

Subject copy
Rhodesia St
P47

PRIME MINISTER'S
PERSONAL MESSAGE



SERIAL NO. STATE HOUSE.

ZOMBA,
MALAWI.

Prime Minister

A reply to your letter of 14 Feb (sent R26 19th March, 1980.

by hand of the new High Commissioner & asking
for Mr Banda's help in the run up to the elections. You did not get much!

The Right Honourable Margaret Thatcher, M.P., P.C.
Prime Minister,
No. 10 Downing Street,
London,
ENGLAND.

Phd - 26/3
ms.

Dear Prime Minister, P414

Deliberately, I delayed replying to your letter of February the 14th. In doing so, it was my intention to avoid making any promises on the question of intimidations or predictions on the outcome of the pending elections in Zimbabwe. But this does not mean that I did nothing privately or quietly.

I did my best quietly through those politicians in Zimbabwe that are well known to me, such as, Mr. Joshua Nkomo himself, Rev. Ndabaningi Sithole and even Bishop Muzorewa. I was, throughout, in contact with Rev. Sithole personally. He came to see me here. Both Mr. Nkomo and Bishop Muzorewa have people who pose as their representatives here in Malawi. I worked through these supposed representatives.

I can understand your disappointment, in particular, with members of the Organisation of African Unity. If the truth may be told, I do not think that even within the Organisation of African Unity, one can truthfully say that there was a solid agreement, one way or the other, on the question of Zimbabwe. The difficulty here is that there were some members of the Organisation of African Unity who were personally interested in certain leaders in Zimbabwe. Naturally, they wanted these leaders, in whom they were interested, to win the elections and become the rulers in Zimbabwe.

To be honest, I was interested in Rev. Sithole. But deep down in my heart, I knew that he could not win, in opposition to either Mr. Mugabe or even Bishop Muzorewa. Because, although he comes under the general term of Shona in Zimbabwe, he is neither Zezuru nor Karanga, according to my information. He is Manyika, a minor section of the Shona people.

Nkomo, I knew he would win some seats. And on the basis of his reputation as father of Zimbabwe politics, I expected him to do well. But I also knew or realised that he belonged to a minority tribal group, Ndebele, to be exact, an offshoot of the Zulu people of Natal, who left Natal in 1835 or thereabout, under the leadership of Mzilikazi.

That Mr. Mugabe would win, I had no doubt at all, because he belonged to the majority tribal group in Zimbabwe, Shona. And even more, he is said to belong to the Karanga section of the Shona people, which is the most active, forceful, even pushful tribe. But I did not expect him to win the elections with such a shattering victory as he, in the event, did. I had expected both Bishop Muzorewa and Rev. Sithole to do much better than they did. But, of course, that is how the game of politics, if one may borrow the late General Smuts' phrase, is.

We, in Malawi, definitely welcome the results of the elections in Zimbabwe. Though Mr. Mugabe and Rev. Sithole are running separate parties, at one time they worked together. As a result of that, Mr. Mugabe knows something about us here.

This is evidenced by his appointment in one of the most important departments in government, Finance. Mr. Enos Nkala, who according to reports has been appointed Minister of Finance, is well known to a number of Malawians. Because he was detained in 1959, when a number of the then Nyasas were detained in Rhodesia. Again, the appointment of a lady by the name of Mrs. Chitepo points in the same direction. The late Herbert Chitepo was my patient in London when he was a student.

And when I was detained in 1959, he was junior to the late Dingle-Foot as my counsel. Even the appointment of Mr. Nkomo as Home Secretary or Minister of Interior is most welcome to us. Mr. Nkomo and I have been working together since 1952.

For all these reasons, then, the new Government in Zimbabwe is most welcome to us. We congratulate you and all those concerned in your Government for everything you have done to make these elections in Zimbabwe possible and a success.

Prime Minister, I think this letter is far too long. I must cut it short now.

With warm personal regards,

Yours sincerely

J. K. Nkomo Gube