

AFRICA

"We Want Our Country"

(See Cover)

The Prime Minister of Rhodesia stood tall and thin in the cavernous banquet hall of the Meikles Hotel. Before him sat the leaders of Salisbury society, formally attired. They had raised glasses in a toast to their Queen, but nodded approvingly when he warned that they might soon be leaving her realm. Now they listened silently as Ian Smith, in the flat, nasal accent of the settler, read from the eve-of-

last week. "Your Majesty the Queen, we want our country!"

The British Prime Minister had come to Rhodesia to try, somehow, to prevent the white-supremacist colonial regime of Ian Smith from seizing independence. It was as critical a mission as Wilson had ever undertaken. The United Nations had urged sanctions to starve the settlers out. Some African states were talking of leaving the Commonwealth. And Wilson himself had talked grimly of the "bloodbath" that might follow a unilateral declaration of independence. At home, where many

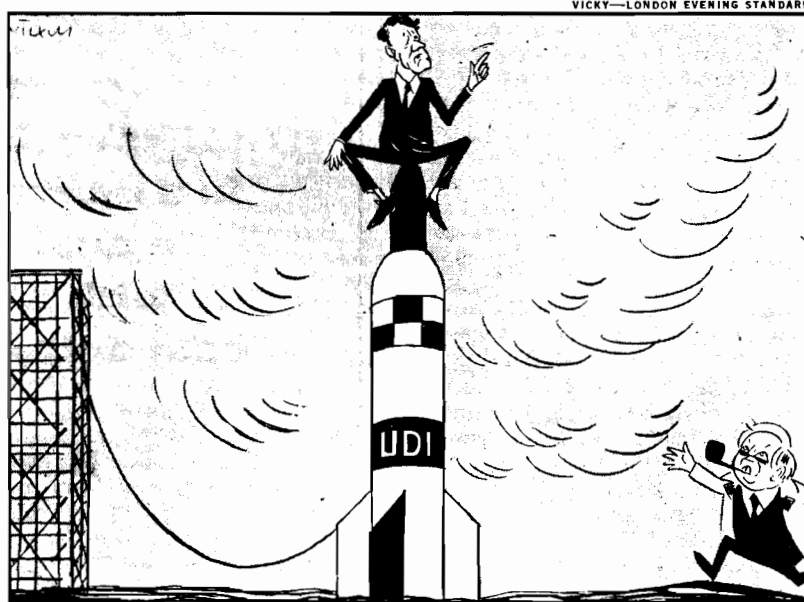
their beds and drive them off the land. As Africa's former colonies have been granted their freedom, the settlers have shaken their heads in dismay. They talk of the violence of the Congo, of the autocracy of Ghana, of Communist penetration everywhere, and of the fate of their cousins in Kenya. If the blacks get more freedom in Rhodesia, says one leading supporter of Smith, "there will be a Mau Mau here."

The Bluster. The white man's fate in the new black African nations has not been all that bad. Kenya's Mau Mau terrorism stopped at the first signs that independence would be granted, and the brutal slaughters of the Congo are so far the exception in Africa rather than the rule. The initial period of white panic and black exultation is past—a period that saw wholesale departures of colonial civil servants who took their "lumpers" (severance pay) when their jobs were "Africanized," or the thousands of European farmers who pulled up stakes and fled, out of some misbegotten sense of guilt and impending bloodshed.

The fact is that the whites who have remained are still working and raising their families in every one of Africa's 29 new black states—if for no other reason than that they are needed. For all his anti-colonialist bluster, Ghana's Kwame Nkrumah depends heavily on the 5,000 Britons (and scores of Americans) who live in his country, engineering dams and power projects, running factories and keeping trade channels open. Despite the horrors of the past, there are now 60,000 Belgians spread throughout the Congo (which once had 90,000), and the nation's industries, commerce and transport systems could not work without them. Last week the Congo's President Joseph Kasavubu went out of his way to assure "all foreigners living in the Congo" that "this is their country; they have their investments here."

Eager Italians. Throughout Africa, many departed whites have returned, or else have been replaced by newcomers from Europe. British railway workers, fired by the Kenya government at the demand of its labor unions, were back on their jobs a year later at much higher pay; too many trains had been going off the tracks. In the Congo's fertile Kivu region, deserted Belgian farmlands have been snapped up by eager Italians who are now making money hand over fist. Attracted by high salaries and a booming, open economy, the French population of the Ivory Coast has doubled in the past five years.

Throughout West Africa—and elsewhere as well—the relations between white and black are easier than they ever were under the colonial regimes. "Today we can say things to Africans



"FOUR, THREE, TWO, ONE-AND-A-HALF . . .": BRITAIN'S WILSON RUSHING TO STOP COUNTDOWN OF RHODESIA'S SMITH

battle speech of Henry V: "That he which hath no stomach to this fight, let him depart. He today that sheds his blood with me, shall be my brother, and gentlemen in England, now a-bed, shall think themselves accurs'd they were not here." When he finished, the Salisbury Municipal Orchestra played *God Save the Queen*.

Another throng of the Queen's subjects poured onto the tarmac of Salisbury Airport last week, but there were no leaders of society among them. For they were black, and had straggled in from the African townships of Harare and Highfield outside the city. They crowded onto balconies, perched in jacaranda trees, and clung to flagpoles around the airport building. More than 6,000 of them were squeezed in a tight mass, hemmed in on one side by a 12-ft. wire fence, on the other by a cordon of police and their dogs. When the R.A.F. Comet whistled to a stop and the chubby, unsmiling man appeared at the cabin door, they loosed a thundering cheer. "*Mambokadzi tinoda nyika yehu!*" roared the black Rhodesians who had come to greet Harold Wilson

Britons had blood ties with the settlers, he was under heavy fire to salvage some sort of solution, if only a delay that would prove that Britain had done its best.

Road to Suicide? Wilson's chances seemed slight. In his talks with Smith last month in London, it had become painfully clear that neither side would make any meaningful compromise on the fundamental issue. The British would give Rhodesia its freedom only on condition that the nation's 4,000,000 blacks be guaranteed control of the government within the foreseeable future. To most of the 220,000 whites, however, that would be suicide. They offered only two meaningless gestures: allowing more blacks to vote for the 15 African seats in parliament, and the creation of an almost powerless senate composed of twelve African chiefs (who depend for their livelihood on the government). Any further freedoms for the blacks were absolutely refused.

The Rhodesians are determined that the blacks will never rule. Deep in their hearts, they believe that the first African government would murder them in

that they would never have accepted before, simply because it is no longer the master talking," says a French Africa veteran. Adds a black waiter in Abidjan: "There is no racial discrimination here, only social differences."

Actually, individual whites have never held much land in West Africa, hence that region has been spared the embittered struggles between black and white that have cropped up in the cooler, more habitable reaches of the east. Even in the bloody Congo, Belgians blame themselves for much of the chaos and exonerate the Congolese for the slaughters that followed independence on the grounds that it was nothing more than tribal ebullience—long restrained by Belgian rule—expressing itself at the agitation of Communists.

Whites who have remained in Africa have stayed on in a less vocal but surprisingly more active role. The large white trading companies in former British West Africa are busier today than ever, and there is no sign of their withdrawal now or in the foreseeable future. Living standards for whites have inevitably progressed with the jet and transistor age: fresh newspapers and delicacies from Europe abound in African cities; Belgian pleasure craft swarm on the Congo River of a weekend; a few theaters in each capital allow whites to keep at least some touch with European culture.

Some countries have been tougher on whites than others. Prime examples: Tanzania, which as Tanganyika once had 22,700 whites, now has 17,000. Last year Julius Nyerere's oft-muddled government confiscated 34,000 acres of rich white-owned farmlands merely to assuage African resentments (and perhaps to undercut Communist pressures from within the government). But even at that, Tanzania's Agriculture Minister is a moderate ex-colonial, Derek Bryceson, who was overwhelmingly re-elected last month as a Gov-



AFRICANS IN HARARE TOWNSHIP
The partners are in the kitchen.

ernment Party stalwart. And Dar-es-Salaam is as benign and friendly a city as a European could hope to visit.

After Uhuru, What? Of all the newly independent black nations, Kenya provides the closest parallel to what Rhodesia might face if "one man, one vote" came true. It had a large population of white settlers (60,000 v. Rhodesia's 220,000), many of whom owned vast tracts in the "white highlands" northwest of Nairobi. Soon after *uhuru*, the government of Jomo Kenyatta bought up thousands of acres in the white highlands—at fair prices but with no refusal—and turned the land over to land-hungry Kikuyu families as part of Kenyatta's political debt to the tribe. Down came the trim hedges and the lofty stands of trees that the English farmers had so cherished; up went ramshackle huts and fields of maize.

Many whites bugged out in despair; others sold their farms but took jobs flying bush planes, running tourist camps, still staying in the grand, gaudy country they loved. Today, there are

41,000 whites in Kenya, and they are by their own testimony happier than they were before *uhuru*. From the four Kenya races—African, Asian, European and Arab—Jomo Kenyatta has forged the closest thing to a united nation that can be found in black Africa. More important, the four African ethnic groups—Bantu, Nilotic, Nilot-Hamitic and the Hamites—are in greater harmony now than ever before, much to the relief of whites and Asians who might otherwise feel their random wrath.

Sir Michael Blundell, a busky-cheeked pioneer who came out to Kenya 40 years ago with only a shotgun on his back, was ready to retire to England just a year ago. After a disappointing political comedown following *uhuru*, he felt the country did not need him. Now he plans to stay on in his fieldstone farmhouse above Nakuru as a brewery director. Says Blundell, who was in charge of putting down the Mau Mau insurrection: "I know now that there is no relationship between the African's outlook today and what it was before. He is much happier and more contented. It is stupid to embark on a policy which must fundamentally turn the African into your enemy. You would then have to control him *ad infinitum*, and that isn't bloody possible."

Totally Unfounded. Curious and moving testimony on black Africa's behalf was delivered fortnight ago when Lord Delamere, the very symbol of the colonial era in Kenya, tried to bring a delegation of white highlanders to Rhodesia to convince Rhodesians that rule by Africans is not so hideous as they might think. The Smith government denied them visas, but it could not shut them up. In a statement published by the Rhodesian press, Delamere said: "Some of us have known in the past what it is to stand up for our rights as settlers. Most of us had perfectly sincere reservations about the speed with which independence was granted to Kenya. Today, however, we must admit that a great many of our fears have so far proved totally unfounded."



BOWLERS IN SALISBURY PARK
The lions are on the escarpment.

Such words are lost on the Rhodesians, who can see nothing north of the Zambezi but Communism, horror and corruption. They prefer to turn their eyes southward to the Limpopo, Kipling's great grey-green, greasy river where the Elephant Child got his nose stretched out by the crocodile. Across the Limpopo lies the shining example of *apartheid* in South Africa.

Champagne for Whites. In the Afrikaner nation of Hendrik Verwoerd, there is no nonsense about who is *baas*. *Apartheid* (pronounced *apart-ite*) means just what it says—apartness—and the regime has gone to amazing lengths to keep the blacks apart. They must educate their children primarily in the Bantu language. They may live in

into a villain in the eyes of the world, but the effect is hardly noticeable. Not even the black African nations pay much attention to the U.N.'s call for an embargo on South African products. Zambia, for example, still buys nearly a third of its consumer goods from South Africa, and radical Mali's government-owned airline serves its passengers Outspan oranges from South African groves. South Africa is by far the greatest industrial power of the continent. At the moment, it is going through a mild recession after four furious years of boom, but under Johannesburg's growing Manhattan-like skyline the city races along at a Manhattan pace.

Rhodesia has not yet matched the brutality or scope of *apartheid*, but the

claims more swimming pools than any U.S. city of its size.

Preference for Land. Despite their good life, Rhodesia's whites still consider themselves frontiersmen in the mold of Cecil Rhodes, the free-swinging colossus who led Britain's last grasps of empire. Announcing that "I prefer land to niggers," he marched into the territory, developed it with his own money, policed it with his own troops and, on the basis of a royal charter granted his British South Africa Co., gave it a government traditionally free of direct London rule.

Most blacks now prefer to call their nation Zimbabwe, after the thousand-year-old ruins of a civilization of master artisans who apparently traded with places as far away as China. To Rhodes, however, it was Zambesia, realm of King Lobengula of the Matabeles, and coveted by the colossus as a link in his dream of an "all-red route" of British colonies from Cape Town to Cairo. Rhodes's interest was not exclusively imperial: Explorer David Livingstone had returned from the area some 30 years before with tales of gold nuggets "as big as grains of wheat."

Lobengula was a curious combination of statesman and savage. To demonstrate his ability to keep up to date, he had built a Victorian brick house among the wattle huts of his royal compound at Bulawayo. The brick pile was only ceremonial; he lived in a covered wagon given him by a passing trader and used its driver's seat as his throne. He loved to show bug-eyed visitors the royal treasury: two rusty biscuit tins filled with diamonds. A crafty giant of a man who stood 6 ft. 6 in. and weighed 300 lbs., the Matabele king was a skillful diplomat with a well-trained army constantly patrolling for trespassers. He had successfully parried the white man's advances for nearly 20 years.

The Pioneer Column. Rhodes got to him in 1888. In return for a promise to keep all other white marauders out of Zambesia, the King affixed his official elephant seal to a document awarding Rhodes's British South Africa Co. the right to dig for gold. Rhodes rushed off to London, passed off the agreement as authority to take possession of the land, and wangled a charter to administer it in the name of the Crown.

For the first expedition, Rhodes hired an army of 500 whites for the British South Africa Co.'s uniformed "police," 200 trusty blacks for servants. The heart of the column, however, was 200 hardy settlers, hand-picked to form a balanced community of professional skills and promised 15 gold claims and 3,000 acres of farmland apiece. By 1890, all was ready. Crossing the Limpopo, the pioneer column marched 400 miles northward, formally took possession of King Lobengula's vassal state of Mashonaland, and began staking out their plots. The old King was dismayed. "I thought you came to dig gold," he



CECIL RHODES (1896)



LOBENGULA & FAVORITE WIFE

"I thought you came to dig gold."

urban areas only on government permission, and even then they are confined to the sprawling African townships that surround every city. They have no political rights and must carry passes wherever they go. They may be hauled off to jail without pretext or shipped off to one of the eight "Bantustan republics," in which Verwoerd has decided that most blacks should live. Over the past 17 years, the regime has handed down 55 major laws to restrict the African in everything he does.

Though aimed at blacks, the authoritarian state's decrees slowly move in on whites as well. Enemies of the regime have been confined to their homes, or even jailed without trial, but the restrictions are more often maddening than menacing. Fairly typical is the plight of Diamond Heiress Mary Oppenheimer, whose wedding this week was to be followed by a formal champagne reception for both black and white guests. Clearly illegal, stormed the government: it would violate the laws against serving alcohol to nonwhites at a "racially mixed gathering."

Apartheid has turned South Africa

inclination of most of its settlers is obviously in that direction. They point out that the country would never be what it is without the energy, hard work and ingenuity of 75 years of white domination. And they have no intention of giving it away. "There will be no black rule in my lifetime," promises Prime Minister Ian Smith.

For the Rhodesian, there is much at stake. Few communities in the world can match the sun-drenched affluence that Rhodesia's hardy settlers have achieved for themselves. Lions still command the distant escarpments, and elephants, baboons and rhinos forage in the valleys of rivers bulging with hippos. But on rolling high veld, brushed with elephant grass and flowering jacaranda trees, the whites have carved out a tidy empire of modern tobacco farms and cattle ranches that has brought modest prosperity to the land. Taxes are low and so are prices; and, for whites, wages are high enough to permit all but the most menial workers their own cars, homes and servants. Salisbury, with a white population of 88,000 spread out over 30 square miles,

estate near Salisbury, talked the tobacco man into helping him found the Rhodesian Front to preserve "Rhodesia for the Rhodesians."

With Lilford paying most of the bills and Smith in charge of organization, the Rhodesian Front sprouted like mealies on the veld at Gatooma. All the rightist fringe groups, including the Dominion Party of Contractor William John Harper (now Internal Affairs Minister), got into the act, as did such present powers as South Africa-born Lawyer Desmond Lardner-Burke (Justice Minister) and Cattle Farmer James Angus Graham, the seventh Duke of Montrose (Agriculture Minister).

For all its potent figures, the Front was hardly a respectable organization—until it won the 1962 election. "They used to look at us at the Salisbury Club as if we'd come out of bad cheese," says Lilford. "They called us everything—cowboys, Nazis, the lot. They don't any longer."

In the interests of prestige, Smith chose a respected tobacco farmer named Winston Field, the best-known of all his candidates, as the Rhodesian Front's first Prime Minister. But Field was not radical enough to suit the party hierarchy. He approved of the Front's demands for independence, but opposed U.D.I. Finally, Smith himself moved into the Dutch-gabled house at 8 Chancellor Avenue, which is the official residence of the Prime Minister.

"My Cook & I." That was 18 months ago, and Smith has done little but prepare for U.D.I. ever since. He seldom entertains, usually eats a sparse lunch at home with his wife, and spends as much time as possible inside guarded gates of No. 8's jacaranda-lined grounds. No major legislation has emerged from his tour as Prime Minister, but to promote independence he has flown to London twice, held a national referendum, an *indaba* (meeting) of African chiefs (all government-paid) and a full-scale parliamentary election (in which the Front won all 50 white seats but did not even contest the 15 black ones).

Smith makes every effort to dress up Rhodesia's brand of white supremacy in respectable terms. He claims he is governing in the interests of the Africans, who could obviously not govern themselves. He points proudly to the fact that their living standard is higher in Rhodesia than in any of the black nations to the north. He boasts that 85% of all school-age children are actually in school and that there are modern hospitals for the blacks in Bulawayo and Salisbury. Blacks and whites get along just fine, he says; Rhodesia is a sort of "racial partnership." And what does that mean? "When my cook and I put on a dinner and it's a failure, both of us are at fault," explains Boss Lilford's wife Doris. "When my cook and I put on a dinner and it's a success, both of us deserve the credit. That is partnership."

And the Africans do all the cooking.

The overwhelming majority of blacks are allowed to go only as far as grammar school—"a waiter's education," as one African puts it. The nation has only three African lawyers, a dozen African doctors and not a single African in a key civil-service post. The few blacks allowed to sit in the legislature are powerless and afraid, for police-state laws allow the regime to confine any suspected troublemaker indefinitely and without explanation. The African congressmen, moreover, were all nominated by essentially white parties: the two major African political organizations have long ago been banned. One is the Zimbabwe African People's Union (ZAPU), whose burly leader, former Methodist Minister Joshua Nkomo, 48, has been held since April of last year at the steaming Gonakudzingwa "restriction center" near the Mozambique border. At another restriction camp at Wha Wha is the Rev. Ndabaningi ("A Lot of Trouble") Sithole, 45, a U.S.-educated Congregationalist minister who broke away from Nkomo in 1963 to form the rival Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU).



SMITH & WILSON IN SALISBURY
"Listen, the savages are singing."

By law, white workers must be given preference over black; the average black income is \$200 a year, the average white income \$2,000. A white telephone repairman is accompanied on his calls by his black assistant, who carries his six-pound tool kit, hands the *baas* his screwdrivers with operating-room efficiency, earns bare subsistence wages, and, at day's end, rides seven miles by bicycle or overcrowded bus to Highfield, one of the outlying African townships into which Salisbury's 300,000 blacks are crowded.

The townships are neat and well planned, and although few of their houses are equipped with electricity or running water, they compare favorably with the festering shantytowns of Latin America, Asia and other African countries. That point is lost on the Rhodesian black, who knows only that they are a far cry from the well-kept white suburbs through which he must ride. But he accepts his second-class citizenship impassively; a lack of education, ingrained docility and the state's efficient police leave him no choice.

But his life is getting worse. The government has recently tightened enforcement of the old Land Apportionment Act whereby blacks can no longer own or lease either stores or offices in downtown Salisbury. It is also trying to force private interracial schools to drop their African students. In the countryside, the government refuses to accept Africans' bids to buy unclaimed land supposedly open to them, and has set up controls to discourage Africans still living in tribal areas from moving to the cities. The motive is all too obvious: "If there is black rule in our lifetime," says Smith, "it will be our fault for allowing them to progress too rapidly."

It was Harold Wilson's task last week to determine just how much play there was in this rigid position. Not only had he to deal with Smith's "not in my lifetime" intransigence but also with the equally rigid demands of Rhodesia's black nationalist leaders for immediate "one-man-one-vote" equality. His task was made no easier by the ill-timed comment of the Archbishop of Canterbury, who asked the British government to use force to prevent U.D.I. Gripped one Whitehall, "This is a fine time to sing 'Onward Christian soldiers, shoot your kith and kin.'"

Wilson's strategy in Salisbury was to reach a "multilateralization" of discussion. "He wants to get so many people involved in the discussions, arguing about various approaches, that there will be a great number of confusing second thoughts," explained an aide. "He wants to move the negotiations away from the monolithic 'yes' and 'no' point where they have been."

The pace was wild and wearying: in his first 48 hours in Salisbury, Wilson met with 71 persons, ranging from members of Smith's "cowboy cabinet" through African chieftains in blue and purple robes to the leaders of ZANU and ZAPU. Among the deep carpets and mustachioed portraiture of Salisbury's Government House, the rambling, pillared seat of Britain's governor, Wilson resembled an Indian raja holding court. When Law and Order Minister Lardner Burke insisted that Wilson see ZAPU's "detained" Leader Joshua Nkomo at the airport rather than Government House—a move aimed at underscoring the "illegality" of Nkomo's party—Wilson snapped that he would see Nkomo and everyone else only at Government House.

Oil & Airlift. From the outset, Wilson found that Smith could not be budged from his bedrock position: Rhodesian independence, based on the 1961 constitution and sanctified by a "sacred treaty." At their first meeting, Wilson handed Smith a letter from the

Queen, expressing hopes for "a solution to the current difficulties"; Smith stuffed it in his pocket to read later. He thus made it clear there was no room in the treaty for the principle of majority rule in the foreseeable future.

With that, Wilson turned to another tack: subtle (and not-so-subtle) hints of the dangers of U.D.I. If Rhodesians felt they could break with Britain and escape hardships, they were wrong. Wilson pointed out that 48 countries had already subscribed to sanctions against Rhodesia in the event of U.D.I., and that it would be a simple matter to cut off the nation's oil by embargo. Even though Portugal would probably keep some oil flowing into Rhodesia through Angola or Mozambique, it would be a scant and stopgap measure at best.

As to Rhodesia's capability of making life tough for landlocked, black-ruled Zambia to the north, which relies on Rhodesian rails to carry its copper to market, Wilson raised the prospects of a joint U.S.-British Berlin-style airlift. That was faintly ludicrous, since expensive, airborne copper could hardly compete for long, but it was meant to demonstrate that Britain was not about to be bullied by threats of Rhodesian countermoves.

Safety in Stalemate. As the stalemate wore on, the voices of Rhodesia's blacks poured in with rising volume. "Listen," said one white Rhodesian, "the savages are singing." They were indeed. Under black umbrellas and dazzling *doeks* (headdresses), the African masses chanted "We want our country," and sang "Zimbabwe shall be free." But the sheer inertia of the positions—the safety, however momentary, that is inherent in stalemate—slowly took effect.

In a sudden series of face-saving shifts, Smith rejected a Wilson proposal for a royal commission to draw up a new constitution for independence, countered smartly with a plan for a "joint" commission (three Rhodesians and two Britons) to decide only if the principles of the 1961 Constitution, with some adjustments, could be adapted to become the basis of Rhodesian independence. To Wilson, it was as unexpected as it was downright "ingenious." It meant that Wilson and Smith could continue talking without either side backing down on principle.

Still, Wilson has no illusions about ultimate agreement. He left Salisbury with the impression that there was only one chance in a hundred of the joint commission actually coming up with a constitutional formula. But the immediate threat of U.D.I. and all its ugly ramifications had—for the moment—been averted. It remained to be seen if Rhodesia's blacks would be as patient as Wilson was willing to be. As he boarded his R.A.F. Comet in the bright sunlight of Salisbury Airport Saturday morning, Wilson left behind a frozen silence. But frost, in the Rhodesian context, is better than fire.