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ccB'w/f

PRESS

PRIME MINISTER

VISIT TO AFRICA: INTERVIEW WITH BBC WORLD SERVICE

You have agreed to give an interview to the BBC Overseas Service (African Service) on Monday.

I attach:

- the general line of questioning which the interviewer, Robin White, intends to pursue;
- some briefing on his questions provided by the FCO

I think that the messages which you need to get across are:

- you will be using your time to the best advantage and packing in as much as you can. You will travel over ten thousand miles, visit four countries (Morocco, Nigeria, Zimbabwe and Malawi), meet five Heads of State (Hassan, Babangida, Mugabe, Chissano and Banda). You will be visiting development projects, financed with our very substantial aid, examples of British investment, refugee camps and our forces training Zimbabwean and Mozambican troops;
- it is a very important and interesting time to be visiting Southern Africa. There are really major and encouraging changes in progress: the Namibia agreement, Cuban troop withdrawal from Angola, the more hopeful prospects for an end to conflict in Mozambique, internal change and reform in South Africa itself. You will be discussing all these issues.
- and this year is of course the tenth anniversary of the Lancaster House Conference on Zimbabwe. You want to see for yourself what has been achieved;

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- Britain has been very active in the region: encouraging progress within South Africa: contributing to the peace-keeping force (UNTAG) in Namibia: providing massive aid to the countries of Southern Africa (nearly £1 billion since 1980) and to blacks in South Africa (£10 million in 1989/90): helping Mozambique with military training;

- your visit is intended to give further impetus to these very exciting changes which would have been unimaginable even two years ago. You will want to discuss how to encourage further and faster reform in South Africa rather than hit out at it with punitive measures: how to ensure that the Namibia agreement is implemented faithfully: how to end the conflict in Mozambique. You will want to establish how Britain can help and what particular role we can play;

- part of your message will be to emphasise the importance of avoiding action which would jeopardise the Namibia/Angola settlement. This is definitely not the time to revive the issue of sanctions. You hope that CHOGM in October - just a week before the Namibia elections - will focus on constructive ways of promoting change in South Africa;

- you welcome the evidence of a more constructive Soviet approach to the problems of Southern Africa. They have played a helpful role in securing Cuban troop withdrawal from Angola. Their recent comments about the need for a peaceful solution to South Africa's problems is a marked step forward. You discussed these problems with Mr. Gorbachev in Moscow in 1987 and will be raising them again with him in early April;

- you will not be visiting South Africa. To do so before the release of Mandela and the opening of negotiations with black leaders would give the wrong signal. Nor will you be meeting the ANC;

- another part of your message will be encouragement to keep up economic reform. The picture here is quite promising, with 30 African countries now embarked on major programmes of economic reform with World Bank and IMF help;

- you postponed your visit to Sudan out of consideration for the government which is obviously going through a very tricky period.

C.D.P.

C. D. POWELL

17 March 1989

SL3BIO

BERNARD

ADVANCE INTERVIEWS FOR THE AFRICAN TRIP

We talked about possible interviews for the PM ahead of the trip to Africa.

Three bids have been so far received:

Zimbabwe Newspapers (The Herald) - This is the main national daily and is recommended by the High Commissioner. The London correspondent, Arnold Raphael, is considered a reasonable journalist.

BBC World Service "Focus on Africa" -This is a half-hour magazine programme broadcast every Saturday.

South African Broadcasting Corporation - FCO support their request for an interview, but have reservations about doing it before the visit to Africa. They feel, rightly in my view, that it would show that the PM's eyes were on South Africa rather than on the countries she is visiting, and could affect their presentation of the visits to their countries.

Given the disparate nature of the trip, an interview with the World Service could serve as a useful curtain-raiser as it covers the whole continent (although the African Service does not cover Morocco, parts of the interview could be relayed there).

As Zimbabwe is the main destination, an advance interview there would go down well, even if it was a written one.

Charles has some reservations about doing any interviews in advance. But I feel it is worth considering doing the World Service radio interview and a written interview with the Zimbabwe Herald (The Post think a written interview would be perfectly acceptable, and this could avoid any misinterpretation).

What do you think?



MICHAEL BATES
9 February 1989



10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1A 2AA

Dear Bob,

14 March 1989

PRIME MINISTER'S TRIP TO AFRICA

As I think you know, the Prime Minister has agreed to give an interview to the BBC Overseas Service (African Service) in advance of her visit to Africa. This has been fixed for Monday 20 March.

The interviewer, Robin White, has provided the following subject areas:

General Main aims of the visit. What does the Prime Minister hope to achieve? Does she expect any demonstrations or other difficulties?

Southern Africa How might political change take place in South Africa, both in the short and the long term? What kind of political system might we eventually expect there? What is Britain's policy on arms supplies to the Front Line States?

Malawi Our views on the political system in South Africa are well known. But what is our view of the political system in Malawi (and in other neighbouring black African States)?

Nigeria What is the current state of our bilateral relationship?

British Aid to Africa Is aid counterproductive, by discouraging African countries from being economically independent? How vigorously is aid provision monitored? How important is aid as a part of our export effort?

2.

With apologies for the short notice, I should be grateful if you could let Charles Powell have briefing notes on the above subjects by close of play on Thursday 16 March. I am copying this letter to Myles Wickstead at the ODA with a request for similar briefing on the aid questions.

Yours ever,
Michael Bates

MICHAEL BATES
Press Office

Mr R N Pierce,
Private Office, FCO.

PRIME MINISTER'S VISIT TO AFRICA: INTERVIEW WITH BBC OVERSEAS SERVICE (AFRICAN SERVICE)

Q What does the Prime Minister hope to achieve on her visit?

- A - In Morocco want to strengthen already excellent links. HM King Hassan's State Visit in July 1987 marked a turning point. Morocco a natural gateway to Africa. Glad to respond to invitation from Moroccan Prime Minister, Dr Laraki. In recent years have increased four-fold our Technical Co-operation programme in Morocco and are now supporting British firms bidding for a number of major projects there.
- Also look forward to working lunch with President Babangida of Nigeria in Lagos on 28 March.
 - Main focus of visit will be Southern Africa.
 - Glad at last to have opportunity to visit two of leading Commonwealth countries in the region. (Already visited Zambia in 1979 for Lusaka CHOGM).
 - In Zimbabwe hope to see for myself the remarkable progress since independence in bringing blacks and whites together in a successful multi-racial society. Also more recent reconciliation between the two main tribes, Shona and Ndebele.
 - Believe Zimbabwe an example for other countries in Africa.
 - Look forward to discussing with Robert Mugabe situation in region including South Africa. Has changed dramatically in last six months with conclusion of Angola/Namibia agreements and increased co-operation between South Africa and Mozambique resulting from the meeting of Presidents Botha and Chissano at Songo in September.
 - Expect to focus on the need to bring Namibia successfully to independence.
 - Will also have opportunity for tripartite discussion at Nyanga in Zimbabwe with Presidents Mugabe and Chissano. Expect this discussion to concentrate on the situation in Mozambique and on our practical tripartite co-operation at Nyanga.



- My visit will underline our practical support for the states in the region through both aid and military assistance.
- Visit to Malawi will underline the important links between our two countries which go back to David Livingstone.
- Malawi has been supportive of Britain in UN and other fora. I much appreciate this.
- Hope also to see for myself the magnificent efforts Malawi is making to look after the huge number of refugees who have fled there from Mozambique. Now nearly 10% of the population. Imagine a situation in which 5½ million refugees had descended on us in Britain in a little more than two years.
- Want to see how we can best help.

Supplementaries

Q What is Britain doing to help the refugee situation in Malawi?

A - In the past two years, UK has given over £6½ million to help Mozambican refugees in Malawi and other neighbouring countries. Have also given £8½ million to the UNHCR and Red Cross Africa General Fund, some of which has been spent in helping Mozambican refugees.

Q Why is the Prime Minister not visiting Mozambique?

A - Would have liked to do so but schedule does not permit this. Always have to make difficult choices on such journeys.

Q What are the Prime Minister's views on the prospects for peace in Mozambique?

A - I look forward to discussing this question with President Chissano. He has, of course, declared an amnesty for all RENAMO supporters. Wrong for me to speculate further before I see him.



Q What is the Prime Minister's attitude to RENAMO? Is it still receiving South African support?

A - We have no contacts with RENAMO. It seems to be largely a guerilla organisation, and a very brutal one, with no clearly defined political aims.

- No doubt that there has been support for RENAMO from ^{some elements} in South Africa. I believe, however, that the South African Government is making a serious effort to put an end to this.

Q Does the Prime Minister expect any demonstrations or any other difficulties?

A - You should ask my hosts that question. Sure there will be no problems which they and we cannot deal with.

Q Political change in Southern Africa?

A - Want to see peaceful change through negotiations leading to creation of non-racial, representative system of government. But new constitutional arrangements must be for South Africans to decide. Would be quite wrong for outsiders to try to lay down blueprints.

- On change through negotiations, favour ideas put forward by Commonwealth Eminent Persons Group:
- release of Mandela and other political prisoners;
- unbanning of ANC and other political organisations;
- resumption of normal political activity;
- negotiations against the background of suspension of violence on all sides.

Supplementaries

Q Talks with Pik Botha?



A - Important to stay in touch with leadership if we are to exert influence. Opportunity to press case for fundamental change.

Q Sanctions issue at CHOGM?

A - Hope will not be distracted with discussion of further measures. Would be folly to impose new sanctions just as South Africans are allowing Namibia to come to independence through free and fair elections. Consequences could be catastrophic. CHOGM should instead be discussing what practical, positive contribution Commonwealth can make to an independent Namibia.

Q Current situation in South Africa?

A - Significant reforms undertaken by P W Botha - abolition of pass laws, legalising trade unions, etc. - have not received sufficient recognition. Disappointed by virtual halt in reform process over last couple of years, and by clampdown on legitimate extra-parliamentary opposition. Condemned press censorship, detainees. Hope momentum of reform will resume soon.

Q What is Britain's policy on arms supplies to the Front Line States?

A - As part of our policy of practical measures to help the states in the region, we have made gifts of non-lethal equipment (for example, landrovers, radios, medical supplies, uniforms) to Mozambique, Zimbabwe, Malawi and Tanzania. All these countries have been engaged in trying to restore peace in Mozambique.
- Intend to continue this policy.



- Willing to supply major items of defensive equipment such as fighter aircraft to meet genuine needs on competitive terms. We are already a major supplier of Zimbabwe Air Force (Hawks). Ready to do more.

Supplementaries

Q Is the Prime Minister not concerned that the supply of lethal equipment to Zimbabwe could increase tensions in the region especially with South Africa?

A - In an ideal world there would be no need for such supplies. Meanwhile, however, every sovereign country has the right to equip itself for its own defence.

Q Are you suggesting that Zimbabwe might be the victim of South African aggression?

A - No, but as elsewhere in the world intentions can change overnight. This is a fact of life of which governments have to take account.

Q Are you not concerned that such weapons might be used against South Africa?

A - Hypothetical question. Do not see such a situation arising.

Q What is our view of the political system in Malawi (and in other neighbouring black African states)?

A - Not for me to pass judgement on political systems of other countries unless they are based on systematic discrimination or the systematic denial of basic human rights.



Supplementaries

Q Some would argue that individuals have been denied basic human rights in Malawi and some other countries in the region, e.g. through imprisonment without trial.

A - We of course condemn abuses of human rights wherever they occur. But, as I say, we should not condemn a whole political system unless it is rooted in such abuses.

Q What is the current state of our bilateral relationship with Nigeria?

A - Excellent. Major trading partner in Africa; leading Commonwealth country; enjoy close and cordial relations. Strengthened since President Babangida took office in 1985. State Visit (9-12 May) will mark a new high point.

Supplementaries

Q What of Babangida?

A - Got on well when I visited Nigeria in January 1988. Looking forward to seeing him again, and to welcoming him on State Visit. Greatly admire courageous steps he has taken to restore Nigeria's economy and to decentralise and privatise.

Q Economy. Role for Britain?

A - Keen to help President Babangida overcome Nigeria's economic difficulties. Welcomed his budget for this year. Tough measures - but necessary to reduce budget deficit. Also welcomed the IMF agreement which Nigeria signed on 3 February.



- Against this encouraging background, have taken leading role in assembling \$600 million international aid package for Nigeria for 1989. Our own contribution will be \$100 million.
- Have also worked hard to obtain for Nigeria generous rescheduling of official debts in Paris Club (3 March). Will give Nigeria vital breathing space for servicing these debts.
- All this is a measure of our commitment to Nigeria.

Q What will you discuss?

A - Only short visit (90 minutes), but expect to cover main topics of mutual interest. See eye to eye on many important issues of the day of them.

Q But what about South Africa/Sanctions?

A - No difference of view on evil of apartheid. Only disagreement is over means to bring about its end. Understand strength of Nigerian feeling over sanctions. But believe they too understand our view. Important thing that we should not allow this to stand in the way of close bilateral relations. Believe President Babangida shares this view.

Q How is UK/Nigerian trade faring?

A - Far and away our biggest market in sub-Saharan Africa, despite Nigeria's economic difficulties. UK exports £480 million. Biggest share of market (22%). Want to improve on that. Recognise that Nigeria's economic potential almost unlimited. British companies well placed once economy begins to revive.

General Supplementaries

Q How does the Prime Minister see the development of Soviet policy towards Southern Africa?



A - Encouraged by the constructive role played by the Soviet Union in the Angola/Namibia negotiations and by other signs of new thinking about the region. I look forward to discussing the region with Mr Gorbachev on my return.

Q How does the Prime Minister see Britain's role in the region?

A - Believe our dual approach of pressing the South African Government for fundamental reform combined with the practical measures we are taking to help the states in the region, is increasingly recognised as constructive and effective. Apart from our military assistance we have given over £1 billion in development aid to the states in the region since 1980. We played an important part behind the scenes in the Angola/Namibia negotiations. We are fully engaged in helping bring Namibia to independence. We are also doing all we can to encourage Pretoria and Maputo to build on the progress made at Songo last autumn in developing closer co-operation. My own visit bears witness to the importance we attach to the region and to our role in it.

Q Will the Prime Minister be announcing any new initiative, for example further aid on military assistance, in the region?

A - Wait and see.



BRITISH AID TO AFRICA

Is aid counterproductive, by discouraging African countries from being economically independent?

Our aid is used precisely to help reduce African countries dependence, for example by developing their agricultural potential - to grow more of their own food requirements, to expand their cash crops for export and to control the pests that attack their crops. Our extensive training programmes, in this country and in Africa itself, are helping to ensure that to an increasing extent these countries will have their own skilled people in key sectors and reduce their reliance on expatriate manpower. Our project aid is helping to improve the efficiency of their transport and power systems, vital for the efficiency of agriculture, industry and trade. And in those countries, now growing in number, that are determined to move away from rigid central planning systems with inflated public sectors - in other words to take the necessary steps to put their economies on the right basis for the future - we are providing a substantial volume of balance of payments support - around £100 million in the current year. These reform programmes are now paying off with higher economic growth and increased exports.

How vigorously is aid provision monitored?

Appraisal and monitoring are a central and increasingly strengthened part of our aid management, both at home and in the field - to ensure that both we and the recipients get maximum value for the scarce resources we provide. Projects are designed to be as efficient as possible and are implemented with help from British experts. Our technical cooperation programmes, and the associated training, are



directed to the areas of greatest need and are carefully supervised by our own staff. Where we provide balance of payments finance we monitor, usually in concert with the World Bank, the extent to which the associated economic reform programme is being maintained and also take great care to ensure that the procurement and allocation systems for the finance we provide are efficient.

How important is aid as part of our export effort?

Over 80% of our bilateral aid is tied to the provision of British goods and services, thus helping to establish or strengthen future commercial opportunities. The provision of British technical cooperation experts and the training programme that we have for Africans are also important in introducing British technology. And in English speaking African countries - those with close connections with Britain - our exporters benefit significantly from the flow of assistance from the multilateral agencies to which we make a contribution. But trading opportunities ultimately depend on economic growth in the countries in question: this is where our financial support for those countries that are liberalising their economies, introducing new incentives and economic reforms, is so vital. By providing the means to help them expand in general we shall lay the basis for improved export trade from this country.

PRIME MINISTER

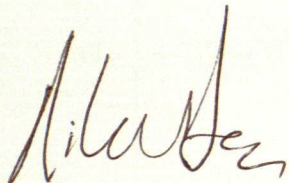
INTERVIEW WITH BBC WORLD SERVICE

You are giving a radio interview to the BBC World Service at 4.00pm on Monday. The interview will be broadcast the following Saturday (ie two days before you leave) on the magazine programme "Focus on Africa". This is widely listened to throughout Africa.

The interviewers will be Robin White and Elizabeth O'Hene (a Ghanaian). They hope to compile a 30 minute broadcast which probably means an interview lasting 35-40 minutes. They will be bringing a photographer, who will take some pictures during the first couple of minutes, and a sound engineer. COI will record.

Charles has submitted briefing separately.

Content to use the study?



Yes not

MICHAEL BATES
Press Office
17 March 1989