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Rhodesia



10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

22 November 1979

President Kaunda

As you know the Prime Minister spoke to President Kaunda early this afternoon on the telephone. The call had been placed earlier in the morning when the High Commission in Lusaka was surrounded by demonstrators. After the Prime Minister had expressed concern about misunderstandings which seemed to have arisen between the two Governments, President Kaunda said that on his return to Lusaka from Europe, he had found a very volatile situation awaiting him. He did not understand what had been happening. He had therefore spoken strongly at a press conference in condemnation of the destruction of Zambian bridges and the murder of Zambians. Following his speech the British High Commissioner had issued a very unfortunate statement indeed. This had greatly annoyed the Zambian people.

The Prime Minister told the President that she was grateful for everything the police and the army had done to protect the High Commission earlier in the day. She went on to say that Britain would have no powers over Salisbury or General Walls until a ceasefire had been signed and a Governor had arrived in Rhodesia. The Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary would be tabling the British proposals for a ceasefire later this afternoon and would be appealing to both sides to come to an immediate agreement to prevent any further damage to Zambia. We would be asking for undertakings from one side that no further cross-border operations should be carried out into Zambia and from the other side that no further movement of Patriotic Front personnel from Zambia into Rhodesia should take place. Everything that was happening underlined the vital importance of an early ceasefire agreement.

President Kaunda replied that he was only speaking to the Prime Minister because of his deep personal respect for her. He did not expect to be paying any more attention at present to what was taking place in London. His time would be spent on mobilising his nation for self-defence. He doubted whether anything he could do to help the Prime Minister bring about an early ceasefire would be effective under present circumstances.

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/The Prime Minister

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The Prime Minister repeatedly urged on President Kaunda the need for an early ceasefire and for his representatives to do what they could to encourage the Patriotic Front to reach agreement. Success was very close. President Kaunda had played an important role in bringing success within reach. It was now a question of holding on until the settlement, which would be an end to Zambia's troubles and to Zimbabwe's, was achieved. She said that she would get in touch again on the telephone if there were any further troubles. In the meantime she hoped that the President would ensure the safety of British diplomats in Zambia. The President replied that he had issued an instruction to his countrymen not to give way to anti-British feelings. The High Commission would be protected.

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