

Prime Minister

CONFIDENTIAL



This note describes the contacts between our High

Foreign and Commonwealth Office

Commission and (i) the Republican Front London SW1A 2AH

(ii) Zapu.

The Annex contains interesting comment on the attitude of the white community to Mr. Ian Smith.

7 December 1982

A.S.C. 2/12

John [unclear]

Zimbabwe

In your letter of 24 November you asked for more details of contacts between the High Commission in Harare and members of the Republican Front (RF) and ZAPU.

Republican Front

Until April this year the High Commission maintained regular Chancery contact (on average about once every two months) with Mr Kluckow, National Chairman of the RF, and with Mr Wadman, a member of the National Executive. Mr Kluckow made clear that the RF considered these contacts useful, but that they should remain discreet and at an unobtrusive level. There were also periodic contacts with a number of other RF members.

Members of the High Commission frequently see a number of others who left the RF at the time of the split last March. However, it has become more difficult to keep in touch with the rump of the RF. The party have lost all but one of their Harare-based members of the House of Assembly. Many of the remaining parliamentarians have taken steps to avoid or minimise social contact with members of the High Commission. A few such as Mr Wadman and Senator Whaley do keep in close touch and are prepared to discuss political subjects, but some others who accept social contact decline to talk about politics at all.

Our High Commissioner believes that the most likely explanation of this behaviour is that following the split the people who remain in the RF are those who were the strongest supporters of UDI, the strongest opponents of the Lancaster House process and most firmly wedded to the view that Britain has consistently sold Rhodesia short over the past thirty years. In other words though they may not object to members of the High Commission personally, they just do not like what they represent and prefer to keep them at arms length.

I commented in my letter of 22 November on the question of contacts with Mr Smith himself. As I undertook to do then, we have asked the High Commissioner (who has just returned from tour) to look again at this whole question. He has arranged to see Mr Smith when the latter next visits Harare on 10 December.



ZAPU

The High Commission maintained Chancery contact with various members of ZAPU's Central Committee in 1981 on a similar basis as with the RF, and with the same frequency. In the course of this year, because of the growing importance of monitoring relations between ZANU and ZAPU, these contacts with ZAPU have been intensified and have taken place at monthly intervals. The High Commissioner has spoken with Mr Msipa, Minister of Water Resources and Development, about ZANU/ZAPU relations and also with Mr John Nkomo, Minister of State in the Prime Minister's Office, who like Mr Msipa, is in close touch with Mr Joshua Nkomo. The High Commissioner has called on Mr Joshua Nkomo to discuss the hostage issue, but it is less easy to maintain contact with him now that he spends most of his time in Bulawayo.

As your questions arise from Mr Smith's visit to London, you may be interested to read the attached comments by our High Commission in Harare in response to a request from us for the reactions among the white community in Zimbabwe to the visit. Mr Smith still retains a substantial following among the whites (the RF won the by-election in Bulawayo referred to, although by a very low poll) and there is no alternative white leader of his stature to replace him. But the High Commission's comments make clear that a large number of the white community, especially among the business sector, consider him to be a harmful influence and unrepresentative of their own views.

I am copying this to Richard Mottram (Defence) and Richard Hatfield (Cabinet Office).

Yours ever,
Robert Bone

(R B Bone)
 Private Secretary

A J Coles Esq
 Private Secretary
 10 Downing Street



Comments from High Commission in Harare on Recent Visit to
London by Mr Ian Smith

Increasingly leading members of the white community here have expressed to us their concern and distress at what Smith is reported to have been saying in Washington. These are people at the head of the private sector organisations in this country, leading farmers and businessmen. They all say the same thing. Smith's posture and pronouncements in the early months after independence were on the whole constructive and helpful. Since then, his influence has been, as they see it, destructive and has represented a serious threat to the position of the white community. They emphasise that he does not represent them in any sense, pointing out that in the recent bye-election in Bulawayo North, reckoned to be an impregnable RF bastion in the past, the total poll was under 29 per cent of the electorate and only 15.7 per cent voted for the RF. They are alarmed to think that Smith may be regarded overseas as accurately representing the views of the white community.

The way the whites in positions of economic influence and importance here see things, their essential task is to get on terms with Ministers and be able to influence Government. They regard the RF as being thoroughly discredited (though many of them must have been RF supporters in the past) and they believe that the way to achieve their objective is to pursue it by extra-Parliamentary means. They have established their own links with Ministers (some through private sector representative organisations and some personal) and they have all found these links to be more live and effective in the course of the last ten months. (Many have sought our advice and help in these initiatives - and we have of course readily given it). Although they have been shaken from time to time by a particular day's events (the Farmer's Union eg faced with summary arrest of their members) in quiet moments they have become increasingly reassured by their many successes in reversing disastrous decisions or actions by the executive.

Zimbabwe
UK Relations

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10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

8 December, 1982

ZIMBABWE

The Prime Minister has noted the contents of your letter of 7 December about contacts between our High Commission in Harare and members of the Republic Front and ZAPU.

A.L. COLES

R.B. Bone, Esq.,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office

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