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subject filed on
Commonwealth: CHAM State House
Policy March 1978 Lusaka, Republic of Zambia

PRIME MINISTER'S
PERSONAL MESSAGE
SERIAL No. T23A/797

8th June, 1979.

My Dear Prime Minister,

May I again congratulate you on your deserved assumption to the high office of Prime Minister of Great Britain. As I said in my earlier note, I look forward to meeting you at the forthcoming Commonwealth Conference here in Lusaka and offer my congratulations in person.

I cannot over-emphasize the importance of your country to Zambia. Britain is one of Zambia's biggest trading and development partners. And in terms of the incalculable practical demands of everyday life, the Zambian people have more ties with the people of Britain than with any other people in the world. This tradition of close relations is and must continue to be of benefit to both of us. It is the buttress of our mutual co-operation.

I thought I should write you early and somewhat at length on Rhodesia which, as you know, for Zambia is a problem of the highest priority. In this connection I thank you for sending Mr. Patrick Cosgrave for a quiet exchange of views on this matter. I hope by now you have had the opportunity to hear his report of the meeting I had with him.

Rhodesia - the thorny rebellion by Ian Smith against the British Crown - is clearly the only problem that has forcibly come to divide Zambia and Britain sharply and one that has continually soured our otherwise very warm fellowship.

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Rt. Hon. Mrs. Margaret Thatcher,
Prime Minister of Great Britain and Northern Ireland,
10 Downing Street,
LONDON.



I am therefore writing to put to you my candid view of the rule that has now been set up in Rhodesia by the rebel leader Ian Smith as a further twist to the thirteen-year constitutional crisis in that rebel territory. This new phase marks the point at which you are directly entering the crisis of the Rhodesian rebellion as Prime Minister of Great Britain.

I will confine myself to this current situation. But in doing so, I am assuming that you already understand Zambia's involvement, contribution and firm stand on the Liberation Struggle in Rhodesia from its beginning to this day. This position remains unchanged. And it is with this background that I am looking at the new development in Rhodesia.

As you are aware, the events that have been taking place inside Rhodesia have culminated into the conversion of Rhodesia to Zimbabwe-Rhodesia and into the formation of a coalition government by Bishop Abel Tendekayi Muzorewa and rebel leader Ian Douglas Smith - the Muzorewa/Smith rule.

As you equally know, this process inside Rhodesia leading to the formation of the Muzorewa/Smith rule followed a path separate from and opposed to the path of the process that was preferred and promoted by the international community and acknowledged by the fighting Liberation Movement of Zimbabwe.

Whatever its negative and positive aspects, the Muzorewa/Smith political framework for Rhodesia is a creation that lies outside and is contrary to the intentions of the fighting Liberation Movement and the intentions of the international community as clearly expressed in the United Nations, the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) and other progressive forums around the world as well as in the long liberation struggle and war by the people of Rhodesia.

In this respect the Muzorewa/Smith rule, as a solution for the Rhodesian crisis, is an imposition upon the fighting Liberation Movement and the international community in the same manner that the unilateral declaration of independence (UDI) by Ian Smith in 1965 was an imposition.

To all intents and purposes, the Muzorewa/Smith rule is a direct extension and growth of the original UDI. It is not a break from UDI. It is Smith's own response - damning response - to the Rhodesian and international attitude towards the abnoxious political conditions foisted by his UDI and rebellion on Rhodesia.



Smith has not broken his stand. He has not broken his rebellion. He has merely reorganised and reconstituted his set-up in order to survive the new Rhodesian, African and international political environments forced upon the territory by the armed liberation struggle against him in the colony.

As a result of this new development, two crucial questions, calling for answers, have arisen and are actively exercising everyone's mind. These are:-

- (a), notwithstanding its negative and positive aspects, is the Muzorewa/Smith rule the right formula for Rhodesia - right in the sense that it is the kind of rule that the fighting Liberation Movement of Zimbabwe and the international community have considered and accepted as the final solution? The answer obviously to this question is a Big No.
- (b) regardless of the negative reply to (a) above, is the Muzorewa/Smith rule a formula that has the capacity to end the war and to settle the Rhodesian crisis once and for all? The answer to this question is also a big no.

It is my considered view that no person who has closely followed, lived with and has been fully involved with the drama of the Rhodesian rebellion over the past thirteen years can candidly answer the above two questions differently.

The truth of the matter is that rather than being a solution, the new Muzorewa/Smith rule is a further strategy for more war in Rhodesia. By this strategy the white rebel leader has made it possible for a black and equally rebel leader in the context of the fighting Liberation Movement, to lead politically the white side against the black side in the Liberation War. Smith has merely succeeded in indigenising the rebellion in his determination to carry on and have his own political way. He has barricaded his institutionalised white rebellion with a body of political blacks.



My perception of the present new turn of events and the manoeuvring by Smith in Rhodesia (and this is crystal clear in my own mind) is that the Western world, if it swallows the Muzorewa/Smith bait, hook, line and sinker, will now be effectively tricked into taking a dangerous position which will damage not only the destiny of Zimbabwe but damage materially the vital interests of the West in Southern Africa. That damage could well tilt the political attitude of the entire African continent against Western sentiment for a long time, especially for the decisive near future.

As I see it, while the Muzorewa/Smith strategy may provide the apparently tired West with the excuse to walk away from the Rhodesian crisis, that same strategy is the device that will have the West running back in panick when the whole of Southern Africa will burst into flames. The difference between now and that time will be that the West will have permanently lost a great deal in material interests; and will have lost almost completely the edge of advantage it now has to solve the remaining three problems in Southern Africa largely by negotiation. The West's insensibility and lack of foresight will have plunged the region into an ideological war as finally the only option to rub out intrrenched racism.

As I see it, the Muzorewa/Smith rule

- (a) neither covers the whole area of the constitutional crisis in Rhodesia nor does it exhaust the crisis.
- (b) cannot and will not end the Liberation war. It does not have the ideological capacity to do so.
- (c) will on the contrary escalate the war and more Rhodesians will die and are already dying each day than before the so-called election to impose this new rule.
- (d) will not, despite the intrrenched clauses and the special political barricade of political blacks, retain the whites in Rhodesia. The whites will run away and lose their property. Nothing will protect them. Many will die.



- (e) will cause a quick transformation of the war from firstly, a mere liberation struggle to a white-inspired black to black civil war which will as quickly transform into a purist ideological conflict.
- (f) will commit the West in Rhodesia on the wrong side of liberation and force the West to fight from this negative approach not only in Rhodesia but also in Namibia and South Africa and be seen generally by Africa to take a negative political line towards the broader aspirations of the continent.
- (g) will commit firmly the black liberation forces in Rhodesia, Namibia and South Africa to the East to whom the fighters will be ever grateful for military assistance.
- (h) the Muzorewa/Smith framework has drawn to itself some characteristics of the solution being sought for to make it look like that solution. But in truth and reality it is far from that solution. It is an artful resemblance. The rebellion and the war in Rhodesia cannot and will not be ended by deceptive resemblances. A straight, clear-cut and hard solution is called for and it is upon this that legality peace and stability can be restored to Rhodesia.

While the West has not participated in the military support of the armed struggle in Rhodesia, it has nevertheless participated noticeably in finding a just and fair negotiated settlement. Significant steps have been taken towards such a settlement.

As things now stand, the Muzorewa/Smith rule is a desperate attempt by Ian Smith to stand in the way of this fair and just negotiated solution. It would be both unfair, misguided and totally wrong to ask (a) the international community, (b) Africa, (c) Frontline States and (d) the fighting Liberation Movement of Rhodesia to trade all their past and present efforts and sacrifices in return only for the Muzorewa/Smith rule which is an incomplete process and one clearly without the capacity to end the crisis and bring peace and stability to the territory.



May I, indeed, say that it is not possible for me to see the Rhodesian crisis as a person from the West would see it. I only see the Rhodesian crisis as an African, as a member of the Frontline States, as a person who has been involved in it from its beginning, as a leader who has given the crisis the highest priority and one whose country and people have suffered tremendous sacrifices in search of a fair and just solution by supporting firmly negotiation, struggle and war.

But however, if I were for one moment to look at the Muzorewa/Smith rule not as I am, but from the side of the West and therefore attach some kind of value to it, the highest positive value I would give to this rule is that it is one reality though unfortunate among many and more valuable realities in the current transitional process of Rhodesia from a rebellious colony to a free and independent state.

In this context, I would say the new Muzorewa/Smith rule is a reality, just like the UDI itself, that has to be taken into account with the other more constructive realities in the honest and impartial search for the solution to the crisis.

But in whatever positive way one looks at it, the Muzorewa/Smith rule does not and cannot constitute the complete and final solution that the blacks of Rhodesia took arms to find and one for which thousands have been and continue to be killed, maimed and to suffer horrors. The Muzorewa/Smith rule is not the finality of the desired settlement. For anyone person to allow oneself even to appear to see this rule as a finality is to open oneself to dangerous reckless political cheating.

No one can cheat the people of Zimbabwe into independence. No genuine independence, peace and stability will be brought to Rhodesia by a trick no matter how clever such a deception might be conceived and carried out.

In my view the new Government of the United Kingdom should do the one thing which only that Government alone can do at this point in the Rhodesian constitutional crisis:

- (a) resolve to act to give Rhodesia speedily a broad-based and lasting solution.

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- (b) in preference for this broad-based and lasting solution, firmly withhold recognition of the Muzorewa/Smith rule as a finality in the settlement of the Rhodesian crisis and hold equally firmly to the existing order of sanctions imposed upon the rebellion by the free will of international community.
- (c) accept the Muzorewa/Smith rule as only one of the many conflicting realities and centres of power in the crucial transition of the territory of Rhodesia from a colony in rebellion to a free and united independent state in the African and world community.
- (d) endorse the true fact that the Muzorewa/Smith rule taken alone and in isolation is not and can never be a rising centre of power but a fading centre of power in the broad process of the political evolution of Rhodesia.
- (e) announce publicly a clear policy position on Rhodesia declaring the Muzorewa/Smith rule as only one of many conflicting features which characterise the transition of the territory and call upon the elements of the leadership inside and the elements of the leadership outside Rhodesia to an all party conference to reach a finality in the settlement of the crisis.

If the new Administration in Britain pronounced itself clearly and firmly on the above, it would immediately give the correct political standing and direction to the new Muzorewa/Smith rule. This approach would promote the forward movement to a fair, just and broad-based independence incorporating the participation of all the significant elements of the leadership of political life in Rhodesia and move the whole country towards a political process and rule that would be genuinely and freely acceptable to Rhodesians and the international community.

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As I see it, the new Government in Britain must act correctly in Rhodesia and avoid taking a narrow and precipitous course which will destroy the forward movement to a broad-based and lasting solution which is already in sight and obviously within reach.

In generating and maintaining the forward movement to an all party conference leading to the establishment of an all party political framework and election for Zimbabwe, the new British Government should seek the vigorous assistance of all those able and willing to help to end this crisis. The Government should avoid blurring the clarity of its vision by isolating and over-emphasizing the individual centres of power in the current crisis of the transition.

All significant centres of power in Rhodesia must have access to the confidence of the British Government as the coordinator of the decolonisation. Britain must not overplay the Muzorewa/Smith set-up inside Rhodesia vis-a-vis the Patriotic Front of the fighting Liberation Movement. Taking into account all things, the logic of political change has it that the fighting Liberation Movement is certainly the rising or expanding centre of power in the evolution of Rhodesia. It is futile to attempt to neutralise it. The positive effort must be directed to harnessing and giving this centre of power full and effective play in a broad and firmly-controlled process of change.

While Zambia's position is abundantly clear and her firm support for the Liberation Movement remains completely unchanged, I have written to you to show in my view what action and how that action can be accepted and acted upon by Britain as the colonial authority in order to reach a broader finality in the settlement of the Rhodesian constitutional crisis as from this moment in time.

Britain has an inescapable duty to God, humanity and the people of Rhodesia to see this problem settled correctly once and for all. The problem of Rhodesia has for a long time now been ripe for solution but only for the will and resolution of Britain to act correctly and decisively.



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As always, Zambia stands ready to do everything in her power to support and contribute to any honest and correct resolve to bring to an end the rebellion and tragic situation in Rhodesia and give the territory a broad-based settlement that can end the war and upon which can be built peace and stability. Zambia needs a free, independent, peaceful and viable Zimbabwe.

I have instructed my High Commissioner in London to remain ready to consult with you on the spot and render any help you may require of her in promoting a broad-based settlement for Rhodesia as quickly as possible.

I send you, Your Excellency, kindest regards and personal best wishes.

God bless.

Yours sincerely,

KD

~~Kenneth David Kaunda~~
PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA