

## Expanded Role Urged On American Business

[AN] "We will structure our programs to utilize wherever possible the potential of the U.S. private sector and encourage it to play a greater role in Africa," Crocker said in the Chicago speech.

As part of this policy thrust, he said the U.S. is encouraging economic reforms in individual countries to stimulate the private sector and is coordinating foreign aid programs with foreign trade and investment policies.

To these ends, the administration has taken a number of recent steps

- Last Friday (March 26), Crocker addressed a one-day meeting in New York on the role of private investment in Zimbabwe. Co-sponsored by the African-American Institute and the American Bar Association, the conference attracted representatives of some seventy banks, corporations, and law firms.

Bernard Chidzero, minister of finance, economic planning and development, was on the program along with other Zimbabwean officials and representatives from the Confederation of Zimbabwe Industries and the Zimbabwe Law Society.

Zimbabwe is one of a group of sub-Saharan nations Crocker has identified "with relatively healthy market economies, in many (but not all) cases supported by oil or mineral wealth," where "we can pursue our mutual economic interests mainly through improved trade and investment policies."

The others he put in this category are Nigeria, Gabon, Cameroon, Ivory Coast, Botswana, and South Africa.

Zimbabwe is also one of the ten nations (along with Egypt, Kenya and the Ivory Coast in Africa) targeted for special programs by the new Bureau for Private Enterprise in the U.S. government's Agency for International Development (AID).

The New York seminar was designed to encourage Americans to do business with the new African nations and to provide specific information on the prospects and problems associated with operating there.

- Two days earlier, March 24, Crocker returned to the Georgetown Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), where he was formerly director of African studies, to open a conference with a similar theme on Angola.

The off-the-record meeting included frank appraisals of doing business in Angola by companies already involved there, among them Carnation, General Tire, and Gulf.

The Angolan delegation, which came to Washington specifically for the session, was led by the governor of the central bank, Jose Victor de Carvalho, and officials from the ministries of petroleum, planning, and finance.

Although the U.S. has no diplomatic relations with Angola and has been highly critical of that African government's relationship with the Soviet Union and Cuba, the administration was well represented at the meeting.

American government participants included additional officials from the State Department, as well as the Departments of Commerce and Agriculture. At a reception for conference attendees hosted by Crocker at the State Department, Deputy Secretary Walter Stoessel delivered what one eyewitness called "extremely carefully worded" welcoming remarks. Although Stoessel's talk was not made public, the State Department released a statement which said:

"We regard the conference as consistent

with our efforts to broaden our dialogue with the Angolan government on the full range of bilateral and regional matters of mutual interest. The U.S. has never discouraged American business investment in Angola."

Several participants said the day-long session seemed to open the way for increased U.S. trade and investment. In addition, one predicted, "It was one of the necessary steps along the way toward normalizing relations."

- Crocker has sent his new special assistant, Robert Cabelli, to southern Africa to look at possibilities for private sector involvement in Botswana, Malawi, Swaziland, Zimbabwe, and Zambia. He will be promoting U.S. investment and trade in the region, working out of the Office of Southern African Affairs in the State Department.

- Following the January mission to four African countries led by Commerce Secretary Malcolm Baldrige and Agriculture Secretary John Block, the administration is planning additional trips "to acquaint the U.S. business community with African markets," according to Deputy Assistant Secretary of Commerce Joseph F. Dennin.

Block and Baldrige led 70 delegates, including 30 from the U.S. government and 25 from the business community, to Nigeria, Ivory Coast, Cameroon, and Morocco January 8-21.

Several contracts were signed during the two week tour, including a four-to-five million dollar joint venture to produce chickens in Nigeria involving the Florida-based Agro Tech International.

The government-run U.S. Overseas Private Investment Corporation also signed two pre-investment agreements with firms planning new Nigerian undertakings—a hog breeder and a rice-based pasta plant.

Other deals are nearing conclusion. Agro Tech is planning a plant to process cassava into animal feed. Read Steel of Birmingham expects to conclude a \$400,000 grain storage contract, and T-CAS of Virginia is finalizing arrangements for an airport weather radar system.

T-CAS, which has already installed weather radar equipment made by Enterprise Electronics of Alabama at Lagos and Kano, has been involved in protracted talks over the third installation, at Port Harcourt.

"In our sort of business, results don't come out as bread and butter right away," T-CAS chief executive James S. Stotsky told special correspondent Susan Gilpin. "You make proposals and spend months negotiating."

The U.S. has a negative trade imbalance with three of the countries included on the trip—Nigeria, Ivory Coast, and Cameroon. U.S. imports from all of Africa exceeded exports to the continent by \$15 billion in 1981.

As a result, Dennin said in a recent article, "Africa has begun to loom larger in our international economic thinking as the U.S. has grown more dependent on foreign sources of oil and strategic commodities."

- The Department of Agriculture has been encouraging the growth of the Joint Agriculture

### Welcome Ties

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stable development. Its policies of stimulating the domestic private sector and welcoming investment from abroad have set high standards.

"If ever a society has prepared wisely for the future, this one has," he concluded.

Consultative Committee (JACC), established by the Carter administration to promote trade and investment in Nigeria. Chaired by former Agriculture Secretary Orville L. Freeman.

At a meeting March 14-15, the committee discussed ways of funding its activities, including a proposed office and staff in Lagos. But no decision was made. Coordination is now being provided by an Agriculture Department official, Ted Freeman, who replaced the founding director Lyn Engstrand earlier this year. The committee includes agri-business firms, food processors,

President Mitterand has announced an ambitious program of government-funded research in electronics, computer technology, and energy. The French President recognizes that only those countries which spend money on science and education can hope

to compete in an increasingly technological world.

traders, banks, and auto and oil companies. The American participants in JACC are planning to hold a joint meeting with Nigerians in Lagos sometime this year, perhaps as early as September.

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President Reagan's policies are based on a blind reliance on market forces and on a belief that government has no role to play in securing social justice. President Mitterand believes that government must be an important partner in industrial growth and must strive to create a more just and humane society, a society which is concerned about its poor and disadvantaged.

France's socialist and social democratic leaders

reject the view that the only way to control inflation is to bring about a recession. One of President Mitterand's closest economic advisers has stated that such an approach is "absurd. You can beat inflation only by increasing productivity."

No one can predict whether Mitterand will succeed. However, if his policies result in economic growth and greater social justice for French workers, they will suggest an interesting model for a way out of the Reagan Ad-

ministration's economic mess. Mitterand's social democratic experiment may eventually provide some answers to developing a policy for

combating the high interest rates, recession, and high unemployment which have gripped the United States.

## A Study In Contrasts

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### Kool-Aid...On A Stick

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#### Frozen Suckers

1 envelope KOOL-AID® Unsweetened Soft Drink Mix, any flavor  
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