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PRIME MINISTER'S

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FM FCO 021220Z NOV 79

PERSONAL MESSAGE / 9

TO IMMEDIATE MONROVIA

SERIAL No. T132A/79T

TELEGRAM NO 138 OF 2 NOVEMBER

INFO PRIORITY WASHINGTON UKMIS NEW YORK CANBERRA WELLINGTON MIRIMBA
SALISBURY MAPUTO DAR ES SALAAM LUANDA LUSAKA GABORONE

MIPT: RHODESIA

Original on
Rhodesia Pt 9

1. FOLLOWING IS TEXT OF MESSAGE TO PRESIDENT TOLBERT:-

BEGINS

DEAR MR PRESIDENT,

RICHARD LUCE HAS TOLD ME OF THE USEFUL TALKS THAT HE HAD WITH YOUR
FOREIGN MINISTER, MR DENNIS, ON 25 OCTOBER, AND I AM GRATEFUL
TO YOU FOR YOUR CLOSE INTEREST IN RHODESIA OVER THE PAST WEEKS,
MOST RECENTLY YOUR MESSAGE OF 30 OCTOBER.

AS RICHARD LUCE EXPLAINED, THE LANCASTER HOUSE CONFERENCE
IS NOW DISCUSSING THE PRE-INDEPENDENCE ARRANGEMENTS. AS YOU KNOW,
AND AS WAS STATED IN THE COMMONWEALTH DECLARATION AT LUSAKA,
IT IS BRITAIN'S RESPONSIBILITY TO BRING RHODESIA TO LEGAL
INDEPENDENCE, TO SUPERVISE THE ELECTIONS AND TO ENSURE THAT
THE ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE ELECTIONS ARE FAIR AS BETWEEN ALL THE
PARTIES. WE ARE READY TO CARRY OUT OUR RESPONSIBILITIES TO THE
FULL, BUT WE SHALL NOT BE PREPARED TO AGREE TO ARRANGEMENTS WHICH
GO WELL BEYOND THE LUSAKA AGREEMENT OR WHICH WOULD MAKE IT IMPOSSIBLE
FOR US TO EXERCISE OUR AUTHORITY. IT IS THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT
WHICH WILL HAVE TO ASSUME DIRECT RESPONSIBILITY FOR RHODESIA IN
THE PRE-INDEPENDENCE PERIOD AND WE NATURALLY NEED TO BE CONFIDENT
THAT WE HAVE THE AUTHORITY TO CARRY OUT THE RESPONSIBILITY.

WHAT IS REQUIRED IS NOT A COMPLICATED TRANSITIONAL STRUCTURE,
BUT FOR THE PEOPLE OF RHODESIA TO BE ALLOWED WITH MINIMUM DELAY, TO
DECIDE FOR THEMSELVES WHAT GOVERNMENT THEY WANT. IN YOUR MOST
RECENT MESSAGE YOU EXPRESSED CONCERN OVER THE LENGTH OF THE INTERIM
PERIOD WE ARE PROPOSING. OUR VIEW IS THAT THE LONGER THE PERIOD
BEFORE THE ELECTIONS, THE GREATER WILL BE THE RISK OF THE SETTLEMENT
BREAKING DOWN. IN PARTICULAR, I DO NOT BELIEVE THAT THE
PATRIOTIC FRONT'S PROPOSALS FOR A TWO-MONTH PERIOD TO ORGANISE THE
CEASEFIRE IS EITHER WORKABLE OR CONDUCTIVE TO THE MAINTENANCE OF
SECURITY ON WHICH THEY ALSO LAY STRESS. IT IS UNTHINKABLE THAT
THE INTERIM PERIOD SHOULD BEGIN IN CONDITIONS WHERE THE CEASEFIRE

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WAS NOT EFFECTIVE. A PERIOD LONGER THAN TWO MONTHS WOULD ONLY LEAD TO UNCERTAINTY AND COMPLICATE OUR TASK OF CONDUCTING THE COUNTRY'S ADMINISTRATION ON A CARETAKER BASIS UNTIL THE ELECTIONS. WE SHALL NOT OF COURSE BE PREPARED TO TRANSFER POWER TO ANY PARTY WHICH HAS NOT WON IT THROUGH FAIR ELECTIONS.

IN THE CURRENT PHASE OF THE CONFERENCE WE ARE SEEKING THE AGREEMENT OF BOTH SIDES ON THE STRUCTURE FOR THE INTERIM PERIOD, NAMELY THE RE-ASSERTION OF BRITISH AUTHORITY, A GOVERNOR WITH EXECUTIVE AND LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY EXERCISING DIRECT CONTROL OVER THE ADMINISTRATION, AND ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE ELECTIONS. OUR PROPOSALS INVOLVE BISHOP MUZOREWA AND HIS MINISTERS RELINQUISHING POWER TO ENABLE NEW ELECTIONS TO BE HELD UNDER OUR AUTHORITY. BISHOP MUZOREWA ANNOUNCED ON 27 OCTOBER THAT HE WAS PREPARED TO ACCEPT THOSE PROPOSALS IN PRINCIPLE. THIS WAS A DIFFICULT DECISION FOR HIM AND HIS DELEGATION TO MAKE, AND WE SHALL NOT BE ABLE TO ASK A GREAT DEAL MORE OF HIM. AS REGARDS THE PATRIOTIC FRONT'S PROPOSAL THAT THEY SHOULD PARTICIPATE IN THE ADMINISTRATION IN THE INTERIM PERIOD, OUR PROPOSALS PROVIDE FOR ALL PARTIES TO BE REPRESENTED ON THE ELECTION COUNCIL. WE, THROUGH THE GOVERNOR, MUST BE LEFT TO RUN THE COUNTRY.

MR DENNIS DISCUSSED WITH MR LUCE THE NATURE OF THE GOVERNOR'S AUTHORITY, ESPECIALLY IN RELATION TO THE SECURITY FORCES. YOU ALSO REFERRED TO THE MILITARY ARRANGEMENTS IN YOUR LAST MESSAGE. ONCE THE POLITICAL ASPECTS OF THE INTERIM STRUCTURE HAVE BEEN AGREED UPON, THE CONFERENCE WILL DISCUSS THE CEASEFIRE, WE PROPOSE TO ARRANGE DISCUSSIONS, UNDER OUR CHAIRMANSHIP, BETWEEN THE MILITARY EXPERTS OF BOTH SIDES. WE HAVE MADE IT CLEAR THAT THE RHODESIAN ARMED FORCES WILL BE UNDER THE COMMAND OF THE GOVERNOR AND WILL HAVE TO ACCEPT HIS AUTHORITY. THE PATRIOTIC FRONT'S FORCES WILL ALSO BE RESPONSIBLE TO THE GOVERNOR, IN RELATION TO THE CEASEFIRE. WE ENVISAGE A CEASEFIRE COMMISSION, UNDER CHAIRMANSHIP OF THE GOVERNOR'S MILITARY ADVISER, ON WHICH THE COMMANDERS OF BOTH SIDES' FORCES WILL BE REPRESENTED. IN THESE CONDITIONS THERE WOULD BE NO ROLE FOR A PEACEKEEPING FORCE. SUCH A FORCE WAS NOT ENVISAGED IN THE LUSAKA DECLARATION. AFTER THE ELECTIONS, IT WILL BE FOR THE NEWLY ELECTED GOVERNMENT TO DECIDE HOW IT WISHES TO ORGANISE THE SERVICES OF THE STATE.

THE PATRIOTIC FRONT ARE STILL CONSIDERING OUR PROPOSALS. I HOPE THAT THEY WILL ACCEPT THE SINCERITY OF OUR INTENTIONS AND OUR DETERMINATION TO ENSURE THE IMPARTIALITY OF THE ELECTION PROCESS

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AND OF THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE COUNTRY DURING THE INTERIM PERIOD. I HOPE ALSO THAT THEY WILL BE PREPARED TO PARTICIPATE IN THE ELECTIONS. OUR ROLE IN OTHER DEPENDENT TERRITORIES HAS BEEN TO ESTABLISH CONDITIONS FOR INDEPENDENCE, NOT TO ENCOURAGE THE ASPIRATIONS OF ONE PARTY OR ANOTHER. IN A NUMBER OF COUNTRIES WE HAVE HANDED OVER POWER TO THOSE WHO HAD PREVIOUSLY BEEN CONFIRMED OPPONENTS OF THE UNITED KINGDOM. WE WILL NOT SACRIFICE THESE PRINCIPLES OF IMPARTIALITY IN THE CASE OF RHODESIA.

FOR THE FIRST TIME IN THE LONG HISTORY OF THESE NEGOTIATIONS, A SOLUTION IS WITHIN OUR GRASP. YOU WERE KIND ENOUGH TO REFER TO THE CONFIDENCE REPOSED IN MY GOVERNMENT IN OUR SEARCH FOR A SOLUTION. WE ARE FULLY AWARE OF OUR RESPONSIBILITIES AND WILL CARRY THEM OUT. WE ARE DOING EVERYTHING IN OUR POWER TO GET BOTH SIDES WITH US ON THE ROAD TO A SETTLEMENT, AND I HOPE THAT I CAN COUNT ON YOUR SUPPORT AND INFLUENCE AS THE NEGOTIATIONS CONTINUE.

YOURS SINCERELY
MARGARET THATCHER

ENDS

CARRINGTON

FILES

RHODESIA D
OADS
NAD
PUSD
PLANNING STAFF
ES & SD
CCD
FRD
UND
LEGAL ADVISERS
(MR FREELAND)
(MR FIFOOT)
ECON D
PCD
DEF D
OID

NEWS D
PS
PS/SIR I GILMOUR
PS/MR LUCE
PS/MR RIDLEY
PS/MR HURD
PS/PUS
SIR A DUFF
SIR J GRAHAM
LORD N G LENNOX
MISS BROWN
MR DAY
MR WILLSON
MR ASPIN

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RHODESIA POLICY

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