

RHODESIA

In order to refresh the minds of Members of this Honourable House regarding the situation in Rhodesia, I summarise below the action taken by the Government of Jamaica following the illegal declaration of independence by Mr. Ian Smith:-

- (1) On the 12th of November, 1965 the Jamaican Cabinet met and the Acting Prime Minister issued a statement deploring and condemning the action of Mr. Smith's rebel Government, called upon the United Kingdom to restore constitutional Government, agreed to support any action, including the use of force, to remove the illegal regime; and put a complete embargo on trade and financial transactions with Rhodesia. Jamaica refused to recognise the Smith Government.
- (2) On the 16th of November, 1965, the Jamaican House of Representatives passed unanimously a Resolution, a copy of which is attached.
- (3) On the 16th of November, 1965, the Jamaican Permanent Representative to the United Nations was instructed to seek permission to address the Security Council setting out Jamaica's position, and this he did.
- (4) On the 14th of December, 1965, the Acting Prime Minister of Jamaica made a Ministerial Announcement in the House of Representatives.
- (5) A meeting of Commonwealth Heads of Governments was held in Lagos in January, 1966. This meeting led to the setting up of the Commonwealth Continuing Committee on Sanctions against Rhodesia. The meeting also agreed that, if sanctions were to have effect, everyone should support them and they must be given time to show their effectiveness. A report of this meeting was presented to Parliament in Ministry Paper No. 4 of the 25th of January, 1966.

2. Commonwealth Heads of Governments again met in London in September, 1966, when the main topic of discussion was the Rhodesian situation. Jamaica was represented by the Acting Prime Minister and

Minister...

Minister of External Affairs and the results of that meeting were

reported to the House in Message No. 63 of the 17th of October,

1966. The most important point to emerge at that conference was

that, if Britain was still not prepared to use force to overthrow

the rebel regime, then Britain should sponsor, in the Security

Council, before the end of the year, a resolution providing for

comprehensive mandatory sanctions against Rhodesia.

3. Meanwhile the United Nations was actively engaged in bring-

ing pressure to bear on the British Government to take steps to bring

down the illegal Government even if the use of force was necessary.

4. The British Government failed to bring down the illegal

regime despite voluntary sanctions which were imposed by many

countries, and accordingly that Government put to the Security Council

suggestions for selective mandatory sanctions against Rhodesia. On

the 16th of December, 1966, the Security Council passed Resolution

No. 252 (1966) imposing certain selected mandatory sanctions against

Rhodesia.

5. Members of this Honourable House will have learnt with con-

cern of the recent actions of the illegal Smith regime in Rhodesia in

executing on the 6th of March, 1968, three Africans who had been

sentenced to death before Rhodesia declared independence, and to whom

Her Majesty the Queen had granted a reprieve. This was followed in

Salisbury on Monday, the 11th of March, 1968, by the hanging of two

more Africans who had been under sentence of death for 2½ years. I

understand that there are more than 100 men under sentence of death

in Rhodesia.

6. I have taken the following action since hearing of these

hangings:-

(a) On the 7th of March, 1968 I telegraphed the Secretary

General of the United Nations, and the Secretary

General of the Commonwealth Secretariat as follows:-

"The news....."

"The head...."

- " The news of the execution in Rhodesia of three Africans under sentence of death has horrified and alarmed me. The illegal regime has taken this ultimate step in defiance of world opinion and in defiance of the reprieve granted to the prisoners by Her Majesty the Queen.
2. Justice and humanity demand that those responsible of these tragic events be made to pay for their action.
3. Jamaica has consistently maintained that precious time was being wasted in any attempt to negotiate with the Smith Regime and only the sternest measures could save the country and its people from atrocities of this kind.
4. Every effort must now be made to see to it that the illegal Smith Regime is brought down and that the country returns to constitutional rule early so that similar atrocities may not again be perpetrated."
- (b) I followed this up with a telegram to the President of the Organization of African Unity assuring the Organization that we share with them the sense of tragedy being experienced by all African peoples over the vicious contempt of the rule of law displayed by the illegal Smith Regime, and sending the Organization the text of my message to the United Nations and the Commonwealth Secretariat.
- (c) On the 8th of March I telegraphed the Secretary General of the United Nations, the Commonwealth Secretary General and the Organization of African Unity as follows:-
- " Further to my telegram regarding murdered Africans please inform what assistance if any can be provided for bereaved relatives of deceased."
- (d) On the 11th of March I telegraphed our High Commissioner in London as follows:-
- " RHODESIA. In view of latest atrocities of Smith regime in execution of Africans please request an emergency meeting of Sanctions Committee to discuss the situation and advise what further action can be taken."
- (e) I also requested our High Commissioner in London on the same day to convey the following message to the Secretary General of the Commonwealth Secretariat:

H. L. Shearer
Prime Minister and
Minister of External Affairs
13th March, 1968

" The head of the Commonwealth, Her Majesty the Queen has been defied and insulted by the Ian Smith Regime in Rhodesia through the illegal killing that have recently taken place in Rhodesia. It is customary for the Commonwealth to be consulted on Rhodesia. It is considered that an emergency meeting of the Heads of Government of the Commonwealth be now called to review developments since the Lagos and London meetings and to determine appropriate and essential action in light of the abject failure of policies so far pursued by the United Kingdom and the rest of the Commonwealth. The Government of Jamaica requests the support of all fellow Commonwealth members in the call for a meeting of the Security Council of the United Nations to decide on appropriate and effective action within that body to restore Rhodesia to the rule of law. Grateful if you could now seek the reaction of all Commonwealth Heads of Government to my suggestion for a meeting in connection with the abovementioned proposals. I offer Jamaica as a site for the meeting, or otherwise, I am prepared to attend a meeting anywhere else. Please advise soonest." (f) I instructed the Jamaican Mission at the United Nations immediately to identify Jamaica with the Committee of 24 at the United Nations to seek the convening of the Security Council on the Rhodesian question and for Jamaica to be allowed to address the Security Council.

(AS PASSED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
ON THE 16TH NOVEMBER, 1965)

RESOLUTION

The Acting Prime Minister and Minister of External Affairs gave notice that at the next Meeting of the House he would move -

WHEREAS the Colonial Government of Southern Rhodesia which is unrepresentative of the majority of the adult population of Southern Rhodesia has made a unilateral declaration of Independence;

AND WHEREAS this declaration is unconstitutional and illegal and is an act of rebellion;

AND WHEREAS such Independence will mean the continued repression and oppression of the majority of the population by a minority;

AND WHEREAS the Jamaican Government has repeatedly declared its irrevocable opposition to any such declaration and its firm support of Independence for Rhodesia only on majority rule and universal adult suffrage;

BE IT RESOLVED that the Parliament of Jamaica -

- (a) records its total disagreement with and its complete opposition to the Unilateral Declaration of Independence by Mr. Smith;
- (b) gives its strong support for the stand of the Jamaica Government at the United Nations and elsewhere in the issue;
- (c) pledges its support for all adequate and effective measures, including the use of force if necessary, for the protection of Africans in Rhodesia which might be taken by Great Britain and the United Nations in this issue;
- (d) supports the Jamaican Government in all measures including the imposition of diplomatic and economic sanctions against Rhodesia and any other stronger measures which might be deemed necessary by the Government;
- (e) reaffirms its support for the great majority of the people of Southern Rhodesia in this hour of their extreme crisis.
- (f) stands ready to offer a defence contribution including men and materials in support of any action taken by the United Nations to enforce law and order and to suppress rebellion in Rhodesia;
- (g) declares that should the British Government by itself or with the aid of the United Nations fail to establish at the earliest possible time a Constitutional Government that will advance Southern Rhodesia to independence under majority rule it will take steps to summon a meeting of members of the Commonwealth with a view to considering what further action should be taken and also to consider in the light of such decisions as may be arrived at the future of that Institution.