

CONFIDENTIAL



Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

11 August 1980

*Previous papers on
Part 16 of this file*

Dear Mike,

General Walls' interview on Panorama

/ I attach a line to take with the press in reply to questions about the reports on tonight's interview on Panorama.

The Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary feels very strongly that we should avoid getting embroiled in a public controversy with General Walls. In the course of the negotiations we took him into our confidence to a substantial extent. He is an emotional man and we know that, however wrongly, he feels embittered over the role played by HMG. He considers that he was given assurances which were subsequently not fulfilled. Our objectives should be to let the affair die away as quickly as possible and, above all, to avoid provoking Walls into further public comments. In particular, it would be helpful if appreciation could be expressed of the key role which he played in the transition to independence: by implication this will help to explain why Walls was given access to the Prime Minister.

We shall be having a further look during the course of today at the Government's contacts with General Walls during the Lancaster House Conference and subsequently: and shall offer further advice tomorrow on the line to be taken in the light of the full broadcast. While General Walls may make further points which require an answer, we think that our objective should be to avoid replying in detail to everything which he says.

Yours ever

Roderic Lyne

(R M J Lyne)
Private Secretary

M Pattison Esq
10 Downing Street
London

CONFIDENTIAL

Line to Take with the Press

We have not yet seen the full interview.

General Walls did indeed send the Prime Minister a message shortly after the Rhodesian elections (the message was in fact received on 2 March). The Prime Minister ~~did not reply in writing.~~

arranged for her to declare them null & void
we didn't foresee to see General Walls personally
to explain why she
felt that could not be done,

However the Governor's Office ~~delivered an oral reply on her behalf.*~~

The reply made clear that in the light of reports from the election supervisors and observers, the Prime Minister ~~did not consider that there were any grounds on which the election could be declared null and void.~~ She did not consider that there were any grounds on which the election could be declared null and void. These reports, and the reports which have appeared since by groups of international observers, have all agreed that while there may have been some intimidation, the elections were as free and fair as was possible in the circumstances and constituted a genuine expression of the will of the Zimbabwean people.

De facto. This situation makes believe Gen Walls + the

General Walls has played a key role, both before and after independence in the Rhodesian settlement, and in the transition to peace, to legality and to majority rule. It was a courageous decision on his part to assume responsibility at a crucial time for the military integration programme.

The PM + F.S. have been repud for the
General Walls
standing

Dep. Gov. look place on

If pressed on the question of intimidation

The size of Mr Mugabe's victory suggests that intimidation, which was not confined to one side, could not significantly have affected the outcome.

Did General Walls have direct access to the Prime Minister?

Yes. General Walls was a key figure in the negotiations and it was agreed that he should be able to speak to the Prime Minister personally, if necessary.

*[telegrams of instructions enclosed: I understand that you have spoken to Sir A Duff about this].



If Pressed

Did General Walls in fact meet the Prime Minister?

Yes. And as General Walls has said, the Prime Minister told him that he could get in touch with her if matters of critical importance arose.

When did General Walls meet the Prime Minister?

On 6 December, when the Lancaster House Conference was drawing to a close.

Why did the Prime Minister agree to meet him/Why was the meeting not announced?

In the last days of the Conference the Prime Minister met leaders on both sides. Although not a delegation leader, General Walls held a position of critical importance, as the Government had recognised from the outset. Without his support, implementation of the settlement would not have been possible: and he has subsequently played a vital part in the transition to independence, by continuing until recently to lead the joint military command.

[If pressed]

~~A meeting between the Prime Minister and General Walls was bound to be a sensitive matter with the negotiations reaching their climax. It was therefore decided not to make a public announcement at that time.~~

General Walls claims that he has been let down

The Government carried out the Lancaster House agreement and held elections, with the support and cooperation of General Walls, which resulted in a democratically elected government.

[If pressed on why ZANU was not banned]

In the view of the Governor and of the Election Commissioner, there was a degree of intimidation on all sides: but this did not justify the banning of one party.



11 AUG 1980

11 AUG 1980

Faint, illegible text covering the majority of the page, likely bleed-through from the reverse side.

Line to Take with the Press

We have not yet seen the full interview.

General Walls did indeed send the Prime Minister a message shortly after the Rhodesian elections asking her to declare them null and void. (The message was in fact received on 2 March.) The Prime Minister arranged for the Deputy Governor to see General Walls personally the following day to explain why, in the light of reports from the election supervisors and observers, she did not consider that there were any grounds on which the elections could be declared null and void. These reports, and the reports which have appeared since by groups of international observers, have all agreed that while there may have been some intimidation, the elections were as free and fair as was possible in the circumstances and constituted a genuine expression of the will of the Zimbabwean people.

The Prime Minister and the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary have great regard for the key role which General Walls played, both before and after independence, in the Rhodesian settlement. It was a courageous decision on his part to assume responsibility at a crucial time for the military integration programme.