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Rhodesia 24

10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

1 June, 1979.

Dear Stephen,

Rhodesia

I wrote to you on 29 May to convey the Prime Minister's views on Lord Harlech's forthcoming consultations in Southern Africa.

The Prime Minister and the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary had a further discussion about Lord Harlech's mission this morning. Lord Carrington explained that Lord Harlech's tour of Southern Africa would have two objectives: to find out whether there was any flexibility in the position of the Front Line Presidents, and also to minimise, so far as possible, the damage which might result to British interests from their current attitude towards the Government's Rhodesia policy. If Lord Harlech did not make contact with the Leaders of the Patriotic Front, the Front Line Presidents would be unlikely to regard his mission as a genuine attempt to achieve settlement, and would probably dismiss it as bogus. Lord Carrington said that he entirely shared the Prime Minister's opinion of Joshua Nkomo and Robert Mugabe, but believed that it would be right for Lord Harlech to see them. The Prime Minister suggested that Lord Harlech might meet President Kaunda and Nkomo together. It was agreed that if this were not, in the event, practicable, Lord Harlech should see Nkomo and Mugabe only in the presence of additional UK witnesses such as our High Commissioner in Lusaka and our Ambassador in Maputo. Lord Carrington pointed out that if, in the event, Nkomo were to refuse to see Lord Harlech, this would do no harm to the Government's public case.

I am sending copies of this letter to the Private Secretaries to the other members of OD and to Martin Vile (Cabinet Office).

*Yours ever,
J.S. Wall*

J.S. Wall, Esq.,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

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