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cc Uganda Sit-D's
Queen - Africa Vint

10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

26 June 1979

B/F 4-779
In 00 Meeting

Dear Stephen,

Rhodesia

As you know, the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary brought Lord Harlech over to No.10 this morning, with Sir Antony Duff, for a discussion of Lord Harlech's recent mission to Southern Africa and of how the British Government should now move forward on the Rhodesia problem.

Lord Carrington outlined to the Prime Minister a possible course of future action on the following lines. Lord Harlech would visit Salisbury on 2 July for an exploratory discussion with Bishop Muzorewa on the possible amendment of the present Constitution. He would report the outcome to a meeting of OD on the morning of Thursday, 5 July. On 7 July, Bishop Muzorewa would be travelling to Washington and on 10 July Lord Carrington would himself be speaking in a foreign affairs debate in the House of Lords. On 11 or 12 July, Bishop Muzorewa would be coming to London and would call on the Prime Minister. In the meantime, Sir Antony Duff would have worked out possible constitutional amendments which would make the situation less unacceptable to the Front Line Presidents but without alienating the supporters of the internal settlement. These could be tried out on Bishop Muzorewa when he came to London. If the Bishop seemed willing to move beyond purely cosmetic changes, the British Government could then, at a time to be decided, make a public announcement of the amendments to the Constitution which it wished to sponsor and would publicly invite the Leaders of the Patriotic Front and the Bishop to attend a constitutional conference in London. The Patriotic Front would either decline the invitation, in which case they would have been publicly wrong-footed: or they would accept it and disrupt the conference, in which case they would be seen to be responsible for its breakdown. The British Government would then be in a position to recognise Zimbabwe-Rhodesia on the basis of an amended Constitution which would be known and seen to be acceptable to Bishop Muzorewa.

The Prime Minister said that she would be content with a scenario on these lines. She said that she attached importance, in the context of future debate with the Front Line Presidents, to being able to point to features of the amended Constitution which were shared by the Independence Constitutions of, e.g.

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Tanzania, Kenya and Zambia. The Prime Minister said that the question of timing would also need careful consideration. She was anxious to move quickly, in order to get the British Government's proposals on the table before Bishop Muzorewa's Parliamentary Party suffered further defections. It was pointed out in discussion that there might be advantage in taking no public action before Lusaka, so that the Prime Minister could, at the CHGM, unveil the British Government's thinking; the Government could then go on to call for a constitutional conference after Lusaka but during the month of August. The Prime Minister agreed that Sir Antony Duff should do some further work on the timetable and that Lord Carrington would give the Prime Minister his recommendations in due course.

It was agreed that when the Prime Minister meets President Carter bilaterally in Tokyo on 29 June, she should inform him of Lord Harlech's recent consultations in Southern Africa, and of his forthcoming visit to Salisbury for further consultations with Bishop Muzorewa: she would not, however, inform the President at this stage of the Government's plans for further moves. She would tell President Carter that Lord Harlech's discussions had revealed a measure of flexibility among the Front Line Presidents and a chink of light on the possibility of finding a formula in which they could acquiesce. She would emphasise that it was clear that the Front Line Presidents would not necessarily object to some form of special constitutional position for the whites in Zimbabwe-Rhodesia and ask the President to ensure that Bishop Muzorewa, when he came to Washington, was pressed to make his Government into more of a going concern and to be seen to be in control of it.

In a short discussion of this morning's raid on Lusaka by Zimbabwe-Rhodesia forces, it was agreed that both President Kaunda and Bishop Muzorewa would have to give public undertakings, in advance of the CHGM, that they would refrain both from raids and from retaliation during the period of The Queen's visit to Zambia and of the CHGM.

In a discussion of the present situation in Uganda, the Prime Minister agreed that the Government should for the time being take no action to recognise President Binaisa but should await further developments. The Prime Minister did not disagree with Lord Carrington's suggestion that ex-President Lule should be allowed to come to the UK if and when President Nyerere released him from detention in Tanzania.

I am sending a copy of this letter to Martin Vile (Cabinet Office), and should be grateful if arrangements could be made for a meeting of OD on the morning of Thursday, 5 July.

*Your ever,
Bryan Cartledge.*

Stephen Wall, Esq.,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

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