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In the early years of post-colonial Africa, Zambia was widely seen as a future star performer. Its Gross Domestic Product per capita of U.S. $431 was not only one of the largest in Africa—three times greater than that of Kenya, for instance—but substantially more than South Korea’s and Brazil’s. As anthropologist James Ferguson reminds us, “Zambia was not reckoned an African ‘basket case’, but a ‘middle income country’, with excellent prospects for ‘full industrialization’ and even ultimate admission to the ranks of the ‘developed’ world.”

It also mattered for what was happening around it. Zambia was the frontline for the struggle against white minority rule across Southern Africa, one of the central political contests of the post-war era.

This context is critical for understanding the importance of Andy DeRoche’s new book, *Kenneth Kaunda, the United States and Southern Africa*, a study of the bilateral relationship between the United States and Zambia. Washington’s refusal to meaningfully support the concerns of independent Africa during the Cold War has become legendary in the historical literature. But when it did endeavor to engage with Africa, it was Zambia that was perceived as a key player, the gateway to actors across central and southern Africa. When Secretary of State Henry Kissinger issued his landmark 1976 address finally aligning American power behind the cause of majority rule in Southern Africa, he did so in Zambia. It was the logical choice.

DeRoche’s role as one of the foremost diplomatic historians of the region has been established since his pioneering 2001 study on America’s torturous policy towards Rhodesia-Zimbabwe, *Black, White, and Chrome: the United States and Zimbabwe, 1953-1998*. If anything, *Kenneth Kaunda, the United States and Southern Africa* is grounded in even more research, reaching deep into American and Zambian archives, as well as featuring oral history with key players.

Ultimately, the book represents a capstone on DeRoche’s long concern with American policy in Southern Africa during this period. It is not hard to imagine graduate supervisors assigning numerous of his works simultaneously as a case study in how a singular scholarly interest can branch out into an entire corpus of mutually reinforcing works. It is also a most welcome addition to the field of international history. The last five years or so have seen an explosion of studies on Southern Africa in the Cold War, with the effect that our knowledge in this area is much more advanced and textured than before. But Zambia has remained less well understood than some other actors, and DeRoche’s book does much to redress that. The footnotes also provide something of a roadmap into Zambian archives for aspiring doctoral students to follow.

All of the reviewers find much to like in *Kenneth Kaunda, the United States and Southern Africa*. Timothy Scarnecchia notes that this is DeRoche’s “most ambitious book to date” and describes it as “full of useful and new insights.” Webby Kalikiti identifies DeRoche’s study as an “outstanding work.” Walima T. Kalusa finds it “a fascinating book… lucid, well-researched, and rich in anecdotes.” Carl Watts sees “an essential port of call for scholars working on the history of this complex region.” The reviewers largely agree that the book will become an important point of reference for historians of Southern Africa in the Cold War, Zambia, decolonization, and America’s foreign policy in Africa.

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I would add a further point of praise. A major strength of DeRoche’s work, as Timothy Scarnecchia notes, is his ability to write with real empathy for the African actors in his story. His deep knowledge of Zambia, its politicians, its people, and its societies seeps through the text in ways that other international historians might envy. To put it bluntly, the ‘feel’ for the period, the place, and the characters in his story is admirable indeed. This view is perhaps echoed by Eliakim M. Sibanda, who describes Kenneth Kaunda as “a very unusual diplomatic book in that it has a uniquely African approach.” The fact that Kenneth Kaunda features at the front of the title, rather than an American actor, says a lot about how deeply embedded DeRoche’s perspective is in Zambia itself. In this regard, DeRoche implicitly positions his book at the forefront of a broader trend to thoroughly decentralise the study of international history and displace the United States from its hegemonic position in the field.

Participants:

Andy DeRoche teaches history full-time at Front Range Community College and lectures part-time at the University of Colorado. He lives in Longmont, CO, with his wife Heather, a former Zambian journalist, and their two children Ellen (12) and Zeke (7). His next research project will be a comparative examination of global aspects of USA ice hockey and Zambian soccer at the end of the Cold War, featuring case studies on U.S. defenseman Eric Weinrich and Zambian striker Collins Mbesuma.

Jamie Miller earned his masters and doctorate from the University of Cambridge in 2013, and has been a Fox Predoctoral International Fellow at Yale University, a Visiting Assistant Professor at Quinnipiac University, and a Postdoctoral Fellow at both Cornell University and the University of Pittsburgh. He specialises in the politics and ideology of apartheid South Africa, while his broader research interests include state-building in the post-colonial era, development, the nexus between race and political ideology, decolonisation, and the Cold War in the global south. His first book, An African Volk: The Apartheid Regime and its Search for Survival, was published by Oxford University Press in September 2016, while his most recent article, “Africanising Apartheid: Identity, Ideology, and State-Building in Independent Africa,” appeared in the fall 2015 issue of the Journal of African History. His commentary on historical and contemporary global affairs has appeared in The Atlantic, the London Review of Books, The Chronicle of Higher Education, The Sydney Morning Herald, The Age, the History News Network, the Imperial & Global Forum, and The Conversation.


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**Carl P. Watts** received his Ph.D. in Modern History from the University of Birmingham. He currently directs the History and Political Science Faculty in the School of Education at Baker College, Michigan. He is a Fellow of the Royal Historical Society and a Research Fellow in the Centre for Imperial and Postcolonial Studies at the University of Southampton. His work on UDI has been published in the *Australian Journal of Politics and History, Commonwealth & Comparative Politics, Diplomatic History, The Journal of Colonialism and Colonial History, The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, and *20th Century British History*. He is the author of *Rhodesia’s Unilateral Declaration of Independence: An International History* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2012).
ow regarded as something of a diplomatic backwater, Zambia was at one time on the frontline of one of the late twentieth century’s major conflicts: the struggle against white minority regimes in Southern Africa. Its President, Kenneth Kaunda, who led the country from independence in 1964 to 1991, had the ears of world leaders. In this new work, Andy DeRoche, who has spent the last three decades exploring the historical relations between the United States and Southern Africa, utilises a collection of archival and oral sources to restore the place of Zambia in international relations in the 1970s and 1980s. The result is an engaging and detailed traditional diplomatic history that provides new understanding of the agency, strategy, and methods of African leaders in their interactions with global superpowers during the height of the Cold War.

The crux of DeRoche’s argument is that Kaunda occupied such a central place in Southern African foreign policy during this period that he became a non-aligned, crucial intermediary for major political players on the world stage such as the Soviet Union, China, and the U.S. DeRoche shows that the Zambian leader, by placing himself in such a strategic position, attempted deftly and with some success to secure the safety and economic interests of his country in an extremely volatile and turbulent regional environment. He also became an important ally of successive U.S. presidents such as Gerald Ford, Jimmy Carter and Ronald Reagan, consequently shaping American policy towards Southern Africa in general, particularly in relation to the fight against racism and colonial rule. This persuades DeRoche to conclude that Kaunda contributed in no small measure to the eventual achievement of political independence in Angola, Mozambique, Zimbabwe, Namibia, and South Africa, and “arguably played the most important role among all African statesmen regarding US relations with their continent” (viii).

It is worth noting that the role of Kaunda in the international relations of the region has been examined before, most notably by Stephen Chan in a work1 that was criticised for what one reviewer termed its author’s “distinct Commonwealth perspective; one wonders what an interested American reader would gain from this book, for there is very little about how much other actors were involved and what parts they played.”2 What DeRoche’s focused study commendably does is to provide that missing and hugely important perspective, albeit one that is far too American, in a way that complements the efforts of previous analyses of regional foreign relations during the Cold War that attempt a more general overview.3

Kenneth Kaunda, the United States and Southern Africa, for instance, shows how, after years of neglect, the United States’ policy towards Southern Africa shifted dramatically after Secretary of State Henry Kissinger’s visit to Lusaka in April 1976. DeRoche convincingly shows that the shift in U.S. Southern African policy emanated from Kaunda’s fear of a Soviet-Cuban advance in the region, which resonated with American

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3 For a recent work on the regional relations, see Stephen Chan, Southern Africa: Old Treacheries and New Deceit (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2011).
interests. This portrayal of Kaunda corresponds with the views of other researchers who have characterised him as a liberal who was fearful of Communist influence in Southern Africa and therefore supported, alongside Côte d’Ivoire’s President Houphouët-Boigny, South Africa’s incursion and subsequent invasion of southern Angola.\footnote{For a work that shows the convergence of Kaunda-American interests, see, for instance Tony Hodges, “The Struggle for Angola. How the World Powers entered a war in Africa”, \textit{The Round Table. The Commonwealth Journal of International Affairs} 66:262 (April 1976), 283. On Houphouët-Boigny see, Jacques Boudin, \textit{La Politique Africaine d'Houphouët-Boigny} (Paris: Eurofar Press, 1980).} Other significant subjects less covered in earlier studies such as the diverse amounts of U.S. aid provided to Zambia and Zaire, the shuttle diplomacy of Kissinger and the complex, protracted international negotiations that led to the independence of Zimbabwe, are justifiably brought to life in this work with unrivalled detail and superb analysis.

DeRoche’s work does have some problems, however. The first is that this is a very diplomatic history in both senses of the word: it is generally politely phrased and not very critical, especially of Kaunda and Kissinger. For instance, DeRoche effectively presents Kaunda as a neutral broker in the Angolan civil war between Jonas Savimbi’s UNITA against the left-leaning MPLA of Augustine Neto. Yet existing evidence shows that Kaunda collaborated closely with South Africa and the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) in supporting Savimbi. DeRoche himself concedes that it was at Kaunda’s instigation that the U.S. got involved in Angola:

When Ford and Kissinger decided to intervene and created Operation IA Feature in mid-July, they based their decision on their interpretation of Kaunda’s request of aid to UNITA (58).

It took University of Zambia students to protest against the government’s support for UNITA before Kaunda U-turned to back the MPLA.\footnote{Among those who have discussed student unrest at UNZA is Randi R. Balsvik, “Student Life at the University of Zambia: Strikes, Closures and the Disruption of Learning 1965-1992”, \textit{Zambia Journal of History} 8 (1995), 10.} The book’s absolving of the blame over Angola in the face of readily available evidence to the contrary is hard to understand and undermines its impartiality.

The second problem is that some of the arguments that DeRoche presents as conclusive are actually inconclusive and informed by the selection of source material. For instance, DeRoche asserts that Kaunda thwarted the several coup attempts against him due to his own tactical and political skills. The author’s series of interviews with Kaunda’s close political associates may have supported this argument. The relationship between Kaunda and South Africa’s successive apartheid governments was in fact more ‘friendlier’ than is generally assumed in the sense that the latter regarded him as a stabilising figure in the region in contrast to the Marxist oriented regimes and liberation movements in Zambia’s neighbours.

Despite this tacit support for his continued stay in power, Kaunda frequently claimed that South Africa actively sought to undermine his government and posed an existential threat to Zambia, one that could best be countered through the imposition and perpetuation of the one party state. It is possible that these sources were not readily available at the time DeRoche conducted the fieldwork for his work, but access to them would have enhanced his otherwise outstanding work and may have modified some of his conclusions.
Overall, however, this is a highly welcome and refreshing publication that explains the nature of the relationship between Kaunda and the United States, and the struggle for the liberation of Southern Africa. It also makes a useful contribution to our wider understanding of U.S.-Africa relations during the Cold-War era and the complicated international negotiations that led to the beginning of the end of white minority regimes including apartheid in Southern Africa.
Kenneth Kaunda, the United States and Southern Africa draws on an impressive range of archival, oral, unpublished, and published sources to reconstruct the history of diplomatic relations between southern Africa and the United States through the prism of Zambian President Kenneth Kaunda’s policies and initiatives and those of successive regimes in the USA from 1974 to 1984. The study’s central object is to “examine Kaunda’s contributions to US relations with southern Africa” (2). Thus, Kaunda, or KK, as the president was affectionately called, looms larger than life throughout the study. The study portrays him as a major regional and global political actor who both played a crucial role in the fight against white minority rule and racial injustice in southern Africa and contributed significantly to moulding U.S. policies towards the region at the height of the Cold War in the last half of the twentieth century.

The book’s introduction briefly traces the roots of Kaunda’s engagement with U.S. leaders before 1975. It observes that until the mid-1970s, Zambia’s relations with the U.S. were at best lukewarm and at worst frosty. According to DeRoche, this partly issued from the frustration of the Zambian leader with the dearth of a clear-cut U.S. policy vis-a-vis the nationalist conflicts and the oppression of Africans by white minority regimes in the region and partly from the dislike of Presidents Lyndon Johnson and Richard Nixon of Kaunda’s non-alignment in the Cold War, socialist economic policies and resistance to U.S. political hegemony through his rejection of the Non-Proliferation Treaty.

The book begins to come into its own in the first chapter which details the endeavours of the Zambian leader to persuade President Gerald Ford to formulate a clear policy that would place conflicts in southern Africa at the helm of U.S. diplomatic agenda in the region. DeRoche argues that such efforts included Kaunda’s 1975 bombshell speech at the White House in Washington in which the President accused the Ford administration of inertia and indifference towards racial conflicts, injustice, and oppression of blacks in southern Africa. Despite eliciting the wrath of the Secretary of State Henry Kissinger and other U.S. officials, this speech, the chapter concludes, succeeded in drawing the attention of the Ford regime to pressing socio-political problems in southern Africa and subsequently informed the U.S. policy towards the area.

Chapter Two focuses on the consolidation U.S.-Zambia relations within the context of the eruption of a bitter civil war in Angola on the eve of that country’s independence from Portugal in 1975 and of the struggle for power in colonial Zimbabwe. The chapter particularly shows that Zambia and the U.S. joined hands in finding a solution to the Angolan war that pitted the ruling Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA) against the National Union for the Total Liberation of Angola (UNITA) and National Front for the Liberation of Angola (FNLA). This conflict was exacerbated by South Africa’s invasion of Angola in October 1975. The chapter ends with an interesting analysis of the lessons that both Kaunda and the Ford administration drew from the failure of their efforts to prevent the escalation of the war.

Chapter Three documents Henry Kissinger’s path-breaking speech in Lusaka in 1976. DeRoche insists that this speech not only marked a significant shift in U.S. policy towards southern Africa but also recognised Zambia as a crucial ally of the U.S. government in its diplomatic efforts in Africa generally and southern Africa particularly. Chapter Four shows that the new policy underlined the successful negotiations that ultimately led to the birth of the new Zimbabwe in 1980. On the other hand, chapters five and six underscore Zambia-U.S. relations during the Jimmy Carter administration from 1977 to 1980. Collectively, the chapters portray the early relations between Carter and Kaunda as having been warm due to Carter’s desire to bring about positive political change in southern Africa. But such relations were dogged by many challenges and
misunderstandings between the President and Kaunda, including a damaging quarrel between them over the buying of fighter planes from the Soviet Union by the Zambian government in 1980.

Chapter Seven examines the shift in the U.S. approach towards southern Africa in the era of the policy of constructive engagement pursued by President Ronald Reagan following Carter’s electoral defeat in the early 1980s. The chapter shows that although Reagan and Kaunda worked together to bring about a negotiated settlement of the Namibia conflict and other conflicts in southern Africa, their relations ebbed significantly away in the first two years of the Reagan administration not least because of suspected spying activities of U.S. diplomats in Lusaka but also because of conflicting opinions between Zambia and the U.S. over the Namibian question itself. Chapter Eight demonstrates that the two countries succeeded in repairing their damaged relationship after 1983 and thus continued to work together to secure independence for Namibia and to settle other conflicts in the region, notwithstanding President Kaunda’s dislike of some aspects of the policy of constructive engagement, especially Reagan’s enthusiasm to do business with apartheid South Africa. The book’s final chapter deals with the last years of Kenneth Kaunda in office from 1984 to 1991 when he lost power. The study ends with an epilogue.

There is something to be said in favour of this book. Lucid, well-researched, and rich in anecdotes, it successfully documents Kaunda’s diplomatic initiatives in southern Africa, highlights his non-aligned approach to regional and global issues, and reveals some of his shady dealings with the U.S., such as his cooperation with the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) in its efforts to boost the military capabilities of UNITA and FNLA in their brutal struggle against the MPLA in Angola. In the same vein, the book clearly explains the policies of successive U.S. authorities with respect to the region under probe. Moreover, DeRoche’s painstaking labour to understand diplomatic relations in the area through the lens of the diverse personalities of Zambian and U.S. leaders, and their policies and whims, makes the study interesting.

But the book hardly escapes the usual grumbles. On a light note, not only is the book repetitive in some instances but its font is too small. More ominously, the book’s narrative on relations between the two countries in question is interrupted at several points by discussions of issues that have little or no bearing on this topic. For instance, the study discusses, inter alia, Kaunda’s cabinet reshuffle, the unsuccessful coup attempt against him in 1980 and his downfall in 1991 without, however, illuminating how these developments impacted on the U.S.-Zambia relationship, or indeed, on U.S. policy towards southern Africa as a whole. Numerous similar diversions add no value to the book.

My biggest gripe is that this study over-exaggerates the influence that Kaunda exerted upon U.S. policies in southern Africa in the decade under scrutiny. It is true that successive U.S. governments perceived him as their dependable ally in their diplomatic manoeuvres in the region. However, it seems to me that such dealings were more motivated by their desire for the region’s resources, their fear of the spread of Communism, and their quest to keep it out of the area than by Kaunda’s own influence. The fact that U.S. policies in southern Africa were not dissimilar from those that the U.S. carried out in other parts of the world at the peak of the Cold War lends credence to this perspective.

These criticisms are by no means intended to denigrate the value of this fascinating book. Its careful reconstruction of the relationship between Zambia and the U.S. will certainly appeal to students, policymakers and ordinary people keen to comprehend how diplomatic relations involving small, poor countries and superpowers evolved during the Cold War with its complex world politics.
Andy DeRoche’s latest book on Zambian diplomacy is a welcome addition to the works he has already provided the field. Most notably, his 2001 book *Black, White, and Chrome: the United States and Zimbabwe, 1953-1998*, established DeRoche’s reputation as the key American diplomatic historian working on Southern and Central Africa. DeRoche’s 2003 work, *Andrew Young: Civil Rights Ambassador*, further demonstrated DeRoche’s excellent use of diplomatic records to analyze and detail the interactions between American and African diplomats in the crucial period of U.S. Cold-War involvement in the region.¹ His latest work under review here is by far the more ambitious of his books and one that works well with the other two, particularly as this latest book on Zambian President Kenneth Kaunda and his diplomacy seems to have a richer archival base than his first books. As someone with less experience as a diplomatic historian than DeRoche, I have to be clear that my discussion below will focus on the contributions the book provides concerning Kaunda’s and Zambia’s diplomacy with the United States during the crucial Cold-War years of the mid-1970s through to 1980, especially as it relates to the Rhodesian crisis.

My own approach to the topic has been greatly assisted by DeRoche’s previous work on U.S. diplomacy during the Rhodesian crisis and the years of diplomacy leading up to the Independence of Zimbabwe in 1980. DeRoche’s *Black, White, and Chrome* laid the impressive groundwork for any future work on this topic, so I was quite pleased to see this new book from DeRoche on Kaunda and Zambia’s role. It has not disappointed, and to an even greater extent this book presents the reader and researcher with a much fuller picture of how Kaunda worked directly with the Americans towards the goal of Zimbabwean independence and the end of the illegal Rhodesian Smith regime after the Unilateral Declaration of Independence (UDI) in 1965.² Right from the start it is clear that the main concern of Kaunda’s diplomacy with the U.S. was Rhodesia and the attempt to fight against the Movimento Popular de Libertação de Angola (MPLA) taking power in Angola. In the first chapter, aptly titled. “Kaunda Gets Ford’s Attention, 1974-75,” DeRoche establishes Kaunda’s key role as the main African leader to advise the Americans on what direction to take in both Angola and Rhodesia. In terms of Angola, Kaunda is shown to have directly lobbied for support for Jonas Savimbi’s União Nacional para a Independência Total de Angola (UNITA) with the help of Joseph Mobutu in Zaire. DeRoche describes Kaunda’s influence on the Ford Administration through a careful reading of the memoranda of conversations (memcons) detailing meetings between Kaunda, President Gerald Ford, and other officials during Kaunda’s visit to Washington D.C., or through direct correspondences between Kaunda and Ford. For example, DeRoche describes a very interesting meeting between then U.S. diplomat George Bush and Zambia’s Foreign Secretary Vernon Mwanga in Beijing on 11 March 1975. In this meeting Mwanga gave Ford a realistic interpretation of Zambia’s ties with China, as well as Zambia’s commitment to negotiations on Rhodesia, but also the determination to support a liberation war effort by the Zimbabwean nationalists if diplomacy failed. (18-19). DeRoche assesses Zambia’s early engagement with the Ford administration as more influential on the decision of the Americans to provide covert support to UNITA and the Frente Nacional de Libertação de Angola (FNLA) to fight the Soviet and Cuban-backed

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MPLA in Angola. Zambia’s requests for support on the Rhodesia question were not as effective in early 1975 (30).

In the next chapter, covering “Lessons Learned from Angola, 1975-76” Kaunda and his diplomats begin to play a more important role in designing American policy toward Rhodesia. DeRoche describes in careful detail both Secretary of State Henry Kissinger and Ford’s commitment to covert aid and then the Congressional intervention that would lead to the Tunney amendment that was approved on January 27, 1976, ending the administration’s ability to fund covert operations in Angola through the Defense budget (56).

After the failure of Zambia, Zaire, Tanzania, South Africa, and the U.S. to influence the outcome in Angola, DeRoche describes how the Zambians then helped to build on Kissinger’s Cold-War reading of Rhodesia as the potential next Angola. Chapter 2 describes the Ford administration’s shifting of focus to Rhodesia after the defeat of American interests in Angola. DeRoche brings in evidence here of important discussions in the State Department over how to help Zambia with aid. An important theme throughout the book, this tension over whether or not to provide military aid to Zambia remained an issue throughout the Ford, Carter, and Reagan years. Most importantly, Zambia’s vulnerability to attacks by Rhodesian and South African air forces meant that Kaunda and his diplomats were constantly requesting more military aid from the Americans. As DeRoche points out, the discrepancy between large amounts of Cold-War military aid to Mobutu in Zaire and the small amounts offered to the more vulnerable Zambia was always a point of contention. DeRoche provides a great quote from Kissinger in March 1976. Discussing with his staff whether or not to provide “…$10 million in military assistance to the Zambian government. Kissinger joked that ‘‘10 million isn’t a program. 10 million is a tip.’” (64) The proposed $10 million was compared to the $300 million received by Zaire at the time (65). DeRoche is quite attune to issues of U.S. Cold-War funding for Zambia during these years and just how important these funds were for Kaunda’s ability to take on a role as a key negotiator for Rhodesia and Namibia. This is an important contribution throughout the work, the attention to requests for US funding in return for Kaunda’s continued role in negotiations, particularly when Zambia was on the receiving end of air strikes and other military strikes from South African and Rhodesian forces. DeRoche also covers the difficult time Kaunda had, particularly in the late 1970s, in convincing the Americans and the British that they should provide him with air defense as well as fighter jets to counter the threats from South Africa and Rhodesia.

Chapter 4 is incredibly helpful and insightful for those of us interested in Kissinger’s 1976 shuttle diplomacy during the Rhodesian crisis. Many historians working on this topic will be familiar with the detailed memcons (memoranda of conversation) that Kissinger’s two visits to Africa, one in April and one in September 1976, provide. Jamie Miller, for one, has done an excellent job with these memcons in his recent book on South African diplomacy, An African Volk: The Apartheid Regime and Its Search for Survival.3 DeRoche, as is his usual fashion, seems to enjoy bringing to life the details of the meeting places, the moods of Kaunda and others present, what they had for dinner, and the contents of the conversations themselves. DeRoche’s

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DeRoche’s direct negotiations with the South Africans and Smith, which would eventually lead to Smith’s 24 September 1976 speech announcing his acceptance of majority rule (100-102). As in other chapters, DeRoche ties the role Kaunda played in getting the Front Line State Presidents (FLSPs) to push for a united front among the Zimbabwean nationalists, to further development aid from the U.S. DeRoche shows that Kissinger was personally involved in making sure Zambia’s development aid increased to $145 million for 1977 (105). He does not spend much time on the 1976 Geneva talks over Rhodesia. One area of interest in terms of Zambia’s role in the talks is who among the Zambian diplomats were involved in releasing the Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU) military and political leaders from Zambian prisons to join the Geneva talks, where they gave their support to Mugabe as the leader of ZANU That is not a topic related to DeRoche’s theme, but it is one many of us working Zimbabwean nationalist history are interested in, and it would be interesting to know if DeRoche has come across materials on this in the United National Independence Party (UNIP) or U.S. national archives.

Chapters 5 and 6 provide important sources and context on Kaunda’s role in the Rhodesian negotiations, and the continued influence of Zambia on U.S. positions. However, DeRoche points out that during the Carter Administration, Zambia’s influence became strained primarily because of Kaunda’s need to seek development and military assistance from the Chinese and the Soviets, given the Rhodesian and South African air threat. As DeRoche notes, the early Carter years, 1977-1978 went extremely well, including a successful state visit by Kaunda to Washington, but the last two years of Jimmy Carter’s presidency were not as smooth in terms of relations between the U.S. and Zambia, which is the subject of Chapter 6. One important aspect of Kaunda’s domestic political survival is raised briefly in Chapter 6: the challenges to Kaunda’s rule by powerful rival Zambian politicians Harry Nkumbula and Simon Kapwepwe in 1978.

DeRoche describes how Kaunda outmaneuvered these senior politicians to maintain the UNIP nomination at the September party congress (138-139). DeRoche does not go very far into domestic politics in this period, or some of the tactics Kaunda used to maintain control of the party and the state, although he does refer to works by Bizeck Phiri, Miles Larmer, Stephen Chan, and Giacomo Macola, which are more concerned with Zambia’s domestic political struggles in these years. This choice makes sense given DeRoche’s central theme is to present Kaunda as an African statesperson whose impressive diplomatic record deserves such a positive treatment. The interesting question, though, for DeRoche, is whether or not Kaunda’s political troubles, related as they were to Zambia’s economic troubles caused by drops in world copper prices and the closure of the border with Rhodesia, became important enough from an American diplomatic perspective to require intervention in terms of economic, development, or military aid. It seems from the British records, the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) and the Prime Minister’s office were well aware that Kaunda needed direct assistance to remain in power. It would be interesting to know more from DeRoche in terms of

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whether or not this theme—of needing to save Kaunda domestically—comes up in the American State Department or National Security Council (NSC) discussions of Kaunda in this tense political climate during the late 1970s.

Chapter 6 then does a wonder job of bringing the reader through the key events that led to the Lancaster House agreement in 1979, which led to Zimbabwe’s Independence in April 1980. The book discusses key events where Kaunda and Zambia played a major role, including the delicate handling of the internal settlement government and the election of Bishop Abel Muzorewa in the short-lived Zimbabwe-Rhodesia. The Commonwealth’s Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) in Lusaka was a key event in Commonwealth history in that Kaunda, along with Australian Prime Minister Malcolm Fraser, managed to convince then relatively new British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher not to recognize Muzorewa’s government by lifting sanctions against Rhodesia. DeRoche brings up Kaunda’s own compartmentalizing of his anti-democratic moves towards Zambian opposition the previous year.

While not acknowledging even the slightest admission of guilt over UNIP’s trampling of democracy by preventing the candidacies of Kapwepwe and Nkumbula, Kaunda’s opening speech [at the CHOGM] lambasted the April elections in Rhodesia as “‘illegal.’ He characterized Muzorewa as a puppet … ‘What we have today is white power clad in black habiliments’.” (149)

The above quotation, while illustrating Kaunda’s hatred for Muzorewa—especially as Muzorewa continued to authorize military strikes into Zambia—also shows DeRoche’s somewhat subtle but still effective pokes at Kaunda’s ability to speak about fair elections after events in 1978. In the end, Kaunda and others in the Commonwealth successfully pressured Thatcher, with Kaunda even dancing with her, to help convince her that acting against public opinion in her own party would ultimately bring the Rhodesian war to an end and result in constitutional talks, a British- run transitional period, and the first majority rule in Zimbabwe. Ultimately, Kaunda’s long time friend and leader of the Zimbabwe African People’s Union (ZAPU), Joshua Nkomo would lose out to his long time competitor but partner in negotiations, Robert Mugabe. DeRoche brings to life many of the meetings and negotiations that took place to get Rhodesia to majority rule, and his book is invaluable for those interested in learning more about U.S. and Zambian diplomacy.

In the end, with all that Kaunda did to help resolve the Rhodesian conflict and bring Nkomo and Mugabe to the negotiating table, he and Carter would end the 1970s at odds over the provisioning of air defense and fighter jets to Zambia to defend against Rhodesian and South African incursions. DeRoche does an excellent job presenting Kaunda’s anger at Carter for Carter’s criticisms of Zambia’s plans to purchase Soviet MIG fighter jets in early 1980 (155-156). DeRoche’s eye for details, especially for the boiling over of issues of development and military aid over the years, is a strong point of this work.

Ultimately, however, as much as Rhodesia was the central preoccupation of Kaunda’s U.S. diplomacy, Kaunda was also influential in talks over Namibia, and after Zimbabwe’s independence and the coming to power in the United States of Ronald Reagan, Kaunda continued to push forward demands for the end of minority white rule in Southern Africa. There is plenty in this book for those interested in these topics and years as well, although I have run out of room to discuss them here. As in DeRoche’s other books and articles, he is once again consistent in his tone throughout the book. He has never hidden his deep admiration for President Kaunda, or President Carter, or U.S. Ambassador Andrew Young, and here in this book that admiration continues. It is not that he refuses to see their shortfalls and problems; he does relate these, but he rightfully sees these three men as having created a special bond that helped take what was a cynical attempt by
Kissinger to stave off Cuban intervention in Rhodesia to a more humane approach to diplomacy. Unfortunately, the Cold-War interests of the U.S. continued to push Carter—as demonstrated as well in Nancy Mitchell’s new book, *Jimmy Carter in Africa*—to worry about Soviet interests in Zambia and elsewhere in the region. What is so important about DeRoche’s tone and respect for Kaunda and his Zambian diplomats is that DeRoche is never one to privilege the American diplomats in his narratives. There are many Americans over all of these years who interacted with Kaunda and other Zambians, but DeRoche is always careful to define the terms of Zambian interests and demands in such a way that show these interactions to have been mutually respectful and important. It may seem like an obvious point, but many historians of the Cold War, when they turn to Africa, do not understand just how important African leaders and diplomats were to the U.S during these years. DeRoche has always seen the importance of individual diplomats and leaders in shaping these events and negotiations first and foremost as individuals trying to complete their tasks as diplomats. There are failures and successes on both sides, but most admirably, DeRoche avoids instilling relative strengths or weaknesses into individuals because of the nation they represented. Many diplomatic historians fail to see this important human side of diplomacy. Face to face, Zambian and U.S. diplomats needed to interact humanely with each other and treat each other with respect. That respectfulness is always present in DeRoche’s work.

The chapters on the 1980s (Chapters 7-9) are quite useful both for the detailed treatment of Kaunda’s role in U.S. policies towards Namibia, Mozambique, Angola, and most importantly South Africa itself. After Ronald Reagan, George H.W. Bush also worked with Kaunda on regional issues. Almost a year and half after Nelson Mandela was released from prison, Kaunda lost his first election. Somewhat fittingly, it would seem, that an African leader who put so much of his own life and reputation into ending white minority rule in Southern Africa, would find himself out of office when the Cold War came to an end and talks for a majority-rule South Africa were now a reality. DeRoche provides a helpful epilogue as well, where he brings the political narrative to a close, showing both the mistreatment Kaunda received in Zambia and the continued support and respect he had in the United States, including from his old friends, Jimmy Carter and Andrew Young.

For the purpose of this H-Diplo forum, I would say my ‘big question’ to put to DeRoche here would be whether or not Kaunda’s longevity in power can be seen as primarily dependent upon his continued diplomatic role in the Cold War in Southern Africa? And if so, was his career enhanced more by American support or by the support he received from other Cold-War powers?

This is certainly DeRoche’s most ambitious book to date, and as such it is full of useful and new insights based on his research in the UNIP archives and the massive amount of U.S. documents he has obtained and analyzed over the years. I have certainly learned a great deal from it, and I am sure all of us working on Southern Africa during the Cold War and after, scholars and students of history alike, will find this a valuable and important contribution to the historiography of Zambia, Southern Africa, and U.S. diplomacy.

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Andy DeRoche’s book insightfully examines Kenneth Kaunda’s diplomatic relations with various presidents of United States, from 1974 to 1984 when he “arguably played the most important role among all African statesmen regarding US relations with the continent” (Preface). DeRoche convincingly argues that Kaunda became an important mediator of U.S.-Southern African relations during this time, leading to Zambia taking a crucial role in these diplomatic relations that occurred mostly within a Cold War context where both superpowers competed for support of African states, especially those of Southern Africa that were in the process of being decolonized. The book begins with a preface which is important because it provides an overview of the entire book, and also gives insight into the author’s approach. Some readers do not read introductions to books in any significant way. DeRoche’s introduction is crucial to the understanding of the main message of his book, and as such it is a must read for all who wish to engage with his work. It lays out some historical context, summarizing the history of Northern Rhodesia as well as Kaunda’s entry into politics and his relations with American leaders prior to the period under study. This portion of the book sets up a fairly sympathetic view of Kaunda followed in chapter one by a generous evaluation of Kaunda’s role in seeking peace and an end to colonialism in Southern Africa; DeRoche persuasively contends that Kaunda played a crucial role in Mozambique, Rhodesia, Angola, and Namibia, with mixed results, as well as achieving a détente with apartheid-era South Africa.

In his chronologically organized nine chapters, DeRoche convinces his readers about the diplomatic role Kaunda played in the democratization of Southern Africa. In the opening chapter he discusses, among other things, the White House meeting and speech at which Kaunda first attracted the attention of Gerald Ford’s administration to the problems of Southern Africa in April 1975 (5). In this speech Kaunda demanded concrete action and aid for the region; this was achieved only in the case of Angola, but DeRoche argues that this was nonetheless a significant turning point in relations with the United States. Chapter two focuses on Angola, and details how the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) initiated covert support for two of three competing factions in cooperation with Kaunda. These efforts ultimately failed, and the Communist Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA) took control. DeRoche argues in this chapter that earlier diplomatic work could have prevented this result, but that Ford and Secretary of State Henry Kissinger learned from their mistakes and decided to work more closely with Kaunda in resolving the Rhodesian crisis.

In chapter three, DeRoche identifies Kissinger’s 1976 tour of Africa as the “most significant shift” (61) in America’s relations with Zambia. Kissinger not only promised aid to Zambia, but also gave a major speech in its capital which included a commitment to racial justice and majority rule in Rhodesia. However, DeRoche points out that the United States government’s main concern was, in reality, Soviet involvement in the highly volatile region. In chapter four DeRoche discusses the results of this shift, with Kissinger coordinating closely with Kaunda in negotiating for a transition to majority rule in Rhodesia. Ian Smith, the leader of a white supremacist government, agreed to majority rule in principle, but the ensuing conference on the topic fell apart. DeRoche nonetheless praises Kissinger for his efforts, and Ford for his determination to follow through in light of the political risks.

In chapter five, he argues that the first two years of the Carter administration (1977-1978) were the high point of U.S.-Zambia relations, as President Jimmy Carter worked on building diplomatic relations throughout Africa. During this period aid to Zambia was increased and the American government began working towards a settlement in Rhodesia, although fighting intensified despite combined diplomatic efforts. DeRoche calls this period of intense cooperation “too good to last” (115). In chapter six he argues that the
Zambian-American relationship became more fraught after 1978, as both countries faced their own issues. Relations were also strained by Zambia’s increased friendliness with the USSR, although Kaunda criticized the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. And even while aid was cut to Zambia, both the U.S. and Zambia enthusiastically greeted Zimbabwean independence.

Chapter seven examines the most difficult foreign policy shift that DeRoche believes strained Zambia’s strong relationship with the U.S. When Ronald Reagan became president in 1980, Zambia was distressed both by the new administration’s willingness to work with South Africa under a policy the U.S. government called Constructive Engagement as well as by a CIA spy scandal (201-203). DeRoche concludes that the damage was mended though difficult diplomatic work, but he identifies Constructive Engagement as a source of disagreements. Both countries moved in a conservative direction in this period, with Kaunda cracking down on internal dissent.

In chapter eight, DeRoche evaluates the end of Kaunda’s influence in America; he argues that from 1983 onwards the two nations continued to work together, but with fewer concrete results. DeRoche calls the Lusaka Conference, held by Zambia in order to resolve the conflict in Angola (with only temporary success), the last instance of “meaningful diplomatic interaction” (184) between Kaunda and the American government. The shared goal of independence for Namibia, which the Americans linked to the Cuban presence in Angola, was ultimately not resolved for several years, and Constructive Engagement continued to face heavy criticism. Chapter nine discusses Kaunda’s loss of power despite his best (and often extralegal) efforts, praising his graciousness in defeat, and is followed by a short epilogue detailing his activities following his retirement from politics.

The organization of the book is very straightforward: it is chronological, and each chapter begins with a short summary of its contents. A great deal of it is simply summary, and the narrative sometimes gets bogged down in the minutiae of diplomatic meetings–although, having said that, it is evident that an impressive amount of research went into finding the details of said meetings.

DeRoche’s work is a very unusual diplomatic book in that it has a uniquely African approach, which recognizes African agency, although his approach is essentially a conventional one that used traditional archival sources and diplomats as sources of information. The use of diplomatic archival sources and diplomats as sources of information has been criticized because some scholars believe that such practices result in a patriotic history. They assert that such sources are by their nature confessional and narcissistic, in most cases where Western diplomatic activities are discussed, and Western powers are invariably cast in a favorable light. Their policies are claimed to be ethical and their motives altruistic, even though other evidence points to the contrary. ¹ DeRoche’s approach is unusual in that it yields different results than what has hitherto been the case in such studies. In this book, African leaders are no longer pawns on a chessboard; they think for themselves and even read through America’s motives of trying to involve them in its Cold War with the Soviet Union (24, 28-29) The then President of Tanzania can be said to have represented the prevailing feeling among most of the Southern African leaders in his response to Kissinger, who was trying to influence him against the socialist world in favour of the United States. According to the author, Julius Nyerere’s response was, “We are not fighting for Cuba, the Soviet Union, China, or the United States” (72). This is

clearly a statement that indicates an absolute declaration of independence of thought. DeRoche’s judicious use of such local sources immensely contributes to the uniqueness of this book.

The author is generally sympathetic to his subject, as evidenced by his statement in the epilogue that he had “a very enjoyable interview” with Kaunda (228). However, that attitude did not deter the author from criticizing what he sees as his subject’s shortcomings. DeRoche, for instance writes disapprovingly of Kaunda’s clinging to a one party state notion, and his rejection of democratic reforms (221). This demonstrated to me that DeRoche is conscious of his own bias, and tried as far as he could to write objectively about his subject. That is a real strength of this book.

The book is not ponderous to read, an asset that is worth noting in an era in which many books are marked by obfuscation and pedantic language. While scholarly, DeRoche’s writing is non-technical, using language that is accessible to the average person and as such the book can command a wide readership. Also, the extensive bibliography and index alone are first-rate. While the bibliography provides reference for further study, the equally extensive index serves as an easy to use cross-reference.

While the work deserves acclamation, it is not without weakness and errors. Some weaknesses are at the same time strengths in some sense. DeRoche is a beautiful writer who narrates events in a clear, free-flowing language of an enthralling story teller; he writes empirically and offers very little of his own informed views. The author tends to shy away from argumentation. He often raises questions without answering them; for instance, at least twice DeRoche ask if Kissinger might have been sexist given his treatment of a female ambassador to Zambia, but does not offer an opinion on the matter. Basically, while DeRoche raises and addresses some very important issues in the area of diplomacy he stops short of developing them fully. For instance, I would have liked to see him address the question of the efficacy and ethics of intervention. The author’s contention that the U.S. policy was driven by racism seems to be less convincing. Might there have been other strong reasons besides racism, most notably negotiating peace in Europe and co-existence with the Soviet Union which after the Second World War had become a nuclear power? Perhaps the United States became consumed with trying to play catch-up with the Soviets, while creating a space for coexistence? Might the cause of the civil rights movement in America, which the U.S. government stoutly resisted, have contributed to this neglect, which it perhaps feared might encourage blacks in its own county to agitate for more rights? Typographically, the book has a couple of errors. The first one is with respect to the date on which Robert Mugabe was sworn in as Prime Minister of Zimbabwe, which is written as April 17. The actual date is April 18 (157). The second is an incomplete sentence on page 167.

Beyond this mild criticism, which seems to me might be a publishing error, DeRoche has demonstrated what he set out to do, which was to present Kaunda as a tireless, patient and consistent diplomat, who was deserving of a Nobel Peace Prize for his (230) work for the democratization of Southern Africa, and DeRoche also assists in our understanding of diplomatic relations with the United States, which during this period put Africa in its diplomatic sights. The book makes a significant contribution to diplomatic studies, and more broadly, will be useful to those interested in understanding the history of the diplomatic relations between the United States and Africa, more specifically Southern Africa between 1975 and 1984.
For the last fifteen years Andy DeRoche has been one of the key figures in the vibrant international
academic community that studies the history of U.S. relations with southern Africa. His book on U.S.
relations with Rhodesia-Zimbabwe, and his biography of Andrew Young are widely referenced and
much respected. Those works may be seen as part of the long preparation for DeRoche’s latest book, *Kenneth
Kaunda, the United States and Southern Africa*, which is the product of more than a decade of careful,
wide-ranging scholarship. His analysis is grounded in extensive use of archives in the United States, South Africa,
and Zambia, more than a dozen interviews with key protagonists (including three with Kaunda), government
publications, newspapers and periodicals from several countries, and an impressive range of secondary
literature. DeRoche is to be admired for his mastery of this material and his lucid exposition of several
interlocking episodes in U.S. relations with southern Africa. His book will serve as an essential port of call for
scholars working on the history of this complex region.

As DeRoche points out, Zambia has been crucial to U.S. relations with southern Africa because of its strategic
location and extensive copper reserves, and for many years this regional relationship was conditioned
bilaterally through Kenneth Kaunda’s “tireless diplomacy” (1). The book includes a brief chapter on the
period before 1975 and a more substantial chapter on Kaunda’s final years in office after 1984, but DeRoche
focuses mainly on the crisis years of 1975-1984. During this period the Ford, Carter, and Reagan
administrations were confronted with a plethora of regional issues that engulfed Angola, Rhodesia-Zimbabwe,
Namibia, and South Africa. This review will comment broadly on Kaunda’s role in relation to the Rhodesian
crisis, especially in the context of the Commonwealth, which DeRoche touches upon at several junctures in
his study. This, I think, deserves to be highlighted, because it can be argued that Kaunda’s importance was
reflected not only in his influence on Zambia as its long-standing head of state, or in his role a regional actor,
or in his efforts to engage the United States in southern Africa, but also in his impact as a Commonwealth
statesman, at a time when the Commonwealth was evolving rapidly as an international organization.

DeRoche’s book is especially valuable because it is now more than twenty years since Stephen Chan wrote his
theoretically-oriented study of Kaunda and southern Africa, and there is of course a need to revisit
historiographical assessments in the light of new archival evidence. As Chan pointed out, Kaunda has been
seen as “either a noble statesman or as a collaborator with the forces of oppression,” and careful academic
work is necessary to demystify “the conflicting and often confused intellectual history that has grown up
around him.” DeRoche clearly admires Kaunda but he takes a balanced approach to his subject. He
acknowledges that African leaders are frequently lambasted for their performance in the years after
independence, but he urges a more empathetic approach to understanding the development of one-party rule,
socialist economics, and non-alignment during the Cold War. Looked at from Kaunda’s perspective, the
United States was mired in racial struggles at home and its reputation was tarnished by the Vietnam War.
DeRoche therefore contends: “Instead of wondering why Kaunda was not more loyal to the West, perhaps it
is more appropriate to thank him for not giving up on us completely” (5). This judgment is quite reasonable.

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1 Andy DeRoche, *Black, White and Chrome: The United States and Zimbabwe, 1953 to 1998* (Trenton: Africa

1.
It is certainly the case that Kaunda was let down badly by the weakness and confusion in Britain’s Rhodesia policy in the 1960s, which left Kaunda, in particular, facing a profound legacy of instability in southern Africa for the next fifteen years.

At the Commonwealth Prime Ministers’ meeting in 1965, Kaunda was one of the more radical and outspoken African statesmen who called for an immediate constitutional convention and, if necessary, the use of force against the intransigent Rhodesian white minority in order to impose African majority rule. The fallout from Rhodesia’s unilateral declaration of independence (UDI) threatened to tear the Commonwealth apart. Kaunda was initially optimistic that Harold Wilson would be able to bring the illegal regime to heel through a policy of economic sanctions, but as 1966 wore on Kaunda’s dismay and irritation grew. In a newspaper article published in September, just as the Commonwealth prime ministers gathered in London, he dismissed Wilson as: “an over-exposed actor seeking a few quick rounds of applause rather than a statesman working for a just settlement of a major international conflict.”³ Kaunda was instrumental in forming a more effective caucus of African Commonwealth leaders to hold the British government to account as it drifted towards the possibility of allowing independence before majority rule. The failure of Anglo-Rhodesian talks aboard HMS Fearless in September 1968 temporarily ruled out such a possibility, which explains why the next meeting of Commonwealth leaders in 1969 was more positive than preceding conferences.⁴

DeRoche observes that at the beginning of the 1970s Kaunda “attained the apex of his international prestige” (5). Kaunda chaired the Organization of African Unity and hosted the third Non-Aligned Conference, which afforded him a visible platform to press for independence and racial equality in southern Africa. DeRoche might have found it profitable to discuss Kaunda’s role during the 1971 Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) in Singapore. African Commonwealth leaders were incensed by British arms sales to South Africa, which suggested that this conference would be just as acrimonious as those in 1965-66. Indeed, the British Prime Minister, Ted Heath, advised the Queen to stay away.⁵ Ahead of the meeting, Kaunda and Julius Nyerere of Tanzania approached the British government with the draft of a Commonwealth statement of principles. The British government feared this was intended to obstruct its arms sales, but nevertheless thought that with some modifications it might offer scope for a constructive outcome to the meeting.⁶ At the opening session Kaunda submitted his draft declaration and this was referred to a


⁴ Ibid., 113.


committee of officials for clarification and amendments. The final document became known as the Singapore Declaration of Commonwealth Principles. The significance of this document – and the credit that Kaunda should be afforded in its creation – deserves some further discussion.

The Singapore Declaration, in essence, stated that the Commonwealth is a voluntary association of sovereign states, opposed to racism and global disparities in wealth. The Commonwealth Secretariat considers it to be a statement of core beliefs, and it is widely regarded as an important milestone in the evolution of the organizational character of the Commonwealth. It has been argued that when viewed in conjunction with subsequent declarations, the Declaration is broadly equivalent to the status of a formal charter (although this view has been contested). There is some academic dispute about how much credit Kaunda deserves for his role in creating the Singapore Declaration, but I think it must go into any analysis of Kaunda’s influence on international relations. As Chan observes, hagiographic assessments of Kaunda have highlighted it as evidence of his “international vision.” Chan thinks that this is unwarranted because Kaunda was poor at drafting documents and the Singapore Declaration was largely the outcome of work done by the committee of officials chaired by the Nigerian politician Emeka Anyaoku (who later became the third Commonwealth Secretary General). Chan’s judgment is that: “Kaunda had come a long way in foreign policy, but not as far as has been claimed for him.” There is something to be said for this interpretation. One British official suggested to Heath that Kaunda and Nyerere had “diminished in stature. A good deal of the shine has gone off and neither seems to have developed real weight and ‘gravitas.’” On the other hand, all of this tends to deflect from the fact that Kaunda and Nyerere came up with the concept of a declaration of principles. This should not be dismissed lightly. As one British official observed before the CHOGM: “The trouble about producing ideas which are interesting, constructive and inexpensive is that the search has been on for about 20 years and


11 Chan, Kaunda and Southern Africa, 66 and 93.

12 Chan, 66.

all the obvious ones have already been found, exploited and by and large judged inadequate.”14 The 1971 CHOGM meeting largely falls outside the chronological focus of DeRoche’s study, but I suspect that if he had given some consideration to this he would probably have leaned towards a more positive assessment of Kaunda’s influence at Singapore.

DeRoche does highlight the constructive role that Kaunda continued to perform at subsequent Commonwealth conferences. At the 1975 CHOGM in Jamaica. Kaunda and his advisers persuaded the Commonwealth leaders to listen to Bishop Abel Muzorewa, resulting in “an air of appreciation and understanding of the Rhodesian problems” (34). DeRoche does not mention that the Canadian Prime Minister, Pierre Trudeau, was strongly opposed to this, because he thought it was like the United Nations agreeing to hear from the PLO Leader, Yasser Arafat, and “would create a Commonwealth precedent for hearing a Quebec secessionist.”15 This was a remarkable turnaround, because in the 1960s Canada had been the most sympathetic member of the Old Commonwealth towards African nationalists and independent African states, including Kaunda’s Zambia.16 DeRoche observes that Kaunda played a central role at the 1977 CHOGM in London, where he “set the tempo for the discussions on southern Africa” (121). Kaunda did not criticize the British government for its failure to solve the Rhodesian problem but rather condemned British companies that were breaking the embargo on oil exports to Rhodesia. This was certainly significant because it gave impetus to the Commonwealth Sanctions Committee to form a working group that could re-examine legislation in individual Commonwealth countries in order to tighten up enforcement measures.17

The following year saw the failure of the Anglo-American proposals to settle the Rhodesian problem. Arnold Smith, who served as the first Commonwealth Secretary General, for a decade after Rhodesia’s UDI, contends that this was partly Kaunda’s fault for hosting the Rhodesian Prime Minister, Ian Smith, in his clandestine visit to Lusaka in September 1977. He suggests that: “Kaunda, who has too often believed the best of people, fell victim to the wiles of Ian Smith, whose greatest talent lay in dividing his African adversaries to destroy them piecemeal.”18 When news of the secret meeting broke in the international media, it sent a shockwave of disbelief around the globe. Kaunda’s motives were impugned; it was thought that he was seeking to displace Nyerere as the key player in the Frontline states, and to arrive at a settlement in Rhodesia that would put Joshua Nkomo and the Zimbabwe African People’s Union (ZAPU) in power and marginalize Robert Mugabe and the Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU). DeRoche rejects this interpretation, arguing that “Kaunda’s willingness to sit down with representatives from any nation or group was a strong point of his statesmanship” (125).


15 Smith, Stitches in Time, 229.

16 Watts, Rhodesia’s Unilateral Declaration of Independence, Ch. 3 and Ch. 4.

17 Smith, Stitches in Time, 233.

18 Smith, Stitches in Time, 232.
Kaunda of course found himself center stage at the 1979 CHOGM, which was held in Lusaka against a background of rapid international developments. The Rhodesian government was proceeding towards an internal settlement with Bishop Muzorewa’s United African National Council. The newly-elected British government under Margaret Thatcher was leaning towards accepting the internal settlement as a sufficient basis on which to grant independence to Rhodesia (148). DeRoche is even handed here. He does not overlook the fact that there was an undoubted hypocrisy in Kaunda’s position. The year before, Kaunda had stymied potential challengers in the Zambian presidential election, but in his opening speech to Commonwealth leaders he rejected the internal settlement in Rhodesia as illegal and suggested that Muzorewa was a puppet of the white minority. However, DeRoche argues that Kaunda “deserved significant credit for his skill as a statesman and consummate host” (149). He notes that Kaunda’s social graces helped to establish an atmosphere that was conducive to the conduct of official business, and, in conjunction with other Commonwealth leaders, Kaunda helped to steer Thatcher towards an agreement that the British government would convene a conference at Lancaster House to secure a settlement of the Rhodesian problem. DeRoche therefore suggests that this was “arguably Kaunda’s greatest contribution to international relations” (150). It is certainly true that Kaunda played a key role at the 1979 CHOGM, but I do not think that DeRoche takes adequate account of the parts played by the second Commonwealth Secretary General, Shridith Ramphal, and the British Foreign Secretary, Lord Carrington.19 DeRoche does note that during the Lancaster House talks Kaunda applied pressure on Nkomo to reach a settlement (152). It is also important to shine a light on the fact that Kaunda and Ramphal successfully applied pressure on Carrington to accept the proposal for a Commonwealth Monitoring Force in Rhodesia (though Thatcher was not enthusiastic about it).20

Sue Onslow has commented that “The Commonwealth’s autonomy and identity in the international system gathered cogency and importance in the 1970s because of a particularly charismatic group of post-independence leaders.”21 There can be no doubt that Kaunda was part of that group. The convergence of Zambian policy with the Commonwealth Secretariat’s energetic pursuit of peace under Ramphal does much to explain the breaking of the Rhodesian impasse at the Lusaka CHOGM and the subsequent Lancaster House settlement.22 This is discussed but not foregrounded in DeRoche’s book, and of course one would not expect this in a work that is titled Kenneth Kaunda, the United States and Southern Africa. Certainly, DeRoche has provided us with a comprehensive and admirable study of an African leader who exercised a significant influence on U.S. policy towards southern Africa during the crisis years of 1975-1984.

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22 Chan, *Kaunda and Southern Africa*, 94.
First, let me say a sincere thank you to the H-Diplo editors for organizing this roundtable. Second, let me say thank you to the roundtable participants. It is humbling to know that such well-respected scholars from around the world took time out of their busy schedules to review my book. I truly feel honored. In my comments, I will respond to the five reviewers, briefly, one by one.

Walima Kalusa praises my research and much of my analysis. He points out some of the most important examples of my evidence, such as Zambian President Kenneth Kaunda’s decision to purchase Soviet MIGs in 1980, and the spy scandal at the U.S. embassy in Lusaka in 1981. He observes that such detail makes the book “rich in anecdotes.” I appreciate very much these kind words.

Kalusa does, on the other hand, offer constructive criticism. He believes that sometimes my narrative went off topic and discussed issues such as Kaunda’s cabinet reshuffle or the unsuccessful coup attempt against him in 1980, and Kalusa believes such “diversions” added no value to the book. Many might well agree with this criticism, but in my view this information provides important context that scholars and students who are not as knowledgeable about Zambian history as Kalusa would find helpful to understand more about the state with which the U.S. was dealing.

Kalusa’s strongest criticism, however, is more convincing. He contends that my study “over-exaggerates” the influence that Kaunda had on U.S. foreign relations. This, I fear, may be true to some extent and is one of the dangers of writing history with a strong biographical component.

In his equally insightful review, Carl Watts also wonders if perhaps my book grants too much credit to Kaunda at times, particularly regarding the 1979 Commonwealth Conference in Lusaka. His constructive criticism here, like Kalusa’s, is well-taken. Occasional lapses into hagiography are, I fear, a hazard of biographical studies.

Watts’s bigger point is that better understanding of Kaunda’s significance in the history of international relations during the Cold War would result from a study that pays more attention to the Commonwealth perspective. He notes, very perceptively, the importance of the 1971 Commonwealth meeting in Singapore. Unbeknownst to Watts, I did include discussion of this in my initial draft chapters, but space limitations imposed on the final manuscript left that material on the cutting room floor. If I ever get to write a more comprehensive biography of Kaunda’s entire career, I will be sure to follow Watts’s advice and pay considerable attention to the Commonwealth angle.

In addition to his very helpful criticism and thoughtful suggestions for future work on Kaunda, Watts offers some extremely generous praise regarding my many years of investigating U.S. relations with southern Africa. I very much appreciate his kind words.

While Webby Kalikiti echoes some of the positive assessments of Kalusa and Watts, in general, he also provides some brilliant criticism of other aspects of my book. He cleverly characterizes my work as being too “diplomatic,” both in terms of being traditional diplomatic history and in terms of not being critical enough of protagonists such as Kaunda and Secretary of State Henry Kissinger. My goal was to be as balanced as possible at all times in my analysis, and perhaps at times I was too balanced.
Kalikiti offered several other constructive criticisms. He notes, correctly, that Kaunda’s government only agreed to recognize the socialist regime in Angola after protests by University of Zambia (UNZA) students. This observation is only fitting from a long-time highly influential professor at UNZA.

Kalikiti wonders if my overall positive analysis of Kaunda’s United National Independence Party (UNIP) reflected the fact that my interviews were exclusively with former high-ranking UNIP officials. This was a good point, although in my defense, I would gladly have interviewed key opposition figures such as Harry Nkumbula or Simon Kapwepwe if they had still been alive in 2005 when most of my research in Zambia was conducted. Kalikiti’s final criticism, that I should have looked at South African sources to get a better understanding of the Angolan crisis, is certainly on the money and is another angle I will examine if I write a bigger book on Kaunda in the future.

Eliakim Sibanda provides a very thought-provoking review. He praises my research in general and my writing style especially, which was flattering. Furthermore, Sibanda lauds my recognition of African agency as demonstrated by Kaunda and other Zambian diplomats. I really appreciate his comments on this issue, as it has long been a central goal of mine to demonstrate human agency in the history of international relations.1

In terms of constructive criticism, Sibanda’s review is insightful. He echoed Kalusa’s concern that my narrative is occasionally bogged down in details. While understanding their point, I also could not help but chuckle to myself as I recalled the original draft manuscript, which was approximately twice as long as the published version. Had the original made it to press, it would surely have been bogged down much deeper in a thicker swamp of details.

A couple of other suggestions from Sibanda are extremely helpful. Commenting on my questions about possible sexism in Kissinger’s treatment of U.S. ambassador to Zambia Jean Wilkowski, he wishes that I had provided more of an answer. He asks whether Kissinger’s behavior demonstrated sexism. I believe that it did, and have attempted several times to publish a full-length journal article about Wilkowski that elaborated on Kissinger’s sexism, but other reviewers (and Wilkowski herself in a 2 June 2008 phone interview), contended that I was making a mountain out of a mole hill. After several submissions to journals were rejected, I finally decided to publish a shorter version that only mentions Kissinger’s possible sexism twice.2 I still think there is a good scholarly journal article, at least, waiting to be written about Kissinger’s attitudes on gender.

Sibanda’s best constructive criticism, however, concerns my analysis about the hesitancy on the part of U.S. presidents to intervene more forcefully in the conflicts of southern Africa. He believes that I attribute too much causation to simple racism, and suggests that instead this hesitancy might reflect concern among white U.S. officials that doing so would encourage a stronger domestic civil rights movement at home, which was already too strong for their wishes. This call for a closer analysis of the connection between civil rights debates

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statt at home and U.S. policy in southern Africa during the Cold War is an excellent idea, and one that future scholars should take to heart.

Tim Scarnecchia submitted the longest of the reviews in the roundtable, and generally the one with the strongest praise. I appreciate the kind words in Scarnecchia’s analysis about my research and writing, and about the ambitiousness and significance of Kenneth Kaunda. Scarnecchia of course, also asks some probing questions and offers constructive criticism. His first major question involves the 1976 Geneva Conference, and specifically asks which Zambian official was responsible for releasing Zimbabwean leaders from Zambian prisons in order for them to attend. I looked back through my files, and in particular my interview with the late Siteke Mwale, who was the Zambian Foreign Minister in 1976 at the time of the Geneva meeting, but unfortunately could not find an answer to this question. I know that many other scholars of international relations history have followed my footsteps into the UNIP archives in Lusaka, and perhaps one of them can answer this.

Scarnecchia’s second query ponders whether the key role of Kaunda in regional diplomacy was valued enough by the U.S. government to have justified intervention in Zambian domestic politics in order to keep Kaunda ensconced at State House (the Zambian White House). Scarnecchia seems to be implying that perhaps in the late 1970s, when Kaunda was a crucial diplomatic friend for President Gerald Ford, Kissinger, U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations Andrew Young, and President Jimmy Carter, that perhaps the Central Intelligence Agency assisted in the squashing of domestic political opposition in Zambia, which was led (to no avail) by Nkumbula and Kapwepwe, among others. I never discovered any evidence of this, but perhaps scholars focusing on Zambian opposition politics, such as Miles Larmer, have an answer.3

Scarnecchia’s final question is a real humdinger, and almost a classic ‘chicken or egg’ conundrum. He wonders if Kaunda’s long career (27 years) as Zambian president is mostly due to his important role on the stage of international diplomacy. In some sense, the question can be turned around, and we could ask if his significant contributions to international affairs were due to his long presidency.

The second part of Scarnecchia’s final question is even more thought-provoking. He inquires as to whether I think Kaunda’s career was enhanced more by U.S. support, or by that of other Cold-War powers. My first response to this question is that the U.S. (except during the Richard Nixon years) played a strong second fiddle, which did much to amplify Kaunda’s credibility. Significant aid (although never the military aid Kaunda wanted) and high-profile White House meetings with Presidents John Kennedy, Lyndon Johnson, Gerald Ford, Jimmy Carter, Ronald Reagan, and George H.W. Bush, helped keep Kaunda in power. The U.S. was arguably never Kaunda’s number one benefactor, however, with that honor going first to England in the early 1960s, second to China in the late 1960s and early 1970s, and then to the Soviet Union in the late 1970s. By the late 1980s, none of the great powers was willing or able to commit significant resources to salvage Kaunda’s presidency, and instead opted to applaud his decision to hold the multiparty elections in 1991 that ended his reign.

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3 For a brilliant example of his important work see Miles Larmer, Rethinking African Politics: A History of Opposition in Zambia (Burlington: Ashgate, 2011).
My last full-length chapter ends with a quotation from Shakespeare’s *Macbeth* about the traitorous Thane of Cawdor, that “nothing in his life became him like the leaving it” (224). This, according to U.S. officials and leaders of other Cold-War powers, was also true of Kaunda’s presidency. Just as the Thane of Cawdor would surely have begged to differ with Shakespeare, however, Kaunda was not as happy about leaving power as Bush and Carter and others were in celebrating the return of multiparty democracy to Zambia.

Thanks again to the H-Diplo editors and all the participants in the roundtable.