

26 February 1982

Policy Unit

*Please let Peter Zanglton have a copy of this note - [initials]*

PRIME MINISTER

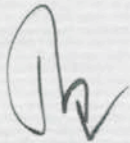
LUNCH WITH DENNIS WALKER, MP (ZIMBABWE)

I was asked to lunch via a mutual friend, with Dennis Walker yesterday. As agreed with John Coles, I simply let him talk and this note summarises the main points he made. Many are probably too obvious to be worth repeating, but, as I am an amateur on Zimbabwe, I have tried to record everything that seemed interesting.

1. Walker struck me as a very calm, sensible, tolerant and level-headed man. My instinct was to trust both his word and his judgment. He is very unlikely to return to Zimbabwe as the odds are he would be imprisoned without trial. He finds his position particularly sad as he was probably involved more closely in working with the black community than any other white MP in Zimbabwe and had worked hard (eg in a tour of Canada) to persuade external opinion that the Lancaster House constitution under Mugabe would work out successfully. He tried to get the "dedication clause" reinstated in the constitution after it had fallen by the wayside at Lancaster House. He was unsuccessful but Government MPs were split in the vote, many of them not making themselves available. Walker expects everything he owns to be confiscated. He and his wife left the country with two suitcases; she is now in South Africa.
2. Mr Stuttaford, about whom Dennis Walker wrote to you earlier this month, had been attending Walker's meetings with black politicians who were concerned about the threat of a one-party state (in order to ensure that Walker himself could not be subsequently misrepresented). Stuttaford was initially interrogated by two whites and one black, and signed a statement which, like the interrogation, demonstrated that there was no case against him. He was then interrogated by two black interrogators and that was when the violence started. Walker got this from Stuttaford's attorney, who is also his own attorney.
3. The effect of the Stuttaford case was to warn property-owners in Zimbabwe off having anything to do with politics. "Once you call someone an enemy of the state, you can do anything you like to them".

4. Walker feels that Mugabe underestimates the reaction within Zimbabwe against the idea of a one-party state. Hence the appeals by black MPs to Walker to take action. Walker's view, on balance, is that Mugabe is not carrying out some unscrupulous political strategy which he had intended all along. He thinks that Mugabe is oversensitive to the threats of a coup (while being insensitive to public opinion on the one-party state, as mentioned). Walker himself has heard of no rumours of a coup.
5. As regards the findings of arms caches on Nkomo's farms, Walker notes that these were found by "political people", not the police or security forces. "There are arms caches everywhere in a country that's been at war for 7 years. Many farmers must have buried arms against the danger of future trouble and it is known that only a small proportion of the guerrilla arms were returned."
6. While Walker tends to exonerate Nkomo from planning a coup, he does, on the other hand, say that there have been moves from among the Ndebele themselves (ie Nkomo's natural supporters) for the removal of Nkomo.
7. Walker fears that the Lancaster House safeguards are becoming non-operative and that the country is on the road to a Marxist dictatorship. This will bring rapid economic disintegration, the gradual breakdown of social cohesion, law and order, and thus - as always in such situations - "great hardship for ordinary people".  
Mugabe is heavily influenced by President Kim of North Korea. "Hardly a week goes by without MPs being circulated with papers emanating from North Korea." There were even some amongst Mugabe's associates who favoured a Cambodian-style de-urbanisation, but Mugabe was too moderate and sensible (or had been at that time, just after the elections) to consider such nonsense.
8. Walker stressed that Lancaster House was not a private agreement but a publicly-agreed constitution. He feels that Mugabe can be brought back to it through pressure from the West, on which Zimbabwe is so dependent economically.
9. Walker says that not all the black Ministers in Mugabe's Government are by any means extremist. In particular, the Speaker and the Education Minister were in his view moderate and sensible men.

10. Walker was planning to go onto the States on Sunday, but is now going to be staying on for a couple more days. He very much hopes to be able to talk directly with Peter Carrington on his return in the middle of next week.



JOHN HOSKYNS



file  
Zimbabwe

10 DOWNING STREET

*From the Private Secretary*

1 March 1982

Zimbabwe

John Hoskyns, the Head of the Policy Unit here, had lunch on 25 February with the Zimbabwe M.P., Mr. Dennis Walker. I enclose a copy of a minute which Hoskyns sent to the Prime Minister afterwards and which Mrs. Thatcher believes that Lord Carrington would wish to see.

A.J. COLES

John Holmes, Esq.,  
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

AC