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SUBJECT



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10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

19 February 1980

Dear Rosene,

Message from President Kaunda

The Zambian High Commissioner called on the Prime Minister this morning to deliver the enclosed message from President Kaunda.

The Prime Minister thanked Miss Chibesakunda for the message and said that she would arrange for the points made in it to be considered urgently. She added that Mr. Nkomo's performance in Rhodesia since his return there had been marvellous. It was a pity that others had not achieved the same standards. Miss Chibesakunda said that her Government had also been pleased by the performance of ZAPU. However they were deeply perturbed by reports available to them about the situation in Rhodesia. There were three points which President Kaunda had asked her to draw to the Prime Minister's attention.

In President Kaunda's judgement it was unfortunate that Mr. Garfield Todd had been arrested. Mr. Todd had been trying to act as a bridge between the various parties in Rhodesia. It was to be hoped that, in view of his helpful activities over a long period, the charges against him would be dropped. The Prime Minister said that the handling of Mr. Todd's case was entirely a matter for the Rhodesian authorities and would be decided in Rhodesia. However it was not beyond the bounds of possibility that matters would turn out in the way President Kaunda hoped.

Miss Chibesakunda said that there were still a large number of South African troops in Rhodesia. Their activities were not conducive to the holding of free and fair elections. Their presence on the borders of Rhodesia was a threat to the neighbouring countries, in particular Zambia, and to the internal parties. The Prime Minister said that she did not, of course, know in detail where the South African members of the Rhodesian Armed Forces were deployed but that in any case the threat to the electoral process in Rhodesia lay elsewhere. The situation in the West and North of the country was relatively calm and campaigning was taking place there. In the East, on the other hand, intimidation was rife. Mr. Nkomo had complained about it and was unable to campaign there. If the efforts being made by the

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other parties were not reciprocated by ZANU there was a real possibility that Mr. Nkomo and Bishop Musorewa might withdraw from the elections. There were only eight days left before voting began. It was essential that every effort should be made to end the intimidation and to make it possible for a free and fair election to take place on the due date.

Miss Chibesakunda raised the question of the difficulties being encountered by refugees wishing to return to Rhodesia from Zambia. She said that a few days previously about 70 men had been returned on the grounds that they had undergone military training in Zambia. The Prime Minister pointed out that military personnel should not be crossing the border now. If they were not already in assembly areas, they should remain in Zambia. In any case the programme to return the refugees had, taken as a whole, been a major achievement. Over 25,000 people had returned to Rhodesia in the last month. She was sure that the difficulties on the Zambian border could be sorted out.

Miss Chibesakunda said that President Kaunda recognised what had been achieved so far. He was anxious that those achievements should be preserved. He wished to remain in close touch with the Prime Minister in the period remaining before the elections took place. It was essential that there should be mutual confidence between the British and Zambian Governments. The Prime Minister agreed about the need for mutual confidence and about the need to remain in touch. The elections were so close that the very real difficulties which remained should not be allowed to affect them. She hoped that President Kaunda would make a renewed effort to help resolve the problem of intimidation.

1 You will no doubt be considering the desirability of an early reply from the Prime Minister to President Kaunda.

Yours ever

Richard Alexander

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