



Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

16 November 1983

Dear John

CHOGM: Mr Mugabe

We have been considering whether to advise the Prime Minister to have a private talk with Mr Mugabe during CHOGM and, if so, what line to recommend.

During his recent visit to Harare Mr Rifkind gained the impression that Mr Mugabe regrets recent strains that have occurred in Anglo/Zimbabwean relations and would like to undo the damage caused by his re-detention of the air force officers; but he is a weak man, temperamentally disinclined to take the first step, and must be hoping we shall not increase his difficulties. We know from other reports that much of Mr Mugabe's bitter reaction to our criticism over this case stems from his concern about Zimbabwean security problems and about his own political position in the lead-up to the Party Congress expected in May. It is likely that he was told during his visit to the US and Canada that we had orchestrated international criticism. He thinks there is personal hostility towards himself.

Mr Rifkind was able to go some way towards reassuring Mr Mugabe. However he will attach great importance to the Prime Minister's attitude at CHOGM. Mr Rifkind was given a hint, presumably at Mr Mugabe's request, that the officers would soon be released. A friendly talk at CHOGM might tip the balance.

The Prime Minister would in that event no doubt wish to refer explicitly to the air force officers' case. Not to do so could be misleading. But the Foreign Secretary recommends that not much time should be devoted to it. Mugabe is very well aware of our position, and is liable to react emotionally if it is raised at length. A possible approach would be to focus the meeting mainly on a discussion of one or two major international issues. Mr Mugabe would probably respond well if his opinion were sought on problems which go wider than our bilateral relations. The Prime Minister could then perhaps simply add that Mr Rifkind had reported his talk with Mr Mugabe about the air force officers' case; and say that we would like to get this problem out of the way so that we can all concentrate on the more constructive side of our relationship.

/The Secretary

CONFIDENTIAL



The Foreign Secretary would be happy to discuss these ideas with the Prime Minister on the flight to Delhi.

Your ever,

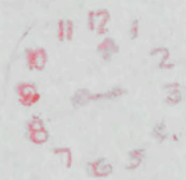
Peter Ricketts

(P F Ricketts)
Private Secretary

A J Coles Esq
10 Downing Street

CONFIDENTIAL

16 NOV 1983



20

CONFIDENTIAL

HU



10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

17 November 1983

CHOGM: Mr. Mugabe

The Prime Minister had a word about your letter of 16 November during her discussion with the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary earlier today.

Mrs. Thatcher confirmed that she would be willing to have a talk with Mr. Mugabe at CHOGM. We can decide on the precise line to take on the spot.

K

Peter Ricketts, Esq.,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

CONFIDENTIAL

CT

IMMEDIATE
ADVANCE COPY

C H G M

ADVANCE COPIES

17

PS
PS/LADY YOUNG
PS/PUS
HD/CCD
HD/UND
HD/NEWS DEPT
HD/SAD
HD/CONFERENCE SECTION, PROTOCOL DEPT



MR FREELAND, LEGAL ADV. WH21
MR FIFOOT, LEGAL ADV. WH20

Mr Goodall
Mr O'Neill
Mr Martin
Mr Colvin
D I O
Sir R Armstrong) CABINET OFFICE

PS/ No. 10 DOWNING STREET

RESIDENT CLERK

CONFIDENTIAL

DESKBY 182000Z

FM HARARE 181900Z NOV 83

TO IMMEDIATE FCO

TELEGRAM NUMBER 931 OF 18 NOVEMBER

*Telegram n A seen
by fcs on 17/11 but
proposal has full
support of SJ John
Leahy.*

CHOGM: MEETING BETWEEN THE PRIME MINISTER AND MR MUGABE

1. MNUNGAGWA (MINISTER OF STATE FOR NATIONAL SECURITY) TOOK ME ASIDE THIS EVENING TO SAY THAT, ARISING FROM PRESIDENT MACHEL'S INITIATIVE, MUGABE WOULD VERY MUCH LIKE TO HAVE A MEETING WITH THE PRIME MINISTER OF, SAY, AN HOURS DURATION, EARLY ON DURING THE CHOGM. MUGABE WOULD LIKE THIS TO BE A WHOLLY PRIVATE MEETING, ON THE BASIS THAT NEITHER SIDE WERE TAKING THE INITIATIVE, BUT THAT BOTH WERE RESPONDING TO THAT OF MACHEL. MNUNGAGWA WAS EXPLICIT THAT A BRIEF MEETING ON THE OCCASION OF THE PRIME MINISTER'S LUNCH WOULD NOT ENABLE MUGABE TO HAVE THE SORT OF TALK HE WANTED.

2. MNUNGAGWA TOLD ME THAT HE WOULD ONLY BE ACCOMPANYING MUGABE TO DELHI IF THIS MEETING WERE TO TAKE PLACE, SO AS TO BE ON HAND TO BRIEF HIM ON THE SUPPOSITION THAT THERE WOULD BE DISCUSSION OF SOUTHERN AFRICAN ISSUES (ALTHOUGH THE WHOLE IMPLICATION OF OUR DISCUSSION WAS THAT THE PRIMARY PURPOSE WOULD BE TO DISCUSS BI-LATERAL RELATIONS.

3. MNUNGAGWA ASKED ME IF I COULD DO MY BEST TO OBTAIN A RESPONSE IN THE COURSE OF TOMORROW SO THAT IT COULD BE DECIDED HERE WHETHER HE WOULD GO TO DELHI OR NOT. HE STRESSED AGAIN THAT MUGABE WISHED TO KEEP THE MEETING AS PRIVATE AS POSSIBLE HENCE MNUNGAGWA'S APPROACH TO ME RATHER THAN ONE THROUGH THE FOREIGN MINISTRY.

3. MNUNGAOWA ASKED ME IF I COULD DO MY BEST TO OBTAIN A RESPONSE IN THE COURSE OF TOMORROW SO THAT IT COULD BE DECIDED HERE WHETHER HE WOULD GO TO DELHI OR NOT. HE STRESSED AGAIN THAT MUGABE WISHED TO KEEP THE MEETING AS PRIVATE AS POSSIBLE HENCE MNUNGAOWA'S APPROACH TO ME RATHER THAN ONE THROUGH THE FOREIGN MINISTRY.

4. IT MAY BE RELEVANT THAT THE REVIEW TRIBUNAL FOR THE REMAINING 3 AFZ OFFICERS' IS NOW TENTATIVELY SET FOR 8 AND 9 DECEMBER. GIVEN THIS AND THE OTHER ENCOURAGING INDICATIONS WE HAVE HAD THAT THE ZIMBABWEANS WISH TO CLOSE THIS CHAPTER AS SOON AS POSSIBLE, I HOPE THE PRIME MINISTER WILL FEEL THAT SHE NEED SAY NO MORE TO MUGABE ON THIS TOPIC, BUT RATHER TALK TO HIM ON MORE GENERAL TERMS.

5. I HOPE THE PRIME MINISTER WILL FEEL ABLE TO RESPOND TO THIS APPROACH WHICH COMPLETELY CHANGES THE BASIS ON WHICH I OFFERED MY EARLIER ADVICE ABOUT THE LENGTH AND NATURE OF A MEETING.

EWANS

NNNN

CCM PARA 3 WA WOULD GO TO - DELHI