

RESTRICTED

CC(79)67
THIRTIETH PLENARY SESSION

COPY NO:

89

CONSTITUTIONAL CONFERENCE
LANCASTER HOUSE
LONDON

Summary of the proceedings of
the Thirtieth Plenary Session,
Saturday 10 November 1979

Lancaster House
10 November 1979

RESTRICTED

RESTRICTED

PRESENT:

UK Delegation:

Lord Carrington (in the Chair)

Sir I Gilmour

Sir M Palliser

Sir L Allinson

Mr D M Day

Mr R W Renwick

Mr P R N Fifoot

Mr N M Fenn

Mr G G H Walden

Mr C D Powell

Mr R D Wilkinson

Mr S J Gomersall

Mrs A J Phillips

Mr M C Wood

RESTRICTED

RESTRICTED

Mr Mugabe, Mr Nkomo and Delegation

Mr S V Muzenda	Mr J M Nkomo
Mr E R Kadungure	Mr J W Msika
Dr H Ushewokunze	Mr T G Silundika
Mr D Mutumbuka	Mr W Musarurwa
Mr J Tungamirai	Mr A M Chambati
Mr E Zvobgo	Mr John Nkomo
Mr S Mubako	Mr L Baron
Mr W Kamba	Mr D N Madzimbamuto
Mr E Munangagwa	Miss E Siziba

RESTRICTED

RESTRICTED

Bishop Muzorewa and Delegation

Dr S C Mundawarara
Mr F Zindoga
Mr G B Nyandoro
Rev N Sithole
Mr L Nyemba
Chief K Ndiweni
Mr Z M Bafanah
Mr D C Smith
Mr R Cronje
Mr C Andersen
Dr J Kamusikiri
Mr G Pincus
Mr L G Smith
Air Vice Marshal H Hawkins
Mr D Zamchiya
Mr S V Mutambanengwe
Mr M A Adam
Mr P Claypole

Secretariat

Mr J M Willson

RESTRICTED

RESTRICTED

The session began at 1134.

THE CHAIRMAN delivered a statement in response to the Patriotic Front's proposals (CC(79)66), subsequently circulated as Conference Paper CC(79)68.

MR NKOMO said that the real purpose of the Conference sessions was not just to set out formal replies, but to discuss matters and try to find methods by which some issues could be looked into by smaller groups. He said that no effort had been made to sit down to discuss and formulate what they considered to be answers to the various problems. It was no good just writing papers and saying they wanted this or that. Those present must get together to try to decide which way to go. He did not think present procedures could bring understanding. Some matters raised in his statement had been answered by the British Government, but not others, and he wondered whether the British disagreed or agreed with those they had not answered. The British had said that the existing police force would be impartial and the Patriotic Front considered that they would not. It seemed that the two sides did not have the same understanding of the term "impartial". He felt that what was needed was to look at the British paper and consider what would be the best way to move forward. He did not think that paper work across the table got to the root of the problems. There was a general understanding of the respective objectives of his and the British delegations; but it seemed that the British wanted to see peace during the interim period, whereas the Patriotic Front wanted to see peace. The British wanted

/a

RESTRICTED

a group of men to maintain law and order; his delegation wanted the same, but they did not necessarily mean the same thing when they said that the group should be impartial. They were not saying that all the members of such a group would be against the Patriotic Front, but they wanted to devise a scheme which would make people realise that a change had occurred.

The British side had said in their proposals that they had made provision for the change which must come and that the settling of misunderstanding must be by peaceful means. His delegation agreed with this, otherwise they would not have come to the Conference. Some method had to be devised of getting through to each other; merely exchanging papers was not the answer. His delegation would study the statement which had just been delivered by the Chairman.

THE CHAIRMAN said that the Conference had started off with plenary meetings; this had been criticised, and bilaterals had been suggested. When these were held, they in turn were criticised and plenaries advocated in their place. If delegations wanted some other means of carrying on the discussions he would be prepared to consider this. It was more difficult to reach decisions with large delegations than with small numbers; that was one of the reasons for bilateral meetings earlier. If those present wished for smaller groups, the Chairman thought that all parties should be involved in them at that stage of the proceedings. He suggested a further plenary meeting the following Monday and in the meantime suggested that the

/delegations

RESTRICTED

delegations reflect on the proposals for smaller meetings. He would be very willing to arrange for such meetings, if the Salisbury delegation were prepared to participate; it would be unfortunate to have bilateral meetings at that stage.

MR NKOMO said that he had not suggested that the Chairman had made a mistake over the form of meetings, as this reflected the requests of delegations. However it was necessary for each of the delegations to get to know what the others were thinking. If they had not wished to discuss matters with the Salisbury delegation they would not have come; both delegations were seeking decolonisation. However the present method of operating made it difficult for his delegation to find out what the Salisbury delegation wanted. If his delegation could let the Salisbury delegation see what the Patriotic Front's aims were they might be able to agree. His delegation would consider the Chairman's proposals, but he thought it essential to use both plenary and other types of meeting in order to arrive at an understanding. THE CHAIRMAN said that he did not wish to mislead those present into thinking that, because he had suggested smaller meetings, a decision was not urgent. If there were to be discussions in smaller groups these must lead to a decision; the Conference had gone on for a very long time. Endless delay could not be envisaged. MR NKOMO said that no one wanted endless delay, but they did not want a hurried agreement resulting in more people being killed.

REV SITHOLE said that there were certain issues which could profitably be looked into in a smaller group; this seemed

/a

RESTRICTED

a legitimate request. Whatever had been said in past meetings, new developments did arise which should be considered in a new light. Some problems were of bilateral interest and some of plenary interest, and should be dealt with accordingly. Not everything could be settled in large plenary sessions. A small group would allow people to go more deeply into the various problems faced by the Conference.

THE CHAIRMAN suggested that the Conference should reconvene on Monday morning, 12 November, having reflected on some of the points he had made; they could then discuss further how to proceed. He wished to emphasise once again that there was urgent need for a decision.

DR MUNDAWARARA pointed out that his delegation had already finished with that part of the Conference; they therefore had nothing to contribute to discussions. He reiterated what he had said before, that it might be helpful at that stage for the Chairman to hold bilateral meetings with the Patriotic Front delegation. THE CHAIRMAN said he understood Dr Mundawarara's point of view. He thought, however, that there was merit in some at least of the Salisbury team being present during any discussion in a smaller forum of points which gave the Patriotic Front delegation concern; Bishop Muzorewa's delegation could, for example, explain their difficulties in accepting certain Patriotic Front suggestions. Dr Mundawarara and his delegation might perhaps wish to discuss this proposal later. MR NKOMO said that the problem had arisen because the Salisbury delegation had accepted the British proposals. His own delegation had

/means

RESTRICTED

means of meeting some of the issues within the British proposals. It was essential that these be discussed. It was fitting, and indeed vital, that those who had agreed to the British proposals understood the Patriotic Front delegation's objectives.

THE CHAIRMAN summed up that both delegations had their points of view. He would leave it to the Salisbury delegation to decide whether they wished to be involved: he would not force them. He suggested that all reflect on what had been said that morning and resume on Monday 12 November.

MR NYANDORO recalled the long series of bilaterals and plenary sessions which had taken place. Further bilaterals might take several months to complete, and such delays were not acceptable. His delegation were in favour of discussion and explanation between the visiting delegations, but there had been no room for this. No black delegate could claim a monopoly of the struggle: all those present had fought for the liberation of their country. The March 3rd agreement and subsequent elections had changed the situation, removing Britain's rights over the country and bringing it to sovereign and independent status. His delegation were not present as if they were a rebel régime but as legitimate representatives, elected by the people of the country.

THE CHAIRMAN reiterated that he did not think he could, as Chairman, refuse a request for a bilateral meeting. He did not, however, envisage the discussions which had been suggested

/taking

RESTRICTED

taking very long. He repeated that time was moving on to the point when decisions had to be taken in the very near future indeed. He knew that Mr Nkomo realised this. To enable decisions to be made very speedily, he as Chairman was prepared to accept a meeting with Mr Nkomo and delegation, with or without the Salisbury delegation.

The Conference was adjourned until 12 November, at a time to be arranged.

The session ended at 1215.

-- 6 --

RESTRICTED