



NRPA

*Handwritten initials*

FCS/80/101

SECRETARY OF STATE FOR DEFENCE

Zimbabwe Debt

1. In your letter of 30 May to Geoffrey Howe you said that, while you understood the Zimbabwe Government's attitude towards repayment of some £800,000 in respect of Hunter aircraft spares, you would find it difficult to justify writing this debt off. You suggested that this should be borne by the FCO as part of the overall aid package for Zimbabwe.
2. I am afraid such a course of action is out of the question. This would be outside the terms of the Overseas Aid Act and would be contrary to the purposes for which the Aid Programme money is voted.
3. The sum is small. As you acknowledge, it would cause grave and understandable offence if we pressed the Government of Zimbabwe to pay it. I consider it essential that we should write this debt off forthwith. I hope that you will be able to agree, before the debt talks resume on Monday 9 June, to take this minor burden on board.
4. I am copying this minute to the Prime Minister, the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the Lord President of the Council.

*Handwritten mark*

(CARRINGTON)

Foreign and Commonwealth Office

5 June 1980