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SOUTHERN RHODESIA

Statement to be made in the Fourth Committee by the Canadian Representative, Mrs. Edwin Fullerton, on the question of Southern Rhodesia (Item 23) on Friday, October 14, 1966

Since the last discussion in this Committee on Rhodesia on the day of the illegal declaration of independence, there have been many developments concerning this crucial problem. Important resolutions have been passed by the United Nations General Assembly and the Security Council. The Council's Resolution 217 of November 20, 1965, called on all states "to do their utmost to break all economic relations" with Rhodesia. This resolution was a major step in the Rhodesian situation and in the history of the United Nations. The Commonwealth Prime Ministers, who devoted much attention to Rhodesia at their meetings in 1964 and 1965, held two meetings in 1966, one at Lagos in January entirely devoted to Rhodesia, and one in London last month at which most of the time was spent on this problem.

The policy of my country in this situation has been to act vigorously in support of United Nations decisions. Canada recognizes that Britain has the constitutional responsibility for Rhodesia and Canada has of course refused to

recognize the illegal declaration of independence and the illegal regime. Canada also strongly supports the role of the Commonwealth in this problem and especially the meetings of its Heads of Government since the Rhodesia problem is of fundamental concern to the multi-racial Commonwealth. The illegal regime and all it stands for in seeking to perpetuate political dominance of a racial minority is anathema to the Commonwealth which is based on the principle of non-discrimination and equal opportunity.

Accordingly and pursuant to the Security Council resolution of November 20, Canada took prompt action to place a complete embargo on trade with Rhodesia with very limited exceptions of a humanitarian nature and has kept the United Nations informed of our decision. Canada has also provided economic assistance designed to help Zambia in the difficulties created by the illegal situation in Rhodesia and to help Zambia achieve a further reduction in its trade with Rhodesia. We participated in a major oil airlift to Zambia earlier this year and we are providing some other economic assistance with the same aims. We fully appreciate the severe strains and tension to which Zambia is being subjected by the continuation of the illegal situation. The Canadian delegation would like to pay tribute here to the statesmanlike leadership of President Kaunda in these very difficult times for his country.

Canada has been only one of a great many governments which have cooperated in implementing the recommendation of November 20 designed to end the illegal situation as the first step to independence on the basis of majority rule. The effect of this economic sanctions campaign has been disappointingly slow. Our disappointment, however, should not blind us to the fact that some progress has been made in this campaign. Although the political effect inside Rhodesia has been limited to date, partly by the illegal regime's ability to conceal and cushion economic effects, the economy controlled by the illegal regime is being progressively damaged by the loss of imports and exports. This effect was slow in developing, partly because of delays in the full implementation of various embargoes. My Government has been concerned to note also that there are a number of gaps and evasions in the trade bans imposed by various governments. The Commonwealth Heads of Government agreed in London last month that though sanctions had undoubtedly depressed the Rhodesian economy they were unlikely at their present level to achieve the desired political objectives within an acceptable period of time. Accordingly, the Heads of Government were generally agreed on the need for stronger and mandatory economic sanctions under Chapter VII of the United Nations Charter. This agreement was recorded in the Communique of the meeting which is therefore relevant to our discussions.

Most Commonwealth Heads of Government wanted general mandatory sanctions under Chapter VII whereas others favoured sanctions on selected individual commodities important to the economy of Rhodesia. Canada was among the latter countries because we are not convinced that application to Rhodesia of general mandatory sanctions under Article 41 is the right course. My delegation believes that future United Nations action in this field should be measured by the limits of the practical and the feasible. Mandatory sanctions on selected commodities which are now evading the embargoes would fit this requirement. We think that such selective mandatory sanctions would be a useful and practical step forward. The Canadian Government therefore hopes that all states, including those that would prefer general mandatory sanctions, can and will agree on the desirability of selective mandatory sanctions. We support the intention of the British Government to co-sponsor a Security Council resolution to this effect before the end of this year if the illegal situation has not ended and given full support of Commonwealth members in the United Nations, which we strongly hope will be forthcoming.

At the same time my delegation is aware that there are members of the United Nations, including members of the Commonwealth, who prefer the alternative method of ending the illegal situation by the use of force. From the beginning, the Canadian Government has had serious misgivings about such a course of action. The force required would be considerable. The resulting destruction in Rhodesia would be a heavy price to pay. Repercussions inside and outside Rhodesia, politically, socially and economically would be very grave. As pointed out therefore by the Canadian Secretary of State for External Affairs in the General Debate on September 23, Canada asks whether the use of force would achieve the results we desire. Might it not hurt those whom it was designed to help?

The Commonwealth Prime Ministers at their meeting in London were not agreed on the question of force. I should point out, however, that after full and frank discussions they were agreed on the need for some mandatory sanctions, on the desirability of aid to Zambia and on the continuation of the Commonwealth Sanctions Committee which was established by the Lagos Conference to review the effects of sanctions and to help coordinate aid to Zambia. Above all, there was agreement in London on the objectives of ending the illegal situation as the first step to a just society in Rhodesia based on non-discrimination and equality of opportunity. My delegation would point out that the British Government has given important undertakings. If the illegal regime does not agree to the restoration

of legal government under the executive authority of the Governor, Britain will, as I have noted, be prepared to co-sponsor selective mandatory sanctions in the Security Council before the end of this year. The British Government will also withdraw all previous constitutional proposals and will not thereafter be prepared to submit to the British Parliament a settlement which involves independence before majority rule. These undertakings are dependent on full Commonwealth support. I would hope that in fact support of all the United Nations members would be achieved for these steps which would strengthen the sanctions campaign significantly and further the objective of an independent Rhodesia based on majority rule. The Canadian Government has long supported this basis for independence.

I would urge that United Nations members and all states give full support to economic measures which have been or may be decided upon by the Security Council. That these measures are proving more difficult and less quickly effective than we had anticipated underlines the need for strengthening this support. The Canadian Government fully understands and sympathizes with the attitude of our African colleagues at the intolerable affront represented by this illegal regime. We much regret the hardships now being suffered by the majority of the people of Rhodesia. We would urge that support for the practical new measures to be presented in the Security Council represents an effective response to these concerns. We would also hope that our discussions here and any resolutions passed by this Committee would not render more difficult the introduction and implementation of the new and practical measures envisaged for tackling this problem before the end of this year.