

Letters

WHOSE JOKE IS SPIRO?

Although it is understandable in these hard times that academics seek government jobs, it is painful when they become sycophants for their new paymasters. As evidenced in his article "Planning of U.S.—African Policy" (*Issue*, vol. II, no. 1, Spring 1972), Herbert Spiro seems to fall into that category, or maybe it is all a bad joke, including the constant plugs for his own books.

He informs us from his new "inside" vantage point that the planning process as coordinated by the National Security Council now provides the President with all the options. Moreover, the adversary process at lower levels of respective bureaucracies ensures that options are carefully thought out and defended. The result, we are assured, is that "the Nixon Administration has made major improvements in our substantive policy toward Africa," and "has also brought about equally important improvement in the procedures by which all foreign policy is formulated."

These assertions are patent nonsense. Where is the improvement in policies which extend important economic credits to the beleaguered Portuguese, erode the pressure on the outlaw Rhodesian regime, and increase or maintain U.S. government and private inputs to South Africa? Do all the options include those of dissociation from the white southern African regimes? Does the adversary process within a leaden bureaucracy make possible the defense of truly alternative policies, including provision of assistance to the southern African nationalist movements?

The real problem is to include the legislative branch and the American people in the policy-making process. Only in this way will we get all the options and a genuine adversary procedure. The Senate Subcommittee on Africa has met once in 10 years, while Congressman Diggs bravely keeps the House Subcommittee alive. We need annual hearings of both subcommittees to be held throughout the U.S. and on occasion in Africa. We need to expose the bureaucrats to a variety of public views and oblige them to become public advocates. Most of all, we need to change the substance of present policies — detrimental to U.S. and African interests.

Aaron Segal
Ithaca, New York

I feel sorry for Mr. Segal who looks on these times as "hard" for academics. I turned down a couple of very attractive professorships when I joined the Department of State on leave of absence from my University — at some financial loss to myself. I became a member of the Planning and Coordination

Staff because I expected that the position would enable me to make further contributions to the attainment of certain foreign policy goals for which I have been working for many years. Happily, my books don't need plugs. I referred to them, in this publication of our learned society, in order to highlight once more the effects of procedure and method upon substantive policy.

As to the substantive issues raised by Mr. Segal, I can only repeat that the "current procedure is designed to put all the options before the President," and refer Mr. Segal to David D. Newsom's "American Interests in Africa and African Development Needs" (*Issue*, vol. II, no. 1) and to his "Southern Africa: Constant Themes in U.S. Policy" (*Department of State Bulletin*, vol. LXVII, no. 1726, July 24, 1972). I need not point out to students of American politics — or, for that matter, to ordinary citizens — that the President makes the final decisions for the Executive Branch, and that the Congress, under the Constitution, plays its own important role in the conduct of foreign relations. For example, the Congress lifted the ban on importing Rhodesian chrome despite strong State Department efforts to the contrary.

As for Mr. Segal's question about the "adversary process within a leaden bureaucracy," my experience is that the State Department is a more collegial and more responsible institution—less secrecy mongering, less intrigue, less nepotism, less hierarchy — than any American university or college I know of. If Mr. Segal wants elucidation of the meaning of "responsibility," he might take a look at my *Responsibility in Government: Theory and Practice* (1969). The joke's on him.

Herbert Spiro
Washington, D.C.