

CONFIDENTIAL



Rhodesia

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Prime Minister

Prime Minister

L.A.

Ph...
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PROCEEDINGS BY LONHRO AGAINST SHELL/BP

(attached)

I minuted to you on 17 January about the proceedings by Lonhro against Shell and BP. The matter at issue concerned the possibility of claiming public interest immunity for documents which came into existence because of the Bingham investigation and of which Lonhro are now seeking production in their arbitration proceedings with the oil companies. Your Private Secretary's letter of 18 January indicated you were content.

The issue of public interest immunity is now to be heard in the High Court. A certificate claiming public interest immunity is required for this purpose. I attach a copy of a letter to me from the Attorney General, and a copy of the certificate. I have accepted the Attorney General's advice that I sign the certificate, which will now be produced at a resumed hearing before Goff J, probably on 21 February.

As I made clear in my minute of 17 January, we can expect criticism of our decision; but I accept the Attorney General's view that an important principle is at stake. Our News Department and certain of our posts have already been briefed on what to say.

I am copying this minute as before.

L.H.G.

M.T.

18 February 1980

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