

Subject



Rhodesia

10 DOWNING STREET

THE PRIME MINISTER

Personal Minute

No. M19/79T

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH SECRETARY

THE RHODESIA CONFERENCE

Today sees the successful conclusion of an extraordinary piece of diplomacy. The period ahead in Rhodesia is not going to be easy but the signature of the Agreement at the end of the Lancaster House Conference later this morning will nonetheless be a milestone of major significance.

The effort to secure an agreement between the various parties to the conflict in Rhodesia began not long after the present Government took office and has continued almost without pause ever since. It has been an exercise not only in negotiation, at Lusaka and Lancaster House, but also in international persuasion and has involved Embassies and High Commissions all over the world. It must have tested the resources of the Diplomatic Service to the full. Clearly the Service has been equal to the task.

You are well aware of my admiration for the way you and the Lord Privy Seal have conducted the negotiation as a whole and the Conference at Lancaster House in particular. But I should be grateful if you could arrange for my gratitude to be conveyed to everyone else who has played a part in the enterprise. They all have reason to be proud of what has been achieved.

Margaret Thatcher

21 December 1979