

Turnstones
Aldeburgh
Suffolk

9 September 1980

Michael Alexander Esq
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LONDON SW1

Mr
Prime Minister (2)

*I will write to Col. van der Post when
the bill for Bourdeaux has been finalised.*

Dear Michael

I enclose a letter which was written recently to The Times and which I think both you and the Prime Minister should see, if you have not done so already. It is written by the sort of Frenchman who represents, I believe, millions, and is the sort of France to which the Prime Minister should address her words and imagination. I have marked the parts which I think are of particular interest to the Prime Minister. The last paragraph marked is the most important.

Also in connection with the discussion we had about Zimbabwe. I thought the Prime Minister would like to know that I had a long talk to David Smith about it on Saturday. David Smith is not only the most important of the two European ministers in the present Zimbabwe Cabinet, but he was the proverbial tower of strength in the Lancaster House period and a rock in my own relationships first in Rhodesia and then Zimbabwe. I am certain you will remember him. He is, by any standards, a remarkable person who has an inspired gift for creative politics. In his view the situation in Rhodesia is not at all bad, in fact he says: "We are doing pretty well, even better than I expected, but we need more help." He feels, as I do, that our representation in Salisbury should be up-graded and that no money poured into Rhodesia would be wasted, but earn a handsome profit. He also feels, as I do, that if Zimbabwe is made a success it will open a vast new economic area in Africa for Britain. Everything I hear tells me that we have not followed through properly what we have achieved at Lancaster House and with independence.

The Prime Minister may also like to know that David Smith's recollection of the upset about which Walls complains, is the same as mine: that the Prime Minister's handling of the affair was above reproach, and that Peter Walls, either out of guilt or strain, has got it wrong.

No acknowledgement is necessary as I am only too conscious of all the work involved in putting a speech together.

Yours ever

James