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10 DOWNING STREET

THE PRIME MINISTER

10 March 1980

Dear Willie.

I have written to Lord Soames asking him to convey to all those concerned with the organisation of the recent elections the Government's thanks and appreciation for their work. I should like, through you, to thank in particular the members of British police forces who helped to supervise the elections.

It is quite clear from all reports, including those of the various international observers, that the conduct of the elections met the highest standards. The elections have been accepted universally as a valid expression of the wishes of the people; there was wide understanding of the secrecy of the vote; and the high level of turnout was virtually unprecedented. All served to put the results of the elections beyond any doubt and thus to secure for Rhodesia, soon to be Zimbabwe, a most convincing start to its new life as an independent state and accepted member of the international community. I know that this result was achieved only by devoted work, often under difficult and dangerous conditions, and in the full glare of publicity. On behalf of the Government, I wish to express admiration and gratitude to all those who contributed to this splendid achievement.

Yours sincerely
Robert White

The Rt. Hon. William Whitelaw, C.H., M.C.

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