

# WHAT THE GUNMAN WANTS

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"Power would be transferred to a minority government : that is the central issue of these Fearless proposals:"

President Nyerere puts the facts of the Rhodesian situation to the Commonwealth leaders.

Mr. Chairman,

My Government submitted a Memorandum to this Conference in the hope of avoiding a long speech from me this morning. There are, however, three points which I now feel must be made in amplification or extension of that document. But before I do so, I would like to pick up the point made by Mr. Wilson when he said that the Commonwealth is united in its anti-racialism. It is my belief that this is the central issue of the Commonwealth today. If non-racialism and human equality is not the basis of the Commonwealth Members, then it has no basis. History is not enough by itself. We, the Commonwealth Members, can disagree on practically every political issue, and every economic issue; but if we are not disagreeing in the context of an accepted human equality, then those disagreements will destroy us. Only on this common and universal assumption of our equal humanity, regardless of race, religion, or colour, can we usefully talk about our differences, and seek the understanding, compromise, or conciliation which makes the Commonwealth worth the time and expenditure of busy people and poor nations.

It is my contention that on this Rhodesian issue we are dealing with the question of whether all Commonwealth members do accept the equal human rights of all peoples, or whether the Commonwealth is willing to accept lesser rights for the African peoples of Rhodesia than they would be willing to accept for any other peoples.

Since 1945 the British Government has relinquished its control over almost all its old 'Empire'. The fact that 28 states are represented here today is the result. And in every case except one, the British Government has insisted on transferring sovereignty to a Government based on the will of the majority. In many cases it has insisted on further elections just before independence to ensure that the new Government did have the requisite majority support. The one exception was Zanzibar, which is now part of the United Republic of Tanzania. In that case sovereignty was transferred to a minority government; the result was a bloody revolution, with all the consequences which follow from such an event—and which are still following. The only other time when Britain has transferred sovereignty to a minority was in 1910—to South Africa. There is no need for me to enlarge on the results there. I will only say that Africa, and Africans, are still suffering the consequences.

In 1964, and in 1965, Tanzania asked Britain for an assurance

that this mistake would not be repeated in the case of Southern Rhodesia. We did not get that assurance. But in 1966 the British Government made a pledge to the Commonwealth. It stated its intention to have one last attempt to get the illegal regime of Rhodesia to transfer executive power back to the Governor — that is, to the Queen's representative. And it said that if this was not done, the British Government would (and I quote from the Communiqué) "withdraw all previous proposals for a constitutional settlement which have been made: in particular they will not be prepared to submit to the British Parliament any settlement which involves independence before majority rule."

The British Government made its 'final attempt' in the Tiger Talks of 1966. They were rejected by Smith. The NIBMAR pledge became operative—and the British Prime Minister reiterated in the House of Commons that he was bound by this pledge.

Yet in 1968 the British Government had further discussions with Ian Smith, and put new proposals for a so-called 'settlement' to him. Those proposals are still open to the regime in Rhodesia. But they are not based on NIBMAR. They are incompatible with NIBMAR. They are based on the 'Six Principles'; and the first of these is concerned with guarantees that the independent government of Rhodesia would have to ensure 'unimpeded progress to majority rule'. In other words, it would not exist before independence. POWER would be transferred to a minority government. That is the central issue of these 'Fearless' proposals.

In justifying its action in this respect, the British Government makes much of its insistence upon a 'double-lock' to the safeguards included in these 'Fearless Proposals'. But the truth is that once a country is independent, and is recognised as such, the no external power can do anything to stop a Government, or a group of people, ignoring their own constitution. That is what independence means: no one else has the right to interfere. Other countries can protest, they can cut off relations with the new administration, and so on. But they cannot DO anything — unless, of course, they are willing and able to intervene militarily. The 'safeguards' in the Fearless Proposals will be effective for as long as, and only as long as, the minority regime decides to adhere to them. In other words, they are meaningless in the face of the facts of POWER.

The only people who can safeguard the interests of a majority, are the majority themselves. Only when power is in their own hands

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alists would not go to such blighted areas.

Now South Africa practises some kind of socialism-fascist socialism—by taking ownership of railway transport, and larger shares of the Iscor Steel, Pretoria, and Escom powers, and controlling every manner of business of the black man. It has Stalin-like central planning to enforce economic separate development, with laws like Job Reservation, 90-day detention, house arrest, Sabotage Act, and the Suppression of Communism Act. All these laws are characteristic of a fascist-socialist country. Why must S.A. pretend it belongs to the Western bloc, when by the nature of its rule it does not? Perhaps it is because the Western countries are holding major investments of capital here. But these Western states are fooled if they think S.A. is in any way a Western-type democracy.

When three-quarters of the population of a country are ruled and oppressed by a quarter of that population, the minority of rulers forms the only bureaucracy, and since the minority are the only ones that can launch political parties, the country becomes a one-party state. The political parties of the majority are banned. The two white parties in S.A. only differ in their squabble on how best to oppress the non-white. They are merely the hawks and doves of white domination. They are in fact one party, since true opposition belongs only to the majority which is suppressed. This is therefore a one-party state.

Under this system, private property belongs only to the bureaucrats, the minority rulers. The 'public' is the embodiment of a particular group of individuals who hold property, i.e. the bureaucrats, the minority rulers. In S. Africa the minority possess everything, and any deals and contracts of investment the free world makes with such a country, it makes it with the bureaucrats, the minority rulers. (The Western Powers know this as they are trading with S.A.) The Black majority owns virtually no property, that is no land and no houses. The Black man is a migrant labourer in the urban area where he lives. Everything he has is leased to him, and it can be taken from him at the whim of a superintendent, who often says he must own in the Bartustans. So since the bureaucrats in S.A. own everything as a group as in communist countries, there is no private ownership of property in South Africa.

White rule does not tire of harping on a seeming state of peace in S.A. Yet over 99% of P.A.C. members released from jail are banned and banished. They live with gun barrels at their temples. That is the kind of peace existing here. Now to crowd a group of people in a concentration camp, with guns pointed at them, and then howl "there is peace in the camp" is the vilest form of self-deception. It is the vilest form of contempt for human intelligence to expect mankind to believe you.

Peace is a voluntary state, arising from contentedness. It is not a compulsion on people, facing them with horrible spooky monsters and nightmares. If you silence a crying child by thrusting a lizard at her, never assume that she is at peace. Peace is not to be maintained by the gun or by fear. One is not going to whip a child who wailed when he saw a snake under his bed; one will rather proceed to kill the snake, but you who will whip the child and not kill the snake, have yourself planted the snake there. You do this because it is not the subordination of the child that you want to achieve, but his death.

Our death is what you have always sought. But you want to destroy us imperceptibly. It has been your aim to make yourselves, the whites, the majority in this country, and you realised your immigration policies do not do this quickly enough. For I can tell you that unless you resort to outright genocide, you are not going to have the extinction of the Black man in this country. For every man you kill, we give birth to three.

Yes, I would like to remind you of what might happen in future. Don't cry about the Indians in Zambia. It is not the Indians you will see suffering in the future in S.A., it is yourselves. Oppression is exercised by the white minority. We might forgive an error of knowledge, but not a breach of morality. Hanging freedom fighters in Rhodesia, with full knowledge of what you are doing, knowing that your judgment of man is the pigmentation of his skin—that's not an error of knowledge. Likewise when you persecute African traders, you turn them against yourselves. Watch.

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can the majority hope that government will act in their interests. This is the very basis of democracy. It is not the whole of democracy, for that includes some rights for minorities too. But no one has previously suggested that the problem of ensuring justice for minorities can be satisfactorily solved by giving the minority in a state total power over the majority.

I do not wish to be misunderstood on this point. I am not now arguing for immediate majority rule in Rhodesia. I am arguing that there must be no independence before that majority rule has been achieved. If Britain, or Ian Smith, were saying that the majority in Rhodesia are not ready for independence yet, so colonialism has to continue, I might disagree. But my disagreement would be of the same kind as other disagreements we have here. It would be a disagreement about timing, about techniques—not about a principle. But as it is, we are disagreeing about a principle. For we are disagreeing about handing a majority over to the control of a minority. And once that is done there is no going back on it. Even if the British Government decided later that it had made a mistake, it could not undo it. The minority would already have the power—and would be using it.

Yet the implication of some of the remarks which have been made, in the Conference and outside, is that by insisting on NIBMAR as the only basis on which independence in Rhodesia can be recognised we are somehow being undemocratic. It is said that only the people of Rhodesia themselves can decide whether they are willing to accept any particular constitutional proposals; it is not up to Commonwealth members, or anyone else, to decide on their behalf.

This argument sounds very nice. For the right of a people to decide their own destiny is what all the argument is about. It would be possible for the British people, tomorrow, to decide to hand over their government to an aristocracy, to a dictator, or to impose educational qualification for the vote or membership of the Government. They could decide to pass responsibility for the administration of this country to Germany, U.S.A., or anyone else. The rest of the world may be amazed or appalled at such a decision, but it would have no right to interfere if the British people had freely come to the conclusion that this is what they wanted.

The Czechoslovakian people could have accepted the Russian occupation; they did not do so. But suppose the Russian Government had found some stooges to take over the Czechoslovak Government; in the course of time this 'new government' would almost certainly have held a referendum to legitimise its authority. Would the rest of us not have looked with some scorn at the result? We would have done so for very good reasons. It would not mean that we rejected the right of a people to decide to be occupied by foreign troops, and governed by those installed by those troops. Our scorn would have been the result of knowledge that a 'test of opinion' made at the point of a gun is meaningless.

Mr. Gorton made the same point in relation to Vietnam. He said that Australia hoped to see the people of South Vietnam freely able to choose their own form of government in a manner that was not only free but seen to be free; it was this outcome that the Paris talks must secure.

I understand that. I also understand why the South Vietnamese elections were not held in areas effectively under the control of the Vietcong. It was argued that the people in those areas could not be expected to vote against the Vietcong, because to do so would be to invite reprisals from the Vietcong. The act of voting would not make the Vietcong go away even if that was what the people wanted, so no effective choice could be offered to them. To organise an election in that area, even if possible technically, was not only meaningless, it was also highly dangerous to the participants.

This is exactly the position we take in Rhodesia in relation to 'principle No.5' of the Fearless Proposals.

First, we in Tanzania regard it as highly suspicious that Britain should think of asking the people of that country whether they agree to being governed by a minority which is distinguishable by its money, its privilege,—and largely by its colour. We cannot understand why Britain wishes to do this in Rhodesia, whereas elsewhere

she insisted on majority rule. But although this seems to us peculiar, we have no objection to the people being offered a real and free choice on this matter. Only we do have the same reservations about 'tests of opinion' in Rhodesia as we have in communist countries. Just as it is no use asking Australia — or Tanzania — to believe that people will express their real opinions about a police state if that police state will still have control over them after they have voted, so it is no use asking Tanzania — and I hope not Australia — to believe that people will express their real opinions about a Rhodesian minority government, if that minority government remains in effective control whatever they say.

Yet that is the position in Rhodesia under the Fearless Proposals. We are told that there will be a 'test of opinion' taken by a Royal Commission. If 'the people of Rhodesia as a whole' say that they are willing to accept the Fearless Proposals, then the Smith Regime will stay, and be recognised by Britain. If the 'people of Rhodesia as a whole' say they are not willing to accept these proposals, but insist upon majority rule before independence, then the Smith Regime will stay and will not be recognised by Britain! In both cases the oppressive and discriminatory regime continues to govern the people. In fact the people are not being given a choice about their own government; at most they are being asked to agree that Britain should recognise the legality of their oppression. Ian Smith put it slightly differently according to yesterday's paper; he said the question at issue was 'a sort of trade agreement'.

Let us not make any mistake about the unreality of this choice. For real and justified fear of an oppressive government does not only exist in communist states. It exists in Rhodesia now. Organised opposition — by Africans especially — to the minority government has been smashed by the ruthless use of police power, of intimidation, and of economic pressures. In fact communism and racial minority rule of this kind are both based on the principle of government by coercion. And to ask a people to express their opposition to this coercion in the full knowledge that having done so they will be at the mercy of it, is exactly the same as asking people to vote contrary to the instructions of the man with the gun. A few brave people may do so; but none of us would regard the result as telling anything except what the gunman wanted.

Nor do I see how conducting this 'test of opinion' through a Royal Commission makes the result any better. We are told there will be complete immunity for the witnesses to the Commission, and the members of it will be free to move anywhere and talk to everyone. But the Commission will be operating in an area under the control of the minority regime, where the police and the army are working for the illegal and minority administration. The safety of the members of the Royal Commission will be looked after by these people — the Regime's representatives will go with them everywhere. Is this 'immunity' really very meaningful under these circumstances? Of course it is most unlikely that the Smith Regime would arrest, harrass, or restrict a witness the same day, or even the same week. But what about when the Commission has moved on? Are we really so sure that 'evidence of subversion' will not suddenly be discovered, or a licence be withdrawn for 'trading reasons' and so on?

Nor is this the only reason for questioning the validity of this 'test of opinion'. The Commission is supposed to be finding out the people's views on a complex set of constitutional proposals, — and remember that these people are said to be unready to vote for their own government! Yet is there going to be any opportunity for African nationalist leaders — assuming they have the courage — to campaign for, AND AGAINST, these proposals throughout the length and breadth of the country? Will they be able to hold meetings in towns and villages where the people live or where they work, to explain the issues to the people? The answer is that it will depend upon the minority government; the illegal regime will decide who will be restricted, and what meetings can be held etc. And on questions of detention and restriction there will be an appeal — to a Tribunal which has 2 Rhodesian nominees and 1 nominee of the Lord Chancellor!

Really, this talk of the people of Rhodesia deciding sounds

very nice. So does a lot of similar talk elsewhere in the world — but we don't accept it there. We have a look at the real meaning of the words. And in Rhodesia we have to recognise that certain conditions would have to be fulfilled before a real 'test of opinion' could be held.

There would have to be a British — or international — administration, with effective control of the police, army and air force. That British administration would have to allow free political activity over a period adequate for all the people to be able to hear the arguments and understand the choice they were being asked to make. And that administration would have to assure the people that if they vote for independence under minority rule it will be effected, and if they vote against it then British rule will continue until there is majority rule — however long it takes.

We are told that this is unrealistic talk, and that the illegal minority regime would never agree to allow the British to take over control of the country for this purpose. That may be so. But in that case why do we talk about the people of Rhodesia making their own decision about whether to accept promises which run counter to the declared policies of the persons making them? Either the people can make a free choice or they cannot. If the Regime which is in control of the people's lives now is not prepared to allow conditions for a real choice to be made, then that is the end of the matter. We have to carry on without giving the people a chance to opt for continued racial discrimination, minority rule, and so on.

This brings me to my final point. We are told that a settlement, even if not ideal, is necessary to save Africans of Rhodesia from the growth of apartheid and so on. Yet no evidence is brought forward or can be brought forward, to justify the suggestions that an agreement will reverse this trend. For years and years the minority, controlling, community has been moving consistently in this direction. We have now got to the point where the people who used to be called 'extremists' are now the moderates if they have not changed along with the majority. 'Separate Development' is one of the principles of the Rhodesian Front Party — one of its aims and objects. And Smith is put forward to us as a moderate because he wants to plan for five years before introducing it in its full vigour! He just wishes to continue as at present — introducing more and more legislative discrimination piece by piece as convenient to him and his government. It may well be that one of the things he is hoping to achieve before his five years delay has expired is a settlement with the British Government — on Fearless basis, or the basis of the next warship talks.

But even if the British Government does achieve a settlement with Smith, they will not have achieved a settlement of the Rhodesian question. The Rhodesian problem will remain, just as the South African problem remains. The problem is there anyway: Why does the Commonwealth, or any member of the Commonwealth wish to surrender the principles on which we exist for the sake of a piece of paper? Is it because sanctions are too expensive for Britain? Or what is the reason?

If every other country in the world gave up sanctions and recognised the Rhodesian Regime, still no Commonwealth country could do so and us retain our boast to be united in our anti-racialism. This Commonwealth stands for something basic to the future of mankind; but only while it stands firmly against racialism and minority racial domination. The fact that we are not strong enough to achieve the result we need quickly must not cause us to give up our principles. We have simply to keep on. Maintain and strengthen sanctions; withdraw the Fearless proposals now before they have smirched our reputation for non-racialism and honesty; and reiterate the pledge to NIBMAR. We must do all these things. For NIBMAR is either a commitment or a gimmick; only if it is the latter can the Fearless Proposals be made compatible with it. But I do not believe that this Commonwealth deals in gimmicks. Let us therefore leave no doubts in anyone's mind. Let us all, unanimously, reaffirm the principle of NIBMAR as the only basis on which we can recognise an administration in Rhodesia, or

From Natal  
The central No.