

At The UN Discussion Of Rhodesia

Britain's Set-Up Threatened With Exposure

Action in the United Nations Security Council last week, traceable to U.S. State Department initiatives, has blighted British hopes of making Rhodesia the scene of a U.S.-Soviet confrontation, by making sure that the penalty would be a politically devastating exposure of London's instigating role.

Early last week, the Security Council passed without dissent a resolution condemning Rhodesian Prime Minister Smith's British-scripted "internal" settlement to Rhodesia's governmental crisis, a scheme that excludes the political arm of the anti-Smith guerrilla forces, the Patriotic Front. The British were pressured not to veto under U.S. threat of isolation, and the appearance of Anglo-American solidarity was maintained through the abstention of all "Big Five" powers.

On March 17 the Security Council went further, and unanimously passed a Zambian resolution condemning the recent Rhodesian raids into Zambia as flagrant violations of sovereignty. The resolution also called on the British to bring a speedy end to Rhodesia's illegal Smith

regime, singling out Britain as the party that must implement a transfer to genuine majority rule — essential for durable peace in the region.

The resolutions put an end to the pretense that the Smith government and the Patriotic Front are forces of equal standing in the dispute over how Rhodesia will be governed, and that both are equally obliged to make concessions. U.S. support for the resolution rests on the recognition that an attempted confrontation with the Soviets in this issue would fail, being based only on U.S. bluff, and would hand Africa over to East bloc influence. As in Angola and Ethiopia, the U.S. would once again find itself on the losing side.

Not only did the U.S. refuse to play, but spokesmen from several African nations and the Patriotic Front have begun attacking the British for their role in the Rhodesia crisis. It could be that the exposure the British so fear could come even as their plans for a U.S.-Soviet showdown evaporate.

The British On The Firing Line In Security Council

At the same time that the U.S. was threatening to break publicly with the British on policy toward the Rhodesia crisis and Smith's internal solution, African nations and Patriotic Front spokesmen began targeting British complicity in the prolongation of the crisis. This African attack came to a head at the UN the week of March 13-17, when two resolutions were passed condemning both Smith's internal settlement, and the Rhodesian military raids into Zambia.

Rhodesia Resolution

United Nations Security Council Resolution 423 (1978)
Adopted by the Security Council at its 2067th meeting
on 14 March 1978

The Security Council...

1. *Condemns* all attempts and manoeuvres by the illegal régime aimed at the retention of power by a racist minority and at preventing the achievement of independence by Zimbabwe;

2. *Declares* as illegal and unacceptable any internal settlement under the auspices of the illegal regime and

calls upon all States not to accord any recognition to such settlement;

3. *Further declares* that the speedy termination of the illegal regime and the replacement of its military and police forces is the first prerequisite for the restoration of legality in Southern Rhodesia so that arrangements may be made for a peaceful and democratic transition to genuine majority rule and independence in 1978;

4. *Declares* also that such arrangements as envisaged in paragraph 3 include the holding of free and fair elections on the basis of universal adult suffrage under United Nations supervision;

5. *Calls upon* the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to take all measures necessary to bring to an end the illegal racist minority régime in Southern Rhodesia and to effect the genuine decolonization of the territory in accordance with General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV) and other United Nations resolutions;

6. *Considers* that, with the assistance of the Secretary-General of the United Nations, the United Kingdom as the administering Power should enter into immediate consultations with the parties concerned in order to attain the objectives of genuine decolonization of the