

**SUBJECT**

THE STATE HOUSE,  
DAR ES SALAAM,  
TANZANIA.

11th December, 1979.

Mrs. Margaret Thatcher, M.P.,  
The Prime Minister,  
10 Downing Street,  
London, S.W.1.  
U.K.

*Lg. V. M. - 15/12/79*

**PRIME MINISTER'S  
PERSONAL MESSAGE  
SERIAL No. T165/79T**

Dear Mrs. Thatcher,

Neither of us assumed that the Constitutional and Peace Conference now being held at Lancaster House would be easy or smooth running! Yet it seems to me that we are now struggling with the very last obstacle before a Cease Fire is agreed - albeit still one which has to be overcome.

As I understand it, the problem is that of the disposition of Forces for the Cease Fire period. Both the Patriotic Front and the Salisbury group are worried that they should not appear to be surrendering to the other side, or to be laying themselves open for extermination if anything goes wrong. This mutual distrust is something we have always recognised as a problem needing to be dealt with in the Conference decisions. It was this recognition which caused Britain to state clearly that both Armies had to be given equal status during the Interim, with the Governor relying upon neither for his own administration.

I therefore find it difficult to understand the British Proposals about the disposition of Forces. As I understand it these are that the Salisbury Forces should be monitored where they are at their existing Company Bases. The Patriotic Front Forces, on the other hand, should be assembled in 15 places - which in effect means something like 2,000 men at each of their bases in contrast to approximately 150 men in the Salisbury bases. Without being a military man, this looks as if the Salisbury Forces will simply sit in their existing operational base ready (if they so decide) to go into operation at any moment, and the Patriotic Front Forces will have left their operation bases and gathered in very large groups out in the open.

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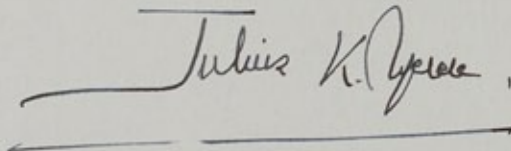
Surely this is not treating the Armies equally? I would have thought that reciprocity demanded one of three things. (a) That both sides should gather in groups of about Company size, at declared spots; as proposed for the Salisbury Forces. Or; (b) That both sides should gather their Forces in 15 separate designated places; as proposed for the Patriotic Front Forces. Or (c) That both sides should observe a Cease Fire from where they are, with the Monitoring Forces being given the necessary information by the Commanders. What does not seem to me to be equality of treatment is that the more mobile Force should be collected in groups of 150 men, and the Force which moves on its feet should be required to assemble in larger groupings, away from their bases of operation, and vulnerable to the air attacks they have always greatly feared.

Although I realise the many other demands on your time, I would still appeal to you to consider this question and make the adjustments necessary to meet what seems to me to be a legitimate objection from the Patriotic Front.

As I am writing, I would like to raise one other question with you, about which I am not clear. Does Britain really propose to send the Governor to Rhodesia before the Cease Fire has been agreed? It seems to me that it would be highly dangerous, both politically and militarily, for the Governor to go to Salisbury in advance of an Agreement.

This letter comes to you with my warm personal good wishes. I look forward to writing a problem-less letter to you in the near future if we can overcome this last hurdle!

Yours sincerely,

  
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