

Julian Amery MP



10 DOWNING STREET

9th August 1979

Dear Julian,

You came to see me on the 24th of last month to talk about Rhodesia, and I wanted to let you know about developments since then, particularly at the Conference in Lusaka, from which Peter Carrington and I returned yesterday.

You will remember that, in our Manifesto, we said that our Government would have a duty to "do its utmost to ensure that the new independent State gains international recognition".

With that objective in mind, we held discussions earlier in the summer, with the United States Government and with our partners in the Community; we also sent David Harlech and Richard Luce to Africa, where, between them, they saw the leaders of twelve African states; soundings were also taken by our High Commissions and Embassies.

These extensive consultations showed that if we were to confer legality on the present Rhodesian Government, with its existing Constitution, we would, almost certainly, have been the only country that would have recognised the new independent State. That would not have fulfilled the objective set out in our Manifesto.

But there has been another equally serious objection. To confer legal independence on the Bishop's government, but then to find that no other countries would join us in recognising that government would have been of little, if any, real benefit to Rhodesia. It would have done nothing to stop the war. The killing and the destruction would have gone on. The white exodus would have continued. The economic prospects for Rhodesia would have remained bleak. For all our consultations had shown that neither the United States nor any European country - let alone any African country (with the possible exception of the Republic) would have gone along with us.

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That is why I said in the House on the 25th of last month that the Government had decided to try another way of achieving our objective of international recognition for an independent Rhodesia.

It is a way that we believe will be better for Rhodesia in the long run, because if our plan is successful, we will be able to bring other countries with us in accepting Rhodesia as a member of the international community. Once that acceptance has been achieved, there will be a better possibility of ending the war. Without that acceptance the war will go on.

As you know, I listened to your speech in the House on 25th July and have since read it in Hansard. You quoted Alec Home. No doubt you will have seen his article in the Sunday Express on 22nd July when he wrote:- "It would help Rhodesia in the future if she could obtain the maximum recognition internationally. This could involve changes in the Constitution as it at present stands." You also expressed the hope that I should emerge from Lusaka without having my hands tied in advance. I enclose the text of the nine points in the communique about Rhodesia. You will see that the Conference accepted that it was the responsibility of the British Government to grant legal independence to Rhodesia; that it was for the British Government to call the Constitutional Conference (as to which there are no pre-conditions); and that the elections to be held under the new Constitution should be supervised by the British Government, although with Commonwealth observers.

It will also be for the British Government alone to put forward those proposals on the Constitutional arrangements to achieve a proper basis for legal independence to which I referred in the House during the Rhodesia debate last month.

We were and we are determined that this is Britain's responsibility. There is no question at all of our hands having been tied in Lusaka. It is, however, a most significant achievement to have secured the support

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of every member of the Commonwealth for the British plan.

I know how deep is your concern - and I hope that you realise how deep is mine - for the wellbeing of Rhodesia. You would have preferred unilateral recognition by the British Government. I understand and respect that point of view. But I believe that it is the better course to try to secure international recognition, in the way that I have described and by making some changes to the present Constitution.

I believe that the better chance of securing international recognition for Rhodesia, of ending the war and of restoring peace and prosperity, lies in the Conference that we have proposed and to which invitations will be sent out very shortly.

I am under no illusion as to the difficulties which the Conference will have to face. But there is now the possibility - I put it no higher than that - that under a changed constitution, Rhodesia will gain international recognition, that the war will be stopped - or at any rate will de-escalate; that the white exodus will diminish; and that peace and progress may be restored.

I understand that you are seeing Ian Gow next week and I have asked him to report your views fully to me. If you would like to come to see me when I get back from Scotland, do please let Ian know.

Yours ever

Rogers

The Rt Hon Julian Amery MP

Extract from the Final Communiqué of the
Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting,
Lusaka, August 1979

Southern Africa

14. Heads of Government had a frank discussion on the current problems of Southern Africa and their implications for the Commonwealth and the wider international community. While recognising that certain developments since their Meeting in London have added new dimensions, they remained concerned by the potential dangers inherent in the existing situation. They therefore stressed the urgent need for finding satisfactory solutions to the remaining problems of this region.

15. In relation to the situation in Rhodesia, Heads of Government therefore:

- a. confirmed that they were wholly committed to genuine black majority rule for the people of Zimbabwe;
- b. recognised, in this context, that the internal settlement constitution is defective in certain important respects;
- c. fully accepted that it is the constitutional responsibility of the British Government to grant legal independence to Zimbabwe on the basis of majority rule;
- d. recognised that the search for a lasting settlement must involve all parties to the conflict;
- e. were deeply conscious of the urgent need to achieve such a settlement and bring peace to the people of Zimbabwe and their neighbours;
- f. accepted that independence on the basis of majority rule requires the adoption of a democratic constitution including appropriate safeguards for minorities;

- g. acknowledged that the government formed under such an independence constitution must be chosen through free and fair elections properly supervised under British Government authority, and with Commonwealth observers;
- h. welcomed the British Government's indication that an appropriate procedure for advancing towards these objectives would be for them to call a constitutional conference to which all the parties would be invited; and
- i. consequently, accepted that it must be a major objective to bring about a cessation of hostilities and an end to sanctions as part of the process of implementation of a lasting settlement.



Personal

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The Rt. Hon. Margaret Thatcher, MP
10 Downing Street,
London SW1

9th August 1979

Dear Margaret,

I was sorry to strike a discordant note amid the acclaim with which the Lusaka agreement was received in many quarters. But you have listened - very patiently - to my views on Rhodesia, in private as well as in the House, and will scarcely be surprised.

My main concern springs from a conviction - which I thought you shared - that the advance of Soviet Imperialism towards the raw material producing areas of Southern Africa represents a mortal and an immediate threat to our survival and that of the whole Free World.

Seen from this point of view the present regime in Rhodesia seems to me to offer about the best bulwark available to face a confrontation which, in my judgement, we are very unlikely to avoid. Its fulfilment of the six principles as confirmed by Alec Home and Harold Wilson (their authors) and certified by Alan Boyd gives us every justification for recognising it.

The remaining ^{*White*} influence in the regime, though the target of African criticism, is probably just strong enough to make it economically and materially viable. But with some knowledge of Rhodesia, I believe that any further dilution of White influence, that was more than cosmetic, would almost certainly open the way for a takeover by the Patriotic Front. This would inevitably advance the course of Soviet Imperialism. Rhodesia would then become a launching pad for a guerrilla offensive against South Africa. South Africa is, of course, much more important to us than Rhodesia, and we could not allow it to go under. But we should find it much harder, politically, to support Mr Botha than Bishop Muzorewa: so better have our interests defended on the Zambezi than on the Limpopo.

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You have rightly stressed the need to end the fighting. But despite the economic difficulties facing the Front Line Presidents, it seems very unlikely that a compromise can be reached between the Salisbury regime and the Patriotic Front. At any rate, it would be irresponsible to put the Muzorewa regime at risk in the - probably vain - hope of finding such a compromise.

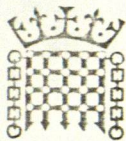
I would add two points.

First, I am sure you will not underrate the very deep concern, amounting almost to a sense of betrayal, which the Lusaka agreement has aroused among many in our Party - and particularly among some of those who would be your best friends in the many tight corners that lie ahead. This concern may not find much public expression before the Party Conference. But if there is no agreement by then, the inevitable Rhodesia debate at Blackpool is likely to be divisive. If on top of that the Party was asked to renew the sanctions order the effects on its morale would be traumatic. The time to restore the Party's confidence is therefore short.

The second consideration is this: ever since your "Iron Lady" speech the hopes of those who see in Soviet Imperialism the greatest threat to their survival have centred on you personally. They form a pretty broad spectrum of international opinion stretching from Chinese, Romanian and Yugoslav Communists through European and American conservatives to Israel, Egypt and some of the Arab monarchies, and beyond them to South Africa.

Most of those concerned know little about Rhodesia; but they will interpret the Lusaka agreement as appeasement of Soviet Imperialism and their faith in you as leader of a Conservative revival will be shaken.

I realise you are now committed to trying to carry out the agreement. I should not be surprised, however, if it all came to nothing because of the objections of one side or the other or both. The choice will then lie between doubling stakes on a losing game i.e. trying to put increased pressure on Salisbury, or else blaming the Front Line Presidents for failing to deliver the Patriotic Front and saying "all bets are off".



The second course would give you the chance of going back to the earlier position of agreeing that the six principles had been fulfilled, recognising the Rhodesian regime more or less as it is and lifting the sanctions. If we take this course we could still recover much of the ground that has been lost at home, among Conservatives world wide and in Rhodesia itself.

If I am right in thinking that the Lusaka initiative will fail — as you may well be expecting this — then our thinking about Rhodesia may once again converge. In that case such influence as I have in Salisbury (→ Pretoria) — and I still have some credit in both worlds of course — be at your

R.T.O.

→ Peter Lowmyer's disposal.

I beg you to forgive this
over long → perhaps over frank
letter. But it has been very
painful to me to disagree
publicly with you and I have
felt I owed you some
explanation.

Yours ever,

Julian.

FROM: THE RT. HON. JULIAN AMERY, M.P.



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Personal

16. VIII. 79

Dear Margaret,

I must write to
say how much I
appreciated your courtesy
in letting me know
your judgement on the

outcome of the Lusaka
conference. It was my
good of you to take
the trouble so soon
after your return.

As you know your
letter crossed with mine
of the same date, so
I will not trouble you
with further argument

FROM: THE RT. HON. JULIAN AMERY, M.P.



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at this stage.

I had a good talk
with Ian Gow who was
able to give me very
useful guidance on the
ways you think matters
may turn out. Thank
you for asking him to
see ~~him~~ me.

I am just off on
a short holiday and
will seek audience on
my return.

Yours,

Julian.

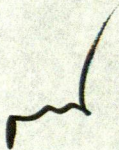
Amery TP

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20th August 1979

I am writing to acknowledge your letter of 16th August as the Prime Minister is away on a brief holiday in Scotland. I shall, of course, make sure that she sees this as soon as she returns to London.

With best wishes.



Richard Ryder
Political Office

The Rt Hon Julian Amery MP