

CONFIDENTIAL



Zimbabwe
file

10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

28 November 1980

Zimbabwe High Commissioner

The High Commissioner for Zimbabwe, Dr. Zwinoira, called on the Prime Minister this morning as arranged. He made a very good impression.

Dr. Zwinoira conveyed to the Prime Minister Mr. Mugabe's best wishes. He invited the Prime Minister to visit Zimbabwe. The Prime Minister asked that her own greetings should be conveyed to Mr. Mugabe. She said that she would be delighted to visit Zimbabwe though she thought it would be wise to wait until some of the "present problems" were sorted out so that she could see the country at its best.

Dr. Zwinoira described the present situation in Zimbabwe in optimistic terms. He said that the Government appreciated their good fortune in inheriting a sophisticated infrastructure and considerable natural resources. They planned to use their advantages to exert a positive influence on their neighbours. Recent events in Bulawayo did not threaten the stability of the country. The Government was determined to ensure the peaceful development of a non-racial society. Although they had evidence of the supply to ZIPRA forces in Bulawayo of arms "from the North" they did not intend to publicise this information or to make a fuss about it. Mr. Mugabe was anxious that Mr. Nkomo should remain in the Government.

Dr. Zwinoira said that overseas investment would be essential if Mr. Mugabe's Government was to succeed. Leadership from HMG would be required. The Zimbabwe Government were counting on the personal support of the Prime Minister, who was a greatly admired figure in Zimbabwe. They regarded their relationship with the United Kingdom as their "number one priority" abroad. The Prime Minister said that the future of Southern Africa depended on success in Zimbabwe. She regarded the transition in Zimbabwe from violence to the democratic political process as "most moving and exciting". She assured Dr. Zwinoira that HMG would not be

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deflected by individual pieces of bad news.

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