

Original on Australia,
Jan 80, Visit by Fraser.



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10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

4 February 1980

PF 11.2.80

Dear Rodric,

VISIT BY MR. FRASER: RHODESIA

As you know, the Prime Minister entertained Mr. Fraser at lunch today. She was accompanied by the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary, Sir Michael Palliser and others. On the Australian side, Mr. Fraser was accompanied by Mr. MacKellar, Sir G. Yeend, Mr. Henderson and others. Among the subjects discussed was Rhodesia.

The Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary described the present situation in the United Nations. He characterised the recent developments in the Security Council as disgraceful. The striking thing about the position in Rhodesia now was not how bad it was but how much progress had been made. Of course disagreeable things had happened but for the most part ZANLA had been responsible for these. The presence of the South Africans at the northern end of Beitbridge had been the price of maintaining white Rhodesian support for the Lancaster House Agreement. The real difficulty now was the determination of one man, President Nyerere, to wreck the Agreement. In response to an enquiry from Mr. Fraser as to why President Nyerere wished to upset things, the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary said that he had never wanted the Agreement signed in the first place. He was absolutely determined that Mr. Mugabe should win. By free and fair elections, President Nyerere meant a victory for ZANU. *~~~~~* There was ample evidence of his destructive activities, e.g. the use of Tanzanian Airways to send large numbers of ZANLA cadres to Mozambique after the ceasefire had come into effect.

Asked by Mr. Fraser about the electoral prospects in Rhodesia, the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary said that of the 80 seats at issue, he expected Mr. Nkomo and his associates to get between 25 or 30. The remainder would be split between Mr. Mugabe and Bishop Muzorewa. Although Mr. Mugabe would probably get the larger number, Bishop Muzorewa should not be under-estimated. He had the better organisation and was expected to get the female vote. The key to the outcome would lie with Mr. Nkomo. Every-

* ~ * Passage deleted and closed, 40 years. /thing
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12 July 2010

thing depended on whether he disliked Mr. Mugabe or Bishop Muzorewa the more. On present form, he was more likely to associate himself with Bishop Muzorewa. This would be the best outcome. In the meantime, there was the worry that the Security Council Resolution would stimulate the OAU to activity. If they were sufficiently determined, they could still destroy the chances of success.

Mr. Fraser said he was grateful for the background. He would have welcomed earlier briefing on the background to the presence of the South Africans at Beitbridge. He had thought at the time that it was an unnecessary provocation to allow the South Africans to remain. He hoped that on another occasion the "colonials" could be taken more into HMG's confidence. (Sir Michael Palliser pointed out that his door was always open to the Australian High Commissioner.) He asked whether there were still many South Africans in Rhodesia: the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary replied that there were a number, as there were Australians, Irishmen and others!

Mr. Fraser said that he had heard from the Australian representative that some members of the Commonwealth Observer Group had already formed their verdict about the conduct of the elections. The Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary, who expressed concern about this, said that this was probably due to the briefing they had received from the Commonwealth Secretary-General, Mr. Ramphal. Mr. Fraser said that he would speak to Mr. Ramphal and accepted the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary's offer of a sight of the text of Mr. Ramphal's briefing. He said he would also like any details that we could provide of ZANLA's breaches of the ceasefire.

Mr. Fraser said that he had spoken recently to President Kaunda on the telephone. He had thought that President Kaunda was looking for a way to resume normal relations with the United Kingdom. The Prime Minister said that she would be willing to write a friendly letter to President Kaunda. In regard to President Nyerere, Mr. Fraser repeated that he found it hard to accept the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary's assessment of President Nyerere's intentions. He offered to speak to President Nyerere about the matter. The Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary said that he thought this might be useful. The point to make would be that while some things had, of course, gone wrong, President Nyerere should not seek to wreck the Agreement as a whole by making elections impossible.

I have already mentioned to Paul Lever on the telephone the requirement to brief Mr. Fraser about Mr. Ramphal and about ZANLA's breaches of the ceasefire. I also asked him to have the drafting of a message from the Prime Minister to President Kaunda put in hand.

Yours ever

Michael Alexander