

CONFIDENTIAL



Zimbabwe  
NBPM yet  
MA 30/5

MO 5/6

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH SECRETARY

ZIMBABWE: MILITARY ASSISTANCE

Thank you for sending me a copy of your minute to the Chancellor of the Exchequer of 27th May.

2. I agree that we should continue to help Mr Mugabe's Government with the amalgamation of the three Armies in Zimbabwe, so they do not need to seek assistance from others who might work against British and Western interests; and that, therefore, I should make available the necessary manpower and facilities to implement General Fursdon's proposals. Clearly the most important and pressing need is for an expansion of the present British Military Advisory and Training Team in Zimbabwe. I cannot find all the additional personnel for this straight away, and should like to phase the increase between now and October, when the current team is due to be replaced. If some of the manpower burden could be borne by suitable Commonwealth countries, this would obviously be welcome to the Army, which is already very short in the ranks required for the team.

3. I envisage little difficulty in providing the other forms of assistance recommended by General Fursdon, provided, of course, that Geoffrey Howe can agree your claim for additional funds from the Contingency Reserve.

4. I am sending copies of this minute to the Prime Minister, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, the other members of OD, and to Sir Robert Armstrong.

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Ministry of Defence

29th May 1980

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