

Rhodesia's Case

ERNEST W. LEFEVER

CRISIS OVER RHODESIA: A SKEPTICAL VIEW,
by Charles Burton Marshall. *Johns
Hopkins Press. Paperback, \$1.45.*

Winston Churchill once said that "facts are better than dreams." In his "skeptical view" of the situation in Rhodesia, Britain's only remaining crown territory in Africa, Professor Marshall calls for the recognition of certain relevant facts all but lost in the strangely unreal debate leading to the December 16, 1966, Security Council resolution that declared Rhodesia a "threat to international peace" and imposed selective mandatory economic sanctions.

This unprecedented Security Council action, vigorously supported by Washington, is a well-known current fact, along with the Unilateral Declaration of Independence by the Salisbury government on November 11, 1965.

A less familiar but crucial fact is the unique political and legal status of Rhodesia (formerly Southern Rhodesia), which Mr. Marshall eloquently documents. Unlike India, Nigeria, or even Northern Rhodesia (now Zambia), Rhodesia was never a colony administered by the British government. It was established by a private company led by Cecil John Rhodes and was governed by the company until 1923, after the settlers voted an "autonomous government in association with the Crown" rather than incorporation into South Africa. Thereupon London appointed a governor with formal executive functions, but with no real authority in internal affairs and limited authority in external affairs.

SINCE 1923 the Rhodesians have had their own citizenship, issued their own passports, and negotiated their foreign trade pacts. They have received and appointed consular representatives. The only British officials to serve in the territory were the governor (until 1959 when he was replaced by a Rhodesian)

and diplomats. Britain never governed Rhodesia nor was ever called on to defend it. Rhodesia has its own armed forces and a large number of Rhodesian volunteers fought with Britain in two world wars.

If Prime Minister Wilson is prepared to withdraw the substance of British power east of Suez, he should be prepared to relinquish the fragile symbol of British authority south of the Zambezi. But because of domestic and Commonwealth political pressures, he is opposed to Rhodesian independence unaccompanied by arrangements for speedily imposing a universal franchise. Washington's support of the sanctions resolution, designed to modify or overthrow the government of Ian Smith, is motivated by similar considerations.

While moderately effective economically, the U.N. sanctions have had an opposite and unintended political effect in Rhodesia—and for that matter in Zambia. The Smith régime has been strengthened and nudged toward the Right. It is not clear how long the "Smith moderates," as they are called in Salisbury, can hold their own against right-wingers who seem intent upon restricting even the present limited franchise, which extends to citizens of all races who meet minimum age, literacy, and income qualifications—provisions that effectively disenfranchise the great majority of black Rhodesians.

The internal problems of state-building aside, Mr. Marshall argues that external sanctions designed to effect internal political reform are beyond the proper competence of international politics. He insists upon *The Limits of Foreign Policy*, to use the title of his first book (1954). The state is antecedent to international politics. By its very nature it is endowed with certain prerogatives, rights, and responsibilities. Assuming Rhodesia to be a state, a proposition difficult to deny by any common-sense definition, the government in Salisbury is responsible for internal affairs and is enjoined from interfering in the internal affairs of other states.

By the same token, London (or Washington, or Moscow) has no mandate to interfere in Rhodesian affairs that have been the exclusive

responsibility of Salisbury since 1923, even though it is under pressure to take a conspicuous position against the limited franchise. Marshall argues that Britain has no clear legal right (with or without Security Council Support) to withhold a certificate of independence until certain internal political changes are made in Rhodesia. Mandatory U.N. sanctions, in his view, create a disquieting precedent for meddling in the affairs of other countries.

Incidentally, it is difficult to demonstrate that the abrupt granting of the vote to tribal and illiterate peoples, with only a marginal participation in the money economy, is the best or only way to build a national society based upon consent and dedicated to inalienable rights of all persons. Elsewhere in Africa, the instant franchise has not always led to stability or democratic government. Perhaps there is a better way? After all, we Americans took well over a century to universalize the ballot, starting with a tiny, white, educated, male, propertied elite. And eighteenth-century America was not confronted with the immense problems of transforming a fragmented tribal culture into a unified democratic society.

It is argued that the sanctions were voted because Rhodesia is a threat to the peace. Marshall is not convinced. Can anyone seriously charge that Rhodesia is threatening the integrity of any of its neighbors by aggressive or subversive behavior outside its borders? If there is a threat of international violence, it is not from Salisbury but from the self-styled "freedom fighters" who are illegally crossing Rhodesia's border for the express purpose of overthrowing the government by subversion and military force.

MR. MARSHALL is not prescriptive. He offers no specific "answer" to the Rhodesian question. He urges no voting scheme upon Salisbury. But he does challenge some of the premises, perhaps illusions, underlying U.S. and British policy, not only toward Rhodesia but toward the Third World generally. It is Mr. Marshall's wisdom and perspective, imaginatively applied to a specific current issue, that give this book its larger significance.

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ROGER D. MASTERS

THE MAYOR'S GAME, by Allan R. Talbot.
Harper & Row. \$6.95.

This year has seen a bumper crop of books about New Haven. Besides several novels set in the city, a children's book on Mayor Richard C. Lee, and Reuben Holden's pictorial history of Yale, we have had William Lee Miller's *The Fifteenth Ward and the Great Society*. Now, complementing Miller's picture of politics at the neighborhood level, Allan R. Talbot focuses on City Hall's leadership in what, the racial outbreaks of last August notwithstanding, has been one of the most progressive cities in the country.

Talbot hides neither Lee's devious strategic maneuvers nor his problems and failures. The sharp battles within his administration (particularly between the mayor and his first Development Administrator, Edward J. Logue, who has since moved on to Boston); the techniques of lining up support from the business community and the local press (frequently robbing the opposition of its potential leaders); the use of personal ties with Yale's late President A. Whitney Griswold to bail out a program or outwit its critics; the near collapse of a major downtown renewal project and the uproar over a plan to achieve school integration by bussing; Democratic Party infighting—it's all here.

Mayor Lee is easy to portray as an aggressive and effective leader devoted to reversing the trend of urban decay; Talbot also shows us a politician who carefully times two-minute "wake stops" at funerals, an administrator who increases his own control by encouraging competition among subordinates, and a man who enjoys razzing an over-