

Secretary of State

Private Secretary

RHODESIA

- 1 I spoke to Mr Renwick on the secure line at 3.30 p.m. this afternoon to find out about the latest developments.
- 2 Mr Renwick said that Walls and the Rhodesian military were in such an emotional state about the activities of ZANU and the refusal of the Governor to proscribe the party that it had not yet been possible to speak to Walls on the lines of our latest instructions.
- 3 Sir A Duff and Mr Renwick had, however, had a meeting this afternoon with the military commanders at which Walls was not present, as a result of which some at least of the commanders were beginning to accept that it would not be possible for us to ban ZANU outright. This more sensible attitude was, however, predicated on the assumption that we would continue to be extremely tough with Mugabe over the release of political detainees held in Mozambique. Mr Renwick said that it would almost certainly be essential for the Governor, in an attempt to encourage this more realistic attitude, to promulgate the Ordinance empowering him to take selective action against any party which consistently violated the Lancaster House agreements. Salisbury will be sending to us overnight the draft of the proposed Ordinance. They realise that it should not be promulgated without prior agreement from the Secretary of State. However, they are having to discuss the idea of such an Ordinance with the Rhodesians as a price of keeping them in play.
- 4 On the political detainees Mr Honwana has told us in Salisbury that President Machel has informed Mugabe that he must release them. However, Mugabe is still wriggling.

5 A meeting of the NJOC is to be held on Monday 21 January.

It will discuss:

- (a) what attitude the NJOC should take if the Governor does not ban ZANU. There is still a feeling that in such circumstances there would be no point in continuing with the Lancaster House settlement;
- (b) what arrangements should be made to deal with the problem of the Patriotic Front forces in the assembly areas.

Consideration of this second point by the NJOC is a constructive development. The former is worrying.

6 The feeling in Salisbury is that it would be wholly counter-productive to tackle Walls on the South African issue until the Governor has considered how the NJOC meeting on Monday goes.

7 This complex of issues is being discussed in Salisbury this evening and tomorrow morning. Mr Renwick says that the Governor will send a full telegram after he has assessed the situation.

8 Given the continuing international pressure over the South Africans at Beitbridge, it is unfortunate that Salisbury have not yet felt able to tackle Walls on this issue. It was, however, very clear from my conversation with Mr Renwick that our relations with the Rhodesian military continue to be balanced on a knife-edge and that there is a very serious risk of putting the Governor's position in Rhodesia in jeopardy if the timing of any such approach is not very finely judged. The Governor and his staff are clearly under enormous pressure and strain. Although there is every reason why we should press to resolve this issue as soon as possible, I consider that we must accept

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the judgement of the man on the spot as regards the precise timing of the approach to the Rhodesians on this issue.

D. M. Day

18 January 1980

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Copied to:

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Mr Powell, Rhodesia Department

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