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Andy DeRoche. "Dreams and Disappointments: Kenneth Kaunda and the United States, 1960-64." *Safundi: The Journal of South African and American Studies* 9:4 (October 2008), 369-394;

Andy DeRoche. "Non-alignment on the Racial Frontier: Zambia and the USA, 1964-68." *Cold War History* 7:2 (May 2007), 227-250.

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Review by **Jim Meriwether**, California State University, Channel Islands

In some ways these two excellent articles by Andy DeRoche can be considered companion pieces, tracing the trajectory of United States-Zambian relations during these critical years of African decolonization, Zambian independence, and U.S. struggles to find a viable policy toward a rapidly changing Africa. At the same time, DeRoche accomplishes different objectives in the articles, so that we don't simply have the case of a bifurcated story ending up in two different journals, but instead two articles that can stand alone and be read one without the other. One benefits most, of course, by reading both.

DeRoche has established himself as the foremost authority on U.S.-Zambian relations as well as a leading scholar on U.S. relations with Rhodesia/Zimbabwe. These articles show that leaders in the United States and Zambia took seriously the potentialities that the relationship offered at the time, and that scholars seeking fuller understanding of decolonization and independence amidst the Cold War should as well. Simply put, the relationship speaks to a world in which U.S. officials had to negotiate two fundamental forces -- the rocky end of colonialism and the chilling pervasiveness of the Cold War -- while forging relations with newly emerging countries like Zambia that often defined their interests differently than did the United States. And for Zambians, how to define and pursue their national interests without bringing the Cold War down upon their fragile nation posed enormous challenges. One of the best aspects of DeRoche's analysis is that he sees both halves of the equation as important.

In 1960, the point when DeRoche picks up the story, Zambia was still Northern Rhodesia, a British colony that for several years had formed part of the Central African Federation along with Nyasaland (Malawi) and Southern Rhodesia (Zimbabwe). The young

nationalist Kenneth Kaunda was emerging as the principal leader in the Zambian drive for independence as head of the United National Independence party (UNIP). In the United States, John F. Kennedy was on his way to defeating Richard Nixon for president, bringing to the White House an occupant far more interested in Africa than had been the last tenant. As president, Kennedy made a concerted and ongoing effort to meet with numerous African leaders and strengthen relations with this "emerging" continent. So it was that shortly after taking office, Kennedy participated in the "Africa Freedom Day" festivities that also brought Kaunda back to the United States, his second visit to the country.

The two leaders met at the White House, where Kennedy made a particularly positive impression on Kaunda. DeRoche argues that during this era personalities mattered greatly in U.S.-African relations, and that Lyndon Johnson left a much more negative impression on the Zambian leader. He argues as well that Kennedy essentially accepted Cold War neutrality in Africa, even as the young president did not do the same elsewhere in the Third World. DeRoche offers a variety of explanations for this, ranging from African American influence on U.S. domestic politics, to the lower strategic priority of African countries such as Zambia.

How much an acceptance of African nonalignment rested with Kennedy, as opposed to the State Department or elsewhere in Washington, is an open question, as is just how far that "acceptance" of nonalignment extended. The leaders and countries that Kaunda and Zambia associated with were very meaningful to Washington. If Kennedy "accepted" African nonalignment, that tolerance apparently lasted as long as one's associates were seen as suitable -- which raises the question as to just how comfortable Kennedy, or anyone in Washington, was with African neutrality.

"Guilt by association" reared its head in ways well beyond Cold War neutrality, as DeRoche points out in regards to African-American leaders such as Martin Luther King Jr., whose associations also proved meaningful to people from J. Edgar Hoover to Robert Kennedy. In making these connections, DeRoche follows fascinating links between Africans such as Kaunda and African-Americans such as King during these years, sketching ties that further our understanding of the extensive and intertwined nature of bonds during that era of freedom struggles.

As Zambia moved toward independence, Kaunda sought investment in the country as well as support for expanding education. Zambia held huge copper reserves, but had tremendous social and economic needs. Interestingly, Zambia did not accept Peace Corps personnel when it became independent; indeed, the Peace Corps was kept out until the 1990s. Even as vast educational needs existed, Zambian leaders kept the Peace Corps at arm's length, a telling indicator of how those in the developing world worried about too tight a relationship with the United States, and how unsubstantiated yet whispered CIA links corroded the very mission of the Peace Corps.

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In discussing such issues, DeRoche does a nice job bringing in actors beyond the respective nations' leaders. Many of these names will be less than familiar to readers outside southern Africa, yet this is one of the aspects that raises DeRoche's work: by including foreign ministers and ambassadors -- counterparts to U.S. officials that one would expect in the story -- DeRoche gives substance to the oft-stated desire to include multiple actors, perspectives, and archives. There are a few times where these actors and their influence seems a bit tangential (the initial choice of ambassadors, for instance, is a foray that stands disconnected from substantive elements of the articles), but the articles are much richer for these efforts.

It's in the *Cold War History* article that we see the struggle by white minority regimes in southern Africa playing a greater role in U.S.-Zambian relations. With Mozambique fighting to maintain control in Angola and Mozambique, white Southern Rhodesians proclaiming their Unilateral Declaration of Independence (UDI), South Africa enforcing its brutal apartheid strictures, and the Congo torn by internal strife and external mercenaries, Zambia faced turmoil all around. It recognized, as well, that the United States tended to back the white minority regimes/interests, in stark contrast to the Zambian position of support for independence and majority rule.

While U.S. officials saw themselves as acting cautiously and wisely, Zambians saw the U.S. position, as DeRoche astutely points out, to be "nonaligned" -- but in this case, nonaligned in the fight for racial justice in southern Africa (CWH, 228). Kaunda and his fellow leaders thus pursued their own course. They sought investment from the United States, but also pursued support for majority rule and investment from the Soviets and, even more, a China that increasingly set its eyes on Africa (a story that has accelerated in recent years). DeRoche adeptly discusses these various Zambian efforts, and in doing so nicely illustrates how perceptions of Zambians often differed from those of their American counterparts.

As the UDI intensified the crisis of southern Africa, U.S. involvement in Vietnam was expanding. Historians often talk about Vietnam consuming the attention of LBJ and his top advisors, and as well the resources of the United States. The consequences are seen in this case: little military or economic assistance for Zambia, and little engagement with pressuring the Ian Smith regime to cede power. And yet, amidst this is Kaunda's rather strange request for nuclear weapons, a request that DeRoche somehow makes plausible from Kaunda's perspective, yet leaves one with some sympathy for all that U.S. officials had to contend with. Some thorny problems were of their own making, of course, but we see that in other cases they were rather blindsided and of limited options.

The tendency of Africa to be put on the margins -- be it in the halls of power or the halls of diplomatic history -- means that those interested in U.S. relations with Africa occasionally feel an extra need to make the case for the significance of the relationship. In actuality, that relationship stands at the crossroads of defining currents of the 20th century -- the Cold War, decolonization, race -- and offers windows into potential

alternative paths. DeRoche posits that Johnson's failed meeting with Kaunda in December 1964 could have ended much better, and the fact that it went so poorly had unknown potential consequences. At the meeting, Johnson took umbrage at Kaunda not expressing support for the force used in the recent U.S. extraction of hostages from the Congo. The two were left less than pleased with the other, and DeRoche is left lamenting lost opportunities over, for example, Kaunda's potential role in mediation in Vietnam. Would a more cordial meeting have led to a chain of better events, even to the mediation of a solution to Vietnam? That seems somewhat unlikely, and yet we are reminded that there were alternative paths not taken.

DeRoche's next and final point is absolutely compelling: the Johnson-Kaunda meeting clearly led to one more world leader believing that caution was best used when approaching the United States, and for reasons not simply due to Cold War considerations. If, less than six weeks after your nation has achieved independence following decades of European colonial rule, the leader of the Western world angrily flies off the handle about Americans being "eaten" in Africa (Safundi, 388), would you hitch your wagon to that person? Johnson may have been advocating civil rights progress in America, but he also was still influenced by longstanding stereotypes and prejudices. Race, decolonization, the Cold War all intertwine in telling ways in southern Africa, and in DeRoche's hands we are given an insightful and lively window onto these all.

Jim Meriwether received his Ph.D. from UCLA and is professor of history at California State University Channel Islands. He most recently published "'Worth a Lot of Negro Votes': Black Voters, Africa, and the 1960 Presidential Campaign" in the *Journal of American History* (December 2008), and is the author of *Proudly We Can Be Africans: Black Americans and Africa, 1935-1961* (University of North Carolina Press, 2002). Recently back from a Fulbright year in Nairobi, his current research project is on the United States and the decolonization of Africa.

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