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CFW

10 DOWNING STREET

THE PRIME MINISTER

27 August 1985

Dear Mr. Ransford

In my letter of 21 June, I promised to let you have my considered views on your proposals for the Nassau agenda (outlined in your letter of 12 June). I now offer the following comments.

As regards the format I am content that the customary structure dividing the proceedings into political, economic and functional issues should be used.

As we approach the autumn meeting, I have in mind the fact that 1985 is a year of commemoration and reflection, spanning the fortieth anniversaries of such momentous events as the end of World War II, the first use of nuclear weapons in war and the founding of the United Nations (as well as the twentieth anniversary of the Commonwealth Secretariat itself). It will be fitting therefore as you suggest for the leaders of the Commonwealth to exchange views on the international situation, to explore ways for further improving of cooperation, and in the spirit of the Goa Declaration on International Security to send to the United Nations Secretary-General the collective resolve of the Commonwealth to uphold the principles and objectives of the Charter.

Following on from the Goa Declaration we shall certainly wish to give consideration to the deliberations of the Commonwealth Consultative Group which has been studying

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the Special Needs of Small States. This has been an area of concern and interest to the British Government, Parliament and the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association.

1985 has also marked the return of the Soviet Union to the negotiating table and the topics of disarmament, arms limitation and East-West relations are all worthy of discussion and comment. The prospects for World Peace and international security can only be enhanced by the success of the current negotiations. I agree that we shall need to consider a number of other political issues with important implications for both regional and international security, such as Afghanistan, Cambodia and the Middle East. It might also be worth discussing the concern of President Hay of the International Committee of the Red Cross about the increasing failure of many Governments to observe the Geneva Convention on the treatment of prisoners of war and protection of civilians in cases of armed conflict. I believe too that we should have an exchange of views on the problems of hijacking and terrorism which are causing so much suffering to innocent victims and are I know worrying a number of Commonwealth colleagues. Mention might also be made of the International Conventions on Aviation Security to which a number of Commonwealth countries have yet to accede.

During his visit to London earlier in the summer Sir Lynden Pindling told me of his desire to have a discussion at Nassau of drug problems. The drugs issue is one to which my Government attaches very great importance and I heartily welcome and support the proposal that the topic should be included in the Agenda.

I agree that the situation in Southern Africa is a matter of continuing concern. We have been categorical in our condemnation of the recent attacks by South Africa against its neighbours, in particular the raid against Botswana, a

fellow Commonwealth country. I believe that we are at one in wishing to see Namibia brought to independence on the basis of Security Council Resolution 435 as quickly as possible, and some real and early progress towards a system of government in South Africa that reflects the wishes and concerns of all South Africans; but we may be divided as to means.

In discussing these issues at Nassau, I believe we would do best to break them down into their constituent parts. The essential point is that we should approach them constructively and without pre-judging the outcome of our discussions. Different members of the Commonwealth will have different views on the ways open to the Commonwealth countries to play the sort of "practical role" which you suggest. The Commonwealth Secretariat will I hope reflect these differences in any suggestions which it may make about discussions on the subject. As you know, we for our part do not consider that economic sanctions would be effective in bringing about the changes in South Africa's policies and the early peaceful evolution which the Commonwealth wants to see. Indeed, it seems to me much more likely that they would have the opposite effect, and hinder the achievement of peaceful progress either over Namibia or within South Africa.

The situation in Cyprus remains a source of great concern. I believe the most effective action we could take at our meeting would be to reiterate our strong support for the UN Secretary-General's initiative, and our hope that all parties will continue to cooperate with his efforts to bring the two sides together again. In that context I believe the Commonwealth Action Group will be most effective if it continues to act in a non-partisan fashion and as a complement to the Secretary-General's initiative, strengthening his hand by voicing its support for his efforts in the months ahead.

When considering the economic issues confronting us, I hope that due regard will be given to the pledges of the major industrialised countries at the Bonn Economic Summit to sustain growth and an open world trading and monetary system from which all our countries can benefit. That meeting looked in particular at the question of indebtedness and welcomed the way in which several developing countries had addressed the problem flexibly and effectively. At Nassau I hope we can find time to consider the present case-by-case approach of the established institutions and the IMF role in adjustment. Both seem to be receiving too critical a press at the moment. It is too easy to associate a sober assessment of the debt problem with unwarranted assumptions that this somehow demonstrates that the present approaches are not working. Our discussions of economic issues will presumably be placed in the context of discussions at the Commonwealth Finance Ministers' Meeting and the annual meetings of the IMF and IBRD which will of course be taking place shortly before our meeting in Nassau.

On IDA the question of a supplementary fund has now been overtaken by the Special Facility for Africa. It would, I suggest, be more appropriate for any discussion to be directed to the prospects for the next IDA replenishment in 1987.

There is widespread recognition of the importance of improving the management of the public sector and promoting the effectiveness of the private sector in the developing countries of the Commonwealth, particularly in Africa. We already attach considerable importance to manpower assistance and training within our aid programme, and we shall be glad to discuss with other Commonwealth donors ways of trying to ensure that our resources are used to the best effect. Perhaps we could find time for this point too at

Nassau.

In that part of your letter which you devote to economic issues, there is one major topic which seems to be missing, namely population and development. In any discussion of the long term problems of sub-Saharan Africa, we cannot ignore the growing and relentless effect of high population growth rates. All the countries attending the International Population Conference in Mexico City last year acknowledged the fact that rapid population growth can hinder overall economic and social development. The Nassau meeting could provide an ideal opportunity for Commonwealth leaders to consider how population growth rates might be reduced and what help Commonwealth aid institutions can provide to complement national efforts in this important field.

I share your desire that the areas of functional cooperation should be properly examined and discussed. I look forward to reviewing the activities of the Commonwealth Fund for Technical Cooperation and considering the report on Science for Technology and Development, which I understand covers the main suggestion in the British paper on Environmental Cooperation submitted at the last Senior Officials meeting for a Commonwealth study into the economic value of wildlife. The Commonwealth Science Council, to whom the UK paper was referred, have suggested that the proposals on natural resources of the Kendrew Report might be a suitable vehicle for putting the UK initiative into practice.

I was pleased to see your reference to the report of the Commonwealth Working Group on the management of technological changes. The Chairman of the Group, Professor Menon, made a most interesting presentation of the Group's work at the meeting of Commonwealth Employment Ministers in Geneva in June and it is clearly right that Heads of Government should consider this report which will be

relevant to all of them.

The British Government also continue to attach great importance to student mobility and educational interchange within the Commonwealth. Our policy of targeted rather than indiscriminate support is a very positive one.

I note that in planning the Nassau meeting, you have had regard for the discussion of Senior Officials in Barbados on the style and format of Heads of Government Meetings. You are, therefore, aware of the great importance that I attach to this subject, particularly now that the Commonwealth has grown to a membership of nearly fifty. We must make sure that our procedures make the best use of those attending, particularly our Foreign Ministers.

Reports have reached me from several sources of the great efforts being made by the Bahamian Government to ensure that our meeting proceeds smoothly in an excellent environment. I know that the Commonwealth Secretariat too will make every effort to ensure a successful meeting and that the proceedings will go so structured that we do not dwell unduly on those areas where agreement will not be possible, and so concentrate our efforts on those topics in which real progress can be made to the mutual advantage of the Commonwealth and indeed the wider world.

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Sincerely

Margaret Thatcher

His Excellency Mr. Shridath Ramphal, A.C., Kt., C.M.G., Q.C.

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cc Pd
Duty Clerk



Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

22 August 1985

Dear Mark, Gt
re Mr

Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM), Nassau:
16-22 October 1985: Agenda

The Commonwealth Secretary General wrote to Heads of Government on 12 June giving his preliminary ideas on the Agenda for the Heads of Government meeting, Nassau in October and the Prime Minister sent an interim reply on 21 June. Since then we have circulated Mr Ramphal's proposals to all relevant FCO and other Whitehall Departments, who have submitted their comments and suggestions. I now enclose a draft reply which Lady Young (in Sir Geoffrey Howe's absence) recommends that the Prime Minister should send to Mr Ramphal. This is longer than last time (but on the pattern of earlier occasions) since in 1983 Mrs Thatcher had a meeting with the Secretary General and gave her views orally.

We expect that shortly after receiving the Prime Minister's comments, Mr Ramphal will issue early in September the Annotated Agenda which will form the basis of the briefing the Prime Minister will require for the Nassau meeting.

Yours Sincerely,

Colin Budd

(C R Budd)
Private Secretary

M Addison Esq
Private Secretary
10 Downing Street

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Commonwealth PT9

CHOGM

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20540

DRAFT: ~~minute/letter/telegram/despatch/note~~

TYPE: Draft/Final 1+

FROM:

Reference

The Prime Minister

DEPARTMENT:

TEL. NO:

SECURITY CLASSIFICATION

TO:

Your Reference

- Top Secret
- Secret
- Confidential
- Restricted
- Unclassified

Mr Shridath S Ramphal
 Commonwealth Secretary-General
 Marlborough House
 Pall Mall
 London SW1Y 5HX

Copies to:

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SUBJECT:

.....In Confidence

COMMONWEALTH HEADS OF GOVERNMENT MEETING, NASSAU
 16-22 OCTOBER 1985: AGENDA

CAVEAT.....

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Enclosures—flag(s).....

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Campanula 179

CHOGM

Flanagan / DeBlois
Duty Clerk, No 10



We spoke. Just in case, here is a copy of the relevant page of the draft to Mr Ramphal on CHOGM, with the missing sentence as "X"

With the compliments of

Susah.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE
LONDON, SW1A 2AH

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