

PM / Moi Plenary extracts  
1130 Hours at No 10  
13 June 1979

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Original on:  
Kenya: Moi visit  
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President Moi said that Kenya thought that stability was essential; the African continent was bleeding and its people were tired of war. Kenya believed in the principle of one man, one vote, and thought that power should come from the ballot box and not from the barrel of a gun. The elections in Zimbabwe/Rhodesia had created a new situation: but Kenya rejected the present constitution in that country because a transfer of power to the African majority had not been affected. Bishop Muzorewa could not be brushed aside but his position did not embody real power. Progress could only be made through discussions conducted on the basis of understanding and the love of peace. Kenya's own experience in forming a constitution had shown that guarantees could be formulated which removed all fears: under the Kenyan constitution every individual was protected and there were now more Europeans in Kenya than at the time of independence. In Nairobi, there was no feeling of pressure and, President Moi said, he would like to see the same situation brought about in Zimbabwe/Rhodesia.

President Moi went on to say that before the meeting of Commonwealth Heads of Government took place in Lusaka there would be a Conference of the OAU in Liberia. He himself would be on a visit to Malawi at the time of the OAU meeting but his Vice-President would attend instead. By the time the Lusaka meeting took place, all views would have been expressed and everybody would see what had to be done. President Moi said that he hoped that the British Government could convince Mr. Smith that discussions must take place in order to stop the bloodshed and achieve a genuine transfer of power; this was what President Nyerere, too, wanted. The present Zimbabwe/Rhodesia constitution created the possibility of attacks on the communities who were given entrenched rights under it. It was much better to rely on the protection of the property and rights of individuals rather than of groups. It was essential to generate confidence; elections could not be held in an atmosphere of hate.

At the Prime Minister's invitation, the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary described the objectives of Lord Harlech's mission to Southern Africa. Kenya was certainly the prototype of how things should be done. Lord Carrington said that he nevertheless thought

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it a mistake to underestimate the extent to which power had been transferred in Salisbury. The British representative in Salisbury, whose presence there did not constitute recognition of the Muzorewa Government, had given a vivid description of the extent to which Bishop Muzorewa was now operating at the centre of Government whereas Mr. Smith was relegated to a subordinate and inactive position. He recognised that this view was not generally accepted outside Zimbabwe and that Bishop Muzorewa must be seen to be running the country. The purpose of Mr. Day's mission in Salisbury was, not to recognise the regime, but to influence Bishop Muzorewa in this direction. Lord Carrington said that some countries, particularly Nigeria, had been very critical of the elections but it was impossible to ignore a turn-out of nearly 65%. Lord Harlech's purpose would be to see if there was any room for flexibility in the positions of the Front Line Presidents; he would also try to move Bishop Muzorewa and bring him closer to the other African leaders. The present constitution was not one that he himself would have written; it was worth remembering, however, that the constitution had not been imposed on the Africans but negotiated with Bishop Muzorewa, Mr. Sithole and Chief Chirau. Lord Carrington pointed out that in 1974 Joshua Nkomo had been prepared to accept an almost identical constitution.

President Moi said that the British Government seemed to be looking for an escape route. The two leaders at present outside Zimbabwe enjoyed substantial support inside the country and they could not be expected to come back straightaway. This meant that there would continue to be unnecessary loss of life. The elections had now created a situation and the next move had to be decided. Support for Bishop Muzorewa would not necessarily bring stability to the area but it could prolong the war. Lord Carrington pointed out that Nkomo and Mugabe might not necessarily have won much support in the April election, had they chosen to take part in it. He hoped that President Nyerere would be helpful. As President Moi knew, sanctions would come up for renewal by the British Parliament in November and it had to be faced that it would not be possible to secure Parliamentary agreement to this.

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The Prime Minister said that this explained the British Government's concern to achieve an early settlement. Despite the time factor, however, the Government wished to consult their Commonwealth partners and to carry their friends along with them. The price of a peaceful settlement was enormous. The Prime Minister asked President Moi to what extent he thought that Ian Smith posed an obstacle to a settlement. President Moi said that, however little Government work Mr. Smith might be doing in Salisbury, he was certainly an obstacle. He was not responsible to anybody except himself. Lord Carrington commented that Ian Smith saw himself as a card to be played; he would leave if recognition and the lifting of sanctions could be secured. President Moi commented that Mr. Smith did not wish to go unrecognised.