

LCC (78) 188

- P.C
- Wm's CONGRESS SO USEFUL!
- BIFFEN
- TAD'Sum in ~~many~~ RESUMES
- MOCHEBY
- LCC.
- John Davis
- cf. INT. THREAT
- L.R.P. WITH POWER

In the catalogue of missed opportunities and errors perpetrated by this Government and its Foreign Secretary in relation to Rhodesia, none seems to me to be more incredible than their failure to recognise the real responsibility of Britain in relation to the future of that country. No doubt all sorts of other countries can usefully express their opinions about how matters should be conducted, but Britain alone in fact holds the final key to the future. It is Britain's responsibility at an appropriate time to make its mind up as to whether any replacement regime in Rhodesia is one which it can regard as legitimate and recognisable. This is an immensely important role, since upon it hangs a wide variety of aspirations of any future regime in Rhodesia. Membership of the United Nations or of the Commonwealth could not be accorded to a government of Rhodesia which did not pass the test of acceptability to Britain. It is only by the repeal of the Rhodesia Act by Parliament that the formal state of legitimacy can be removed. No other country has that capacity but Britain alone. The apparent indifference to this vital issue has meant that Dr. Owen consistently fails to demonstrate to all parties to the problem, how essential it is that if their ambitions are to be realised then it can only be with British consent and support. In this very context, I made it abundantly clear to Joshua Nkomo that no Conservative Government I could visualise would ever be prepared to give the imprimatur of legitimacy to him if he had won his way to power in Salisbury through the pursuit of an evil and brutal war. In the same context, I made it clear to the signatories of the internal settlement that unless they carried through their intentions to remove the residue of racial discrimination in Rhodesia and to achieve a clear public support for a new constitution, then Britain would inevitably be unable to accept that the test of legitimacy had been passed.

This critical issue touches very closely that of sanctions. The institution of sanctions was certainly not part of the doing of this Conservative Party, and seems to me entirely at variance with its whole

philosophy and outlook. It seems to me at variance too with any kind of efficacy. The case where international sanctions against a country are shown in fact to have achieved the results initially identified has yet to appear. The policy of sanctions has proved itself again and again to be inept, and I do not doubt that if ~~it~~ is now once again considered in another context, it will prove itself as useless.

WNY
CONCERN
THIS?

However, Britain having been the sponsoring country for the institution of international sanctions against Rhodesia, even against the views of this Conservative Party, Britain is inevitably involved in their removal. The issue of legitimacy is critical to our ability to effect the removal of sanctions against Rhodesia on a universal basis. Of course other countries can make decisions about their compliance with the UN resolution. We all have in mind the many breaches of those sanctions that have taken place, some formalised as in the case of the Byrd Amendment in the USA, some not so formalised in the covert trading activities undertaken by many countries with Rhodesia over the years since 1965. What I am saying to you is that our position is different. Upon us hangs the whole issue of the maintenance of sanctions against Rhodesia worldwide. It is at one and the same time, a vast responsibility and a very important lever. In talking to all those concerned with the resolution of this problem, it needs to be made clear that only by an act of the British Parliament can the worldwide strictures on Rhodesia's ability to trade with the world at large be removed. It is a lever which at this stage, we would be unwise to abandon even if we could. I am saying to you that it is of course open to us as a Party to move for the removal of sanctions against Rhodesia or to refuse to vote for their renewal. Whatever we decide to do in that context we must not abandon the very substantial right to recognise or not to recognise whatever regime does appear in Rhodesia in the future.