

Smith Tries To Look Liberal But Nobody Is Fooled

Rhodesian Prime Minister Ian Smith this week made known legislation to ease racial discrimination in that country, a hasty move to acquire some credibility for his "internal negotiations" with domestic tribal chiefs. Smith wants to undercut the position of the Rhodesian nationalist Patriotic Front and pre-empt expected new British interventions to bring about a peaceful transition to majority rule in Rhodesia.

Spokesmen for the Patriotic Front contemptuously rejected Smith's maneuver. The Front maintains that the basis for resumed negotiations is the willingness of Britain to take responsibility for enforcing the settlement.

Forward to the 1950s

Smith's anti-discrimination legislation, graciously approved by his Rhodesian Front Parliamentary caucus yesterday, essentially moves Rhodesia forward to the racial policies of pre-1954 Mississippi — optional rather than mandatory racism. Some restaurants, bars and lunch counters will now legally have the privilege of deciding for themselves who they will and will not serve, and some aspects of the Land Tenure Act, which sets racial policy for land ownership, will be set aside, although that act is not fundamentally changed.

Smith also trumpeted his "liberalization" move in an interview broadcast on the Feb. 20 "Issues and Answers" program on ABC-TV. The Rhodesian outlaw prime

minister asked for U.S. support for his internal negotiations in Rhodesia, adding that he "could think of nothing better" than the Carter Administration handling the situation.

Smith has in no way changed the Patriotic Front and front-line states' position, expressed some weeks ago and reiterated in the Feb. 21 issue of *Pravda*: "When Great Britain shows its readiness to take an unambiguously positive and more resolute position in order to achieve the transition of power, to the people of Zimbabwe, we can take a look at the question of initiating preliminary talks *with the British*."

Since that time, Patriotic Front co-chairman Joshua Nkomo has been lining up support for his movement in North Africa and from the Italian government of Giulio Andreotti. Last week Nkomo met with Italian Deputy Foreign Minister Ratti, who issued a communiqué supporting the Patriotic Front. Nkomo returned to Rome from Libya this week for further consultations.

It has been mooted, according to BBC, that new British Foreign Minister Owen may soon visit the front-line states and South Africa. In preparation for this, British representative Sir Anthony Duff had several meetings with State Department Africa Bureau chief William Schaufele. Far from inviting another round of U.S. shuttle-sabotage, Duff's mission was to discern American intentions, or, as a State Department spokesman put it, "the meetings were for *reconnaissance*."

EXCLUSIVE

Ethiopia Struggles To Escape Role As 'Horn Of Africa' Hotspot

by Douglas DeGroot

On Feb. 3 fighting broke out at the headquarters of the ruling Dergue (Provisional Military Coordinating Committee) in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. It began with an attempt to purge an alliance of nationalists and socialists which was quickly gaining increasing power over the Dergue. Had the purge succeeded, the country would have been plunged back into the disorder from which it has been slowly emerging since the end of 1975 after a period of complete chaos with the downfall of Emperor

Haile Selassie in 1974. But the purge attempt failed, and the ensuing half hour of fighting included among its victims the perpetrators of the intended purge, including its chief conspirator, Gen. Teferi Bante, the head of the Dergue.

The purge attempt occurred one month before the early March Afro-Arab summit meeting is scheduled to take place in Cairo. African and Arab governments have been preparing for this summit for months. It is intended