



Prime Minister

Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

5 May 1979

Dear Bryan,

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Rhodesia

Thank you for your letter of 4 May to Stephen Wall, enclosing a copy of the letter addressed to the Prime Minister by the President of the UANC, Bishop Abel Muzorewa. The Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary entirely endorses your advice that Professor Hutchinson should not be used as a channel of communication with Bishop Muzorewa.

Lord Carrington considers that the objective at this stage should be to show appreciation of the Bishop's approach, but at the same time to avoid any open commitment to him until the Government have been able to consider the first steps they would wish to take. There is also the consideration that any reply from the Prime Minister herself sent through the 'normal channels' - via Sir David Scott in Cape Town and the Rhodesian "diplomatic representative" there - would be given wide publicity by the Bishop, who informed the Salisbury press yesterday that he had sent a message to Mrs Thatcher.

X || Accordingly, Lord Carrington thinks that the best course would be to send the Bishop a candid, but informal reply at once, explaining that the Government will wish to be in touch with him once they have had an opportunity to consider how we might move forward. This could be best delivered orally, by our representative in Salisbury who is in touch with the Bishop. He could speak in terms of the attached note. If the Prime Minister agrees, we will arrange for this to be done.

Y || In view of the Bishop's announcement about his communication to the Prime Minister, there may well be press interest. If News Department are asked, they will confirm that a message has been received and say that it is being studied.

(G G H Walden)

B G Cartledge Esq
10 Downing Street

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From the Private Secretary

7 May 1979

Rhodesia

Thank you for your letter of 5 ~~May~~, in which you conveyed the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary's advice on what response should be given to Bishop Muzorewa's letter to her of 30 ~~April~~.

As I told you on the telephone this morning, the Prime Minister agrees that Bishop Muzorewa should be given an oral response by our representative in Salisbury, in the terms of the note enclosed with your letter.

The Prime Minister has also agreed that the Press Office in No. 10 and the FCO News Department should simply confirm, if asked, that a message has been received and say that it is being studied.

B. G. CARTLEDGE

G. G. H. Walden, Esq.,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

KHH

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