

THE EXECUTIVE MANSION  
OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT  
MONROVIA, LIBERIA

*C. F.W.*

*for  
Nunt*

S T A T E M E N T

BY

DR. WILLIAM R. TOLBERT, JR.  
PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF LIBERIA

&

CURRENT CHAIRMAN OF THE  
ORGANIZATION OF AFRICAN UNITY

AT THE

L U N C H E O N

IN HIS HONOUR

BY

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE MARGARET THATCHER  
PRIME MINISTER OF THE UNITED KINGDOM

LONDON, DECEMBER 10, 1979

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HONOURABLE PRIME MINISTERS;  
MR. THATCHER;  
LORD MINISTERS;  
EXCELLENCIES;  
DISTINGUISHED LADIES AND GENTLEMEN;  
FRIENDS:

YOU HAVE ONCE MORE OCCASIONED AN HISTORIC MEETING -- THIS TIME, INVOLVING THE FIRST LIBERIAN CHAIRMAN OF THE ORGANIZATION OF AFRICAN UNITY AND THE FIRST LADY PRIME MINISTER IN THE HISTORY OF ENGLAND AND OF EUROPE!

SINCE YOUR RECENT ELECTION TO THIS HIGH OFFICE, YOUR FIRMNESS AND FLEXIBILITY HAVE OFTEN BEEN COMPARED TO THE COMPONENTS OF STEEL. BUT WE FEEL CONFIDENT THAT THE PEOPLE OF AFRICA WILL

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APPRECIATIVELY AGREE THAT YOUR LEADERSHIP IS  
STEEL-LIKE AS WELL AS STEADFAST, COURAGEOUS  
AS WELL AS CONSIDERATE, PURPOSEFUL AS WELL AS  
PATIENT.

ON BEHALF OF THE GOVERNMENT AND PEOPLE OF  
LIBERIA, OUR SUITE AND MRS. TOLBERT, WE EXTEND  
TO YOU, THE GOVERNMENT AND PEOPLE OF THE UNITED  
KINGDOM OUR DEEP APPRECIATION AND GRATITUDE FOR  
YOUR KIND INVITATION TO PAY AN OFFICIAL VISIT  
TO BRITAIN; ESPECIALLY AT THIS TIME OF CONFRON-  
TATION IN AFRICA.

NOW THAT IRON HAS BECOME A GREAT FAVOURITE  
OF THE BRITISH ELECTORATE, WE HOPE THAT LIBERIA,  
A TRADITIONAL IRON ORE PRODUCER, WILL ENJOY A

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MOST FAVOURED NATION STATUS HERE IN ENGLAND!

HONOURABLE PRIME MINISTER: FOR SCORES OF DECADES, THE AFRICAN COUNTRY OF RHODESIA LAY PROSTRATE UNDER THE COLONIAL YOKE. AND FOR OVER ONE ADDITIONAL DECADE, SHE DRIFTED RE- PRESSIVELY IN THE LIMBO OF DEFIANT, REBELLIOUS ILLEGITIMACY. THEN, IN ABOUT FOURTEEN WEEKS, UPON THE ADVENT OF YOUR PRAGMATIC GOVERNMENT, IN EXERCISING IT RESPONSIBILITY, A WELCOME PERIOD OF PRUDENCE AND PROMISE HAS BEEN USHERED IN ZIMBABWE.

WE CONGRATULATE AND THANK YOU HEARTILY FOR THIS ACHIEVEMENT.

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IN PARAPHRASE OF DISRAELI, HONOURABLE PRIME MINISTER, LORD CARRINGTON AND YOURSELF HAVE SKILLFULLY WROUGHT THE PREMISE OF PEACE IN ZIMBABWE, AND WE CAN ONLY HOPE THAT IT WILL STAND FOR THE HONOUR OF BRITAIN AND OF AFRICA.

MAY I CORRESPONDINGLY STATE, HONOURABLE PRIME MINISTER, THAT IN AFRICA THE LEADERS OF THE PATRIOTIC FRONT ARE TOWERING HIGH TODAY, FOR THEY HAVE WITHSTOOD NOT ONLY THE SCARS OF CONFLICT BUT HAVE BRAVELY BORNE THE TRIALS OF MANY CONFERENCES. WE COMMEND AND CONGRATULATE THEM ALSO FOR THEIR UNIQUE CONTRIBUTIONS OF PERSEVERANCE, RESTRAINT AND ACCOMMODATION TO THIS SOLID ACHIEVEMENT. AGAIN, AFRICA OWES A

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LASTING DEBT OF GRATITUDE TO THE HEROES OF THE  
FRONTLINE STATES, BOTH PEOPLE AND LEADERS, FOR  
THEIR STRENGTH OF PURPOSE AND THEIR ENDURING  
SACRIFICE IN THE CAUSE OF AFRICAN EMANCIPATION.

IN AFRICA WE LOVE PEACE, BUT, ALAS, NO  
PRICE IS TOO GREAT TO PAY FOR THE PRIZE OF  
LIBERTY.

WE MUST PERMIT NOTHING NOW TO TURN BACK  
THE HANDS OF TIME!

ALL MANKIND, WE BELIEVE, HAS AN INALIENABLE  
AND IRREPRESSIBLE RIGHT TO SELF-DETERMINATION, TO  
LIBERTY AND TO PROSPERITY; TO DIGNITY, JUSTICE AS  
WELL AS DECENCY.

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AND PRIVILEGED TO SPEAK AS THE CURRENT  
CHAIRMAN OF THE ORGANIZATION OF AFRICAN UNITY,  
I CANNOT MORE GRAVELY STRESS THAT THE RIGHTS  
OF THE MAJORITY OF HUMANITY IN NAMIBIA AND  
SOUTH AFRICA CANNOT, AND WILL NOT BE LEFT IN  
ABEYANCE TO BE TRAMPLED UPON PERSISTENTLY BY  
A RACIST MINORITY.

NOR WILL THE WHOLE AFRICAN COMMUNITY OF  
NATIONS PERMIT ILLEGAL AND REPRESSIVE REGIMES  
IN SOUTHERN AFRICA TO CONTINUE TO ABUSE THE  
SOVEREIGNTY AND TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY OF  
INDEPENDENT COUNTRIES IN THE AREA.

THE VOICES OF THE MAJORITY MUST BE HEARD, THEIR CHOICES MUST BE RECOGNIZED, THEIR ASPIRATIONS RESPECTED, AND THESE MUST BE TIMELY ACHIEVED IN AN ATMOSPHERE OF CONCORD, MOST PREFERABLY AND HOPEFULLY AROUND THE CONFERENCE TABLE.

HONOURABLE PRIME MINISTER: SINCE PEACE IS PROLOGUE TO DEVELOPMENT AND PROGRESS, WITH EACH SETTLEMENT FOR PEACE THE ISSUES OF PROSPERITY ARISE. AND AFRICA'S CLAIMS AGAINST RACISM AND AGAINST COLONIALISM BECOMES AFRICA'S CASE AGAINST DEVELOPED NATIONS.

SADLY, DESPITE CENTURIES-OLD RELATIONSHIPS, THE DIFFERENCES IN LIVING STANDARDS BETWEEN DEVELOPED AND DEVELOPING COUNTRIES ARE MASSIVE AND EXPANDING, WHILE THE ECONOMIES OF AFRICAN NATIONS ARE BY FAR OUTDISTANCED BY THOSE OF OTHER CONTINENTS.



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AFRICA'S SHARE IN WORLD INDUSTRIAL OUTPUT IS SIX-TENTHS OF ONE PER CENT, COMPARED WITH 93 PER CENT FOR DEVELOPED NATIONS, AND 6.4 PER CENT FOR ASIA AND LATIN AMERICA.

AFRICA HAS THE HIGHEST INFANT MORTALITY IN THE WORLD.

THE MAJORITY OF EARTH'S POOREST NATIONS IS IN AFRICA.

OUR POPULATION GROWS AT A RATE MUCH LESS THAN THE RATE OF OUR FOOD PRODUCTION.

AND FOR ALMOST TWO DECADES OUR INCOME PER CAPITA HAS RANGED FROM A NEGATIVE RATE TO 1.8 PER CENT, AT CONSTANT PRICES.

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TO ALL THESE WE ADD THE RATHER IMPOSED  
PARAMETERS OF HIGH EXTERNAL DEBTS AND HIGHER  
ENERGY COSTS, DECLINING EXPORT DEMAND AND  
DETERIORATING TERMS OF TRADE.

FOR OUR OWN PART, THE OAU HAS ADOPTED IN  
MONROVIA, A DECLARATION OF COMMITMENT FOR  
POSITIVE ECONOMIC ACTIONS TO BE TAKEN BY THE  
YEAR 2000. AND STUDIES ARE NOW UNDERWAY FOR  
CONVENING AN EXTRAORDINARY SUMMIT ON ECONOMIC  
DEVELOPMENT EARLY NEXT YEAR IN LAGOS, NIGERIA.

IN AN IMPORTANT MANNER, THE SERIOUS  
CHALLENGES OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FOR AFRICA,  
IMPLY SUBSTANTIVE CHANCES FOR MULTILATERAL AND  
BILATERAL COOPERATION AS WELL AS PRIVATE INVEST-  
MENTS.

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THE OPPORTUNITIES FOR COOPERATION WERE FIRST SEIZED BETWEEN BRITAIN AND LIBERIA IN 1847. LIBERIA RECEIVED HER FIRST GRANT FROM HER MAJESTY QUEEN VICTORIA IN 1848, AND HER FIRST DEVELOPMENT LOAN FROM BRITISH BANKS IN 1871.

IN SUM, OUR RELATIONSHIP HAS TRAVERSED A RUGGED, BUT SATISFYING COURSE, AND WE ARE HAPPY TO ACKNOWLEDGE THAT BRITAIN HAS GAINED A SHARE IN OUR DEVELOPMENT AND A STAKE IN OUR FUTURE.

HONOURABLE PRIME MINISTER: UNDER YOUR ABLE GUARDIANSHIP, THOUGH IN THE MIDST OF WIDESPREAD INFLATION, RECESSION AND UNEMPLOYMENT, BRITAIN HAS SECURED IN AFRICA A VICTORY FOR PEACE, AFRICA WILL TRUST ALSO IN THE CARRY OVER OF YOUR LEADERSHIP UPON A VICTORIOUS COURSE TO DEVELOPMENT.

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MANY DEEDS WILL SEAL THIS CONFIDENCE --  
THROUGH YOUR MANAGEMENT OF THE TRANSITION TO  
MAJORITY RULE IN ZIMBABWE; THROUGH YOUR EQUAL  
PROTECTION OF MAJORITY AND MINORITY; THROUGH  
YOUR EFFECTIVE PREVENTION OF RACIST ALIEN  
INFRINGEMENTS AND INTERFERENCES; AND THROUGH  
YOUR BALANCED COUNSEL IN OTHER GLOBAL DISPUTES  
OF THE PRESENT AND FUTURE.

AS OLIVER CROMWELL STATED, (QUOTE) THOUGH  
PEACE BE MADE, YET IT IS INTEREST THAT KEEPS  
PEACE. (UNQUOTE) IF GENUINE, OUR INTEREST IN  
PEACE WILL EXTEND PARTICULARLY TO DEVELOPMENT --  
TO WIDENING TECHNICAL SERVICES, TO MORE ADEQUATE  
FLOWS OF FINANCE, BACKED BY MUTUAL INVESTMENT  
PROTECTION AGREEMENTS, TO EXPANDING LEVELS OF  
COMMERCE AND TO NEWER RESOURCE DISCOVERIES.

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IN THE INTEREST OF A DEEPER RELATIONSHIP,  
WE HOPE YOU WOULD DO LIBERIA THE HONOUR, AT  
YOUR CONVENIENCE, OF RECIPROCATING OUR OFFICIAL  
VISIT TO THE UNITED KINGDOM, IN FOND ANTICIPATION  
OF WHICH WE EXTEND YOU NOW THIS FORMAL  
INVITATION.

HONOURABLE PRIME MINISTER: AT THIS CHRIST-  
MASTIDE, THE STAR OF PEACE HAS PEAKED ABOVE AN  
ENDANGERED, TROUBLED WORLD. MAY THE GLOW FROM  
THAT STAR IGNITE THE BEAMS OF GOODWILL WITHIN  
ALL HUMAN HEARTS, THAT HARMONY AMONG AND LOVE  
TO ALL MANKIND WILL REIGN. IN KEEPING WITH THE  
MIND OF THE PRINCE OF PEACE, WE MUST BURN BRIGHT  
THE LAMPS OF PEACE, TO ENSURE A NEW WORLD ORDER  
OF GOODWILL AND JUSTICE, HUMAN DIGNITY AND  
PROSPERITY FOR THE NOBLE FAMILY OF MAN.

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LORD MINISTERS, EXCELLENCIES, DISTINGUISHED  
LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, FRIENDS: TO THE HONOURABLE  
PRIME MINISTER MARGARET THATCHER!