

# ONLY THE BLACK MAN CAN BE SURE OF THE FUTURE

by Garfield Todd

By August 1976 Mr Ian Smith's "five-day wonder" of white independence founded upon black repression had become engulfed in eleven years of blood and horror — a situation without hope.

In an open letter to the Government, Bishop Donal Lamont "concerned for world peace and for the well-being of Rhodesia" wrote: "Conscience compels me to state that your administration by its clearly racist and oppressive policies and by its stubborn refusal to change, is largely responsible for the injustices which have provoked the present disorder and it must, in that measure, be considered guilty of whatever misery or bloodshed may follow."

Only a month later, despair broke into hope when Mr Smith accepted "majority rule within two years." The whites in Rhodesia believed him and while some were angry and rebellious, many expressed relief. The blacks believed him, thought the war would soon end and that all the hundreds of friends and relatives in detention would be home for Christmas.

One month later, the Geneva Conference opened with five Rhodesian delegations in attendance, four black and one white.

Majority world opinion was summed up on September 25, 1976, in the Washington Post headline, "Rhodesia Accepts Black-Rule Plan." Joshua Nkomo had stated that he would never again negotiate with Ian Smith except on the terms for surrender. Mr Nkomo went to Geneva to work out the mechanics of the transfer from white to black. Bishop Muzorewa opened his address at Geneva by saying: "We have come to take."

But even before the Conference opened, doubts and fears were being expressed. Could Smith be trusted at any point and under any circumstances? The question was being asked both by Mr Smith's supporters and by his opponents. In Rhodesia, closed meetings of Rhodesia Front members were being assured that all would be well, that while accommodations to world opinion must be made, White supremacy would be maintained. "You can trust Smithy." Blacks were looking again at the proposals Mr Smith had accepted and noting not only what Dr Kissinger had said,

but especially noting the glosses which Mr Smith had made in his introduction to the Kissinger document.

They noted that while the Kissinger Proposals said majority rule would be established within two years, Mr Smith said: "It will only be at the conclusion of this exercise that we will know whether this whole operation has succeeded or failed."

In the light of such uncertainty, Nationalist leaders decided to demand a definite date for independence.

Kissinger said that the Rhodesian Government and African leaders would meet "to organise an interim government": Mr Smith spoke of the setting up of the Council of State as "a first stage", and as "a first duty."

Again, while Dr Kissinger was silent on the status of the Council of State, Mr Smith spoke of it as "a Supreme Body", and it became increasingly clear that Mr Smith saw himself as head of that supreme body.

Mr Smith said that this supreme body, the Council of State, would appoint the Council of Ministers, but the Kissinger Proposals provided that the members of the Council of State and the Council of Ministers, except for the chairman of the former, would be nominated by the respective sides.

Dr Kissinger said that the Council of State would supervise the drawing up of the Independence Constitution, but Mr Smith said that it would do the job.

To the Nationalists the situation appeared sinister and despite the differences which existed between them they were unanimous in their rejection of the Kissinger Proposals. They accepted majority rule within two years, hopefully within one year, but the terms would not be the Kissinger Proposals but an immediate transfer of power from white to black on terms decided at Geneva.

In rejecting the Kissinger mechanics of transfer the Nationalists were within their rights. They had not been consulted about what Dr Kissinger was putting to Mr Smith, and what Dr Kissinger brought back from his Pretoria meeting they did not accept; in fact Dr Kissinger on his way back from Pretoria saw Mr Nkomo briefly on the morning of Tuesday, September 21. Mr Nkomo studied the proposals as they had been outlined to him and later that same day he informed Dr Kaunda that he considered them

unacceptable and gave a written statement setting out his objections!

The Patriotic Front which was a working arrangement for the Geneva Conference agreed between Mr Joshua Nkomo and Mr Robert Mugabe, worked separately on the various proposals considered. Only after very full consideration had been given to a subject did a small group of party leaders from each organisation meet to determine a common approach at the Conference. Agreement was not always reached easily. However, on the opening day, both parties were strongly of the opinion that the status of the Conference was not sound. The ability and integrity of Mr Ivor Richards were never doubted but it was held that Britain, with her legal status as Colonial Power, should be represented by a Chairman who was a Minister of the Government. Britain should not be chairing a conference as a negotiator but as a dominant government guiding the transfer of power from white to black. This was what Mr Smith's acceptance of "majority rule within two years" was all about. The Nationalists made it clear that Mr Smith must end his rebellion and submit to Britain. Britain in her turn, not as Chairman of a Conference, but as a Government, must then transfer power to the Government of Zimbabwe elected by the people on a universal franchise.

During the morning of the opening day, strong approaches were made by the Patriotic Front to have the Conference upgraded. Eventually, certain assurances from the U.K. Government regarding the authority of the Chairman were reluctantly accepted and the Conference convened three hours later than scheduled.

The distrust of the Patriotic Front was vindicated by subsequent happenings. While Mr Richard had the ability and the patience needed he lacked authority, and by the time Britain accepted her responsibilities in relation to the interim period of adjustment and government, the Conference was in the doldrums and it did not emerge. Five vital weeks of the seven week conference had passed before Mr Crosland in a written reply to a question said, 'The objective of the British Chairman, Mr Ivor Richards, remained to secure an early agreement on the central issue, the structure of an interim government... for their part, Her Majesty's Government are ready to play a direct role in the transitional government if it is the general view that this would be helpful.'

On the same day. Lord Alport wrote to the Times sympathising with the British Government's reluctance to undertake heavy responsibilities in the Rhodesian issue, but went on to stress that there was a way which would enable Great Britain to play an honourable part in discharging its responsibilities to black and white in Rhodesia, while at the same time giving Zimbabwe a real chance of emerging peacefully as an independent state.

"What is needed," wrote Lord Alport, "is to find a means of maintaining confidence among the black majority that the transference of power to them will be genuine and effective and among the white minority, that there will be a tolerable future for them in Zimbabwe . . ."

There were many practicable possibilities open to Britain and the free world if the U.K. was prepared to lead. Lord Alport outlined one possibility, Sir Robert Tredgold put forward another, and at Geneva each of the black delegations had definite proposals. No plan, had any

relevance if Mr Smith had no intention whatever of accepting majority rule — not in a thousand years.

On December 15 the Geneva Conference was adjourned.

In the six months that have passed since Mr Smith's acceptance of the principle of "majority rule" on September 24, the magnitude of the fraud which he tried to perpetrate has gradually been revealed.

In his acceptance speech Mr Smith said that the western powers had forced him to change; forced him to accept majority rule. It is now quite clear that at no time did Mr Smith intend to transfer power from white to black — Mr Smith has not changed.

First there was his hope, in the terms of his interpretation of the Kissinger document, to take over personally the chairmanship of the Council of State. This would give him direction of the "Supreme" body in the interim period.

Then came the news that majority rule would produce an electoral roll on which blacks would have a majority — possibly of one! In other words, if the whites on the roll numbered 80,000, the electoral machine would produce something more than that number of Blacks — but not twenty-two times 80,000 as the relative population figures would justify. Under such circumstances, constituencies could be so delineated as to bring more whites than blacks into Parliament and white supremacy would be maintained.

There have always been those who have said "You can trust Mr Smith." On March 29 our TV had just shown an interview in which Mr Pik Botha said that there was no evidence to suggest that Mr Ian Smith was not sincere when he said that he would accept majority rule within two years. Then came an official Government statement to "clarify" the situation.

An erroneous belief had grown that the Government accepted there would be majority rule within two years. "This belief is wrong."

"The position is that the Government accepted majority rule within two years but only as part of a comprehensive package deal.

"There is no commitment to unqualified majority rule in isolation."

The statement said that the Government was irrevocably determined that the country would not be surrendered to the forces of chaos and revolution.

"The war will be pursued with the utmost vigour until we have destroyed the terrorists."

The Government through its complete control of Radio and TV have continued to hammer the premise that nationalism is Marxism, that guerillas are communists and answerable to Russia and China. When, therefore, the Government says power will not be transferred to the "forces of chaos and revolution", it means that Black nationalists will not be allowed to take control of the country.

Government also continues to propagate the falsehood that blacks like the security forces and hate and fear the guerillas. At the same time the most extreme penalties, even the death penalty, are used daily by the courts to try to separate the people from their brothers in arms, the guerillas. The Government will yet find that this is an impossible task.

The fact is that the white Government faces a determined and militant black population more than twenty times as large as the total white population.

Philip Knightley calls his history of war correspondents 'The First Casualty' — the first casualty being Truth.

Rhodesia is at war and truth is hard to recognise for propaganda is paraded in persuasive guise by both sides. Recently, the Government has made much play of a programme by the Army to "win hearts and minds."

One morning this month twenty of my employees on the ranch were standing around a tall, uneducated cattle herder and all were looking shocked. I found that Dickson had just received word from his home eighty miles away that "the soldiers" had burned his four huts and all their contents. "Who was at home?" I asked.

"Only my two wives and six children were at home." There is no appeal; nothing can be done except to give what help one can. No hearts or minds were won by this news.

Earlier this month I spoke to a friend who has a University education and he told me that his brother had been executed the day before. He was on his way to take the news to his widowed mother. A year ago his brother had left his sixth form studies to train as a guerilla. He had re-entered Rhodesia and in an engagement lost his left arm and his right leg and had been captured, hospitalised, tried and condemned to death for "being in possession of arms of war." There had been an appeal but now came the news of the execution. We execute our prisoners of war — and win no hearts or minds.

Last week I had news of another friend. He is an exemplary man, the head teacher of a school, married to a teacher, has two children and has saved a large sum of money which he has in a business — in other words a

typical "Black Marxist." He has just left Rhodesia, his wife, his family, his business, to train as a guerilla. "I will see you again in a free Zimbabwe."

What have we learned in this six months?

Mr Smith has shown the whole world that he has no intention of transferring power from whites to the whole population, including whites.

The Nationalists, though divided in their leadership represent the people united in their determination to free themselves from white domination, no matter what the cost in blood.

Britain and America made a mistake in putting the interim period of government up for negotiation. Britain should have nominated a caretaker government so that the politicians would have been free to concern themselves with two main matters, the framing of an independence Constitution and all the political preparations required for an election based on a universal franchise. Democracy cannot begin in the new Zimbabwe until there is security for an election and freedom for all to participate. Any referendum conducted under the Smith Government's aegis and during the state of emergency is doomed to fail.

Leadership can only be decided at a general election, and at that election the Opposition will also be determined — an equally important matter.

If the free world, with all its influence and power, cannot provide a catalyst to make possible the unification of black and white then a war of attrition will depose the white men in dishonour. That is a matter for the white man's choice and is his concern. The future could belong to us all; today only the Black man can be sure of the future —and he is sure. •

# MORE THAN BUILDINGS LIE IN RUIN

Letter from a 17 year old schoolboy in Guguletu black township addressed to a white Liberal

Dear Dart

We are still fine at this riot stricken township.

Sophia has always been worried since the unrest started. Sometimes she wants to cry warning me and Archie not to walk in the streets at night. She does not want to see us with our girl friends. She is also afraid thinking that we can be detained at any time and be killed. Sometimes she tells me that she does not sleep, but thinking.

Dart, as far as I can recall back from my mind is when I was five years old. At that time we were living at..... in a one roomed house made of zinc. When we came in there Sophia told us that that was our home. We had nothing with us except blankets to sleep on a wooded floor. I remember one morning Sophia cutting bread with

her hand for me and Archie, what thick, shapeless slices we had. One day while we were playing Sophia called. When we stepped in the house we saw a white lady to whom we were introduced. This lady left us, she was driving a red beetle Volkswagen. Sophia told us that was Dart. From that day I did not forget that name.

Dart came back again now with a small basket in which there were few cups, a knife and a towel. From that day we used to look at the northerly direction for Dart. If we saw a red Volkswagen, we used to run home to tell mother that Dart was coming. It did not end there. Dart brought us a sofa to sleep on. All three of us slept there like sardines packed in a tin with our head in opposite directions. Again the non-tiring lone fighter brought us a