

Wilson's retreat in the face of U.D.I

by IDRIS COX
(A British writer on African Affairs)

WHEN Mr. Harold Wilson was Leader of the Opposition he was most forthright in condemning the Tories for their failure to strive for "an agreed Commonwealth solution" to the problem of Rhodesia.

This is what he told the Commons over two years ago: "We have said that no constitution is defensible which fails to allow the people of those territories to control their own destinies. We have bitterly attacked the Southern Rhodesian Constitution for that, and a Labour Government would therefore alter it—we've made that very, very plain." (March, 1963.)

NEW CONSTITUTION

In its autumn session that year the United Nations had demanded the suspension of the 1961 Constitution, and a new constitution based on African majority rule. Mr. Wilson then challenged Sir Alec Douglas-Home in the Commons in these words: "Now we must ask the

Prime Minister to be utterly unequivocal about this demand he has received. Already our good name has been besmirched by our handling of the Central African question. Too much is at stake for Britain's standing in Africa, in the United Nations and in the world for him to evade this issue. Will he give a clear and specific assurance that H. M. Government will not concede independence to Southern Rhodesia until a new constitution is in force which accepts, as the present constitution rejects, the principles of democratic government? In view of the admitted inability of the Government to solve this problem... will he tell us that he will convene a Commonwealth Prime Minister's Conference for the purpose of an agreed Commonwealth solution to this problem?" (November, 1963.)

Eight months later Sir Alec did convene a conference of Commonwealth Premiers, talked a great deal about "African advancement", but refused to move an inch towards a solu-

tion in Southern Rhodesia. But he was forced to include in the final conference report the overwhelming demand of the Commonwealth Premiers (which he promised to consider) that:

- (1) all African political prisoners be released;
- (2) the suspension of the 1961 Constitution;
- (3) a new constitution based on African majority rule.

This was in July 1964. Three months later came the General Election, as a result of which Mr. Harold Wilson became Prime Minister. One of his first declarations was against U.D.I. in Southern Rhodesia, with a strong warning that Britain would apply sanctions in this event.

In June 1965 there was another conference of Commonwealth Premiers, but Mr. Wilson refused to go any fur-

ther than the Tories towards a solution for Southern Rhodesia.

Again the Commonwealth Premiers urged the principle of "one man, one vote", the release of African prisoners, the suspension of the 1961 Constitution, and a new constitution based on majority rule. They insisted that a new constitutional conference for this purpose be held within three months, before the end of September.

In the House of Commons on June 29, Mr. Wilson reported on his discussions with Mr. Smith, and declared that:

"... if these discussions did not develop satisfactorily in a reasonably speedy time, the British Government would be ready to consider promoting a constitutional conference in order to ensure progress to independence on a basis acceptable to the people of Rhodesia

as a whole." (Hansard, 29.6.65.)

The discussions were not "satisfactory", but Mr. Wilson did nothing to convene a new constitutional conference. On the contrary, far from suspending the 1961 Constitution Mr. Wilson had already committed himself to the acceptance of this constitution as the basis for independence.

DISCUSSIONS

This is made clear in the recent Government *Blue Book* on the discussions between Mr. Smith and the British Government between November 1963 and November 1965. In a letter from Mr. Wilson to Mr. Smith, dated March 29, 1965, Mr. Wilson makes clear:

"What the British Government wish to see is a peaceful transition to majority rule, the principle of which

is enshrined in the 1961 Constitution." (*Blue Book*, p.59.)

There's not a word of truth in this claim that the 1961 Constitution "enshrines" the principle of independence under majority rule. The majority of Africans are not eligible to become electors, and even if they were, under the constitution they could get only 15 seats against 50 for the white settlers.

Mr. Smith also accepts the 1961 Constitution, but has repeatedly stated on several occasions his opposition to majority rule before independence, as in this letter to Mr. Wilson:

"Since it is our determination not to accept independence under majority rule, the conclusion should be obvious." (October 18, *Blue Book* p. 97.)

CLEAR WARNING

This was a clear warning that Mr. Smith was on the brink of declaring independence for the white minority. Instead of standing up to this challenge Mr. Wilson flew to Southern Rhodesia for further talks with Mr. Smith, in the course of which:

"He reminded the Rhodesian Cabinet this was the first occasion in modern history on which the United Kingdom Government had been prepared to contemplate the grant of independence on a basis of less than majority rule." (October 29, *Blue Book*, p. 124.)

Once again Mr. Wilson had retreated. It was no longer "majority rule before independence" but "guaranteed an unimpeded progress to majority rule" (Wilson broadcast, October 12). In other words, it was independence before majority rule.

STATE OF EMERGENCY

So Mr. Smith was quite confident he had Mr. Wilson on the run! The plans had already been made to declare U.D.I., and a few days later Mr. Smith declared a "State of Emergency" in Southern Rhodesia to crush any opposition to this plan. On November 11 Mr. Smith declared "independence".

In face of this open defiance what steps has Mr. Wilson taken? The Labour Government has imposed limited sanctions. These do not worry Mr. Smith. Even the *Financial Times* had to point out that:

"The British Government has not taken those steps which might have produced immediate and drastic results—it has not completely frozen Rhodesia's London

balances, nor interfered with the supply of oil, [written before the British Government was obliged to impose oil sanctions.—Ed.] nor imposed a general ban on exports." (*Financial Times*, 13.11.65.)

RESTRICTION

in trying to frighten Mr. Smith during the talks in Salisbury Mr. Wilson told him:

"In particular, it might not take long for a restriction of oil supplies to inflict serious damage on the economy." (*Blue Book*, p. 114.) But after Mr. Smith declared U.D.I. Mr. Wilson has done his best to argue against oil sanctions. Even after the U.N. resolution on November 20 calling for sanctions it is argued it would take a long time to have "consultations" with other countries.

Equally, Mr. Wilson is opposed to the use of military force except against "subversion" and a threat to "law and order". Since the Africans in Southern Rhodesia have no alternative to engage in "subversion" and to destroy the "law and order" enforced by Mr. Smith does this mean that Mr. Wilson is only prepared to use military force against the Africans?

From all this it seems clear that Mr. Wilson has not the slightest intention of taking effective steps to ensure African majority rule in Southern Rhodesia. Sanctions are limited to preserve "national unity" with the Tories. United Nations resolutions are ignored, as they were by the Tories.

Mr. Wilson has nightmares about the prospect of the "Red Army in Blue berets" becoming part of a U.N. force in Rhodesia. In all his talks in Salisbury it was Mr. Wilson who emphasised that:

"... he fully shared Mr. Smith's desire to counter Communist influence in Africa." (October 29, *Blue Book*, p. 115.)

Even after U.D.I. Mr. Wilson made clear next day in the Commons that on the proposed "Royal Commission" to recommend how to consult the people of Southern Rhodesia, he had conceded everything to Mr. Smith:

PROPOSAL

"On the last outstanding point which held up agreement... we made a proposal to the Rhodesian Government which would fully meet every demand they made." (*Hansard*, 12.11.65.)

This is how the "brave and courageous" Mr. Wilson has given in to the fascist dictators in Southern Rhodesia! (With acknowledgements to "Comment" a weekly review published by the British Communist Party)

Finance for Independent Development

by a Special Correspondent

HOW to solve the problem of amassing funds in building an independent national economy is a question of great significance. The experience of the Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea in solving this problem shows that it was indispensable to mobilize all internal reserves and potentialities, while steadily expanding accumulation and making a rational use of the funds procured.

Up to August, 1945, Korea remained a colonial, semi-feudal society subjected to Japanese oppression. Hence, in order to build an independent national economy through the maximum mobilization of its internal reserves, North Korea had to liquidate the economic foundation of the colonialists and the feudal relations of production in the countryside by using the people's state power as a weapon and establish new relations of production.

This constituted not only an indispensable condition for liquidating the reactionary forces, consolidating the people's state power and giving full play to the creative wisdom of the masses of the working people, thereby opening up a wide avenue for the development of the productive forces, but also a prerequisite to solving the ques-

tion for a certain period of time to agriculture for the funds needed in laying the foundation of an independent industry.

Along with the land reform, nationalisation of industry, transport, communications, banks, commerce, and trading organizations belonging to the foreign imperialists was of weighty politico-economic importance.

COLONIAL RULE

In the days of Japanese colonial rule, 93 per cent of the total capital in Korea belonged to the Japanese, 2 per cent to the other foreigners and the remaining 5 per cent to the Koreans.

Such being the case, it was impossible for the Koreans to consolidate the people's state power and build an independent national economy so long as the aftermath of the imperialist sway over Korea's economic life-lines was not eliminated.

the national capitalists, private traders and entrepreneurs by encouraging their creative activities.

The anti-imperialist, anti-feudal, democratic reforms mentioned above were carried out in 1946, thus preparing the ground for building an independent national economy. The construction of an independent national economy in North Korea started on a full scale after the war (1953).

Under the conditions where the country was severely destroyed and the people's life deteriorated by the war, to build an independent national economy was quite a hard task for the people of North Korea. Particularly difficult was the question of how to raise such a colossal sum of funds needed.

In this connection, mention must be made of the basic line of economic construction—a line of giving priority to the growth of heavy industry while simultaneously developing light industry and agricul-

ture. The working people who came to realize the country's situation set about exploring reserves to overcome a series of difficulties by unfolding a mass movement for increased production.

The country placed faith in the strength of the people, the makers of history, relied on them and organised and mobilized them to overcome the hardships.

MORE GOODS

This brought forth tremendous strength. As an illustration of this, we may cite the policy of the simultaneous development of centrally-controlled and local industries and a mass movement, such

put and 59 per cent of the output value of consumer goods.

Taking the capital investment made in the field of industry as a whole, the investment in heavy industry increased from 81.1 per cent during the Three-Year Plan (1954-1956) to 82.6 per cent during the Five-Year Plan (1957-1961), whereas the investment in light industry was reduced from 18.9 per cent to 17.4 per cent during the same period.

This notwithstanding that the average annual rate of growth in the production of means of production and in consumer goods were 59.4 per cent and 28 per cent respectively during the Three-Year Plan period, the corresponding figures during the Five-Year Plan period being 37.7 and 34.9 per cent.

In other words, the marked growth of local industry made it possible to produce a considerable portion of consumer goods through its extended production without additional state investment.

The same is true of the "machine-tool multiplying movement". The rapid development of industry demanded more and more machines. But at that time there was a big gap between the country's demand for machine tools and its production capacity.