

H-Diplo ROUNDTABLE XXI-6

Eddie Michel. *The White House and White Africa: Presidential Policy Toward Rhodesia During the UDI Era, 1965-1979.* New York: Routledge, 2019. ISBN: 9781138319998 (hardback, \$149.95).

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INTRODUCTION BY CARL WATTS, BAKER COLLEGE, MICHIGAN

I am delighted to introduce this H-Diplo Roundtable Review of Eddie Michel's book, *The White House and White Africa*. Michel—who completed his doctoral thesis at the University of Birmingham in 2016 and is now a postdoctoral fellow at the University of Pretoria—has quickly established himself within the very vibrant field of scholars researching the international history of Rhodesia's Unilateral Declaration of Independence (UDI). This is evident from his recent cluster of journal publications,¹ one of which has already been reviewed in some depth for H-Diplo.²

The contributors to this Roundtable Review write many positive comments on Michel's book. Given that academic writing is sometimes dry, badly organized, confusing, or even impenetrable, it is worth pointing out that Andy DeRoche and Alois Mlambo both appreciate Michel's accessible and engaging style. Moving on to more substantive matters, three of the reviewers note that the author has made excellent use of recently declassified archival material to bring fresh insight to presidential decision-making towards Rhodesia during the UDI period. DeRoche also observes that the Rhodesian collection in the Cory Library at Rhodes University in South Africa provided a particularly fruitful source for discussion of Rhodesian politics and foreign relations. Eliakim Sibanda draws attention to the author's literature review, which provides a balanced synthesis of the (increasingly voluminous) works on UDI and will therefore be valuable to scholars as they seek to keep up with the output of books, chapters, and journal articles on this complex topic.

A central contention of Michel's book is that much of the existing literature has sought to examine the Rhodesian issue through the use of a specific lens, particularly race, but he is keen to widen the analysis of U.S. decision making to emphasize additional factors such as the Cold War, economics, and human rights. Timothy Scarnecchia finds the discussion of economics to be particularly helpful, and comments that the author "has a strong sense of economic history." On the other hand, Sibanda finds the nexus between human rights and U.S. policy to be "the least developed variable in his book" and thinks that it "is not convincingly argued." Mlambo also highlights an inconsistency between an emphasis on human rights and a failure to uphold international sanctions: "the American presidency was speaking the language of human rights and fair play and condemning racist Rhodesia at the same time that American companies were subverting the African people's fight for their rights by prolonging the life of the Smith regime through sanctions busting." In considering the relative weight to be attached to the various determinants of U.S. policy toward Rhodesia during the UDI period, Sibanda affirms the significance of race as the most convincing analytical lens, an argument with which I suspect many other scholars would agree.

Scarnecchia is pleased to note that Michel has avoided "the traditional pitfalls of hagiography toward U.S. presidents that tends to put too much emphasis on personal attributes," but also sees some structural issues in his book. From an Africanist perspective, histories of U.S. foreign relations that are organized chronologically by presidency can have an unfortunate tendency to marginalize African perspectives, which is a point that DeRoche echoes when he suggests that the author would have gained some useful perspectives by using more secondary works on Zambia (the importance of which is often overlooked in international histories of UDI). Of course, author cannot be expected to be completely comprehensive in their book's coverage, especially when they have an express purpose in examining *presidential* approaches to U.S. policy-

¹ Eddie Michel, "The Luster of Chrome: Nixon, Rhodesia, and the Defiance of UN Sanctions," *Diplomatic History* 42:1 (2018), 138-161; Michel "Those Bothersome Rho-dents: Lyndon B. Johnson and the Thorny Issue of the Rhodesian Information Office," *Safundi: The Journal of South African and American Studies* 18:2 (2018): 227-245; Michel, "'This Outcome Gives Me No Pleasure. It Is Extremely Painful for Me to Be the Instrument of Their Fate': White House Policy towards Rhodesia during the UDI Era," *South African Historical Journal* (December 2018).

² Carl P. Watts, review of Michel, "The Luster of Chrome," H-Diplo Article Review No. 774, 13 June 2018, <https://hdiplo.org/to/AR774>.

making, but these sort of comments serve as a reminder to our scholarly community that African agency must be preserved in the historical record.

Other criticisms of Michel's book are relatively minor. DeRoche laments the publisher's failure to include a bibliography or works cited, which can create obvious frustrations for researchers using book-length studies. Mlambo would have liked to see "interviews with some of the key players at the time," which he thinks "would have enriched the book considerably." In the case of Rhodesia's UDI, scholars are of course running out of time for securing oral or epistolary evidence to supplement the archival record. This highlights the value of existing records like those preserved in the Commonwealth Oral History Project and the Oral History Collection of the Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training.³

I join my colleagues in congratulating Michel on the publication of *The White House and White Africa*. I note that he is now pursuing a new research project entitled "The Whites are there to stay! The United States and apartheid South Africa, 1948-1994." This is intended to provide a critical study of the complex and shifting diplomatic relationship between South Africa and the United States during the apartheid period. I wish Michel the best with his new project and no doubt our community of scholars will look forward to reviewing his future work.

Participants:

Eddie Michel is a Research Fellow in the Department of Historical and Heritage Studies at the University of Pretoria, South Africa. Michel is also affiliated with the 'Rethinking Twentieth Century Southern Africa' research group which is supported by the (NIHSS). He received his Ph.D. in History from the University of Birmingham, UK. He is the author of *The White House and White Africa: Presidential Policy toward Rhodesia during the UDI era, 1965-1979*. He is currently researching U.S. relations with South Africa during the apartheid era. His broader research interests include U.S. foreign policy, Southern African history, and the Cold War on the global periphery.

Carl P. Watts received his Ph.D. in Modern History from the University of Birmingham. He has taught at several institutions in the Midwest and is currently Chair of the Department of Social Studies in the College of Education at Baker College, Michigan. He is a Research Fellow in the Centre for Imperial and Postcolonial Studies at the University of Southampton and a Fellow of the Royal Historical Society. He is the author of *Rhodesia's Unilateral Declaration of Independence: An International History* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012). He is presently researching the Ford administration's southern Africa policy using sources in the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library and the UK National Archives. He is also writing a chapter on education policy for Kimber Quinney and Amy Sayward eds., *Understanding and Teaching Modern American History, Reagan to Trump* (University of Wisconsin Press).

Andy DeRoche teaches history at Front Range Community College in Longmont, Colorado. His latest book is *Kenneth Kaunda, the United States and Southern Africa*. He is currently working on a biography of former NHL hockey player Eric Weinrich and an article on Zambian foreign relations in the early 1970s.

Alois Mlambo is Emeritus Professor in the Department of Historical and Heritage Studies of the University of Pretoria. He has published widely on Zimbabwean and Southern African history. His latest books are *History of Zimbabwe* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014) and, with Neil Parsons, *A History of Southern Africa* (London: Red Globe Press, 2018).

Timothy Scarnecchia is an associate professor of African history at Kent State University. Recent publications on Zimbabwean diplomacy include: "The Anglo-American and Commonwealth negotiations for a Zimbabwean settlement between Geneva and Lancaster, 1977-79," *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* 45:5 (2017): 823-843; and,

³ Commonwealth Oral History Project, available at: <https://commonwealthoralhistories.org/> ADST Oral History Collection available at: <https://adst.org/oral-history/>.

“Front Line Diplomats: African Diplomatic Representations of the Zimbabwean Patriotic Front, 1976-1978” *Journal of Southern African Studies* 43:1 (2017): 107-124. Also, “Africa and the Cold War” in *Blackwell Companion to African History*, edited by William Worger, Nwando Achebe, and Charles Ambler (Blackwell Wiley 2018). His book on early Zimbabwean Nationalism and diplomacy is *The Urban Roots of Democracy and Political Violence in Zimbabwe: Harare and Highfield, 1940-1964* (Rochester University Press, 2008). His latest book project, *Cold War Race States: Zimbabwe and the diplomacy of decolonization, 1960-1984* is currently under review.

Eliakim M. Sibanda is professor of history [full] University of Winnipeg, and Chair, Joint MA, Peace and Conflict Studies, Universities of Manitoba and Winnipeg. He researches and publishes on immigration, social movements, liberation movements, biographies and human rights, topics on which he is a renowned speaker around the world. Eliakim is the author of a widely read book on liberation movements, *The Zimbabwe African People's Union, 1961-87: A Political History of Insurgency in Southern Rhodesia*, 2004.

REVIEW BY ANDY DEROCHE, FRONT RANGE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

In this valuable new work on relations between the United States and the nation formerly known as Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe), Eddie Michel provides us with a fresh look at an important subject that had not been comprehensively examined for nearly 20 years.⁴ Michel's style is engaging, his analysis is insightful, and his research is impressive. Most notably, his use of Rhodesian sources, British sources, and U.S. sources not available to the earlier generation of scholars gives Michel's book added weight. This is traditional diplomatic history arranged chronologically, with substantive chapters on the policies of each of the U.S. presidents in office during Ian Smith's reign in Rhodesia: Lyndon Johnson, Richard Nixon, Gerald Ford, and Jimmy Carter. Overall, *The White House and White Africa* is a positive addition to the literature and should be read carefully by any scholars or students who are interested in U.S. relations with southern Africa.

The first of the four substantive chapters, on Johnson, has many strong points. For example, there is considerably more discussion of Rhodesian politics and foreign relations than in previous studies. Much of this material comes from the Rhodesian collection in the Cory Library at Rhodes University in Grahamstown, South Africa. Michel's combing of British archives also paid great dividends. Expecting an additional research trip to Lusaka might be asking too much, but incorporating more secondary works on Zambia's reaction to Rhodesia's Unilateral Declaration of Independence (UDI) would have added a useful perspective.⁵ Michel concludes his solid section on the Johnson years with the assessment that Johnson "opposed the UDI for both moral and pragmatic reasons," and contends convincingly that his response to the Rhodesian rebellion "was defined by a form of cautious hostility" (61).

Michel's analysis of Johnson's policy toward Rhodesia does an exceptional job of considering the influence of U.S. domestic politics, as does his second substantive chapter (on the Nixon years). Nixon's close relationship with arguably racist Democrats in the Senate, such as James Eastland (D-Mississippi), is revealingly explored. Michel also did a fine job of utilizing newly available primary sources which demonstrate Nixon's disdain for various black African leaders. His revisionist examination in *The White House and White Africa* of the debates over the Byrd amendment, which allowed the U.S. to renew imports of Rhodesian chromium ore in violation of United Nations sanctions, is balanced and insightful. "The Nixon administration's policy towards Salisbury," concludes Michel, "was characterized by a pragmatic realpolitik with little, if any, consideration for the morality of ending white supremacy in southern African" (113).

After the Nixon chapter, a wonderful collection of some 15 images considerably jazzes up this already excellent book. The photo section provides a fitting lead-in for the examination of the Ford presidency, which is the most provocative and ground-breaking chapter in *The White House and White Africa*. In part, what Michel does in his treatment of Ford is provide a new look at familiar ground, such as the debates over repealing the Byrd Amendment and the eventual decision by Secretary of State Henry Kissinger to launch a full-scale diplomatic intervention in southern Africa. These sections are important and useful; however, the real added value is the discussion of Ford's interest in the moral aspects of U.S./Rhodesia relations in terms of both foreign policy and domestic politics.

Michel utilized previously untapped (at least as far as this reviewer knows) materials such as the papers of Stanley S. Scott at the Ford Library. Before becoming a special assistant to Nixon and then Ford, Scott had worked as the first African-American reporter for the United Press International. In that role he had been present in the Audubon Ballroom when

⁴ This reviewer's own *Black, White, and Chrome: United States Relations with Zimbabwe, 1953-1998* (Trenton: Africa World Press, 2001) was one of the last scholarly works on the topic. Michel's frequent citations to my book were flattering, but the realization that it is nearly 20 years old was shocking. Time flies!

⁵ For example, see Andy DeRoche, "Non-alignment on the Racial Frontier: Zambia and the USA, 1964-68," *Cold War History* (May 2007): 227-250.

Malcolm X was assassinated in 1965.⁶ Motivated by such experiences and his own struggles as a path-breaking person of color, Scott worked hard to dramatically increase the attention to racial issues both at home and abroad when Ford replaced Nixon. Scott's helping to arrange a meeting between Ford and the Congressional Black Caucus, with whom Nixon had refused to meet is an example of his success (144 and 171, note 4).

That such meetings took place also tells us much about the president himself, of course. Ford's willingness to make race relations a higher priority influenced his approach to Rhodesia. As Michel powerfully concludes, "President Ford himself entered the White House with a sincere commitment to moral principles, including racial justice, both domestically and globally" (170). This commitment on Ford's part contributed to his decision to support the effort to reinstate sanctions against Rhodesia and send Kissinger on his high-profile missions to southern Africa, despite the high likelihood that such actions would hinder Ford's hopes of winning the 1976 election.

While other historians (this reviewer included) have spilled plenty of ink on Kissinger's diplomacy in Lusaka and Pretoria, Michel's analysis of Ford's role in relations with Africa is the most thought-provoking to date. The compelling evidence and bold claims about Ford's moralism, however, do beg the question: why? One tantalizing explanation for why Ford – a former offensive lineman at the University of Michigan and enthusiastic legislator who seemed destined for a career in the House of Representatives – would take a stand for peace and justice in southern Africa comes from historian Peter Wood. In a brilliant article from 1987, Wood portrayed Ford as a "peacemaker" who above all else sought "domestic tranquility." In Wood's article the most important examples are Ford's testimony in his parents' divorce hearing, his contributions to the investigation of John F. Kennedy's assassin Lee Harvey Oswald, and his pardon of Richard Nixon. The same line of analysis, it seems, could explain Ford's stance regarding Rhodesia, especially his post-presidential support for the 1978 internal settlement in Rhodesia between Ian Smith and Abel Muzorewa, a moderate black Zimbabwean nationalist and Christian minister. In so doing, Ford hoped to facilitate 'domestic tranquility' in Rhodesia and prevent a nasty drawn-out struggle, as he had tried to do with his parents' divorce, the Oswald case, and the Nixon pardon.⁷

After his ground-breaking and thought-provoking chapter on the Ford years, Michel finishes strong with an excellent examination of the policies of the Jimmy Carter administration. This is a well-researched section that is clear, concise, and convincing. The actions of key players such as Andrew Young and key events such as the repeal of the Byrd amendment and the December 1979 Lancaster House settlement which ended the war are carefully considered. For the Carter years, nonetheless, I would still recommend that interested scholars also consult Nancy Mitchell's magisterial tome.⁸

No book is perfect, of course. My only real criticism of *The White House and White Africa* is the lack of a bibliography or works cited. It is very frustrating to try to find the first full citation to an archival source in the end notes or footnotes, so that you can possibly follow up in your own research, when there is no easily accessible list of all repositories consulted. This fault, though, is the publisher's. Eddie Michel's book has made a very valuable contribution to the literature which should be on the shelves of all historians and graduate students interested in southern African international relations, even if he also succeeded in making me feel old!

⁶ "Stanley S. Scott, 59, Nixon and Ford Aide," *New York Times* obituary, 7 April 1992, accessed 22 October 2018, <https://www.nytimes.com/1992/04/07/obituaries/stanley-s-scott-59-nixon-and-ford-aide.html>.

⁷ Peter H. Wood, "The Pardoner's Tale: The Personal Theme of 'Domestic Tranquility' in Gerald Ford's Pardon of Richard Nixon," *Prospects: An Annual of American Cultural Studies* 11 (1987): 491-539.

⁸ Nancy Mitchell, *Jimmy Carter in Africa: Race and the Cold War* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2016).

In *The White House and White Africa*, Eddie Michel traces and analyses the policies of America's presidents towards Rhodesia during the Unilateral Declaration of Independence (UDI) years; a period spanning the presidencies of Lyndon B. Johnson, Richard Nixon, Gerald R. Ford, and Jimmy Carter. Throughout this period, Prime Minister Ian Smith and his Rhodesian Front government thumped its nose at the entire world and defied numerous condemnatory United Nations (UN) resolutions and international sanctions, as well as efforts by African nationalists to end white colonial rule through armed struggle. Arguably, the ambivalent policies of successive American presidencies from Johnson until Ford, as well as the widespread disregard of international sanctions by most countries, including the United States, Britain, and France despite their open condemnation of UDI and pushing for the imposition of such sanctions, enabled Rhodesia to survive for so long.

While much has been written on the nature and character of and the motivations for American policies towards Rhodesia, Michel's study blazes a new trail in that it attempts to provide a comprehensive and multi-faceted explanation of the trajectory of American policy towards Rhodesia over time which takes into account a wide array of domestic, international, and global factors which influenced decision-making. As he points out, foreign policy is the result of many complex and inter-penetrating factors and, therefore, cannot be explained through "the prism of a single overriding factor" (12). *The White House and White Africa* also explores the tensions between pragmatism or realpolitik and morality in the formulation of American policy towards Rhodesia and argues that the American policies at any given time during this period were based on each president's understanding and assessment of what the balance between the two should be, depending on their individual personalities, but also reflecting "the changing international and domestic arena against which their decisions were made" (12).

American policy towards Rhodesia was also framed by its attitude towards the "wider racial struggle of political power in Southern Africa and towards the other members of the 'White Redoubt'" (3), namely South Africa and the Portuguese territories of Angola and Mozambique, which, like Rhodesia, were also racist in their governance systems. The dilemma for the United States was whether to pursue policies that championed what was the morally right cause of ending racist regimes and promoting the African people's human rights or to stand behind the minority white governments which were vocally anti-Communist at a time when the world was divided bitterly by the Cold War into the East and the West, and which also had much that was economically beneficial and strategically essential for the United States. The Cold War, in particular, posed a challenge for decision makers, especially given the polarisation of domestic attitudes towards the best approach to take between the so-called Cold Warriors, who maintained that the United States should support Southern Africa's white regimes because they were anti-Communist, and those who argued that continuing to align with such regimes actually opened the door for Moscow, Beijing, and Havana to become increasingly involved in the region and to pose as champions of the downtrodden African majority.

America's economic interests also posed serious challenges for the various presidents and their governments given the involvement of a number of American companies, including the chrome giant Union Carbide, in Rhodesia's economy and the fact that Rhodesia "possessed a range of strategic minerals . . . that were vitally important to the US on economic and strategic grounds." To complicate issues further, the U.S. had to safeguard and promote its growing trade with and business in the independent nations of black-ruled Africa which possessed considerable "mineral wealth, offered lucrative markets and investment opportunities" (4).

Since American society was divided over what the United States' attitude and approach to Rhodesia should be, based on its own traditions and values, this also affected the pragmatism-morality tension referred to earlier. While the liberals and civil rights leaders at home urged the U.S. to promote anti-colonialism because of its own anti-colonial history and opposition to European imperialism and drew parallels between the African struggle for self-determination and the African-American struggle for equal rights at home, conservatives had a different view. Many White Southerners and members of the Rhodesian Lobby in Capitol Hill, for example, shared Ian Smith's racist outlook and, therefore, empathised with White

Rhodesia (4). Thus, while the former advocated for African human rights, the latter pushed for the rights of whites as minorities in Southern Africa and equated UDI to America's own Declaration of Independence. In the light of this divide, American presidents had to be sensitive to the voting power of the various groups and were not keen to pursue policies which might antagonise and alienate potential political support.

Michel also highlights the fact that, apart from various changes occurring at the global level, such as the rise and growing influence of Afro-Asia group as more Third World countries gained independence and took their seats in the United Nations and other international organisations, and the fact that the Cold War was escalating the competition by the two bloc to win friends and supporters in the Developing World, there were also changes occurring at home. Among these were a gradual shift from the radicalism of the 1960s in the U.S. to a more conservative dispensation in the 1970s which was characterised by the election of Richard Nixon to the presidency, the growing electoral power of the African-American population following the Voting Rights Act of 1965, and the divisive Vietnam War.

In terms of organisation, the book consists of an introduction, four substantive chapters, and a conclusion. The introduction contains a very succinct discussion of the various forces which influenced American policy toward Rhodesia, some of which have been summarised above, as well as a comprehensive and thorough literature review which demonstrates Michel's intimate familiarity with the literature and the debates in the field pertaining to America's policies to Rhodesia in the years under study and successfully locates his present study in the field.

Chapter 1 argues that Johnson was opposed to UDI on both moral and pragmatic grounds, a stance consistent with his abhorrence of white political control in the American South, and that he wished to work closely with Britain, the de facto colonial authority over Rhodesia, even though he realised that Britain "no longer held sufficient economic or military strength (61)" to resolve the Rhodesian crisis on its own. He also wanted to remain in the good books of black Africa for "strategic, economic and diplomatic reasons." However, for pragmatic reasons, Johnson was not prepared to support "radical actions that could prove detrimental to US geopolitical interests and threaten its domestic agenda"(61). Johnson's stance towards Rhodesia was thus one of "cautious hostility" predicated, on the one hand, on maintaining public opposition towards Salisbury "combined with limited diplomatic and economic sanctions" to demonstrate support for racial equality and, on the other, on refraining from any measures that could damage relations between the U.S., Portugal, and South Africa (61).

Chapter 2 focuses on the Nixon Presidency and maintains that, unlike Johnson, who tried to balance morality and pragmatism, Nixon and Henry Kissinger, his Secretary of state, had little time for morality and were motivated mostly by America's strategic and economic interests. Anti-Communism, access to Rhodesia's strategic minerals, especially chrome, and maintaining closer relations with South Africa and Rhodesia, tinged with disdain for the African liberation struggle, in particular, and black Africa, in general, were the key ingredients of this foreign policy approach. They were, however, wary of the potential danger of antagonising black Africa too much for fear that this would open doors for Moscow, Beijing, and Havana to get a footing in Southern Africa, posing as supporters of the oppressed African majority. This notwithstanding, economic interests proved so strong that the United States willingly and knowingly violated the international sanctions which it had earlier helped sponsor by authorising the importation of chrome and other minerals from Rhodesia under the 1971 Byrd Amendment. Like his predecessor, Nixon continued to support British initiatives to resolve the Rhodesian conundrum.

Chapter 3 analyses the presidency of Gerald Ford; a period in which "for the first time moral and pragmatic objectives linked together leading to a distinct shift in policy towards Salisbury" (169). Ford publicly stated his commitment to majority rule and supported the repeal of the Byrd Amendment in order to restore America's international image, which had been damaged by its violation of sanctions, and also to send a strong message to Salisbury of America's disapproval of minority rule. Ford's policy was also influenced by Cold War geopolitics, particularly the increasing involvement of Moscow and Havana in Southern Africa and the military victory of the *Movimento Popular de Libertação de Angola – Partido do Trabalho* (MPLA) in Angola, backed by the two Communist nations. Finding a solution for Rhodesia in order to avert the further spread of communist influence in the region thus became a matter of urgency.

Chapter 4 examines the Carter Years and maintains that “the election of President Carter rang the death knell for white minority rule in Rhodesia” (222). With no sympathy for the racist regime in Salisbury, Carter was determined to work towards the end of UDI and white minority rule. Working with Civil Rights struggle stalwart Ambassador Andrew Young, Carter liaised with and supported Britain in efforts to end the Rhodesian crisis. Further motivation to end white minority rule was the escalating bush war and the growing danger of Soviet and Cuban involvement in the region. Carter’s efforts clearly contributed to the end of white rule and the birth of Zimbabwe in 1980. The conclusion summarises the major arguments advanced in the study and ends with Michel’s observation that

Overall, White House policy towards Rhodesia during the UDI era reveals the core determinants which guided foreign relations during the 1960s and 1970s. The choices made by the occupants of the Oval Office demonstrate the influence of Cold War geopolitics, the shifting constellations of global power, the importance of maintaining access to strategic raw materials, domestic race relations and the human rights movement on presidential decision-making. Furthermore, using Rhodesia as an illuminative lens exposes the interaction between pragmatism and morality in formulating foreign policy during the UDI era as well as the competing visions of what constituted a pragmatic or moral approach (251).

One cannot fault this reasoning which, in any case, is fully supported by the evidence and arguments presented in the book. They show that a wide range of factors influenced policy and that the mix of these elements at any given time depended, to an extent, on the personality in the Oval Office at the time.

An aspect which Michel might also have considered in his study is an element of duplicity which runs through most of the period under discussion and which manifests itself in the constant breach of the very international sanctions which the United States had helped impose through various UN Security Council resolutions. As is well documented, while the Bryd Amendment was the most obvious decision by the United States to openly violate international sanctions, there were numerous other American businesses which also constantly and wantonly breached sanctions, with little or no censure from the American Government. Michel discusses the case of the Rhodesia Information Office (RIO) and the subsidiaries of American petrol companies as evidence of how it was not easy for the American government to stop their activities because of legal constraints. However, there were many other such violations by travel, tourist, airline and arms- producing companies which breached sanctions with impunity. Thus the American presidency was speaking the language of human rights and fair play and condemning racist Rhodesia at the same time that American companies were subverting the African people’s fight for their rights by prolonging the life of the Smith regime through sanctions busting. Was the American government so handicapped by legislation that it could not do anything about these violations or did it just turn a blind eye to these violations and, if so, why?

The United States was, of course, not the only violator of sanctions, as many other countries, including France, the Netherlands, Britain, Japan, Eastern European countries, some African countries, and many others continued to trade with Rhodesia, their sworn support for sanctions notwithstanding. It could be argued, of course, that the duplicity which manifested itself in public condemnations of white minority rule in Rhodesia at a time when numerous American companies were subverting the very mechanism which was supposed to help end such rule was a form of realpolitik.

The White House and White Africa is a well-researched book that makes excellent use of recently-declassified presidential archives and provides rich insights into the forces that helped shape American policy in a way that was not possible earlier. My one minor gripe is the absence of any interviews with some of the key players at the time, several of whom are still alive. Interviews with American leaders who helped craft some of the policies described in the book and with some of the major players in Britain and in the then Rhodesia would have enriched the book considerably.

This criticism notwithstanding the book makes a huge contribution to our knowledge about American political history, international relations, and diplomatic history, among other intellectual fields. It is written in easily accessible language and a very pleasant style. This book is a must read for anyone who is interested in understanding American foreign policy-making and the geo-political forces that helped shape it during the UDI period from 1965 to 1979.

REVIEW BY TIMOTHY SCARNECCHIA, KENT STATE UNIVERSITY

Eddie Michel has provided a much needed history of U.S. foreign relations concerning the period of the Unilateral Declaration of Independence (UDI) white minority regime in Rhodesia from 1965 to 1979. Anyone familiar with this period will know it produced a vast amount of archival material, especially for the Anglo-American alliance, as both the U.S. and the UK had their own reasons for wanting to resolve the 'Rhodesian crisis' and bring a majority rule government into power. Even though Michel has chosen to organize his narrative along the traditional diplomatic historical lines of successive presidential administrations, he is able to avoid the traditional pitfalls of hagiography toward U.S. presidents that tends to put too much emphasis on personal attributes. The strength of Michel's work is that he has a strong sense of economic history and is able to ground his analysis not only in the domestic racial politics of each administration, and Cold War imperatives, but also the very real unfolding of U.S. economic interests over the years.

Michel's strong sense for detail concerning economic history is clear throughout the book, but particularly as he follows the politics around chrome imports to the U.S. and the related question of economic sanctions imposed by the UK, the United Nations (UN), and the United States. By digging into the archival details of the debates around chrome and sanctions, Michel is then able to step back and show how these relatively small but strategic imports had a much larger political impact than otherwise might have been assumed. Michel shows how the U.S. was skeptical of British hopes that economic sanctions would bring the UDI government of Rhodesian Prime Minister Ian Smith to its knees. The continued support of South Africa and the Portuguese in Angola and Mozambique made sanctions imposed from outside difficult to work (31).

Michel explains the details of the 16 December 1966 United Nations Security Council (UNSC) Resolution 232 that imposed sanction on Rhodesia, and President Lyndon Johnson's executive order 1132 on 5 January 1967, which brought the U.S. into the UN sanctions regime (52). Importantly, Michel stressed that neither the UN nor the U.S. decisions did "...anything to affect the operations of foreign subsidiaries owned or controlled by their nationals" (52). This had the effect of protecting U.S. and British oil and other economic interests in South Africa. The story of sanctions against the Smith regime, which are often held up as a 'success' story from the perspective of the white Rhodesians, therefore began with a large loophole that kept American and British companies operating in the region. Oil imports to Rhodesia via South Africa continued as before, although camouflaged, and the land-locked illegal regime continued to have access to vital oil supplies.

In chapter two's coverage of the Nixon administration, Michel delivers very useful coverage of the debates in the administration over support for white minority rule in Southern Africa. Michel covers the debate over the National Security Study Memoranda (NSSM) 39 and the Interdepartmental Group's response to it quite well. This debate helps to show the growing unease and tensions caused by the American civil rights movement on the one hand and the Cold War on the other, a tension that was much more pronounced in the Ford Administration. Michel shows the tensions between National Security Adviser Henry Kissinger's Cold War realpolitik and President Richard Nixon's attempt to remain in the good books with conservative southerners over Rhodesian sanctions. Michel does a good job of conveying Nixon's secret policy to support whites in South Africa (95). The tension between Kissinger and Nixon comes out clearly during the Nixon administration's response to the Byrd Amendment in 1971 (95-105). Michel's analysis of the divisions between U.S. policymakers and Congress on the Byrd amendment—which made it very difficult for the U.S. to impose sanctions on Rhodesian chrome imports because the only other major source was the Soviet Union—is really well done.

The next chapter, covering President Gerald R. Ford's administration, takes the story into the crisis period precipitated by the Portuguese revolution and the swift end of Portuguese colonialism in Mozambique and Angola. The ability of the *Movimento Popular de Libertação de Angola* (MPLA) to come to power in Angola, with the support of the Soviet Union and, most importantly, Cuban troops, called for a much swifter response by Kissinger and Ford to the dilemma of private support for 'white' governments in Southern Africa and public rhetoric of support for African self-determination and majority rule. Michel impressively chronicles the shifting terrain of U.S. policy that occurred during the 1976 presidential primaries, which found Ford having to defend himself from criticism from the right of his party, especially from Ronald Reagan's primary challenge, for abandoning whites in Rhodesia. Even though Michel continues to ground his narrative in economic and Cold War realities, he also suggests that President Ford's strong anti-racist views helped to shift U.S. policy.

Michel calls Ford a “man of integrity,” who “opposed any form of racial discrimination as fundamentally unjust. In the case of Rhodesia, the Smith regime represented a flagrant violation of the principles for which Ford stood” (142). Michel goes on to argue that this character quality helps to explain Ford’s support for the repeal of the Byrd amendment (145). This is a sound point, even if one recalls that morally upright presidents are forced to go along with policies that do not fit their own moral codes. The better explanation for Ford’s shift away from previous administrations on support for Rhodesia has to do with the Angola situation and the threat of Cuban support for Zimbabwean liberation movements. Michel does a good job in acknowledging this point (146), stressing the reality that Kissinger’s intensive shuttle diplomacy on Rhodesia in 1976 was meant to produce a quick negotiated position where the U.S. would not find itself having to defend white Rhodesia against a Cuban and Soviet-backed liberation war. In that sense Kissinger did succeed, but the haste of the Geneva talks and the reluctance of the UK to take full responsibility for the transfer of power in Rhodesia to majority rule created a number of new consequences that the Carter administration would have to confront.

Michel’s treatment of the Carter years is equally premised on the moral commitment of President Jimmy Carter to oppose white minority rule and racism. Summing up the Carter years, Michel writes, “[t]he fervent opposition of the White House to the continuation of white political control in Rhodesia stemmed chiefly from the alignment of Carter’s deep ideological commitment to the doctrine of human rights, his background in the Jim Crow South, the geopolitical realities of the late 1970s in Southern Africa and domestic electoral considerations.” Michel argues that of all these factors, “human rights” became the main rationale for supporting majority rule, as “...Rhodesia deprived its black citizens of their basic humanitarian rights...” (223). This chapter thoroughly covers the many tests of this resolve brought on by Smith’s internal settlement with some African nationalists and once again different pressures in the UK and U.S. for recognizing the new country of “Zimbabwe-Rhodesia” under the leadership of Bishop Muzorewa. Michel provides a clear and concise history of the political decision making in the U.S. that supported an active, albeit consciously behind-the-scenes, role of the U.S. in negotiating the Lancaster House agreement, the British brokered cease-fire and majority rule constitution reached in late 1979. Michel provides good examples from the Carter library of prominent African Americans who wrote to President Carter, letters encouraging Carter to not give in to pressures from the right to recognize the internal settlement and to lift sanctions (212-213). He also makes the point that British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, in one of her first major foreign policy roles, was strongly influenced by Carter in her role of not recognizing Muzorewa’s government and forcing him to officially accept that he would need to give up power as part of the Lancaster House settlement, although Muzorewa was confident he would win the first majority rule election in early 1980. (215). This process is open to interpretation and debate, particularly based on British archival materials. Still, it is clear that Carter held onto his position and was heavily influenced by Tanzanian President Julius Nyerere as well as U.S. Cold War readings of the region.⁹ This period is covered in great detail by Nancy Mitchell in her major work, *Jimmy Carter in Africa* (2016).¹⁰ Michel likely completed his manuscript before having had time to incorporate or better engage Mitchell’s book. It is interesting, however, in the spirit of H-Diplo roundtables, to ask Michel to what extent he agrees with Mitchell’s assessment that Carter and his diplomats were driven more by Cold War priorities than the moral characteristics of Carter and his commitment to human rights. Further, would he agree that this is in a sense a false binary, and that it is in fact not really possible to choose between the Cold warrior Carter vs the human rights Carter?

As an Africanist, I have always been somewhat suspicious of histories of U.S. foreign relations that stick to a more traditional organization based on the characteristics of presidents as they move sequentially through a period of 15 years. I know that Michel’s approach was consciously limited to the American political arena, and so it is not fair to suggest that he should have spent more space discussing the African side of the diplomacy, or the South African and British side, for that matter. I do think, however, that the comparative approach between subsequent U.S. presidential administrations has structural

⁹ See Arrigo Pallotti, “Tanzania and the 1976 Anglo-American Initiative for Rhodesia,” *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* 45:5 (2017): 800-822.

¹⁰ Nancy Mitchell, *Jimmy Carter in Africa: Race and the Cold War* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2016). See the H-Diplo Roundtable Review at <https://hdiplo.org/to/RT18-18>.

limitations because the variables of external pressures and agency are too easily set aside to privilege the comparison between U.S. administrations. The pressures of the liberation war on Zambia and Mozambique in particular; Nyerere's strong pressures on the U.S. and UK as the leader of the Front Line States; increased Cold War pressures post 1976; and the return of South Africa's direct involvement in the Rhodesian conflict all changed the nature of the Rhodesian crisis, and all of these factors were often outside of U.S. influence. Therefore, just as it is possible to argue that U.S. Rhodesian policy was driven by moral or ethical concerns about race as projected by U.S. administrations, it is also possible to see U.S. policy as a reaction to a changing playing field, and new threats and opportunities over the span of this 15 year period.

Still, having made my criticism of this sort of structure, I do believe that Michel's book transcends the limitations of earlier works organized by administrations. I remain very impressed with Michel's attention to the economic details and his command of internal U.S. political debates over Rhodesian policy. He does, at times, fall into the trope that sees U.S. policy to Rhodesia as a linear shift from the racism in foreign policy that saw value in the White redoubt in the earlier years to a more expansive concept of racial equality by the Ford and Carter administrations. Michel has gone beyond the limitations of that older U.S. foreign relations trope, however, and has provided a clear narrative of how a relative lack of strategic importance of Rhodesia to the U.S.—beyond the specifics of chrome imports in the Cold War—meant that the Rhodesian crisis and the response to UDI lent itself to a polarized and racialized debate with presidential administrations, Congress, and U.S. public opinion. The continued support for white rule among the political right in the U.S. all the way through 1979 showed that Rhodesia was not only a proxy for racial politics in the U.S., but a sort of imagined state where many different groups could project their own racial thinking. This conclusion does not necessarily privilege the perspectives of individual presidents towards race politics in Rhodesia, but it does come through well in Michel's more traditional structuring of this history. Given his attention to details and his skill at getting at the heart of the historical debates that came to shape policy, I find Michel's book a highly valuable addition to the literature on Zimbabwean political history and certainly an important work in the literature on U.S.-Africa foreign relations. Last, I would commend Michel for his excellent attention to detail and sources/citations. This is a model of scholarship and will help future historians locate important sources in the U.S. and elsewhere.

REVIEW BY ELIAKIM M. SIBANDA, UNIVERSITY OF WINNIPEG

In a thoroughly researched and expanded book anchored on his 2017 doctoral dissertation,¹¹ Eddie Michel analyzes the changing attitudes towards the Rhodesian government throughout four White House administrations, as well as the influence of the United States on foreign policy regarding the legality of the Unilateral Declaration of Independence (UDI) regime. Although the subject has been contested over the years, and much ground has been covered on the subject,¹² Michel adopts a revisionist approach, and questions the use of race only as a defining category of analysis in evaluating U.S. presidential policies towards Rhodesia during the UDI period. His work builds on the strength of previous studies the topic, and makes a major contribution by going beyond the years covered by the previous works, and by using a multifaceted theoretical framework of analysis that goes beyond race, a category which he argues has been the only one that has been used to analyze the presidential policies towards Rhodesia during the Unilateral Declaration of Independence period. Michel begins by setting up the reasonable argument that the factors that ultimately guided U.S. foreign policy during the UDI era were: the Cold War, economics, race relations, and human rights (2). Thus Michel's book is innovatively nuanced in that it seeks alternative explanations to those that have been previously offered on the topic.

In his introductory chapter Michel gives a lucid and helpful overview including a brief history of the UDI, a broad but concise history of the relationship between the United States of America (U.S.) within the cold war context, and an interesting literature review, which he synthesizes with a rare feat of balance. This is a must read as it informs the reader on some previous key works on the topic of his book that, together with his work, invite the reader to reflect on the broader meaning of the way different U.S. presidents viewed Rhodesia during the UDI era. The introduction also offers a very helpful overview of the book's contents and a preview of the topics covered.

The first chapter analyzes the policy decisions of the Lyndon B. Johnson administration. By the time of the declaration of UDI, America had already made progress towards racial equality through the Civil Rights Act and the Voting Rights Act, and Johnson remained an opponent of racial injustice. Therefore, when UDI was declared, Johnson remained an opponent of minority rule in Rhodesia, and Michel makes a connection between the president's commitment to civil rights and the fight against white supremacy in the Southern states and on the global stage (16).

Michel further describes the Johnson administration's approach to Rhodesia with the steps leading to and immediately after the UDI. The administration saw the issue of Rhodesian independence as a British issue, but still wished to prevent a UDI based on both strategic concerns and the lack of representation of indigenous peoples in an ostensibly independent Rhodesia led by a white minority. Michel notes, however, that the actions taken by Johnson were cautious and calculated in nature, with strong support of the British position, but without radical action that could have threatened geopolitical interests or political support on the domestic level (28).

The reader is guided through Johnson's support of economic sanctions on Rhodesia, such as preventing the importation of Rhodesian sugar (29). The extreme measures taken to hold those sanctions in place, such as the Zambian airlift (an emergency measure to preserve the Zambian economy reliant on trade routes through Rhodesia), showed Johnson's commitment to the British position on Rhodesian independence. However, Michel points out when the intense sanctions

¹¹ Eddie Michel, "The White House and White Africa. U.S. Foreign Policy on Rhodesia during the Unilateral Declaration of Independence era of 1965-79," PhD Thesis, University of Birmingham, Birmingham, UK, April 2016.

¹² Andy DeRoche, *Black, White and Chrome: The United States and Zimbabwe, 1953 to 1998* (Trenton: Africa World Press, 2001); Gerald Horne, *From the Barrel of a Gun: The United States and The War against Zimbabwe* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2001); Carl P. Watts, *Rhodesia's Unilateral Declaration of Independence: An International History* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012).

and fruitless negotiations between London and the Smith government did not reach the expected departure from UDI, Johnson did not press stronger measures to preserve ties with Pretoria and Lisbon (61).

Michel gives many examples of how the administration supported the British position, for the duration of Johnson's presidency, by supporting proposals put forward by London, condemning minority rule, condemning the Salisbury Hangings, among other similar approaches taken by London. However, none of these actions was aggressive enough to anger Pretoria, but also did little to satisfy the Afro-Asian bloc at the United Nations (UN). In this way, Michel concludes that the Johnson years were not overtly hostile, but were marked by a careful level of action taken towards Rhodesia in order to protect American interests (61).

Next, Michel contrasts the Nixon administration with the Johnson administration in its approach to white Africa and Rhodesia. He points out the strong emphasis on resisting Soviet influence in southern Africa and pursuing economic opportunities, as opposed to ending minority rule. Much of the Nixon administration's foreign policy was the work of Secretary of State Henry Kissinger. Michel argues that in terms of policy, Kissinger was against communism and implicitly supported white Rhodesians by ignoring criminal excesses of minority rule (86). The basis for the pro-Rhodesia position began with the study of American interests in Southern Africa under a National Security Study Memorandum, whose findings and application led to better relations with Rhodesia. Possibly the most important change in policy towards Rhodesia during these years was the lifting of sanctions on Rhodesian chrome, in direct violation of UN sanctions. Michel argues that the motivation for allowing chrome imports from Rhodesia was primarily strategic. The Nixon administration had a priority of ending reliance on Soviet chrome and used legislative action such as the Byrd amendment¹³ to import Rhodesian chrome regardless of UN sanctions. Michel's description of the negotiations between Rhodesia and London, the ineffectiveness of sanctions, and the support for the Smith regime among the white minority, reveals the Nixon years to have been stagnant in terms of progress in majority rule.

The Ford years continued the struggle for a settlement with the Smith government, but Michel portrays the United States as a more prominent player in the dispute, even while it still mostly adopted the British position. The reader is shepherded through the dispute over the Byrd amendment, the greater attention given to minority rule, and the larger push for a settlement given increased Soviet influence in the region. Michel argues that insurgence movements and instability pressed the Americans to negotiate for the Geneva conference in an attempt to prevent Cuban intervention. While the Geneva conference was unsuccessful, Michel highlights the importance of Kissinger and President Gerald Ford's influence on the Prime Minister of Rhodesia, Ian Douglas Smith, with the Anglo-American Proposals (AAP), which included a commitment to majority rule. Through Ford and the AAP, the United States became more than an observer to the Rhodesian crisis, and was directly involved in the negotiations between all parties.

With the election of President Jimmy Carter, the pressure was increased on the Smith government. Michel provides a narrative through this final administration of the transition from Rhodesia to an independent Zimbabwe, which began with repeal legislation of the Byrd amendment, greater diplomatic pressure, and opposition to the Internal Settlement. There were, however, setbacks to majority rule, including the propaganda distributed by the Rhodesian Information Office (RIO) and Smith's opportunity to present their case in Washington. Michel argues that these outcomes were weak moments for the Carter administration, but this was countered by the decision not to recognize the 'majority rule' government of Zimbabwe-Rhodesia and therefore maintain sanctions. Michel argues that the decision not to recognize the internal settlement ultimately led to concessions to the Patriotic Front in the Lancaster House settlement, which ended the UDI era and brought majority rule to Zimbabwe.

The book is not without a few challenges. While Michel's inclusion of human rights practice in the United States offers a very intriguing nexus between the U.S. and the international community sensibilities (8), more information and

¹³ The Byrd Amendment was amended in 1971 to prohibit United States from not importing materials it considered strategic from countries that were not run by communist governments as long as acquiring same material from countries under communist governments was not banned.

demonstration on how Christians in the U.S. influenced American foreign policies from the mid-1970s on would be more than welcome as this aspect is not convincingly argued. It is well documented that Christians in the U.S., especially leaders, championed the equality of all people. They challenged what they perceived as injustice based on both Christian precepts and the Constitution from the 1960s on. They thus influenced U.S. government policies, and played critical political roles from the late 20th century on¹⁴. However a preponderance of evidence both anecdotal and written points to something quite different. It supports the position that it was mostly black church leaders, and a few white clergypersons during the Civil Rights Movement era and on, who championed that equality. This is best summarized by Jim Wallis a U.S. Christian writer social justice activist, when he observed how U.S. Christians understood the role played by Christianity in social transformation. Wallis wrote: "The religious and political right get the public meaning of religion mostly wrong - preferring to focus on ...cultural issues while ignoring ...matters of justice. [While the left]...mistakenly dismisses [it] as irrelevant to social change."¹⁵ Thus to address this lacunae authors should address how and when U.S. Christian understanding of the concept of human rights was mainstreamed during the 1970s so that human rights became a common denominator of the U.S. foreign policy. As well, whether the American Christians' understanding of human rights ever went beyond human rights discourse on religious liberties. I dwell on this aspect of Michel's multiple-faceted theoretical framework which he offers as the best way to understand the views of the successive U.S. presidents towards Rhodesia during the UDI era because, in my estimation, it is the least developed variable in his book. While Michel is correct in discussing the active engagement of the Christian pursuit of human rights in 1970's, it was Latin America, and not the U.S., where liberation theologians sought to promote the notion of equality not only in their own countries but also strove to relate it international communities. Central to their promotion of equality as part of human rights was a Marxist and anticolonial motif which most Christians in the U.S. strongly opposed as they viewed it as promoting Communism, an ideology they strongly opposed.

Michel argues that "race relations as opposed to a complete evaluation of the diverse factors which impacted presidential decision-making" (11), have wrongly been put at the very centre of literature on how different U.S. presidents viewed Rhodesia during the UDI era. He then offers a multi-faceted approach with an emphasis on "different strategic, economic, ideological and moral viewpoints of each president [and] the changing international and domestic arena against which their decisions are made" (12). The claims Michel makes for his theory are undoubtedly strong, and he eloquently demonstrates his points with great acumen throughout most of his book. While I consider Michel's multi-faceted approach as the major contribution of his book, I am not persuaded that all variables were of the same weight. What cannot be disputed is the dominance and persistence of the race variable in U.S. relations with Rhodesia during the era he discusses as evinced by that race is the central thread that runs throughout his book. Thus it can be argued that race in this context was used as a barometer of the nature and quality of the U.S. presidential relations with Rhodesia during the UDI period. In a sense, Michel missed an opportunity of deepening his theory by not highlighting the inordinate impact that the race variable played and still plays in American life.

At times Michel's writing is repetitive in the emphasis on the Cold War as the reason for a change in foreign policy towards Rhodesia, but he defends his position well. Much of his analysis is based on the legality of sanctions and legislative issues, instead of on ideological considerations. Michel's analysis provides historical context and direct quotations from those directly involved, but his major focus on minor legislative issues, such as exemptions on sugar imports, take away from the flow of his argument.

Overall, the book is densely researched, lucid, and readable. Although based on his dissertation, by and large the book does not have the pedantic language and repetitiveness characteristic of an academic thesis. Michel provides an interesting narrative on the question of Rhodesian legality and gives an in-depth analysis of United States' involvement in bringing

¹⁴ Stephen P. Miller, *The Age of Evangelicalism: America's Born-Again Years* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015), 8.

¹⁵ Jim Wallis, *Why the Right Gets It Wrong and the Left Doesn't Get It, God's Politics, A New Version for Faith and Politics in America* (San Francisco: Harper, 2005), 3-4.

majority rule to Zimbabwe. In a forceful way Michel joins the already vociferous group of scholars¹⁶ who have taken the focus of the Rhodesian UDI era away from the British-Rhodesian dynamic in reaching majority rule and shows the influence of American foreign policy in driving the agenda on ending minority rule over four White House administrations. To that end it is a worthwhile addition to literature on decolonization of Zimbabwe, and specifically on relations between the U.S. and Rhodesia during the UDI times, as well to our attempts at understanding the nuanced reasons as to why white Rhodesia, and Rhodesia as country, was of great interests to American presidents between 1965 and 1979.

¹⁶ Andrew De Roche, *Black, White, and Chrome: The United States and Zimbabwe, 1953-1998*, (Africa World Press, 2001); Gerald Horne, *From the Barrel of a Gun: The United States and the War against Zimbabwe, 1965-1980*, University of North Carolina Press, 2001. Although these two books do not directly the UDI per se, they do indeed substantially detail U.S. foreign policy toward white Rhodesia during that period and before; see also William Bishop, "Diplomacy in Black and White: America Contribution to the Search for Zimbabwe Independence, 1965-1980," PhD dissertation, Vanderbilt University, 2012.

 RESPONSE BY EDDIE MICHEL, UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA, SOUTH AFRICA

I would like to begin by thanking all of the reviewers for taking the time to read and evaluate my book. The comments from all four reviewers demonstrate a thorough understanding of my work and the objectives that I hoped to achieve.

In *The White House and White Africa: Presidential Policy Toward Rhodesia During the UDI Era, 1965-1979* I aimed to provide a comprehensive analysis of presidential policy towards white minority controlled Rhodesia during the Unilateral Declaration of Independence (UDI) era of 1965-1979. Instead of using a single lens such as Cold War geopolitics or race I sought to explore the broad spectrum of determinants, both global and domestic, which shaped the changing nature of the U.S. approach to global relations during the 1960s and 1970s. I also utilized a broad range of archival material from British, Rhodesian and U.S. sources, much of which was unavailable to previous researchers, in order not only to give further weight to my narrative but to ensure the most accurate and balanced version of events during the tortuous diplomatic saga of the UDI era.

In that context I was delighted by the response of the reviewers to my book. Both Andy DeRoche and Tim Scarnecchia point out the importance of my work as “fresh look” and “much needed history” on the important subject of U.S. relations with southern Africa during the 1960s and 1970s. As DeRoche notes, my research was particularly timely as the subject had not been comprehensively examined for nearly 20 years. I was also grateful that Eliakim Sibanda declares that my book adopted a revisionist approach that both builds on the “strength of previous studies” but also makes a “major contribution” by going beyond the period covered by the previous works.

In my work I also sought to demonstrate the key role of U.S. foreign policy in as a factor in the varying fortunes of Rhodesia during the UDI era and especially in the mid-to-late 1970s as an important dynamic pressing for an end to white minority rule. In the case of Rhodesia, too often the British-Rhodesian dynamic dominates the narrative of the transition to majority rule to the detriment and indeed exclusion of other international players including the United States. It was therefore rewarding to read the comments from Sibanda regarding my “forceful” shifting of the diplomatic focus away from London and highlighting the importance of Washington in “driving the agenda on ending minority rule.”

A core element of my work was to provide a comprehensive multifaceted framework of analysis to explore the full range of international and domestic dynamics guiding U.S. policy towards Salisbury. I specifically sought to avoid the trap of using a single variable, most commonly race or Cold War geopolitics, as the sole factor influencing decision making. I was pleased to note the positive response of the reviewers to this approach. In particular, Alois Mlambo points out that my “study blazes a new trail in that it attempts to provide a comprehensive and multi-faceted explanation of the trajectory of American policy towards Rhodesia over time which takes into account a wide array of domestic, international, and global factors” and concluded that “One cannot fault this reasoning which, in any case, is fully supported by the evidence and arguments presented in the book.” Sibanda also astutely observes the “innovatively nuanced” approach of my work with respect to my multifaceted theoretical approach.

In terms of individual determinants, Scarnecchia notes the weight that I gave to economic factors, notably the question of economic sanctions and the related issue of chrome imports. As Scarnecchia points out, these small but strategic issues had a much broader impact on global and domestic politics than might be anticipated. I was also gratified by DeRoche’s comments on my analysis of U.S. domestic politics, especially his interest in the moral aspects of President Gerald Ford’s approach towards the UDI state. It was rewarding to read his view that “Michel’s analysis of Ford’s role in relations with Africa is the most thought-provoking to date.” I found his line of analysis, based on Peter Wood’s 1987 article,¹⁷ that Ford’s perspective

¹⁷ Peter H. Wood, “The Pardoner’s Tale: The Personal Theme of ‘Domestic Tranquility’ in Gerald Ford’s Pardon of Richard Nixon,” *Prospects: An Annual of American Cultural Studies* 11 (1987): 491-539.

on Rhodesia could be explained by his inner desire for “domestic tranquility” and to avoid prolonged periods of tension and unpleasantness, as he had tried to do in other issues, to be particularly intriguing.

Sibanda raises the question of the importance of Christianity in shaping the human rights aspect of U.S. foreign policy. He is quite correct to point out that this is the least developed variable in my book. Based on my archival research, however, I would argue that very little pressure, especially compared to other determinants such as economic interest, was exerted on the respective presidential administrations by Christian groups regarding policy towards Salisbury. While it is certainly true that President Jimmy Carter was clearly guided by Christian principles, as noted in my book, I found little evidence to suggest that any of the other three presidential administrations were shaped by Christian beliefs or the need to appease activist Christian groups when formulating policy towards Rhodesia.

Mlambo brings up an interesting point regarding the extent of the duplicity of the respective U.S. governments in “the constant breach of the very international sanctions which the United States had helped impose through various UN Security Council resolutions.” In response, while I would highlight the legal constraints placed on the U.S. when dealing with quasi-governmental entities such as the Rhodesian Information Office (RIO) and the operations of foreign subsidiaries of U.S. companies, it is also quite clear that Washington did not wish to take any actions against Rhodesia that would lead to major damage to U.S. economic interests. The Lyndon B. Johnson White House was particularly concerned with taking any extreme actions which could lead to a trade war with Portugal or South Africa, both of which openly violated UN sanctions. I would point out, however, that Washington, despite certain loopholes, enforced UN sanctions far more strictly than many European countries and indeed a number of black African states. Certainly there existed a degree of hypocrisy in the U.S. position, but much less than in other nations who were far more vocal in their condemnation of the UDI state.

Scarnecchia mentions the recent publication of Nancy Mitchell’s book, *Jimmy Carter in Africa*,¹⁸ and asks to what extent I agree with her assessment that the Carter administration was driven more by Cold War priorities than his moral commitment to human rights or whether this is a false binary. I would agree that it is a false binary “to choose between the Cold warrior Carter vs the human rights Carter.” I would instead suggest that the Carter era represented a point where in the case of Rhodesia, Cold War geopolitics aligned with human rights concerns to seek the mutually compatible goal of ending white minority rule.

As noted earlier, in terms of source material, while I engaged in extensive research at the various presidential libraries in the United States, as befits a study of U.S. diplomatic history, I also moved beyond U.S. sources and engaged with archival material at the National Archives in Britain as well as Rhodesian Government papers held at the Cory Library in at Rhodes University in South Africa. The Rhodesian material proved to be particularly useful in gleaning a sense of the perspective in Salisbury on U.S. actions and the efforts of Rhodesian politicians to integrate their unrecognized nation into the Western struggle against Communism.

I was therefore pleased to be commended by both DeRoche and Scarnecchia regarding my source material and especially the observation by DeRoche that the use of the British, Rhodesian, and indeed U.S. sources that were not available to a previous generation of scholars adds weight to my book. In terms of oral sources, Mlambo makes a valid suggestion that interviews with some of the key players would have enriched the book. While I accept the point, my previous experiences with oral interviews have led me to question the validity of many of the responses not only due to a desire among interviewees to justify their actions but also the reliability of memory especially relating to events that occurred nearly half a century ago. From my perspective, the archival material portrays a far more accurate picture of the events that transpired and the rationale behind the decision-making.

¹⁸ Nancy Mitchell, *Jimmy Carter in Africa: Race and the Cold War* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2016). See the H-Diplo roundtable at <http://www.tiny.cc/Roundtable-XVIII-18>.