

CONFIDENTIAL

PRIME MINISTER



Foreign and Commonwealth Office  
Contact with draft ab A?

London SW1A 2AH

MS

3 April 1980

*Dear Minister,*

*Agreed  
ab*

TANZANIA/RHODESIA

You will have seen Dar es Salaam telegrams numbers 276<sup>17</sup> and 277 conveying the text of a message from President Nyerere to the Prime Minister about Rhodesia (copies enclosed). I attach a draft reply for the Prime Minister's consideration.

As the post notes, the tone of the letter is grudging and without apology. It is a belated recognition by Nyerere that he has put himself in a false position by his failure promptly and directly to acknowledge to us the successful outcome of the elections in Rhodesia (in marked contrast to the reactions, for example, of Machel). Nyerere has probably been advised that this is the minimum required to protect Tanzania against the consequences of any deterioration in British-Tanzanian relations.

It is clear that Nyerere sees some risk of this. He is aware that the absence of a congratulatory message has been noted and that our High Commissioner in Dar es Salaam has been recalled for consultations. The Tanzanian High Commissioner returned at short notice to Dar es Salaam on 26 March (this may have contributed to the confusion whereby the original of a letter dated 24 March has never been delivered).

/Lord

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Lord Carrington has discussed our future relations with Tanzania with Sir P Moon. We have told the Tanzanians that we are not ready for the annual bilateral aid talks, originally scheduled for 24 March. Much of our aid to Tanzania is for capital projects which cannot be terminated without breaking inter-governmental agreements and contracts with UK suppliers, who could seek compensation if these were cancelled. However £18m of pledged aid will not now be allocated to projects. (But we do not propose to make this public; this would enable Nyerere to claim that he was being victimised). Lord Carrington thinks that our policy for the longer term should be to reduce Nyerere's political influence with other African governments, particularly the Front Line States. We should, so far as possible, ignore Nyerere and deal directly with other governments on general African issues. Meanwhile, Tanzania has acute economic difficulties to which Nyerere will have to pay increasing attention.

Sir Ian Gilmour does not think that Nyerere's message should cause us to alter this policy; but it will be the more effective if we maintain correct relations with Tanzania which give Nyerere no ground for claiming that we are seeking to punish him for his performance over Rhodesia. This would attract sympathy, however undeserved, and could hinder efforts to detach African support for Tanzania. It would be appropriate, therefore, for the Prime Minister's reply to match the cool but correct tone of Nyerere's message. There is no need for urgency in replying: presentationally we think it would be better to do so after a lapse of a few days. If the Prime Minister is content we will despatch the message telegraphically from here for delivery in advance of the signed original.

/I am



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I am copying this letter to David Wright at the Cabinet Office.

*Yours ever  
Stephen Gomersall*

S J Gomersall  
Private Secretary to  
the Lord Privy Seal

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1-3 APR 1980

