiding principle. This leftist bent of the ALSC thus caused some members of the more conservative class of African-American leaders to keep away from the organisation, especially because of the cold war climate of the time.

In terms of activities, the ALSC was also different from AMSAC and the ANLCA. For example, while the ANLCA tended to focus its activities on organising conferences and meetings with U.S. government officials, no “positive actions” were taken by the group to support the African liberation struggle. St. Clair Drake, in his assessment of the earlier contributions of African-American groups to the African liberation struggle, wrote that, if we are very honest with ourselves we shall have to admit that we played virtually no role in the liberation and consolidation of the now independent African States – except to serve as a very proud cheering section. We were too busy looking toward our own integration to play any important part in African liberation, and there was no pressing need for it.⁶⁶

In contrast, the ALSC adopted “positive actions” in the form of demonstrations, petition drives, boycott campaigns, and fund raising to mobilize their support for African liberation struggles. These combined activities of ALSC helped to publicize the nature and importance of the African liberation struggles. News reports of ALSCs demonstrations appeared in major newspapers, including *The New York Times* and *The Washington Post*, and a host of African-American news outlets such as the *African World*, and *The Black Panther*.

Owusu Sadaukai, chairman of the ALSC, was one of those that assessed the importance of the ALSC's organized demonstrations. In his view, the demonstrations were "a kind of willingness on the part of people to internationalize our struggle and a willingness to begin to understand the concept that we are an African people".⁶⁷ He further emphasized "that this expression on the part of the masses went beyond the level of a psychological cultural nationalist identification with Africa or an expression denoted by a desire to go back to Africa," and that it was also significant in that "it was an expression of the understanding of what our struggle is all about and a willingness to accept the notion that Black people throughout the world have a common enemy."⁶⁸ Marion Barry expressed a similar view in a statement endorsing the efforts of the ALSC when he opined that, it is very gratifying to witness and participate in the growth of a movement in this country, which in one year of organisation has demonstrably heightened the level of political consciousness of Blacks here and is now moving to raise thousands of dollars to directly contribute to African liberation movement.⁶⁹

Beyond demonstrations on African Liberation Day, the ALSC collected money that it committed to helping African liberation struggles. While it is not possible to ascertain the exact amount collected, it marked a new phase in African-American support for the liberation struggle in Africa in the 1970s. Congressman Charles C. Diggs, Jr., observed in 1974, that "reinforcing commitment through financial support is another aspect of struggle that Afro-Americans are beginning to understand in new ways. There is a financial exchange between Africans and Afro-Americans in the name of freedom".⁷⁰ The ALSC's drive to support African liberation struggles was to meet the organization's declared aim of providing material support for the struggle. Sadaukai explained that to raise the money, "we will use the traditional methods of fund-raising among blacks-barbeque and chicken dinners, church suppers, card parties, dances and cabarets, sweet potato pie and coconut cake sales, street bazaars and others."⁷¹ There is a report that the ALSC gave Amilcar Cabral, the leader of the liberation struggle in Guinea Bissau, an honorarium of \$2,200, when he came to give a speech at Lincoln University where he received an honorary doctoral degree.⁷²

The ALSC also initiated the program to boycott the Gulf Oil Company and Portuguese products. The OC-ALSC spearheaded the drive in Chicago and in some other selected cities to ban the sale of the South African gold coin, the Kruggerand. Relative success was achieved in this direction. Thus the ALSC was working to attack both Portuguese and South African economic interests in the United States. American companies doing business in southern Africa were also targeted by ALSC protests. Such protests were definitely taking the support for African liberation beyond mere rhetoric to the level of activism, especially within the U.S.

The petition drives of the ALSC also constituted a major way through which it lent support to African struggles. Their rallies and petitions, the latter sent to Congress through Representatives such as Charles Diggs, Jr., showed unmistakable interest of African-Americans for African interests. The signatures collected by ALSC lent some weight to the struggle to repeal the Byrd Amendment in 1973, and such support was important to African-American members of Congress in their efforts to influence America's decisions that affect Africa.⁷³

The ALSC in its active years helped to raise the level of consciousness among African-Americans of the necessity for them to help African liberation struggles. Leaders of the organisation established the inter-relatedness between the exploited and degraded status of Africans both in the continent and those in the Western Hemisphere. It was therefore not surprising that in the 1970s the issue of support for Africa became part of Black intellectual and activist debates in the U.S.⁷⁴ For the ALSC, the African's predicament was traceable to the evil of capitalism. It attributed Africa's and African exploitation to imperialism; hence the new OC-ALSC adopted the motto 'fight imperialism from USA to USA'. The leaders emphasized the fact that "there can be no peace or honour until all Black people are free".⁷⁵

As stated earlier, the ALSC suffered from ideological disagreement amongst its early members. The debates based on ALSC principles helped to bring about intense discussions on the direction of the entire Black Liberation Movement in America. In the process, there were splinters and mergers of different groups, while individuals learnt more about the different ideologies on liberation movements. The debates led to national conferences being called such as that called by the ALSC of Howard University in Washington, D.C. in May of 1974.⁷⁶ Debates were centred around such issues as the primacy of the struggle in the U.S. versus emphasis on the African continent; the importance of a class analysis among Blacks in the U.S, the role of the Black petty-bourgeoisie, the necessity for a party, the land question; and alliances with whites.⁷⁷ As already indicated, these debates led to some members withdrawing from the organization. Unfortunately for Africa, the ideological squabbles within the ALSC stymied the activist angle of the organisation, while dogmatism dominated.

Indications are that "African revolutionaries" including leaders of the liberation movements in southern Africa identified with the ALSC, but same cannot be said for most of the established governments in Africa. This latter position may not be unconnected with the fact that most of the governments in Africa at this time refused to identify with communism/socialism.

A contradiction however exists in the relationship between the ALSC and the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) on the issue of which of the liberation movements to support, especially in Angola. Fundamentally, the ALSC refused to send the financial assistance for the liberation movement through the OAU since they argued that the OAU was a “historic relic which had attached itself to the underside of the sinking ship of Western Imperialism”.⁷⁸

It is ironic however, that whereas on the Angolan issue, the OAU decided to recognize and support the MPLA under Augustino Neto who was supported by communist Russia, the ALSC decided to recognize and give financial support to UNITA which was supported by capitalist U.S. This was surely contradictory. Although different explanations have been proffered for this decision, they are not convincing, rather ALSC by this decision seem to have either decided to support the American popular position in the climate of the Cold War era, or the body was just not well informed. The explanations for this decision, however, include such arguments as that:

UNITA was seen as being ‘Blacker’ or more nationalistic than the MPLA; secondly the decision was in consonance with the earlier decision not to give any money to the OAU which supported the MPLA, since the OAU was defined as ‘the neo-colonial instrument of imperialism’, and ‘by supporting UNITA, ALSC will be giving international credibility to it, and will be forcing organisations like the OAU to deal with its existence’⁷⁹.

Abdul Alkalimat argues also that it was the view of the ALSC that it was important for the liberation movements in Angola and other parts of Africa to work together, hence the decision to support UNITA. Alkalimat also attributes the decision to support UNITA to the fact that the organisation had key nationalist supporters in the U.S., including Kwadjo Akpan who was a member of an organisation called Pan-Africanist Congress based in Detroit that worked on behalf of UNITA. He also averred that the decision was taken because the ALSC felt that it shouldn’t give up the right to make its own decision on whom to support.⁸⁰

Later events in Angola, including the United States government support for UNITA led some to conclude that the ALSC defending of UNITA had “betrayed the real principles of Pan-African nationalism, by reneging on their own statement of principles which declared that the U.S. ruling class... was the corner stone of Western imperialism... Africa’s most dangerous enemy”.⁸¹ The ALSC, by disregarding the position adopted by the OAU, turned out to be supporting the U.S., UNITA, and the South African axis in the Angolan conflict. Thus, its position undermined the solidarity which the OAU hoped to build in helping to rally support for the MPLA.

Alkalimat’s response to this criticism of the ALSC decision is that “the present situation in Angola where the MPLA is being compelled to negotiate with UNITA, and the MPLA’s government decision to take loans from the International Monetary Fund show that the ALSC was not far off base in its decision and it raises the fundamental question as to whether a true socialist revolution had actually taken place in Angola.”⁸² This defence notwithstanding, it is obvious that in the early 1970s some of the leaders of the ALSC did not respect the views of the OAU, an organisation they described as “neo-colonialist”. Aside from the explanations offered by the ALSC in its manifestoes, an important explanation for the contradiction in ALSC’s position is closely tied to the ideological factionalisation within the ALSC which was still raging at the time the decision was made, and which eventually led to its demise. Later groups, such as the Congressional Black Caucus and Trans-Africa Inc., which don’t seem to be haunted by such ideological divisiveness, have tended to respect the positions of the OAU on most issues, without necessarily taking directives from the OAU. Aside from the case of Angola, the ALSC and OAU positions converged on a number of other liberation issues in regards to Africa.

Nevertheless, the African liberation struggle obviously benefited from the activities of the ALSC. Apart from the consciousness that it raised in the African-American community on the question of helping Africa, it was able to work out a functional coalition, even through for a short while, that rallied material and moral support on behalf of Africa. Beyond the borders of the USA, the ALSC also represented the international links with similar groups in Canada, Antigua, Jamaica, Dominica, and Trinidad, and built an international network of people. To a certain degree the ALSC, in its mobilization of the masses, and the international links it established, was the closest to the Garvey Movement of the 1920s.⁸³

However, the ALSC was not able to entrench itself as a long-lasting organisation in the African-American community, partly because of the dogmatic squabbles. It originally brought together people and organisations of different political persuasions to rally around the common cause of supporting Africa; yet in its attempts to clarify ideological orientation’ as exhibited in the conferences it organized, its effectiveness became weakened, and it eventually phased out.⁸⁴

The fact that it was able to achieve tangible successes in its activities, and that some of its *moda operandi* have been adopted by new organizations that have now emerged in the African-American community that work to support Africa, are testimonies to the fact that it was realistic in selecting its goals. New organizations such as Trans-Africa Inc. have avoided one of the major pitfalls of the ALSC, that of its “radical” “leftist” inclination, a factor that partly explains the current durability of Trans-Africa.

Conversely, the existence and activities of the ALSC constitute a clear testimony to the fact that while the masses of African-Americans were identifying culturally with the ‘New Africa’ of the 1960s and 1970s, they were also being mobilized to contribute to the struggle to free Africa of the last shackles of white colonial domination.

Conclusion

It was during the Italo-Ethiopian crisis of 1935-1940 that African-Americans first concretely demonstrated their support for the African struggle against white imperialists. In years to come, the Council on African Affairs, the American Society of African Culture and the American Negro Leadership Conference on Africa as Black organisations in the United States offered African-Americans the opportunity to fraternize with African people from Africa, and thus contribute to their struggles. It was this tradition that the ALSC maintained. Through it, African-Americans demonstrated their solidarity with the people of southern Africa in their struggle. The African liberation effort received a boost from this international angle, and in subsequent years, Trans-Africa Inc., continued the practice of African-Americans working within the United States to aid African liberation efforts. Unlike ALSC, Trans-Africa has not been bogged down by issues of ideology; instead it has worked by tapping from both the “radical” and “conservative” Black communities.

The decision of African-Americans to work within the United States to aid Africa, instead of returning to Africa, shows clearly the internationalization of the operational field of Pan-Africanism. By maintaining the consciousness of their African links and continuously working to contribute to Africa, African-Americans have operated just as other prominent identifiable ethnic and national groups in the United States, such as Jewish-Americans that have maintained similar links, with their “homelands”. The dynamics of this African-American and African connection are still unfolding, with the latest being in the common struggle for payment of “reparations” to African people by the Western world.

Endnotes

- 1 The concept of “Pragmatic Pan-Africanism”, emphasizes the practical aspects of the relationship between “Africans” throughout the World as against the rhetorical aspects that tend to be more sentimental and intellectual (See Erhagbe, 1992 and 1994).
- 2 In most cases, these discussions were necessitated by domestic concerns, especially with regard to their social, political and economic status within the United States. However, Africa also featured in the context of being an area for black missionary work.
- 3 Notable Diasporan blacks that held this view included Edward Wilmot Blyden, Martin Delany, Henry Garnet, Marcus Mosiah Garvey, and Paul Robeson (See for example, Garvey, 1969 and Robeson, 1958).
- 4 See for example Ranger, 1968; Harris, 1971; Harris, 1993 and UNESCO’s eight volume General History of Africa. And Alli, 1999.
- 5 Immanuel Geiss, The Pan-African Movement: A History of Pan-Africanism in America, Europe and Africa. Translated by Ann Keep (New York: Africana Publishing Co., 1974), 3-4.
- 6 See Erhagbe, 1992.
- 7 Bernard Magubane, The Ties That Bind: African-American Consciousness of Africa. (New Jersey: Africa World Press, Inc., 1987), 5.
- 8 See Stokely CarMichael, “What we want”, New York Review of Books, September 22, 1966 and H. Rap Brown, “Colonialism and Revolution”, Address after the Detroit Riots of 1967 in Arthur L. Smith and Stephen Robb (eds.) The Voice of Black Rhetoric, (Boston, 1971), 304-312.

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- 9 “Historical Sketch of the African Liberation Support Committee”, n.d., 5. (Hereafter cited as “Historical Sketch”). Prof. Ron Bailey’s Personal Collection, South Carolina State University, Orangeburg, South Carolina.
- 10 “Historical Sketch”, and Interviews with Professors Ron Bailey (a former active member of the ALSC), Boston, Massachusetts, November 30, 1990, and Abdul Alkalimat (Gerald A. McWorter) (former director of research and development, ALSC), Boston Massachusetts, February 20, 1991.
- 11 The OAU had set aside May 25th of every year as the World Solidarity Day with the Peoples of Africa.
- 12 Interviews with Bailey and Alkalimat; “Historical Sketch”, 5.
- 13 “Historical Sketch,” 7.
- 14 Ibid.
- 15 A basic argument within the ALSC was whether to concentrate on supporting African Liberation struggle in Africa or to combine this with supporting domestic struggles. See Hutchings, 1974:48-53.
- 16 “Historical Sketch,” 8.
- 17 ALSC (Houston, Texas), ALSC Handbook for Struggle and Repeal the Byrd Amendment 1973, 5. Document in personal collection of Abdul Alkalimat, 21st Century Books Ltd., Chicago, Illinois.
- 18 Dawolu Gene Locke, “A Few Remarks in Response to Criticisms of ALSC,” August 1974, 3. Document in Alikalimat’s Collection. The number of chapters later shrunk to about twenty chapters late in 1974 because of the exit of “right-wing”, forces from the organisation – see Revolutionary ‘workers League, What Road for ALSC? (Greensboro, N.C.) 2, in Alkalimat’s Collection.

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- 19 Interview with Alkalimat.
- 20 As discussed later in this paper the central issue was what the ideological orientation of the organisation should be.
- 21 “African-Americans and the struggle for African Liberation. Some Notes on African Liberation Day, May 27, 1972, San Francisco, California”, Prepared for the Bay Area Co-ordinating Committee by Pan-African Information Bureau, April 6, 1972 – in possession of this author.
- 22 Lu Palmer, “What’s Behind African Liberation Day”, Chicago Daily News, May 20-21, 1972.
- 23 Black Panther, June 3, 1972; African World, June 10, 1972; Washington Post, May 28, 1972.
- 24 Ibid., and the California Voice, June 1, 1972.
- 25 The African World June 10, 1972.
- 26 Washington Post, May 28, 1972; African World, June 10, 1972.
- 27 Interview with Sadaukai, African World, June 10, 1972.
- 28 Ibid.
- 29 Ibid.
- 30 Washington Post, May 28, 1972.
- 31 Palmer, “African Liberation Day”.
- 32 Ibid.

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- 33 Ibid.
- 34 The African World, June 10, 1972.
- 35 Ibid.
- 36 The Black Panther, June 3, 1972.
- 37 Modibo M. Kadile, “The African Liberation Support Committee and the Class/National Question”, n.d., 6, document in Prof. Bailey’s collection.
- 38 “The ALSC Minutes of the African Liberation Committee meeting on February 10, 1973, Chicago, Illinois,” Unpublished, 1973, 1, cited in Ibid., 6.
- 39 The New York Times, May 21, 1973.
- 40 Ibid.
- 41 Minutes of the ALSC meeting, February 10, 1973, 3 in Kadalie, ALSC, 80.
- 42 Ibid.
- 43 Pan-African Information Bureau, Stanford, California, “ALSC Chairman Speaks”, n.d., in possession of this author.
- 44 “ALSC, Minutes, April 28 and 29, 1973, Greensboro, 4,” in Kadalie, ALSC 90.
- 45 New York Amsterdam News, May 26, 1973.
- 46 Washington Post, May 27, 1973. Abdul Alkalimat is of the view that more people participated in the ceremonies throughout the country when compared to 1972 – since the activities were not “nationalized” as was the case previously.

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- 47 YOBU News Service, "African Liberation Day Success Reveals Growth in Back Political Understanding," African World, June 16, 1973, 201.
- 48 Bishop Sailwood E. Williams of the Bible Way Church, one of the speakers at the Washington ceremonies, donated \$150.00. Washington Post, May 287, 1973.
- 49 Interview with Alkalimat and Bailey. Gene Locke of Houston and Brenda Paris of Canada were members of a delegation that went to Africa. It was however, not possible to establish the exact amount collected and what went to each of the liberation movements, and the ceremonies, if there were any, during which the aid was delivered to the groups. The fact that funds were sent to African Liberation struggles is, however, supported by (Houser, 1990:93) who states that "funds for the African struggle were raised, and a delegation was assigned to deliver the money to African leaders personally".
- 50 Ebony Magazine 28 (July 1973), 41-46.
- 51 Charlyne Hunter, "Black Intellectuals and Activists Split on Ideological Direction" in The New York Times, April 28, 1973; 14-15 and 23; and Phil Hutchings, "Report on the ALSC National Conference". The Black Scholar, July, 1974 – August, 1974:48-53.
- 52 Ibid.
- 53 Hunter, "Black Intellectuals and Activists Split on Ideological Direction". 14.
- 54 On March 29, 1971 Senator Harry Byrd (Ind. – Va.) introduced in the Senate bill S. 14014, which was intended to amend the United Nations Participation Act of 1945 by denying the President authority to prohibit imports of any strategic material into the United States from a non-communist country. More specifically, the bill was to enable the U.S. to continue importing chrome from Rhodesia in contravention of the UN sanctions against Rhodesia.

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- The Byrd Amendment was made a part of the Military Procurement Bill that was passed in the Senate on October 6, 1971, and the House of Representatives on November 10, 1971 and signed into law on 17 November 1971 by President Nixon. The Treasury Department in January 1972 published a general licence permitting U.S. importers to resume freely the importation of chrome ore. Supporters of African Liberation struggles for the following years worked to have the Byrd Amendment repealed.
- 55 ALSC Handbook, Appendix I.
- 56 “Historical Sketch,” 12; Locke, “A Few Remarks in Response to Criticism of ALSC,” (Introduction).
- 57 Ibid. This was definitely a small number considering the relative population of the blacks in the U.S.
- 58 Handbill on the ALD, May 26, 1973, Arroyo Park, Oakland, California, in possession of this author.
- 59 The United States and Britain were two of the powers that refused to recognise the independence of Guinea Bissau declared on September 26, 1973. To them, Guinea Bissau failed to fulfil any of the criteria their governments had laid down for recognition of new governments of countries.
- 60 “Historical Sketch,” 13.
- 61 Interviews with Bailey and Alkalimat; “Historical Sketch;” and Revolutionary Workers League, What Road for ALSC?
- 62 “OC-ALSC News Release: Carson-Pirie Scott Withdraws Krugerrand from store, November 28 1977,” in Prof. Bailey’s collection.
- 63 The Daily Northwestern, December 2, 1977.

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- 64 Chicago Defender, Monday December 5, 1977.
- 65 These organizations were established in the 1960s to further facilitate the cooperation between Africans in the Diaspora and those in the continent. For the activities of the ANLCA see (Erhagbe, 1991).
- 66 St. Clair Drake, “The American Negro’s Relation to Africa,” presented at the ANLCA Third Biennial National Leadership Conference, Washington D.C., January 26-29, 1967, published in Africa Today, 14, 6 December 1967, 15.
- 67 Interview with the African World, June 10, 1972.
- 68 Ibid.
- 69 Statement of Endorsement by Marion Barry, President of the Board of Education, Director of PRIDE, Inc., Washington, D.C. Document in Possession of this author.
- 70 African Liberation Day Statement – May 25, 1974. Congressman Charles C. Diggs, Jr., Chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Sub-Committee on Africa” in Hon. Charles C. Diggs, Jr., Papers Box #226, Moorland Spingarn Research Centre, Howard University, D.C. (hereafter cited as Diggs Papers).
- 71 The New York Times, May 21, 1973.
- 72 ALSC Handbook.
- 73 See Diggs’ Statement on May 25, 1974, African Liberation Day, in Diggs Papers Box #226.

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- 74 Hutchings, “Report on the ALSC National Conference”, 48.
- 75 The theme of ALD activities in New York City, May 26, 1973. New York Amsterdam News, May 12, 1973.
- 76 Hutchings, (1974).
- 77 Ibid., 53.
- 78 Detroit African Liberation Support Committee, “Position Regarding the Organisation of African Unity” Unpublished, April, 1973, 4, in “Kadalie, ALSC, 9.
- 79 Interviews with Alkalimat and Bailey: and Hutchings, 1974:48-58.
- 80 Ibid., and Kadalie
- 81 Patrice Lumumba Coalition, “The ALSC and CAP Abandon Pan-African Nationalism for “The Chinese Line”, May 14, 1976, 4.
- 82 Interview with Alkalimat.
- 83 Interview with Bailey.
- 84 See. N.53 above.

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