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CC (79) 27
TWELFTH PLENARY SESSION

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CONSTITUTIONAL CONFERENCE
LANCASTER HOUSE
LONDON

Summary of the proceedings of the
Twelfth Plenary Session of the Conference,
Thursday 11 October

Lancaster House
11 October 1979

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PRESENT:

UK Delegation

Lord Carrington (in the Chair)

Lord Harlech

Mr R Luce

Sir A Duff

Mr D M Day

Mr R W Renwick

Mr P R N Fifoot

Mr N M Fenn

Mr G G H Walden

Mr C D Powell

Mr P J Barlow

Mr R D Wilkinson

Mr S J Gomersall

Mrs A J Phillips

Mr M C Wood

Mr Mugabe, Mr Nkomo and Delegation

Mr R G Mugabe
Mr S V Muzenda
Mr E Z Tekere
Mr J M Tongogara
Mr H Ushewokunze
Mr D Mutumbuka
Mr E Zvobgo
Mr S Mubako
Mr W Kamba

Mr J M Nkomo
Mr J M Chinamano
Mr J W Msika
Mr T G Silundika
Mr A M Chambati
Mr L Baron
Miss T Siziba
Mr W Musururwa

Bishop Muzorewa and Delegation

Bishop A T Muzorewa
Dr S C Mundawarara
Mr F Zindoga
Mr D C Mukome
Mr G B Nyandoro
Rev N Sithole
Mr L Nyemba
Chief K Ndiweni
Mr Z M Bafanah
Mr D C Smith
Mr R Cronje
Mr C Andersen
Dr J Kamusikiri
Mr G Pincus
Mr L G Smith
Air Vice Marshal H Hawkins
Mr D Zamchiya
Mr G Mutambanengwe

Secretariat

Mr J M Willson

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The session opened at 1501.

THE CHAIRMAN apologised for the break since the session held on 9 October, when he had asked Mr Mugabe and Mr Nkomo to give their answer today on whether they were prepared to accept the British proposals for an independence constitution, provided satisfactory interim arrangements were concluded, as indeed was the case with the Bishop's acceptance.

MR NKOMO then read out a statement which was subsequently circulated as Conference Paper CC (79) 28. THE CHAIRMAN asked if Mr Mugabe had anything to add; MR MUGABE confirmed that it was a joint statement.

THE CHAIRMAN said that the British delegation could not accept that the issues raised in the paper concerning land, the army, the police, the public service and the judiciary were connected with the transitional arrangements. He had however considered the problem of land and he recognised that a future government of Zimbabwe would wish to extend land ownership. The Government could of course purchase land for agricultural settlement and the independence constitution would make it possible to acquire under-utilised land compulsorily provided that adequate compensation was paid. Any resettlement scheme would clearly have to be carefully prepared and implemented to avoid adverse effects on production. The Zimbabwe Government might well wish to draw in outside donors, such as the World Bank, in preparing and implementing a full-scale agricultural development plan. The British Government recognised the importance of

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this issue to a future Zimbabwe government and would be prepared, within the limits of their financial resources, to help. The British Government would for instance be ready to provide technical assistance for settlement schemes and capital aid for agricultural development projects and infrastructure. If an Agricultural Development Bank or some equivalent institution were set up to promote agricultural development, including land settlement schemes, the British Government would be prepared to contribute to the initial capital. In their view, the costs would be very substantial indeed, well beyond the capacity of any individual donor country, and the British Government could not commit themselves at this stage to a specific share in them. They would, however, be ready to support the efforts of the Government of independent Zimbabwe to obtain international assistance for those purposes. The Chairman hoped that this would go some way to reassure the delegation of Mr Mugabe and Mr Nkomo about land.

The Chairman then asked for confirmation that the penultimate sentence on the last page of Conference Paper CC (79) 28 meant that Mr Mugabe's and Mr Nkomo's delegation accepted the proposed independence constitution, subject to the usual proviso about agreement on interim arrangements or whether it meant that they reserved the right to reopen these questions again. MR NKOMO replied that the paper was clear. THE CHAIRMAN again sought clarification. MR NKOMO then re-read the last sentence of the penultimate paragraph of his statement. After some further /attempts

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attempts at clarification THE CHAIRMAN suggested a short adjournment to enable the British delegation to study the paper.

The session adjourned at 1515.

The session recommenced at 1624.

THE CHAIRMAN explained that he had attempted during the adjournment to obtain clarification of the statement made by Mr Nkomo. Following a conversation during the adjournment with Mr Mugabe and Mr Nkomo, it seemed that the Patriotic Front were making reservations on a number of issues which by their own admission were of major importance. This was not what he thought had been agreed to at the opening of the Conference. The Chairman said that he had tried to be of assistance on the question of land, and he hoped that Mr Mugabe and Mr Nkomo would read his statement on possible British financial assistance carefully. It was necessary to reiterate what had been said at the beginning of the Conference - that negotiations should proceed on a step-by-step basis to avoid a repetition of what had happened at Geneva. The Chairman thought that it had been agreed to cover the constitution first, and to accept it if possible, subject to the satisfactory outcome of discussion on the interim arrangements. Consequently it was not possible for the British Government to accept the reservations contained in Mr Nkomo's statement; to do so would mean that major questions would remain on the table after discussion of the interim arrangements. There was therefore now no alternative but to adjourn. When the Conference resumed, it would have to be to

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discuss the arrangements for implementing the independence Constitution. Before this, he needed to know whether the Patriotic Front could accept the independence Constitution, and he hoped to receive a response in the near future.

BISHOP MUZOREWA asked what the Chairman meant when he referred to "the near future". THE CHAIRMAN said that this depended partly on the Patriotic Front; the Conference could not go on to discuss the interim arrangements until the Patriotic Front had accepted the Constitution, subject to the agreed provisos. MR MUGABE said that his delegation had already responded. THE CHAIRMAN explained that what he was now seeking was a response to what he had just said.

The session ended at 1630.