

June 27, 1979

Best two-out-of-three in Rhodesia

I AM IMPELLED, pursuant to the injunction that requires you to state the case you disagree with in its most persuasive mode, to put forward the arguments of what one might call reasonable anti-sanction-lifters in the great Rhodesian debate.

This excludes Andrew Young and his gang in the United Nations, together with those in the State Department who are emotionally sympathetic to the movement of Nkomo and Mugabe and the Patriot Front.

I SPEAK OF such men as Stephen Solarz, the young Brooklyn congressman whose role as chairman of the House Subcommittee on African Affairs has been crucial; and of Allard Lowenstein, the prominent liberal lawyer and former congressman whose considerable influence issues, ex officio, from his unassailable idealism.

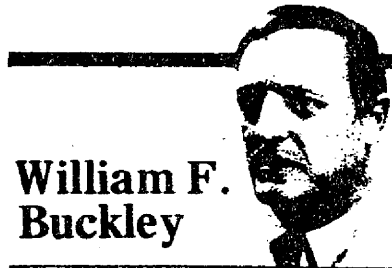
Here is what they are saying:

1) The transfer of power to Bishop Muzorewa is not accepted as such until it is viewed as an "ongoing process." It is as if the Constitution of the United States went into effect, the marginal state having ratified, and a country was born. But would the new country work? Will Rhodesia be convincingly governed by the majority?

2) In order that this demonstration be made, there must arise a point of contention between the black majority in the assembly and the white minority. It could be symbolic in character: for instance, the designation of qualified blacks to vacated positions even in those ministries constitutionally as-

signed to the whites to supervise during the 10-year-long constitution. A contest in which the blacks prevailed is judged a psychic necessity.

3) The constitution having been drafted by whites and approved by them is judged for that reason to be



William F. Buckley

contaminated. Needed: a second election called by Muzorewa, in which the followers of Mugabe and Nkomo are specifically invited, by the use of electoral rolls, to participate.

4) On the assumption that any refusal of at this point by Mugabe and Nkomo would result in their disavowal by Nyerere of Tanzania and Kaunda of Zambia, the way would now be cleared for Mrs. Thatcher's government to propose the reintegration of Zimbabwe-Rhodesia into the Commonwealth.

5) That having been done, the United States would instantly lift sanctions, in return for which Ian Smith would resign his present position as minister without portfolio.

PRESSURE WOULD be put on moderate black leaders in the United States to recognize that all reasonable condi-

tions have been met to qualify the new state for recognition as an independent country in which a constitution guarantees minority rights.

6) The argument that it is preposterous to worry about democratic or ethnic niceties in a single state in a continent conspicuous for its 1-party rule and tribal animosities has a moral, but no existential, bearing. The fact of it is that we are dealing now with Rhodesia, not with the Central African Republic.

7) The only way Zimbabwe-Rhodesia can hold out under existing arrangements is to receive massive aid from South Africa. Although it is true South Africa is willing to provide such aid, the receipt of it and the *de facto* dependency on a white-supremacy state would greatly diminish Muzorewa's prospects of recognition in the black community.

8) The whites in Rhodesia will, under the proposed arrangements, need to swallow their pride yet again. But what is the alternative? They can leave the country, as many are doing; they can continue to get killed in an endless defensive operation. Or they can go through the exercise with a reasonable chance that, a year from now, the guerrillas will have been isolated and the country gradually restored.

There, now. I feel like Clarence Darrow having argued the literal interpretation of the Bible. I have discharged an obligation.