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Subject filed as Zaire:
Nov 79 Visit of Foreign Minister

RECORD OF A TALK BETWEEN THE PRIME MINISTER AND THE FOREIGN MINISTER
OF THE REPUBLIC OF ZAIRE, MR. NGUZA KARL-I-BOND, AT 10 DOWNING STREET
ON 13 NOVEMBER, 1979, AT 1800

Present:

Prime Minister

Mr. Nguza

Mr. M.O'D.B. Alexander

H.E. M. Matungulu N'Kuman Tavun

The Prime Minister thanked Mr. Nguza for taking the trouble to come to London, and asked him to convey to President Mobutu her gratitude for the positive interest he was taking in the problems of Rhodesia. Mr. Nguza said that the Government of Zaire felt closely involved in the Rhodesian problem in both a physical and moral sense. They were close in a physical sense because of the obvious facts of geography. They were close in a moral sense because they themselves had suffered too much at the time of gaining independence, and did not wish to see others going down the same path. The Prime Minister could feel assured of the friendship and support of the Zaire Government in her efforts to find a solution in Rhodesia.

The Prime Minister said that she was hopeful that decisions might be taken in the next day or two. Mr. Nguza said that he had seen both Bishop Muzorewa and Mr. Nkomo in the course of the day. He had given them President Mobutu's message which was that they should take care not to let the conference fail. The people of Rhodesia would never forgive them if the present opportunity was missed. Bishop Muzorewa had replied that he had agreed to everything that had been asked of him. He had gone on to say that if Lord Carrington so wished, he remained willing to make further concessions. The Prime Minister commented that Bishop Muzorewa had already made great concessions. The problem lay with the unwillingness of the other side to allow progress to be made. Could Mr. Nguza do anything to help with Mr. Nkomo and Mr. Mugabe.

/ Mr. Nguza

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Mr. Nguza said that he had been into considerable detail with Mr. Nkomo about the various outstanding problems. Mr. Nkomo had left him with the impression that none of the problems were likely to prove insurmountable. Although he would not take a final decision until he was sure that nothing more could be extracted from the situation, he intended to accept the British Government's proposals. He asked Mr. Nguza to pass this message to President Mobutu.

Mr. Nguza said that Mr. Nkomo attached importance to having some of "his boys" inside Rhodesia. They should be there not as a guerrilla or rebel army, but on the same basis as the other forces. He was thinking in terms of bringing in two or three brigades from Zambia. The Prime Minister said that Mr. Nkomo already had a considerable number of his men inside Rhodesia. If there were a ceasefire, they would have to be assembled at a specific point. Once they were assembled, Britain would be responsible for housing and feeding them. Subsequently, we would help with rehabilitation and resettlement. We assumed that most of the men would go home. Some would no doubt wish to become full-time soldiers: it would be for the new Government to deal with the amalgamation of the three armies. Mr. Nguza strongly agreed that the three armies could not continue in being after independence.

The Prime Minister said that she was hoping the discussion on the interim could come to an end on the following day. Bishop Muzorewa had been away from Salisbury too long, and would probably wish to return at the end of the week. Satisfactory arrangements could be made if the will was there. The length of the transition should not be a problem; the proposed period was very close to three months.

Mr. Nguza repeated that Mr. Nkomo had asked him to tell President Mobutu that he would be back in Salisbury. Mr. Nkomo still had some "psychological problems" with his people. He

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was worried about the return of the refugees and their registration for the elections. Mr. Nguza had told him this was no problem. Mr. Nguza had also told him that two to three months gave ample time in which to prepare for the elections. He had the impression that this was not a big problem for Mr. Nkomo. The Prime Minister commented that Mr. Nkomo was very well known in Rhodesia.

Mr. Nguza said that he had not seen Mr. Mugabe in London on this visit, but that he had seen him in the Netherlands two weeks previously. He had told Mr. Mugabe that if he were to cause a breakdown of the Conference by adopting an excessively hard policy, many African leaders, including President Mobutu, would blame him. Mr. Mobutu had denied that he was causing problems and had undertaken to be more flexible. Mr. Nguza said that if Mr. Nkomo were to settle, Mr. Mugabe would, however reluctantly, follow him. He had no choice.

Mr. Nguza said that, in the course of his talks during the day, he had tried to bring Bishop Muzorewa and Mr. Nkomo together. Bishop Muzorewa had said that he was willing to talk to Mr. Nkomo. If Mr. Nkomo wanted to go with him, he was "my brother". Mr. Nkomo had said that the past was the past and might perhaps be forgotten. He would talk to his "boys". Mr. Nguza said that when he had last seen Lord Carrington he had told him that he thought there would be an agreement on the constitution within two or three days, and there had been. His feeling now was that the Patriotic Front would accept Britain's proposals with only very minor changes. For example, acceptance of a three-month interim and some stepping up of the Commonwealth monitoring force. Acceptance would not necessarily come within two or three days, but it would come. The Prime Minister said that if this result were achieved, most of the credit would go to the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary and to his helpers in the Foreign and Commonwealth Office. Despite the length of the negotiations and

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the large number of people involved, she had never heard a word of criticism about the way things had been done. Mr. Nguza agreed.

The Prime Minister then asked about the attitude of the neighbouring countries. Mr. Nguza said that President Kaunda wanted the problem resolved as rapidly as possible. President Nyerere was also very positive; more so than President Machel. There were differences between President Nyerere and Mr. Mugabe. President Nyerere did not regard the Patriotic Front as the sole representative of the people of Zimbabwe, and was in favour of elections whatever their outcome. He had told President Mobutu during a recent meeting, attended by Mr. Nguza, that if Ian Smith were elected Prime Minister in a free and fair election, he would be received in Tanzania.

In the course of a brief discussion about Zaire Mr. Nguza said that there would be an important meeting in Brussels next month to discuss Zaire's economic problems and to try to agree on aid to enable the Zairean economy to take off. There was a need to restore confidence in Zaire. In this context Mr. Nguza said that recent talk about massacres in Zaire was proving very damaging. President Mobutu denied that any massacre had taken place, and had made it clear that he would welcome any international commission which wished to come to investigate the situation. Mr. Nguza would be meeting Mr. Ennals on the following day to invite Amnesty to send a team to Zaire.

The meeting ended at 1835.

AmA

13 November, 1979.

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