

E. R.

FILE
CONFIDENTIAL

*PM seen
Message to Carter
not sent*

PRIME MINISTER

Rhodesia: Security Council Debate

You discussed this with the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary this afternoon.

The situation now is that the Americans, despite a phone call from Lord Carrington to Mr Vance, are hesitating about their vote. M. Francois-Poncet has said that he would have no chance of persuading President Giscard to join in a veto unless the Americans had first agreed to do so. The chances of our securing sufficient amendments to the African Draft to make an abstention possible seem very slight.

If the Americans continue to waiver and if the difficulty seems to lie in the White House rather than the State Department, Lord Carrington may wish to suggest either a message or a phone call from you to the President later this evening. Against that possibility I attach the text of a draft telegram which could serve either as the text of a message or as your brief for a telephone call.

Either I or the Duty Clerk will be in touch with you later in the evening to tell you how the situation is developing.

Rand

1 February 1980

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File No.
Department . . . RHODESIA
Drafted by
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OUTWARD
TELEGRAM

Security Classification CONFIDENTIAL
Precedence FLASH
DESKBYZ

FOR COMMS. DEPT. USE	Despatched (Date)..... (Time).....Z	POSTBYZ
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PREAMBLE

(Time of Origin).....Z(G.M.T.)
(Security Class.) CONFIDENTIAL
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To FLASH WASHINGTON
(precedence) (post) Tel. No.....of.....

AND TO (precedence/post) FLASH UKMIS NEW YORK

AND SAVING TO

REPEATED TO (for info) IMMEDIATE SALISBURY

SAVING TO (for info).....

Distribution:-
Rhodesia Policy.

(TEXT)

1. Following is text of message from Prime Minister to President Carter which is being sent on direct line to the White House. Begins:

'Dear Mr President,

Peter Carrington has been in touch with Cy Vance about the situation in the Security Council over Rhodesia. You know the tremendous effort we have put into making the settlement reached at Lancaster House work. It is therefore very disheartening that the Africans should choose to take the issue to the Security Council. ^{The} Prime mover on the African side is President Nyerere whose commitment to the settlement has always been uncertain.

/There

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There is no doubt that the Soviet Union are encouraging the more extreme Africans in the course they have chosen ^{in order} to distract attention at the United Nations from their own behaviour over Afghanistan. // The draft resolution being circulated by the Africans is quite unacceptable to us. Not only is it offensively critical, ~~but~~ it also seeks to reinterpret the Lancaster House agreements. If it were allowed to go through, it would seriously undermine the Governor's authority in Rhodesia. It would also, I suspect, only reinforce the Africans' determination to keep the issue before the United Nations. We have agreed to take on direct responsibility for the administration of Rhodesia; we cannot be told how to exercise that responsibility. There is a further complication. As you know, the South Africans have played a vital part in getting the Whites in Rhodesia to accept the settlement, and are continuing to provide practical support for them. There is a real risk that a resolution which 'humiliates' the South Africans will cause a strong reaction, which could in turn have serious consequences for our ability to ~~get~~ ^{see} ~~the settlement~~ get through to the elections without a major crisis.

We are pressing the Africans very hard in New York to amend the worst passages in their draft so as to enable us to abstain and avoid a /confrontation.

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NOTHING TO BE WRITTEN IN THIS MARGIN

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confrontation. But I understand the chances of their agreeing to do so are not very great and that we may well be faced with a resolution much the same as the present draft. In those circumstances, we should have to vote against it. I would hope very much that we could look to you for support: a resolution in such terms is really unjustifiable and will do great damage. Moreover, there is a risk that the Africans may seek to use the 'uniting for peace' procedure to take the issue straight to the General Assembly if we vote against the resolution alone. I believe they would be much less likely to try this were it to be plain to them that you were solidly with us. We have also been in touch with the French Government who are prepared to consider joining us in a vote against the resolution if it is clear that you will do so too. I hope very much that you will give us your support.

Yours sincerely,
Margaret Thatcher.

Ends.

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