

CC PC

PRIME MINISTER (2)

HARARE

SUBJECT cc MASTER
OPS



10th January, 1986.

Prime Minister

PRIME MINISTER'S
PERSONAL MESSAGE

SERIAL NO. T68/86

Dear Prime Minister,

A most intemperate
message to which I
think you should had
a firm reply. CDD
16/1

I write to acknowledge with thanks your letter of 20 December, 1985, in which you inform me about your meeting with the Commonwealth Group of Eminent Persons. I trust that the Group will discharge its unenviable task to the best of its ability. I shall eagerly await the results of its endeavour.

I must, however, frankly and honestly inform you that I take great exception to the second paragraph of your letter, especially the portion which reads as follows:

"..... I was frankly dismayed to hear the news that another landmine had exploded in Northern Transvaal on 15 December, this time involving substantial loss of life. I understand that it is your policy not to allow such attacks to be mounted from Zimbabwe and hope that you will continue to use your influence to try to prevent such incidents."

Clearly, what you are trying to convey to me is not only your dismay at the landmine explosion but also your belief that the attack was mounted by the ANC from Zimbabwe and that, therefore, we must have allowed the ANC to use our territory as a base for such attacks.

Surely, with a well-established embassy in Zimbabwe and several thousands of British nationals living all over our territory, you should be in a position to know that we have no ANC, PAC or SWAPO bases in this country. The fact that the explosions have occurred in the Northern Transvaal close to the border with us does not make Zimbabwe responsible for them. Perhaps you are also aware that within a few days of the Northern Transvaal landmine explosions there was a serious attack upon an electric station close to Swaziland. And only last week, another landmine explosion occurred close to the border with Botswana. Do you want to tell me that these countries neighbouring South Africa must be held responsible for those ANC attacks merely because of their geographical contiguity to South Africa?

Prime Minister, the ANC is not a Zimbabwean organisation and I have no influence on it. Therefore, the mode, timing, geography and targeting of the ANC attacks are entirely its own matter. But let it also be remembered that the ANC, PAC and other democratic forces in South Africa are waging a struggle for their freedom, a struggle for human rights, which is far nobler than your South African struggle for the sustenance of British economic interests. To me, the morality of their cause surely overrides the morality (in my view, the immorality!) of the British economic case.

I also find it surprising that the Northern Transvaal explosions should have been the first to dismay you. I suppose this is because the victims of the explosions were, for the first time, exclusively seven whites. What about the hundreds of blacks murdered by the apartheid regime within South Africa, and those others murdered by it across the border in Lesotho, Swaziland, Botswana, Mocambique, Angola, Namibia, Zambia and Zimbabwe? Do they move your conscience at all? While white may be more beautiful for the British and their South African apartheid allies, black is also more beautiful for us of African descent!

Please, there can never be any question of my pleading with the A.N.C. to "prevent such incidents", as you put it. You certainly seem to be unaware of the stand taken by the last summit of the O.A.U. urging the South African Liberation Movements to intensify their freedom struggle. That is the African position! It is also my position! Anyway, Comrade Oliver Tambo, the President of the ANC, lives in London, not in Zimbabwe, and hence it is quite an easy matter for you to express your views directly to him.

The second paragraph of your letter also goes on to state, "but there are quite clearly limits to the South African Government's tolerance if these incidents continue in the future." This, indeed, amounts to a threat you are delivering to me on behalf of South Africa. But let me state quite clearly that we (that is, my Government and People) are not afraid of any invasion by South Africa. Whatever its military strength might be in relation to ours, we can never allow it to get away with any criminal act of blatant aggression. You can tell them that! It should not

be forgotten that we won our freedom and independence through an armed revolutionary struggle. We remain prepared to defend that freedom and independence through the same struggle!

We, more than South Africa, have come to a stage where we can no longer allow our tolerance to be further stretched, and, certainly, we will not allow South Africa to engage with impunity in acts of direct aggression against us.

I am sure you know that in respect of Zimbabwe South Africa has, since Independence, been trying to destabilise both our political and economic systems. Even as I write you now, South Africa is training dissident and bandit recruits from Zimbabwe at at least two centres. We have thus been more sinned against than sinning. So, please do not add British insult to the injury being inflicted upon us by the Boers.

I am sorry to have to write in this tone, but am constrained to do so by the import of the second paragraph of your letter.

Yours sincerely,

R. G. Mugabe



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South Africa: Relations Pt 8.

