

PRIME MINISTER'S ENGAGEMENTS

This morning Mrs. Thatcher was attending the inauguration of the Taylor Woodrow Research Laboratory in Southall.

This afternoon, at 1445, the Prime Minister will have talks with Bishop Muzorewa.

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WHITE PAPER LIST

Details were circulated of next week's publications.

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BOAT PEOPLE

We were not in a position to give any figures relating to the number of Vietnamese who might be accepted for settlement in Britain. Dr. Kurt Waldheim, who met the Prime Minister yesterday, had not been given any figures covering numbers of refugees or possible cash aid.

NEXT WEEK'S STATEMENTS

Strictly operationally a Statement on Boat People could be expected on Wednesday or Thursday, the first of Department of Industry's Statements on Regional Aid on Tuesday (in the form of a lengthy written answer) and a Statement by Patrick Jenkin on Wednesday at 1530 following publication of the Report of the Royal Commission on the National Health Service.

RHODESIA

We gave correspondents the following on the record statement:

"The Prime Minister and Lord Carrington have discussed with Bishop Muzorewa ways of making progress towards the Government's stated objective of bringing Rhodesia to legal independence with wide international acceptance.

The Government will be continuing its consultations with particular reference to the discussions at the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in Lusaka.

There will be further discussions with Bishop Muzorewa and his colleagues as necessary in Salisbury and elsewhere."

The meeting between the Prime Minister and Bishop Muzorewa, at which Lord Carrington and Sir Anthony Duff (senior FCO official) were present, lasted an hour and took place in a very friendly and congenial atmosphere.

Everything else that was said at the Lobby was on the normal unattributable basis.

Would Bishop Muzorewa be going to Lusaka?

Only he could answer that. We understood that he would be giving a press conference tomorrow before leaving London.

Were any specific proposals/suggestions put to the Bishop during his meetings with the Prime Minister and Lord Carrington?

Correspondents must assume that no specific proposals or suggestions were put to Bishop Muzorewa during the meeting. The British Government saw today's talks as a continuation of the process of consultation begun by Lord Harlech, Mr. Richard Luce and the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary. This process of consultation would certainly include the Commonwealth Heads of Government meeting at Lusaka and it would be more realistic to think in terms of any proposals/suggestions being made after that meeting had taken place. The Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary had made it clear in his speech to the House of Lords last week that the British Government had not yet formulated any specific proposals but was in the process of wide-ranging consultations which were continuing.

Were today's talks encouraging?

Yes, in the sense that they had led to a better appreciation on both sides of the difficulties in the way of a solution to the Rhodesian problem. But again, we had to emphasise that no specific proposals had been made.

Was most of the meeting taken up by Bishop Muzorewa stating his case?

No. There was a genuine dialogue between the two sides.

Would the Prime Minister/Foreign Secretary make a statement to the House about their meetings with Bishop Muzorewa?

We thought it unlikely but in any case, if there were such a statement, it would almost certainly go no further than the on the record statement above.

Why were the British Government saying so little about the talks?

Because the whole Rhodesian problem was an enormously sensitive one for all concerned.

Did the third paragraph of the statement imply that Bishop Muzorewa would return to London?

It was not envisaged but equally, of course, it could not be ruled out.

Would Lord Harlech go to Salisbury again before Lusaka?

Again, it could not be excluded but, if he did so, it would not be as a specific consequence of the Prime Minister's and Lord Carrington's meetings with Bishop Muzorewa today.

Had the Prime Minister been in touch with the Front Line Presidents by telephone as part of our consultations?

No, but as the Lobby knew, it was our practice not to reveal our methods of communication. There were many ways in which Heads of Government could make contact with each other.

Did the Prime Minister's discussions touch on changes in the constitution, Ian Smith's position in Bishop Muzorewa's Government, etc?

We said that we could go no further than the statement at the beginning of this note. No specific proposals had been put to the Bishop on this occasion.

Are any further talks between the Bishop and the PM or Lord Carrington scheduled before he leaves tomorrow?

No.