

RHODESIA: MYTHS AND FACTS

by

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Editor

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A recent letter in the London Daily Telegraph (March 23, 1976) started with these words: "Nothing remotely resembling the truth has ever been told to the people of Britain regarding the situation in Rhodesia." To this I would add: "nor to the rest of the world"; and it is my purpose today to try to correct some of the erroneous ideas which are currently held by those who still believe that the world's Press presents the unbiased truth when, in fact, it has largely been taken over by the Left and turned into an organ of left-wing propaganda.

Rhodesia declared her independence on November 11th, 1965, when she severed the tenuous ties that bound her to Britain. We have always maintained that there was nothing illegal in such action, no more than when the junior partner of a business firm wishes to dissolve partnership and set up on his own.

From 1890 to 1923 Southern Rhodesia (now Rhodesia) could properly be called a "settler community" and was administered by the British South Africa Company. But from 1923 onwards it was owned by the people of Southern Rhodesia by right of purchase. In 1923 Southern Rhodesia was given the choice of self-government or inclusion in the (then) Union of South Africa; and, as the result of a plebiscite, chose self-government. The British Crown bought out the B.S.A. Co's claims for £3 750,000. "The Crown took over all unalienated lands, public works and buildings in the two Rhodesias, whilst the Company kept its mineral rights both north and south of the Zambesi and received cast-iron protection against any tampering with its railway assets. The new Southern Rhodesia Government had to pay £2 million to the British Government, thereby reducing the total Imperial cost of acquiring the two Rhodesias to £1.75 million (i.e. the remainder was in respect of Northern Rhodesia and not a debt of the Southern Rhodesia Government - Author).

"Southern Rhodesia for her part obtained her public works and un-alienated land, the Southern Rhodesian settlers becoming the only community in Imperial history which has ever had to pay for the privilege of self-government."* (My italics - Author).

The Rhodesian Courts are noted for their austere impartiality and, some Rhodesians would say, disregard of the dictates of government administrative expediency. After much careful consideration of all the arguments and much detailed research, the Rhodesian Court of Appeal came to the conclusion that the so-called "Smith regime" was both the de facto and de jure government of Rhodesia.

The main argument that swayed the Rhodesian Court of Appeal was that in fact the British Government had long previously given Rhodesia her independence; and that she could no more take it back from Rhodesia than she could from Canada, Australia or New Zealand (or, for that matter, the United States).

In disregard of the same arguments the British House of Lords Judicial Committee (composed mainly of political appointees) hastily decided that Mr Smith's government had become illegal overnight, although it had been previously elected under a Constitution approved by the British Crown and Parliament.

Further, the Southern Rhodesia Government bought the mineral rights from the British South Africa Company for £2 million in 1933; and subsequently the railways also were acquired by purchase.

Although Southern Rhodesia continued to be called a Colony in legal documents, in fact from 1923 the British Government never once intervened in her affairs nor ever contributed any finance towards development; and the status of Southern Rhodesia was recognised as that of a self-governing colony. As such she continued to develop and prosper until she was ill-advisably persuaded to join in the formation of the Central African Federation in 1953.

*History of Southern Rhodesia: Early Days to 1934, by L.H. Gann, 1965, page 248

When the Central African Federation was dissolved by the British Government in 1963, the other partners - the former Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland - were given their independence; and it was tacitly assumed that Southern Rhodesia would receive the same treatment. But it is now clear, in hindsight, that the main purpose of the formation of the Central African Federation was to draw Southern Rhodesia into a net from which it was not intended she should be released. This was in accordance with the agreement made at Yalta between Roosevelt and Stalin, behind Churchill's back, that the price of lease-lend in World War II included the dissolution of the British Empire within twenty-five years and the abandonment of the protective imperial tariffs which had proved so disadvantageous to American trade. Southern Rhodesia, as part of the erstwhile Empire, was not to be exempted from this wholesale sacrifice.

Economically and politically Rhodesia was more, not less, capable of standing on her own feet; and indeed in the years that have elapsed since then, Rhodesia has amply proved her economic stability, her ability to order her own affairs, to maintain law and order, and in every respect to fulfil the obligations and conditions which should have accorded her universal acceptance in the community of nations.

By contrast, the favoured former partners, Zambia and Malawi, have proved unstable and inefficient in spite of massive financial and technological aid which has been, and continues to be, lavished upon them; whereas for nearly eleven years Rhodesia, far from receiving any aid at all, has survived and prospered in spite of the most vicious exercise of almost universal sanctions, in spite of being cut off from the money markets of the world, and in spite of the constant harassment of terrorist incursions into our territory which are not only draining us of money and material which could more profitably have been spent on peaceful development, but which also imposes a severe strain on the limited manpower of a country whose total population is only six millions, of which about half are under seventeen years of age.

I have touched briefly on the alleged illegality of Rhodesia's UDI because it is frequently maintained that sanctions, terrorist attacks and all the other harassments to which Rhodesia has been subjected are the fault of Rhodesia and the consequence of her rashness in declaring her independence. Critics of UDI base their opposition to it on the grounds, not that it was illegal, but that it was superfluous and led us into unnecessary conflict with the British Government, the United Nations and indeed most of the world, with all the sanctions and restrictions which have since accrued; because Rhodesia already was independent, and greater insistence on this fact should have been made and pursued through the Court of International Justice. But even before UDI plans were being drawn up and implemented for the subversion of Rhodesia. For instance, the British Government banned the importation of all firearms, even sporting rifles, into Rhodesia before UDI; and terrorist incursions across our borders started before the end of 1964 by terrorists based in Zambia, our former partner, encouraged by the apparent military weakness of Rhodesia and the ill-concealed hostility of the mother country.

From this assertion another false notion has grown: that terrorist attacks are due to "freedom fighters" whose organisations were caused by the intransigence of the Rhodesian Government in not coming to terms with "African nationalism". I reiterate that these attacks preceded and are not a result of UDI. They started for the same reason as attacks on Angola and Mocambique - to force Rhodesia to spend ever-increasing money and manpower on defensive measures. Portugal gave up when this exceeded 40 percent of her national income; and South Africa has recently been compelled to increase her defence budget by 39 percent.

The next step was to condemn Rhodesia for "racialism" and, by the constant repetition of the term "race war", to place the blame for the bloodshed not on the terrorists who are clearly the aggressors, but on the Rhodesian Government and in particular on the white population who dare to resist this aggression. Again I must stress that this is not a race war. How could it be, when nearly half of our security forces, and almost

two-thirds of our police, are black? This is further endorsed by a statement made by Senator Chief J.S. Chirau and Senator Chief K. Nkeweni on behalf of the Council of Chiefs on Feb. 23 1976:

"We refer to the statement attributed to Mr. Ennals to the effect that Britain would not intervene if a 'race war' flared up in Rhodesia.

"We, as the representatives of the Council of Chiefs and on behalf of all tribesmen, condemn this statement as utterly irresponsible. There is no race war in Rhodesia now, nor do we expect this to happen.

"The fight is between decent Rhodesians, black and white, and terrorists who are being used and directed by the forces of Communism. Look at the victims of the murders, atrocities and land-mine incidents. Most of them are black.

"How does Mr. Ennals reconcile that with a so-called war between the races?"

THE MYTH OF AFRICAN MAJORITY RULE

It has become the official policy of successive British Governments, whether allegedly right-wing or frankly left-wing, that peace can only be assured in Rhodesia by the handing over of power to what is glibly referred to as "African majority rule". This policy is based solely on the counting of heads with no regard to their contents; there being about 6 million blacks to about 275,000 whites. No credit, of course, is given for the fact that the blacks have increased from an estimated 300-400,000 in 1890 to nearly 6 million now, because the white man put an end to inter-tribal war, brought law and order to a primitive and savage country, and through his expertise and energy brought prosperity, health, education, and material and social progress to the indigenous population at an expense of effort and treasure out of all proportion to the meagre contribution made by the black population. "Genocide" and "oppression" are the terms commonly used to describe these benefits which have accrued to the black man from the white man's efforts.

In the Daily Telegraph (Feb. 19) an article on Rhodesia written by conservative M.P. Mr. Winston S. Churchill stated (inter alia):

"Every pressure should be brought to bear on Mr. Smith and the Rhodesian Government to reach an early settlement with Mr. Nkomo which, more than anything else, would facilitate a strong stand by Western Governments against Soviet aggression."

This cliché does not become any truer by being repeated by nearly every political commentator in the United Kingdom and elsewhere; nor has any Western Government made any strong stand against Soviet aggression.

Mr. Smith is the legally elected head of government under the existing franchise. Mr. Nkomo is the leader of the ZAPU faction of the African National Council which draws its support mainly from the Matabele who are about one-sixth of the black population. ZANU is led by Bishop Muzorewa and is responsible for most of the terrorist attacks on Rhodesia. Neither commands more than a relatively small support from their respective tribal groupings. Both are communist-influenced, ZANU drawing its main support from and leaning towards Maoist, ZAPU towards Marxist, ideology. An accommodation with Mr. Nkomo would lead, not towards African majority rule, but towards minority rule by a minority tribal group. Moreover, Bishop Muzorewa and ZANU have already made it clear that they will not recognise any agreement reached by Mr. Smith and Mr. Nkomo. Handing over to an Nkomo-led party would lead not only to intensified inter-tribal warfare, such as occurred in Angola, but would play straight into the hands of the communists.

ALLEGIANCE TO THE CHIEFS

Nor does it appear to be the wish of the black people themselves that they should be handed over to so-called African majority rule. African society in both urban and rural areas revolves around the Chiefs. They continue to receive the allegiance due to hereditary leaders and live among their people in the areas allocated to each tribal group, as well as making frequent

visits to the urban African townships. It is because of this that the Chiefs have rightfully been given their place in the Rhodesian Cabinet, in the Senate and in the lower House of Assembly. The black political parties are essentially the product of urban semi-sophisticates, university students and graduates, and the so-called emergent black intelligentsia, who hope to sit in the seats of power and milk the country for their own profit in the event of the surrender of good government to anarchy.

The clamour of thousands of vociferous supporters at ANC gatherings is lost in the silence of the millions of quiet, simple Africans who daily go about their ordinary tasks in peace, and who look to the white man for their welfare. They look to the white man for economic advancement, health, education and protection. They look to him for fairness and more than a fair share of the profits of their joint enterprises.

Above all, they look to him not to let him down. It is not the white Rhodesian or South African who is letting him down, but those of Europe and America who, by failing to lift a finger in our and their defence, are condemning black and white to the endless servitude of international communism.

The burden of responsibility assumed 85 years ago by white Rhodesians cannot be wantonly or irresponsibly abdicated. The once prosperous countries of Angola and Mocambique have been reduced to ruin; famine and terror stalk these lands; business is at a standstill and white men with their skills and humane care have emigrated by the hundred thousand, whilst African so-called nationalist movements fight each other - and the civilian populations - for the corpses of their once-prosperous lands. These factions, based as they are on tribal antipathies, have their counterparts in Rhodesia.

The acceleration of this horror has one clearly defined cause; the removal of white control, the lifting of that civilised moderation which has always been necessary to curb the latent savagery of Africa. Here we touch the core of the matter. This is not

a military objective, and there is none discernible here. The objective is terroristic, the victims are civilians and more black than white; and the destruction of homes, farms and other amenities affects the blacks as much, if not more than, the whites.

As I write, this Whitsunday, when we celebrate the descent of the Holy Ghost to bring wisdom and understanding to all mankind, two white mine workers have been brutally murdered in the Mtoko region for no reason at all except that they were in an isolated area where murder can be done with less risk of retribution. As a result the mine has been closed down, eighty Africans have lost their employment and the country has been deprived of the revenue from the exportation of the mine's products.

There is not one country of Africa which can legitimately claim that it is in any way better off under black rule than it was under white rule.

There is absolutely no valid reason why Rhodesians should consider for a moment, not only handing over to black rule, but any sharing of power with those who have never in their entire history had the slightest regard for the sanctity of human (or animal) life; who have never understood the meaning of power-sharing; who look upon reasonableness as weakness, concessions as surrender, and who have historically celebrated victory with orgies of slaughter, rape and pillage upon the persons, womenfolk and possessions of those who have been so unfortunate as to fall into their pitiless hands.

This is the fate that those who recommend surrender to "African majority rule" intend for the inhabitants - black, white, Asian and Coloured - of once-prosperous and progressive countries.

COMMUNIST AGGRESSION

I trust it is clear from this brief survey that the so-called "race war" is nothing but communist-inspired aggression against my country and its inhabitants. There is overwhelming evidence available (which I need not detail here) that the terrorist organisations

operating against Rhodesia are organised, trained, armed, led and financed by communist money. Arms captured from terrorists used to be predominantly of Red Chinese origin; recently they have been replaced by those of Soviet Russia and her Eastern European satellites.

Rhodesia and South Africa are treasure-houses of natural resources. We have in abundance what our enemies want and intend to take by force. For instance, Rhodesia mines 38 minerals of which 13 are classified as of strategic importance. Our enemies cloak their cupidity with a hypocritical concern for the "oppressed" black man whom they intend to "liberate" from freedom into slavery.

In 1965 - the year of UDI - there was virtually no wheat grown in Rhodesia. By 1970 our farmers were supplying nearly 50 percent of our requirements; and this year it is predicted that we shall be self-sufficient in wheat.

By contrast, a 26 percent decline in output is forecast in the U.S.A.; drought has hit East Anglia, the wheat-growing area of England; and in Soviet Russia and Red China production is falling behind even more than usual.

The agricultural output of southern Africa could feed all Africa south of the Sahara. In Africa as a whole the black population has steadily increased by about $3\frac{1}{2}$ percent per annum over the last thirty years, while agricultural production has declined by 5 percent per annum. If this continues, widespread starvation will be the lot of millions; and the time will come when food will become the only negotiable currency. In responsible hands this threat of starvation can be averted for all foreseeable future. This awesome responsibility is ours and cannot be lightly abandoned.

Over the last dozen years or so it has been the task of Candour League, willingly assumed, to educate the people of Rhodesia and elsewhere about the realities of communist aggression not only against Rhodesia but against the whole civilised

world. There are the fainthearted who wring their hands and exclaim: "But what can a little country of a bare 6 millions do in the face of the might of international communism?" We reply: Examine what this little country has already done. It has not only survived ten years of sanctions: it has prospered - for the benefit of all its peoples of whatever colour or creed. Indeed, the economic and social progress of the indigenous population has probably been greater than anywhere else in Africa. In spite of the continuous and considerable strain of terrorist attacks and a flood of hostile propaganda winged on the air from neighbouring countries, race relations remain excellent, as is attested by almost every foreign visitor to Rhodesia. In particular the loyalty of the Chiefs to the Government has been and remains unshaken. Contrary to all the expectations of the vultures gathered for the feast, Rhodesia remains alive and kicking.

A CLOUD OF WITNESSES

From Thermopylae (480 B.C.) to Malta (A.D. 1565), from Horatius at the bridge to little Belgium in 1914, it has often fallen to a small community or people to give a moral lead to its larger and more powerful neighbours. In each case the war was not ended by the small country's stand; in each case the value of its sacrifice was measured by subsequent events; in each case valuable breathing space was gained for other parties to rally to the cause and to complete the task so boldly initiated by faith.

We in Rhodesia have a very strong sense of national purpose. We feel we have been singled out by Providence to be the stumbling-block in the path of communist aggression. There is yet time for the Western powers to put Rhodesia's stand in its historical perspective; but they are leaving it dangerously late. So long as the Western powers concern themselves solely with trading interests and their own material benefits, so long will they fail to appreciate the spiritual connotations of Rhodesia's obduracy. To the

Western world, Rhodesians are an obsolete and reactionary remnant, obstinately clinging to values which are regarded as outmoded in Europe and America.

We are conscious that the eyes of the world are upon us, ready to sieze upon, enlarge and distort any weakening of our resolve to continue the fight to the end - whatever that end may be.

As St. Paul wrote: "Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith."