

CONFIDENTIAL

GR 950
CONFIDENTIAL
DESKBY 142030Z
FM DAR ES SALAAM 141930Z NOVEMBER 79
TO IMMEDIATE FCO
TELNO 903 OF 14 NOVEMBER

RHODESIA:

1. FOLLOWING IS THE TEXT OF AN UNSIGNED COPY OF A PERSONAL MESSAGE FROM PRESIDENT NYERERE TO THE PRIME MINISTER. IT WAS DELIVERED TO ME THIS EVENING, 14 NOV BY MISS WICKEN. SHE TOLD ME A MESSAGE WAS ALSO BEING DELIVERED TO THE US AMBASSADOR. MESSAGE BEGINS:

DEAR MRS THATCHER,

I AM VERY WORRIED INDEED ABOUT WHAT I SEE AS A VERY REAL POSSIBILITY - ALMOST A PROBABILITY - OF THE RHODESIAN TALKS COLLAPSING. I AM APPEALING TO YOU TO HELP REMOVE THIS THREAT. SUCH A COLLAPSE WOULD BE DISASTROUS TO THE HOPES WHICH WE ENTERTAINED AFTER OUR WORK AT LUSAKA SINCE EVEN WORSE, IT WOULD THRUST SOUTHERN AFRICA INTO YEARS OF INTENSIFIED AND EXTENDED WAR.

IN MY CORRESPONDENCE WITH YOU SINCE LUSAKA I HAVE EMPHASISED MY WORRY ABOUT THE CONDITIONS DURING THE INTERIM UNDER WHICH THE ELECTIONS WOULD BE HELD. I HAVE STRESSED ALL THE TIME THE NEED FOR BRITISH AUTHORITY TO BE BOTH EFFECTIVE AND SEEN AS EFFECTIVE. UNTIL NOW I HAVE TAKEN FOR GRANTED THAT THE BRITISH AUTHORITY WOULD BE EXERCISED OVER A SUFFICIENT PERIOD TO ENSURE AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY FOR ALL PARTIES, BECAUSE I HAVE ASSUMED, I THINK UNDERSTANDABLY, THAT THIS IS IMPLICIT WHERE IT IS NOT EXPLICIT IN THE LUSAKA AGREEMENT.

WE HAVE ACHIEVED CONDITIONAL AGREEMENT ON A NEW CONSTITUTION - THE CONDITION IS ONLY THAT THE INTERIM ARRANGEMENTS SHOULD ALSO BE AGREED. FRANKLY THERE IS MUCH IN THAT CONSTITUTION WHICH I DO NOT LIKE AT ALL, BUT I HAVE DONE WHAT I COULD TO GET THE PATRIOTIC FRONT TO ACCEPT IT BECAUSE IT DOES, I BELIEVE, DO THE ESSENTIAL THING - WHICH IS TRANSFER EFFECTIVE POWER TO THE MAJORITY.

CONFIDENTIAL

/BUT I HAVE

CONFIDENTIAL

BUT I HAVE ONLY BEEN ABLE TO HELP IN URGING DISTASTEFUL DECISIONS ON THE PATRIOTIC FRONT, AND I WILL ONLY BE ABLE TO DO SIMILAR THINGS IN THE FUTURE, WHILE I REMAIN CONVINCED THAT THE ELECTIONS THEMSELVES WILL BE CARRIED OUT UNDER CONDITIONS WHICH ARE REALLY FAIR AND GIVE AN EQUAL CHANCE TO ALL THE PARTICIPANTS. I CANNOT URGE THE PATRIOTIC FRONT TO TAKE PART IN ELECTIONS WHEN THE CARDS ARE STACKED AGAINST THEM BEFORE THEY START, ANY MORE THAN YOU COULD URGE SUCH ACTION UPON THE BISHOP IF THE CIRCUMSTANCES WERE REVERSED. FOR WE HAVE BEEN URGING THE PATRIOTIC FRONT TO GIVE UP ARMS AND TURN TO THE BALLOT SINCE THEY ARE READY TO DO THAT. WE FOR OUR PART ARE NOW DUTY BOUND TO GIVE THEM A FAIR CHANCE IN THE POLLING BOOTHS.

BUT AS FAR AS I CAN SEE THAT WOULD NOT HAPPEN WITH A TWO MONTHS INTERIM BEFORE ELECTIONS. THE BISHOP AND HIS ALLIES HAVE BEEN LEGALLY IN RHODESIA FOR YEARS, AND HAVE BEEN ORGANISING POLITICALLY WITH THE BACKING OF THE SALISBURY ARMED FORCES SINCE THEY HAVE KNOWN CANDIDATES - OR CAN HAVE WHERE THEY DO NOT ALREADY HAVE THEM SINCE THEY HAVE A POLITICAL ORGANISATION IN BEING. THE PATRIOTIC FRONT, ON THE OTHER HAND, IS COMPOSED OF PARTIES WHICH ARE NOW ILLEGAL INSIDE RHODESIA, AND WHICH HAVE OF NECESSITY ORGANISED THEMSELVES FOR WAR, NOT FOR POLITICAL CAMPAIGNING SINCE MOST OF THEIR LEADERS AND ACTIVISTS ARE AT LEAST PART OF THE TIME OUT OF THE COUNTRY AND CERTAINLY HAVE TO MOVE IN SECRECY WHEN INSIDE IT. THE PATRIOTIC FRONT PARTIES HAVE THEREFORE NO EXISTING POLITICAL ORGANISATION, NO CANDIDATES READY, NO MEANS OF MOVING THEIR PEOPLE ABOUT THE COUNTRY EXCEPT ON FOOT, AND SO ON.

THERE IS ANOTHER ASPECT TO THIS PROPOSED TWO MONTHS INTERIM. IT WILL BE INSUFFICIENT - THIS IS ACKNOWLEDGED - TO COMPILE A VOTERS' REGISTER OR TO DEMARCATe CONSTITUENCIES. THE ABSENCE OF A REGISTER IS A HANDICAP TO FAIRNESS SINCE BUT I COULD SWALLOW THAT AS THE ELECTIONS ARE ON A ONE-PERSON, ONE-VOTE BASIS AND INDELIBLE MARKINGS CAN BE MADE ON THE HANDS OF VOTERS. I DO NOT, HOWEVER, SEE HOW WE IN THE BRITISH TRADITION CAN RUN, SUPERVISE, OR JUDGE AS FAIR, AN ELECTION ON A MULTI-MEMBER, PARTY-LIST, SYSTEM. BOTH MAJOR PARTIES IN BRITAIN HAVE REJECTED SUCH A SYSTEM - INDEED I BELIEVE EVEN THE LIBERALS FAVOUR A SINGLE-MEMBER TRANSFERABLE VOTE PROPORTIONAL REPRESENTATION SYSTEM.

IN AFRICA THERE ARE EVEN MORE ARGUMENTS AGAINST SUCH A SYSTEM AS THAT NOW BEING PROPOSED. IN PARTICULAR, IT ENCOURAGES

CONFIDENTIAL

TRIBALISM IN STATES WHICH ARE STILL BUILDING THEIR NATIONAL CONSCIOUSNESS. AND IN RHODESIA IT HAS THE STILL FURTHER DISADVANTAGE AT THIS JUNCTURE OF BEING IDENTIFIED WITH THE SMITH REGIME.

FRANKLY I DO NOT UNDERSTAND WHY THIS TWO MONTHS PERIOD IS PROVING SUCH A STICKING POINT IXR YOU, AND STILL LESS WHY YOU ARE JEOPARDISING EVERYTHING WHICH YOU - AND WE ALL - HAVE WON OVER THE PAST WEEKS OF HARD WORK. THE ARGUMENTS FOR SIX MONTHS HAVE BEEN PUT FORWARD SEMICLN THEY HAVE NOT BEEN ANSWERED. WE ARE ONLY TOLD THERE IS A DANGER THAT THE CEASE FIRE WILL NOT LAST MORE THAN TWO MONTHS. YET THERE WILL NOT BE A CEASE FIRE AT ALL IF TWO MONTHS IS INSISTED UPON EXCLAMATION MARK AND THE WHOLE COMMONWEALTH, AS WELL AS THE FRONT LINE STATES, HAVE AGREED TO BACK UP A C ASE FIRE FOR AS LONG AS NECESSARY AND THEN TO BACK UP THE ELECTED GOVERNMENT - PROVIDED AGREEMENT IS REACHED.

CAN WE NOT EVEN NOW, SAVE THE CONFERENCE? I HAVE SUGGESTED THAT ONE WAY FORWARD WOULD BE FOR AN EMERGENCY COMMONWEALTH MEETING, OR A MEETING OF OUR LUSAKA WORKING PARTY GROUP OF SIX NATIONS, TO DISCUSS THIS ISSUE. SUCH A MEETING COULD BE HELD IN LONDON IF YOU WISH. BUT FOR EITHER OF THESE IDEAS TO HAVE A CHANCE WE NEED TO BE RELEIVED OF THIS ATMOSPHERE OF CRISIS SEMICLN A DECISION IS NOT POSSIBLE WITHIN ONE OR TWO DAYS UNLESS IT IS A DECISION TO BREAK UP THE CONFERENCE.

THIS LETTER COMES TO YOU WITH MY PERSONAL GOOD WISHES AS ALWAYS.
YOURS SINCER LY.

ENDS
MOON

F I L E S

RHODESIA D
OADS
NAD
PUSD
PLANNING STAFF
ES & SD
CCD
FRD
UND
LEGAL ADVISERS
(SIR I. SINCLAIR)
(MR FIFOOT)
ECON D MED
PCD NENAD
DEF D EID (E)
OID

NEWS D
PS
PS/SIR I GILMOUR
PS/MR LUCE
PS/MR RIDLEY
PS/MR HURD
PS/PUS

SIR A DUFF
LORD N G LENNOX
MISS BROWN
MR DAY
MR WILLSON
MR ASPIN
MR BULLARD
MR FRETWELL

ADDITIONAL DISTRIBUTION
RHODESIA POLICY