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The Honorable Jimmy Carter
President of the United States
The White House
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

In the next few months you will face a crucial test of American commitment to the principle of majority rule in Southern Africa.

The Case-Javits amendment to the International Security Assistance Act of 1978 prohibits the enforcement of United Nations sanctions against Rhodesia if you determine that:

- (1) Rhodesia has demonstrated its willingness to negotiate in good faith at an all parties conference held under international auspices on all relevant issues; and
- (2) a government has been installed chosen by free elections in which all political and population groups have been allowed to participate freely with observation by impartial internationally recognized observers.

Clearly the Rhodesian government has satisfied neither condition.

Rhodesia has not demonstrated a commitment to negotiate in good faith at or before an all parties conference. Mr. Cledwyn Hughes has recently reported to Prime Minister Callaghan that Rhodesia has "given little if any attention to the updated Anglo-American proposals we gave them on 20 October in Washington." Instead he reports that Rhodesia intends to set its own course by holding elections on April 20 to form a "government of national unity" that they hope will lead to international recognition. "The Salisbury parties would attend a conference/ believing that they would lose nothing by again offering a place to the Patriotic Front within the internal settlement." The Salisbury government has demonstrated only that it will attend a conference, not that it will negotiate in good faith.

Secondly, "free elections" imply an electoral process based on a democratic constitution and conducted under objective conditions that insure genuine choice. The Rhodesian elections planned for April cannot meet this test. No election setting aside twenty-eight

percent of parliamentary seats for four percent of the population solely on the basis of race can be characterized as free elections. They are inherently unfree.

No elections can be free unless the constitution on which they are based has itself been agreed to freely by all the people of Zimbabwe. The constitution under which the April elections are held has been approved by only one percent of the population.

Free elections require freedom for all political prisoners. They require freedom for all political parties to campaign. Yet the Patriotic Front parties are banned in Rhodesia and 2000 of its leading members are in jail less than one month before the elections.

The people of Zimbabwe cannot vote freely with a gun at their heads. Eighty-five percent of the country is under martial law. According to reports in the New York Times private armies loyal to the internal settlement are roaming the rural areas intimidating Africans in order to "teach them to vote."

The government has lost control of large areas which are now firmly held by the Patriotic Front. More than 150,000 Zimbabweans who are refugees in neighboring countries will not be able to vote. Under these conditions no free expression of national will can be obtained.

Free elections under these circumstances would require not simply observation but control and supervision by large, impartial independent forces. The Rhodesian regime, whose legitimacy is recognized nowhere in the world, cannot conduct partial and partisan elections under its own supervision and control and have them accepted as free. To send official observers to the elections would dignify a process that is fundamentally flawed.

No doubt you will wish to wait until the election process is held in April before making a decision on all of the evidence that unofficial sources can supply. However, we argue that no additional evidence and certainly no observation is required to reach the conclusion that the requirements of the Case-Javits amendment will not be met. The United States should not legitimate a fraud.

We urge you to continue to enforce sanctions while offering the parties our good offices if and when negotiations once more become possible. To do otherwise would destroy the little credibility our nation has recently enjoyed in Africa.

Respectfully yours,

Sister Jeanne Adams, S.H.C.J.

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