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*The Big Gamble**The Transition and Pre-election Period*

While Nkomo had managed to acquire further financial and military support from the Soviets in 1978, he also returned to Belgrade in Yugoslavia in January 1979 to request further funding and military support from President Tito's government. While there, he described the continued problems he faced in the PF, the inability of Mugabe and the ZANU leadership to accept a political unification, and their insistence on a military unification first, which Nkomo said was impossible. He blamed ZANU for the failure to unite, noting that ZANU's leaders, Mugabe, Tongogara, Muzenda, and Tekere, were "illegal and a group of self-appointed leaders." Having said this, he also went on to stress the importance of ZANU. "Nkomo estimates that it is necessary to preserve the Patriotic Front, because it is 'the only hope for the centralization of the struggle and to preserve the unity of the nation after gaining independence.'"¹ In February 1979, ZIPRA would again use Soviet-supplied surface-to-air missiles to shoot down another Air Rhodesian passenger plane, this one carrying tourists from Victoria Falls to Salisbury. According to accounts historian Nancy Mitchell has found, Ian Smith responded to this attack by contacting President Carter and Prime Minister Callaghan to inform them that the Anglo-Americans were the only ones who could "bring an end to all this inhuman terror."² This outcry did not stop the Rhodesians from carrying out air raids on ZIPRA camps in Zambia, as well as raids against a ZIPRA training camp in

¹ "Information about the visit of the delegation of the African National Union of Zimbabwe / ZAPU / led President Joshua Nkomo, 7 – 9 January 1979," Savezna Konferencija SSRNJ Sekcija za spoljnu politiku i medunarodne veze [Federal Conference SSRNJ Section for Foreign Policy and International Relations], Broj: 408–19 Beograd, 12.1.1979, Signatura ACKSKJ, IX, 140/53, 5 24, Viii 1978, Arhiv Centralnog Komiteta Saveza Komunista Jugoslavije. Thanks to Sarah Zabic for taking photos of this and other files for me in this archive.

² Nancy Mitchell, *Jimmy Carter in Africa: Race and The Cold War* (Stanford University Press, 2016), 506.

Angola in late February. The attack into Angola brought up again the possibility of Cuban and Soviet retaliation.

South African diplomat Piet Van Vuuren in Salisbury reported that he asked the Rhodesians if they were worried about Cuban retaliation after the raid. He pointed out to his Rhodesian contact Mr. Bulls that “there may now be MIG aircraft stationed in Angola that were perhaps three times faster than the Rhodesian planes.” He added that Mr. Bulls had “apparently not yet thought of this.” Van Vuuren stressed that these attacks into Angola “cannot be in the interest of Rhodesia – nor in the general interest of peace in Southern Africa.” Van Vuuren noted that “since the middle of 1976, there have been 17 airstrikes carried out on bases in Zambia and Mozambique, during which at least 50 camps have been destroyed and between 3,000 and 4,000 terrorists killed.”³ Given the amount of cross-border raids into Mozambique against ZANLA and into Zambia against ZIPRA, 1979 would be a very difficult year. Soviet documents indicate that Nkomo and Mugabe requested Cuban pilots to fly defensive operations against the Rhodesian Air Force, but this request was turned down.⁴

In January 1979, the US ambassador to Tanzania, James Spain, relayed President Nyerere’s assessment of the Rhodesia situation. Nyerere was “still clinging” to the Anglo-American plan. “Although he was pessimistic about the future. If civil war is to be prevented in Rhodesia, [the] only alternatives are [the] Anglo-American plan or PF unity. He doubts he can produce the latter. But he also believes that [the] time when success was possible with the AAP is probably past.” Ambassador Spain summed up Nyerere’s pessimistic prognosis as follows: the “US and UK will do a lot of

³ The South Africans reported air attacks on two ZIPRA camps: Chunga and a camp at Nampundu Mine near Lusaka. The attack on “the ZIPRA camp near Luso in Angola” resulted in the death of “190 terrorists” and “injured 540.” Piet Van Vuuren to Secretary of Foreign Affairs, Cape Town, “Rhodesian Aircraft Outside the Country Boundaries,” March 6, 1979, 1/156/7, vol. 2, Rhodesia Foreign Policy and Relations, Department of Foreign Affairs, South African National Archives, Pretoria.

⁴ Raul Valdes Vivo is recorded to have stated, “I was tasked . . . to convey to J. Nkomo and R. Mugabe, that Cuba is unable to satisfy their request to send pilots for the repulsion of air attacks on the training camps for the Patriotic Front armed forces.” “Memorandum of Conversation between Minister-counselor of the Soviet Embassy in Havana M. Manasov and Cuban Communist Party CC member Raul Valdes Vivo, 7 May 1979,” May 24, 1979, History and Public Policy Program Digital Archive, TsKhSD, f. 5, op. 76, d. 834, ll. 82–84, <http://digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/document/113031>.

talking but with British election coming up, there will be no action. If Labor wins again, and by the time US has possible action arranged, civil war will have begun." Nyerere's own recommendation, according to Ambassador Spain, was a "US-backed British intervention within the next couple of months."⁵ Nyerere's pessimism was shared among many other actors in the Rhodesia negotiations. The internal settlement, the failed "secret talks" of August 1978, and the intensification of the war after September 1978 seemed to push the possibility of all-party talks farther off. Plans underway for the 1979 "internal settlement" elections that would create the state of "Zimbabwe-Rhodesia," with Bishop Muzorewa as the first black prime minister, also seemed to confirm Smith's potential success at outmaneuvering the Anglo-American plan.

In February 1979, Sir Anthony Duff, the US assistant secretary of state for African affairs, Richard Moose, and South African secretary of foreign affairs, Brand Fourie, discussed the Anglo-American and South African positions on Rhodesia. Moose and Duff continued to express concerns about the present conditions, especially given the raids by the Rhodesians and South Africans against ZANLA and ZIPRA in Mozambique and Zambia. It was suggested that these raids had even raised incentives for the Tanzanians to consider turning to the Soviets and Cubans to help defend the Frontline States hosting the liberation armies. Duff suggested that Nyerere may have changed his view toward requesting help from the Cubans and Soviets. "Previously Nyerere had believed in Africans solving their own problems but now he seemed to be thinking of using Cubans for the defence of Moçambique, Tanzania and Zambia against Rhodesian attack." Duff summarized his own view of what might be an "undesirable scenario," involving "the creation of a climate receptive to Soviet and Cuban intervention; the departure of the whites; black civil war; and the establishment of a Government subservient to the Soviet Union." There was, according to Duff, evidence of stepped-up contact with Cuban and Soviet advisers in both Zambia and Tanzania.⁶

⁵ Dar es Salaam to State, "President Nyerere's Views on Namibia and Rhodesia in Meeting with Mayor Bradley," January 6, 1979, DAR ES 00077 060906Z, Central Foreign Policy Files, 1973–1976, RG 59, General Records of the Department of State, USNA.

⁶ "Fourie Meeting with Sir Anthony Duff and Mr. Richard Moose, February 21, 1979 at the Verwoerd Building (Office of the Secretary of Foreign Affairs)," DFA 1/156/1, vol. 2.

Moose suggested that President Kaunda was also more inclined to ask for Soviet help to defend against Rhodesian air raids. However, Fourie, given his long experience with Kaunda, replied, "Kaunda has been saying for years that he might have to turn to the Communists. It was true that his position at present was very shaky. If the recent elections in Zambia had been genuine, he might not now have been President."⁷ Fourie then presented what he saw as the necessary objectives for Rhodesia: "There cannot be an end to the fighting nor can international recognition be expected and sanctions lifted unless an election is held with all parties' participation and under international – presumably U.N. – supervision. There will also have to be a U.N. Force to hold the ring." Duff responded to Fourie's suggestion with the need for "a cease-fire first." Duff stated that what he would like to accomplish was that "South Africa and the United States and the United Kingdom all accept that this is the basic objective and each of them bring to bear on the parties such influence as they can."⁸

As cooperative as this sounds, the South Africans and the British were not on the same page vis-à-vis the internal settlement, nor were the Americans, but the three nations believed they could influence the negotiations in ways to fit their national interests. The United States wanted Rhodesia to become Zimbabwe without Soviet or Cuban military intervention. The British wanted the same, while also trying to keep their role in the transition to a minimum. The South Africans wanted Muzorewa's government to survive and have sanctions lifted, but they did not necessarily want his government to receive international recognition so that it would remain dependent on South Africa. The South Africans sought first and foremost to have Bishop Muzorewa elected in April 1979, as the first black prime minister, and hoped that if sanctions could be lifted, the Rhodesians could begin to finance more of the war without so much South African assistance.⁹

In June 1979, the US ambassador to Mozambique, Willard Dupree, met with Mugabe in Maputo to go over the latest developments in the US Congress concerning the important vote to delay making a decision about lifting sanctions. Mugabe was quite pleased with this development according to Dupree, who recorded Mugabe's reaction as

⁷ Ibid. ⁸ Ibid.

⁹ See Gary Baines, "The Arsenal of Securocracy: Pretoria's Provision of Arms and Aid to Salisbury, c. 1974–1980," *South African Historical Journal* (2019), 1–18.

supporting President Carter, and how continued developments along such lines “would make for excellent relations between the PF and US.”¹⁰ Dupree goes on to say that Mugabe characterized the United States “as a great nation,” but that it “must not be seen supporting a neo-colonial regime in Zimbabwe. He stressed that PF has never said that US must support [the] PF as such, but that US should support democratic change and progress.” Mugabe went on to reassure Dupree that the “PF does not intend to create a dictatorship in Zimbabwe.” Mugabe claimed that “he is not anti-US and added that ZANU does not want to be dominated by Soviets or anyone else.” He told how the East Germans had asked him to “denounce [the] Chinese in exchange for GDR arms” and his reply had been to say, “ZANU does not accept aid with strings attached.” Mugabe is then directly quoted by Dupree as adding “and you know we’re not the best friends of the Soviets.” As usual, Mugabe could not make this statement without adding a dig at ZAPU. “Mugabe stated that ZANU does not tie its hands on foreign policy. But he didn’t know what ZAPU thought on this subject.”¹¹

By July 1979, British diplomats in Maputo were receiving reassurances from ZANU’s Secretary General, Edgar Tekere, that they would participate in any upcoming conferences. Tekere told British diplomat John Doble who had taken over the duties of the British ambassador for Mozambique after the appointed ambassador had suffered a heart attack, that ZANU “were waiting keenly for new proposals from us [Britain]. They would study them carefully. Even if they disliked them, they would come to any meeting we called, even if only to say they could not accept them. ZANU did not like refusing to go to conferences.” Doble also noted that Tekere’s eldest son “had just joined up” to fight in the war, so Doble felt that while Tekere noted that the war would go on if Britain tried a “short-circuit” solution, the point was also made that negotiations could bring the war to an end. Asked if Tekere was willing to work with Muzorewa, Tekere said that he could not because “Muzorewa was a traitor” and “even though he had no

¹⁰ Fm American Embassy Maputo to Sec State, “Mugabe’s Comments on Rhodesian Developments,” June 16, 1979, 1979MAPUTO00746, Central Foreign Policy Files, 1973–1976, RG 59, General Records of the Department of State, USNA. For the Carter Administration’s decision to not lift sanctions in 1979, see Eddie Michel, *The White House and White Africa: Presidential Policy Toward Rhodesia during the UDI Era, 1965–1979* (New York: Routledge, 2019), 212–24; Mitchell, *Jimmy Carter in Africa*, 460–62, 569–70.

¹¹ Ibid.

power, they could not talk to traitors.” Tekere did note, however, that he had contacts in the Rhodesian Army who “would welcome in a new Zimbabwean army.” The bottom line for Doble was “that it seemed ZANU, while maintaining an intransigent line, are not likely to try to prevent further negotiations by seeking to impose impossible pre-conditions.”¹²

A few months earlier, Doble had written his interpretation of the Cold War politics at play in the PF following a meeting with Soviet minister-counsellor Arkady Glukhov in March 1979. Glukhov had told Doble that “the situation was . . . very difficult for the Soviets,” as “they supported Nkomo and the Mozambicans, while the Chinese supported Mugabe and the Mozambicans, and Mozambique and Tanzania supported Mugabe.” Glukhov “claimed to be all in favour of a conference to try and get a peaceful settlement.”¹³ Keith Evetts wrote up an account of Soviet views in Maputo which he sent to Rosemary Spencer in the Rhodesia Department of the FCO. According to Evetts second-hand account, “the Russians are exasperated with the Zimbabweans. They are annoyed that Nkomo has made little progress (and that his reputation is in decline); they do not believe in Mugabe’s ‘liberated areas’; and they are frustrated by their inability to get PF unity.” It is worth noting that both sides in the Cold War were frustrated by this inability. Evetts summarized how the Soviets did not want to give weapons to both sides, “since the two wings of the PF would probably shoot at each other.” He also said his source had indicated that the Soviets wanted to avoid “‘another Angola’ – if only because of the expense.”¹⁴

Just prior to the Lusaka Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in early August 1979, Mugabe met with Bulgarian leader Todor Zhivkov in Sofia. Minutes from this meeting demonstrate Mugabe’s rhetorical commitment to a communist ideology, as would be expected in his pursuit of military and financial aid from eastern bloc nations. In contrast to his claims of neutrality made to Ambassador

¹² Maputo to FCO, “Telno 164,” July 21, 1979, item 86–87, PREM 19/109, BNA. John Doble explained his situation in Sue Onslow and Michael Kandiah, eds., *Lancaster House 1979: Part I – The Witness Seminar* (Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office: London 2019), 65.

¹³ To Ambassador from John Doble, “Soviet Views,” item 22, FCO 36/2408, BNA.

¹⁴ Evetts to Spencer, “ZANU (Mugabe) Potboiler,” March 1, 1979, item 22, FCO36/2408, BNA.

Dupree, Mugabe promised Zhivkov that he and ZANU were committed to “scientific socialism and Marxism-Leninism,” and that “[s]hould we establish a socialist zone within the borders of Angola, Zimbabwe, and Mozambique, then success in South Africa will be guaranteed. South Africa is quite aware of this impending danger; that is why it provides assistance to Ian Smith.”¹⁵ Zhivkov was straightforward with Mugabe, according to the Bulgarian minutes of their meeting. Zhivkov asked Mugabe: “What is it that separates ZANU and ZAPU? Are there any differences in principle? I don’t think there are.” He then noted how “[t]he historian of the future will definitely draw the conclusion that there have been no differences in principle. History will give its severe, yet impartial judgment.” Zhivkhov then said, “If there are no principal differences, then what can we say? That these differences are unprincipled, which implies that both ZANU and ZAPU will bear the historic responsibility. History will never forgive you. I invited you, and that is why I am frank and straightforward.” Mugabe responded with a long discussion of the history of ZANU and ZAPU. He eventually blamed Nkomo for his inability to treat Mugabe and ZANU as equal partners: “I have told him [Nkomo] several times that he must create a realistic idea of the Patriotic Front. People must see us, to see that we are together and have taken up a common struggle against imperialism.” Mugabe then gives the usual explanation for the lack of progress in unifying the two parties, utilizing the “*Tamba wakachenjera*” strategy established to avoid unity, “However unity must be achieved at all levels, not only at the top. This is a problem. That is why we insist that military unity be established. Nkomo is unwilling, but we still hope things will change and we won’t give up.”¹⁶

Lusaka Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting Provides the Diplomatic Breakthrough

The Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in Lusaka, which was held from 1–7 August, produced the influential Lusaka Accord

¹⁵ “Minutes of Todor Zhivkov – Robert Mugabe Conversation, Sofia,” July 29, 1979, History and Public Policy Program Digital Archive, Central State Archive, Sofia, Fond 378-B, Record 1, File 523. Translated by Assistant Professor Kalina Bratanova; edited by Dr. Jordan Baev and obtained by the Bulgarian Cold War Research Group. <http://digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/document/111111>.

¹⁶ Ibid.

that articulated the Commonwealth's position on South Africa and Rhodesia/Zimbabwe. In terms of Zimbabwean decolonization, the Lusaka Accord finally confirmed Britain's commitment to overseeing the transition to independence. Given this responsibility, it was necessary for the British to host a formal conference to produce a new constitution to supersede that of the new Zimbabwe-Rhodesia state. Unlike the Geneva talks three years previously, this conference in 1979 had pre-established Britain's role in seeing through the transition to majority rule. The Lusaka Accords also set the stage for Bishop Muzorewa and his EXCO partners to negotiate at Lancaster House. Bishop Muzorewa and the other EXCO leaders had to agree to concede their recently obtained sovereign power as leaders of Zimbabwe-Rhodesia in order to negotiate in all-party talks with the full participation of the PF in the process.¹⁷

Margaret Thatcher and the Conservative Party came to power after the Conservatives' victory in the May 3, 1979 general election. Prime Minister Thatcher, along with her foreign minister, Peter Carrington, faced an important foreign policy decision early in their administration: whether to push for the Anglo-American proposal negotiated settlement including the PF, and to stand firmly against recognition of Muzorewa's government, or to recognize the Zimbabwe-Rhodesia government and to lift sanctions. While Thatcher and Carrington would later take credit for their decisive foreign policy decisions that led to Lancaster House and the Zimbabwean 1980 elections that included the PF, the backstory involves many others as well. It would be at the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in Lusaka, during the first week of August 1979, where President Kaunda and other Commonwealth leaders famously staged a well-orchestrated plan to convince Thatcher to go against the advice of many of her party's

¹⁷ The Text of the Lusaka Accord reached at the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting included the following key position: "accepted that independence on the basis of majority rule required the adopting of a democratic constitution, including appropriate safeguards for minorities; –acknowledged that the government formed under such an independence constitution had to be chosen through free and fair elections properly supervised under British Government authority and with Commonwealth observers." Reprinted in SADC Hashim Mbita Project, *Southern African Liberation Struggles: contemporaneous Documents, 1960–1994* edited by Arnold J Temu and Joel das N. Tembe, vol. 9: *Countries and regions outside SADC & International Organisations*, 205–6.

influential leaders. This lobbying was successful, resulting in the British decision to not lift sanctions and, at the same time, to not recognize the new Muzorewa-led government of Zimbabwe-Rhodesia.¹⁸ As Carol Thompson argues in her work on the Frontline State's role in Zimbabwe's independence, the economic pressure from Nigeria, in particular in nationalizing oil production to stop Shell from providing oil to South Africa and Rhodesia, was also a key pressure point to get Thatcher and Carrington to follow the Commonwealth's line of argument.¹⁹

Just before the meeting in Lusaka commenced, Prime Minister Thatcher met with African Commonwealth leaders to obtain their views of the PF leadership. During a July 31 meeting in Lusaka with Malawi's life president, Hastings Banda, Thatcher listened as Banda praised his old friend, Reverend Ndabaningi Sithole, while also saying, "frankly that only two men could assume power in a democratic Rhodesia: Bishop Muzorewa or Mr. Mugabe. This was because both were Shonas. Dr. Banda said that he did not like Mugabe because he was too close to the Russians; but he was a Shona nevertheless." Banda painted a grim picture of Nkomo's future prospects: "Joshua Nkomo could never rule Rhodesia since he came from a minority tribe and he had no chance of winning." Nor was Banda at all impressed with Muzorewa's chances, at least without the intervention of the British on his behalf. "Bishop Muzorewa commanded a majority, whether one liked him or not." Banda told Thatcher that it was now the "UK's problem." He said that the Bishop wanted "to make his government acceptable to the rest of the world but it was the UK's problem to bring this about."²⁰ Banda also reassured Thatcher that, in his opinion, there was little chance of the Soviets getting involved in a civil war after

¹⁸ Carrington explains that Britain could not accept the Muzorewa election and recognize his government because everyone else, except the South Africans, were against it. There was even a chance that the Commonwealth would break up over the issue. Carrington evidence provided in Michael Kandiah and Sue Onslow, eds., *Britain and Rhodesia: The Route to Settlement* (London: Institute of Contemporary British History Oral History Programme 2008), 78. See also, Sue Onslow, "Noises Off: South Africa and the Lancaster House Settlement 1979–1980," *Journal of Southern African Studies* 35, no. 2 (2009), 489–506; A. DeRoche, *Kenneth Kaunda*, 148–50.

¹⁹ Carol Thompson, *Challenge to Imperialism: The Frontline States in the Liberation of Zimbabwe* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1986), 66–67.

²⁰ "Note of the Prime Minister's Discussion with Life President Banda of Malawi in the Mulungushi Village, Lusaka, on 31 July 1979," PREM 19/10, BNA.

independence. "It was sometimes argued that Nkomo and Mugabe would continue to fight on after independence had been granted. He did not share this view, which assumed that the Russians would intervene openly; there was so far no evidence that they might." Thatcher asked if Mugabe was under Russian control, and Banda said no; nor was President Machel of Mozambique in his opinion. Banda told Thatcher, "Shonas like Robert Mugabe were very individualistic by temperament." The prime minister commented that "this should make them capitalistic as well!"²¹

On Friday, August 3, 1979, during the conference, Thatcher and Carrington met with Botswana president Seretse Khama and his foreign minister, Archibald Mogwe. The two were critical of Thatcher's statement earlier in the day that Bishop Muzorewa was not the same as Ian Smith. Mogwe explained that since no country had recognized the April 1979 election of Muzorewa, the Zimbabwe-Rhodesia state and Muzorewa's position as prime minister remained illegal, so therefore Muzorewa was still representing the same illegal regime led by Smith since the Unilateral Declaration of Independence. Khama was critical of Thatcher and the British for putting too much support behind Muzorewa. Thatcher explained that since coming to power only three months previously, she had been moved by the killings in Rhodesia, and this is why she wanted to move quickly, and added that "there was an expectation back in London that she and her government should support the Bishop."²²

Mogwe concurred on the need to act quickly, but from his perspective, the need came from another source. "Botswana's great fear was that at the forthcoming Conference of the Non-Aligned [Movement] at Havana, just as at the recent OAU Conference, the PF would be confirmed as the sole legitimate representatives of the Rhodesian people, and this could only encourage and strengthen them."²³ President Khama was less concerned than Mogwe with the OAU. He did not agree with the OAU's assessment of "the PF as the sole legitimate representatives of the people of Rhodesia, and he believed that the resolution should be ignored." For Khama, a direct role for the Commonwealth, with Britain in the lead, was important to intervene before other groups became involved.²⁴ Foreign Secretary Carrington interjected into the discussion to say that Britain had in fact accepted

²¹ Ibid. ²² Ibid. ²³ Ibid. ²⁴ Ibid.

responsibility for Rhodesia, but that some member states, notably Nigeria, were trying to push the prime minister and Britain to go further. Carrington argued that “the British Government was on a tightrope over Rhodesia. We had to think not only of the African parties – both inside and outside Rhodesia – to the problem, but we also had to have in mind public opinion in Britain, which was very largely behind Bishop Muzorewa.” It is possible that Carrington was in fact expressing his own doubts about Muzorewa in the company of Khama and Mogwe. He concluded by saying “If Britain did anything which appeared in Salisbury to be a sell-out to the PF, there would be no question of getting the whites to agree to change the constitution. Britain was surrounded by different pressures, and we needed all the help we could get if we were not to fall off the tightrope.”²⁵

President Khama emphasized that he “wanted to keep Britain on the tightrope. He was sure that there was no intention on the part of African people to push the United Kingdom into doing anything which the United Kingdom did not think was right.” Khama told Carrington that “it was not only Britain which faced a problem. Some of the Front Line State Presidents had come to realise that they had made a mistake by encouraging the leaders of the PF to think that they were going to be ‘top dogs’ and they were trying to undo their error. It was, however, a difficult process.”²⁶ Mogwe proffered that the British should not give Muzorewa “precedence . . . whatever view they took of him privately.”²⁷

The result of the Lusaka Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting was that Thatcher and Carrington had committed Britain to sponsor a Lancaster House constitutional conference and that there would be no recognition of Zimbabwe-Rhodesia, nor any lifting of sanctions. As the meeting’s results became known in Zimbabwe-Rhodesia and South Africa, Rhodesian cabinet minister David Smith met with South African diplomats to discuss the next steps. Smith provided an honest assessment of the situation from the perspective of whites and the military. He said that “whites’ moral[e] with [the] Lusaka congress was shattered.” He also stated, “We are not winning the war, we have to win politically. We are losing military/morale of fighting troops are very low. The will to fight is withering away.” Given that the political solution was now all that was left to the Rhodesian

²⁵ Ibid. ²⁶ Ibid. ²⁷ Ibid.

Front, David Smith argued that an all-party conference would offer white Rhodesians a way to negotiate majority rule in which the only discussion will be safeguards for minority groups. Smith also told the South Africans that if elections were held tomorrow, Muzorewa would win.²⁸ Handwritten notes from the meeting attribute the following to Pik Botha, South African minister of foreign affairs, at this meeting with the Rhodesians, summarizing South Africa's position towards the proposed Lancaster talks: "Mugabe/Nkomo shoot conference down we have made it. Sanctions lifted. Recognition is not important."²⁹ The last point is a reference to South African hopes that Zimbabwe-Rhodesia would survive without international recognition.

Pik Botha's views corresponded well with an August 10, 1979 South African strategy paper entitled "Guidelines to handle the strategic situation in ZR [Zimbabwe-Rhodesia] following the Commonwealth proposals for a settlement." The document lists the contributing factors to the grave situation in Zimbabwe-Rhodesia, including a "deteriorating" security situation and economy that "is not in a healthy state," the continuation of sanctions, the lack of international recognition for Zimbabwe-Rhodesia while "white emigration is taking place at a steady rate," and the continuation of the PF's "terrorist war" against Zimbabwe-Rhodesia. The document notes, "It is largely due to the RSA's economic, fiscal and military assistance that ZR has not been forced to bow to the military and economic pressures against her."³⁰

The strategy paper argued that given the PF's past refusals to negotiate without first having the Zimbabwe-Rhodesia government's "abdication" and the "replacement of the [Security Forces] by forces of the Patriotic Front," it was "unlikely that the so-called PF leaders, especially Mugabe, will in the final instance be prepared to comply with the principles of the settlement initiative as set out in the statement by the Commonwealth Heads of State." In addition to this deduction, the paper believed that the close and public ties between South Africa and Bishop Muzorewa would be "another of the stumbling blocks to

²⁸ "Handnotes, Meeting with David Smith, South African Defense Forces, August 12, 1979," 3 HSAW/3/168, SADF Archives.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ "Guidelines to Handle the Strategic Situation in ZR Following the Commonwealth Proposals for a Settlement," HS OPS/DGMS/303/6/3/4, Box H, SAW 168, Group 3, SADF Archives.

international recognition of ZR.” Given this, the paper recommended that in order to continue the avoidance of international recognition, strong public recognition of ties between Zimbabwe-Rhodesia and South Africa needed to be maintained.

The Lancaster House Negotiations, September 10 to December 15, 1979

Unlike at the start of the Geneva talks in 1976, at the start of the Lancaster House negotiation in 1979, Joshua Nkomo had little reason to feel confident about his future as leader of an independent Zimbabwe. Frank Wisner, who had led the US diplomatic team at the Geneva talks in 1976, described Nkomo’s possible options at Lancaster House in a September 7 telegram he drafted to brief the US ambassador to the United Nations, Andrew Young. Wisner believed that there were too many pressures on Nkomo to allow him to stay within the PF as the conference moved forward.³¹ Wisner then described reports of Nkomo’s state of mind based on talks with US embassy staff in Lusaka. The general feeling was that Nkomo had become “a perplexed man who in recent months has become increasingly concerned that time is running out on him and his movement.” Wisner also summarized the view of the Indian high commissioner in Lusaka, who characterized Nkomo as a “man who thought he was losing control over the course of events in Rhodesia.” Aaron Milner, the former Zambian minister who had known Nkomo for years, described to Wisner that Nkomo “believes his Zambian base is eroding as the pressures on Kaunda increase.” Milner also relayed to Wisner that Nkomo “apparently is also concerned by ZAPU’s younger generation which is pressing for greater authority in the party’s councils.”

Wisner then gave attention to the many pressures on Nkomo and the “conflicting advice he is receiving from those around him.” These divisions are described primarily through ethnicity. “Following the Rhodesian raids into Lusaka last April, Nkomo tended to associate himself more closely with those (mostly Ndebeles and Kalangas in the military wing) who have been pushing for a more activist military

³¹ From [Wisner] SecState for Ambassador Young, “Rhodesia: Nkomo’s Position on the Lancaster House Talks,” September 7, 1979, 1979STATE235317, Central Foreign Policy Files, 1973–1976, RG 59, General Records of the Department of State, USNA.

police.” In contrast, Wisner said that Nkomo had more recently “begun to pay more attention to his old-time political associates (mostly Shona), who have been supportive of efforts to seek a negotiated solution to the Rhodesian conflict.” The reason for their willingness to negotiate, according to Wisner’s interpretations, was that “these trusted lieutenants of Nkomo see their positions eroding within ZAPU as the new military generation begins to emerge.”³²

Wisner also noted Nkomo’s deep distrust of the Tanzanians, and his belief that the Lusaka Commonwealth Conference Communique had been created to work against Nkomo’s position. He noted that even though Kaunda had supported the communique, he would be more supportive of Nkomo at Lancaster. He could not trust the Tanzanians. Wisner then described Nkomo’s increasing impatience “with ZAPU’s failure to make any significant progress on the political or military fronts.” Given Nkomo’s age, Wisner believed that this need for a breakthrough was “a major, if not determining factor, behind ZAPU’s decision to infiltrate large number of guerrillas into Zimbabwe Rhodesia in recent weeks.” This was meant to both put pressure on the Salisbury government, and to put ZAPU in “a much stronger position to demand that its forces play a role in the transition process or the ZAPU ‘areas of influence’ are recognized under the terms of the ceasefire.” Wisner ended by saying that Nkomo, as well as Kaunda, would likely not escalate the war “until it was obvious that the Lancaster talks had broken down and the blame for their collapse could be placed at Salisbury’s doorstep.” Wisner did note, however that there was pressure on Nkomo to intensify the war: “Nkomo’s more radical military advisers, the Soviets, and the Cubans will argue for a settlement that ensures Patriotic Front supremacy in Salisbury and possibly for a major escalation of the fighting.” Wisner related that Nkomo told him that he “believes that time is running out on him and his movement and that a solution to the conflict – whether political or military – most come soon.”³³

Patriotic Front Diplomacy at Lancaster House: The Land Issue

There is not enough space to cover the Lancaster House conference here. I would like to instead focus on the debates and diplomacy that

³² Ibid. ³³ Ibid.

almost scuttled the conference. This had to do with the insistence on protecting white interests in the Constitution, especially the clause that protected white commercial farmers from state appropriation for a ten-year period. Almost a month into the negotiations, on October 11, 1979, Nkomo and Mugabe issued a joint statement, as the PF, listing all of the issues that were still unresolved. The list was long, including issues with “the Declaration of Rights in so far as it affects land and pensions” and “the provisions of the four principal institutions of government (the army, the Police, the Public Service and Judiciary).” The statement did, however, indicate their willingness to cooperate and conceptually agree to the draft constitution. “We are now satisfied that the conference has reached a sufficiently wide measure of agreement on the independence constitution to enable it to proceed to the next item on the agenda.”³⁴ Carrington adjourned the negotiations until the following Monday, which gave the PF time to talk with the Frontline State presidents and others about these objections.

Roderic Lyne, Peter Carrington’s secretary, reported on the stalled talks to Prime Minister Thatcher. Lyne indicated that Nkomo and Mugabe were not in total agreement over the impasse. “There were clear signs of strain between ZAPU and ZANU at today’s session. Nkomo appears to be looking for a way out, while Mugabe seems determined not to accept the points in the Constitution covering land and pensions, as well as maintaining general reservations about the Army, Police and Public Service.” Lyne, all along following the tactics of the British, hoped that this disagreement might lead to a split between Nkomo and Mugabe. “There is a possibility that ZAPU will look for a way out of the dilemma. But, if we have to face a breakdown of the Conference, we will, in Lord Carrington’s view, have a fully defensible position, and we would lose the support of Bishop Muzorewa and his delegation if we give way on this issue.”³⁵ Similar to Kissinger’s position at Geneva in 1976, Carrington in 1979 was quite willing to have the Lancaster House talks break down, just as long as the British could be seen as having offered Mugabe a compromise that would have allowed him to participate in elections and potentially take over the country through majority rule, and have Mugabe blamed for turning it down.

³⁴ “PF Reply to Chairman’s Statement of 11th October 1979,” PREM 19/113, BNA (n. d. but likely October 11, 1979), 366.

³⁵ “Rhodesian Constitutional Conference,” October 11, 1979, PREM 19/113, BNA, 338.

Explanations for why the British continued to insist on language in the constitution about compensating whites for agricultural land usually revolve around the “kith and kin” argument, suggesting that it was a functional exercise of looking out for their own. But there was also a negotiating side of it too. Mervyn Brown, who had worked on Rhodesia for many years before becoming the British high commissioner for Nigeria, wrote to Carrington on October 15 to point out how important the land compensation issue was to keep Smith and his supporters at the table. Brown told Carrington that Smith was in Rhodesia “trying to rally white opposition to the constitution.” Brown warned Carrington not “to give way on the question of pensions or of expropriation of land without compensation” because “this would rally virtually the whole of white opinion behind Smith and destroy any hope of agreement on the constitution.”³⁶

The British drafted a response “to use if necessary” in order to address the PF’s objections on the land compensation issue. But even in this October 11 draft statement the FCO was clear that the British were not going to commit themselves to an actual amount of compensation. The statement suggested that the British were committed to contributing to “the initial capital” for “an Agricultural Development Bank,” or something similar, but then qualified this commitment by stating that “[t]he costs would be very substantial indeed, well beyond the capacity of any individual donor country, and the British Government cannot commit itself at this stage to a specific share in them.”³⁷ There is evidence that this statement was distributed to the PF because letters were prepared to send out to the high commissioners in Lusaka and Dar es Salaam the next day in order to help them explain the standoff at Lancaster regarding land compensation. The letters asked Nyerere and Kaunda to assist in convincing Mugabe and Nkomo to accept the proposed constitution in order to move on to the transitional arrangements. The letter to Nyerere was slightly different, as it referred to Nyerere’s earlier advice to the British that they should be sensitive to the PF demands over the land issue. “As you suggested, we have tried to help the PF over the question of land.”

³⁶ From Lagos to FCO, “Telno 859,” October 15, [1979], “Rhodesia Constitutional Conference,” PREM 19/113, BNA, 233.

³⁷ The draft statement continues: “We should however, be ready to support the efforts of the Government of independent Zimbabwe to obtain international assistance for these purposes.” “Statement on Land (For Use if Necessary in Reply to the PF),” October 11, 1979, PREM 19/113, BNA, 341.

The letter described the problems in the negotiations, particularly the PF's opposition to compensating white farmers for land. Nyerere was informed that the Lancaster constitution "does make fully adequate provision for the government to acquire land for settlement. What it also does is to provide for adequate compensation, and that is what the PF are at present unable to accept."³⁸

President Nyerere replied that he did not believe the land issue would remain a stumbling block in the negotiations:

Nyerere was grateful for the message, he really did not believe that there was now any major issue between us [Britain] and the PF, and he was seeking to persuade the PF of this. He welcomes the fact that it had come down to the land question and compensation, because he thought this was solvable. "It was not a constitutional issue at all."³⁹

Nyerere mentioned that Nkomo had told the BBC that £55 million would be sufficient for land reform. Nyerere told the British high commissioner that he "considered this was very reasonable: in fact rather small. He did not know but he thought that Nkomo, who was very shrewd, might deliberately have named a figure at this juncture with the negotiation in mind." Nyerere expressed his wish that the British should take Nkomo up on this figure. As the high commissioner related, "He was going to say to the PF that they 'should be able to get the kind of money Nkomo was speaking of', and should settle with us [the British] on that basis."⁴⁰ This amount was a low amount, as Mugabe would tell a Dutch diplomat a week later that the amount needed for land compensation would be ten times as much. "On the question of land, Mugabe's reluctance to see Zimbabwe begin its independence with 'a debt of £500 million.'⁴¹ The land compensation impasse at Lancaster would

³⁸ The letter to Nyerere continues: "Peter Carrington made a statement in the Conference on 11 October which was designed to help them even over this hurdle. He promised that we would help, with the limits of our financial resources, with technical assistance for land settlement schemes and capital aid for agricultural development projects and infrastructure. We shall also be ready to help the new government obtain international assistance for these and other purposes." "Draft Letter to Nyerere," October 11, 1979, PREM 19/113, BNA.

³⁹ "FM FCO to Washington telno 1406 of 14 October 1979," PREM 19/113, BNA, 241.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ From Hague to FCO, Telno 323, October 22, 1979, "Reports of Mugabe's meeting on Oct 22 with Van Gorkum, Director General of International Cooperation at the [Dutch] MFA," item 85, FCO 36/2408, BNA.

eventually be resolved, mostly through Commonwealth, American, and British diplomatic interventions with the PF leaders.

The lack of financial commitment from the US government was demonstrated in a comment made by Anthony Lake, Vance's director of policy and planning in the State Department at the time. At a meeting in Washington on October 17, Lake told Robinson from the FCO that the US administration was "very conscious of the need to avoid giving the impression that its purpose was to buy out whites, or that it would compare in size to the old 1977 Zimbabwe development fund." Lake continued to define the American financial role: "The sort of thing that they [Carter Administration] had in mind would be for the whole region, perhaps with a figure nearer to the bottom end of the Zimbabwe Development Fund than to the 55 million pounds attributed to Nkomo in a Speech in Oxford for development purposes generally." Lake concluded, "It would be easier to get money from Congress for a regional fund, and it would certainly be difficult to get money to buy out whites."⁴²

But this careful plan to avoid committing funds did not stop the US ambassador to Britain, Kingman Brewster, from helping the PF come to their decision to accept this clause in the new constitution. According to US State Department documents, General Ramphal was the point person in terms of the intervention to assist the PF "out of a corner" and to come up with a "face-saving" response to Carrington's ultimatum over the land compensation language in the constitution. Ambassador Brewster was also instrumental as he and General Ramphal met with Nkomo and Mugabe on October 16 to help the PF with a "face-saving" response. In the afternoon meeting at Ramphal's London home, Brewster told Nkomo and Mugabe that the United States was not in a position to make "a commitment to support a 'land fund' or anything that could be interpreted as a white buy-out." According to Brewster, "both Mugabe and Nkomo indicated that they fully understood the point."⁴³ Brewster's

⁴² Washington to FCO, Teln 3234, October 17, 1979, PREM 19/112, BNA, 205.

⁴³ American Embassy London to Secretary of State, "Lancaster House Conference: Emboff meeting with PF," October 16, 1979, London, 20350, Central Foreign Policy Files, 1973–1976, RG 59, General Records of the Department of State, USNA. The multilateral effort to break the land compensation impasse has been covered in more detail elsewhere, but it is important to understand that the Americans and also the Commonwealth's General Secretary Ramphal intervened to make sure that the land issue would not be the deal breaker at Lancaster. The British may have hoped that Mugabe would have left the talks over this issue. See Timothy Scarnecchia, "Proposed Large-Scale Compensation for White Farmers

account of the meeting is very positive, stating that Nkomo had asked for his help coming up with a response to Carrington, but Brewster apparently indicated that he could not help in this regard. General Ramphal then suggested he would work with the PF on an appropriate response.⁴⁴ On the following day, October 17, Brewster explained the hostility he received from Renwick and Spencer over the idea of compensation. “Both Renwick and Spencer reacted very negatively saying HMG was not having any linkage of a ‘fund’ to [the] Lancaster House package, nor did they envisage any development/land reform ‘edifice’ arising from Carrington’s October 11 statement of British intent.”⁴⁵

What comes out of these telegrams is that Carrington had given the PF an ultimatum; either sign onto the British constitution that included compensation for white farmers, or he would proceed to work only with Bishop Muzorewa. Carrington held meetings with Muzorewa without inviting the PF. The Americans believed that the PF wanted some promise of funds to pay for land reform and compensation not only to “save face” but also to help them in the elections, particularly in order to give them the upper hand against Muzorewa. Mugabe had told Brewster that Carrington’s decision to meet with the Muzorewa “has wrecked our confidence in Carrington.”⁴⁶

George Houser Visits His Patriotic Front Contacts during the Lancaster House Negotiations

American activist George Houser arrived in London at the end of October for a brief visit to check in with the PF leaders. Houser met with Nkomo and Daniel Madzimbamuto on October 29, 1979, in London. Houser recorded that Nkomo was upset with Carrington at

as an Anglo-American Negotiating Strategy for Zimbabwe, 1976–1979,” in A. Pallotti and C. Tornimbeni, eds., *State, Land and Democracy in Southern Africa* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate 2015), 105–26; Sue Onslow, “Race and Policy: Britain, Zimbabwe and the Lancaster House Land Deal,” *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* 45, no. 5 (2017), 844–67.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ From Secretary of State to US Mission to the UN, “Lancaster House Conference,” October 17, 1979, State271343, Central Foreign Policy Files, 1973–1976, RG 59, General Records of the Department of State, USNA. See Robin Renwick, *Unconventional Diplomacy in Southern Africa* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1997), 57–62.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

this point in the Lancaster talks as he felt Carrington was pressing “the PF to honor a cease fire and even let Muzorewa remain in his position in the government during the interim period.” Houser noted that he later found out that the second point was untrue, that Muzorewa would have to step down. Nkomo then told Houser how he felt that the “PF is in a weakened position because of the Commonwealth conference paving the way for these constitutional talks and making it necessary for the PF to attend.” Nkomo confessed that he “didn’t know how they are going to resist Carrington in what he refers to as a weakened position at this point.” Nkomo said he hadn’t given up hope, and that the PF would do its best to seek help from Commonwealth countries to “use their pressure on Carrington to back up the position of the PF.”⁴⁷ After meeting with Nkomo and Madzimbamuto, Houser met “in quick succession” with Edward Ndlovu, George Silundika, Jane Ngwenya, and Joe Msika, who all agreed that the PF had “held together beautifully,” according to Houser. “Apparently, there have been no real differences and there has been a harmonious approach in the discussions.”⁴⁸

Having witnessed the acrimonious relations between ZANU and ZAPU in the past, and knowing the details of much of this conflict, Houser wrote how he was impressed by the approach of both ZANU and ZAPU. “For one thing they have a united front which is really working. I have gotten this from all sides. They meet regularly and have frank discussions. There has been no disagreement.” Houser’s interpretation of the situation also expressed the confidence of the PF that they would be able to get what they wanted. “In addition the PF are really here to seriously negotiate. I think they would like to see an agreement come out of this. But they are not willing to take one which will seriously compromise them.”⁴⁹ What the PF felt were essentially “deal breakers” at the end of October, according to Houser’s notes, included the following: “They are not willing to have their forces disbanded or completely neutralized. They must have a role in both the administration and the defense and the police system during the interim period. If they don’t get it, there will just not be any agreement, and the war will go on.”⁵⁰ As would be decided later in

⁴⁷ “Houser Trip to London (Lancaster House) and Algeria – notes 1979,” MSS 294, Houser Papers, Special Collections, MSU Library.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.* ⁴⁹ *Ibid.* ⁵⁰ *Ibid.*

the ceasefire talks, the PF would not be integrated into the civil, military, or police forces during the transition.

Intelligence gathered by the United States from Lancaster House suggested that while the PF were working together at Lancaster, Mugabe was actually in stronger position in relation to Nkomo than in the past, a reversal in the balance of power that would help to facilitate the PF's ability to stay the course and reach an agreement. On November 15, President Carter's national security advisor, Zbigniew Brzezinski, wrote to Carter to say that although the PF leaders were "not likely to dissolve their PF 'partnership' any time soon," there was evidence that "the balance of power between them is shifting closer toward parity. Mugabe has begun to emerge from under Nkomo's shadow and has become less belligerent publicly." Brzezinski believed that this new strength of Mugabe vis-à-vis Nkomo would help to push both leaders to a settlement.⁵¹ This was a perceptive observation, as much of Mugabe's prior intransigence had been caused, in part, by his lack of firm control over the party and ZANLA due to internal challenges to his leadership of ZANU.

The Americans were also hearing from the South Africans that they were losing confidence in Bishop Muzorewa's chances to win a post-Lancaster House agreement election. Writing from South Africa at a time that would turn out to be only a few weeks from end of the talks, the US ambassador to South Africa, William Edmonson, suggested that the American diplomats at Lancaster House inform the PF and Frontline State representatives that "nothing would please South Africans more than to have [the] PF not participate in [the] Rhodesia elections." He added that American diplomats might "indirectly refer" their Frontline State counterparts "to recent Embassy Pretoria reports that the SAG [South African Government] has doubts about Muzorewa's electoral chances against [the] PF and their statements that the PF is on the verge of winning by the ballot what they could not win by the bullet."⁵² Ambassador Stephen Low, who had served as US ambassador to Zambia since 1976 but was now the US ambassador

⁵¹ Brzezinski to President Carter, "Information Items: Another Look at the PF," November 15, 1979, NLC-1-8-6-11-4, Carter Presidential Library.

⁵² American Embassy Pretoria to Secretary of State, "Rhodesia: Suggested approach to the Front Line," November 23, 1979, Pretoria, 10568, Central Foreign Policy Files, 1973-1976, RG 59, General Records of the Department of State, USNA.

to Nigeria, also commented on the South African view of Lancaster at the end of November, “that a collapse of the negotiations would delight the SAG, which is pessimistic regarding Muzorewa’s chances against the PF in an election.”⁵³

This intel came as the Frontline State presidents were meeting directly with Nkomo and Mugabe to advise them on what direction they should take at the Lancaster House talks. The United States had a new Ambassador in Tanzania, Richard Noyes Viets, who provided an account of his meeting with President Nyerere a few days following the Frontline State presidents meeting with Nkomo and Mugabe. Nyerere had apparently expressed his anger at Lord Carrington for how he was conducting the negotiations with the PF. Ambassador Viets described Nyerere’s “emotional and personalized attack” on Carrington. Nyerere reportedly found Mugabe and Nkomo to be “thoroughly irritated ‘and damned fed up by his ultimatums.’” Nyerere stressed to Viets that “Carrington must be told that his arrogant and insensitive handling of the PF is resulting not only in an unfortunate personalization of the negotiating process but more dangerously the PF leadership is now openly expressing a loss of trust in him.” Notwithstanding Nyerere’s complaints, Viets claimed that Nyerere “kept reiterating the need to conclude the negotiation and move on to the election.” Nyerere emphasized how he had “warned Nkomo and Mugabe over the weekend not to leave him dangling in the breeze again.” Viets’ own comment to the State Department indicated that he thought the British were keeping Nyerere out of the loop on the progress made at the Lancaster House negotiations. Viets saw this as a mistake, adding sardonically, “Nyerere is going to be working [in] Southern Africa long after Peter Carrington has returned to till his Buckinghamshire spread. Somebody ought to remind the Brits of this obvious fact.”⁵⁴

At the end of November 1979, Pik Botha met in Germany with Vice Chancellor Hans-Dietrich Genscher. According to the South African

⁵³ American Embassy Lagos to Secretary of State, “Lancaster House: Cease Fire Arrangements,” November 27, 1979, LAGOS15167, Central Foreign Policy Files, 1973–1976, RG 59, General Records of the Department of State, USNA.

⁵⁴ American Embassy Dar Es Salaam to Secretary of State, “Front Line Summit meeting: Conversation with Nyerere,” November 27, 1979, Dar Es Salaam, 5712, Central Foreign Policy Files, 1973–1976, RG 59, General Records of the Department of State, USNA.

account of their meeting, Botha was eager to explain South Africa's lack of interest in a continued war in Rhodesia. Botha told Genscher that the German media was incorrect in claiming that South Africa wanted to become even more involved in Rhodesia. Botha explained that South Africa's position was that "only in the event that chaos developed on a large scale" on South Africa's borders would parliament be called together to decide on a course of action. "However, it was a very difficult situation when innocent people were being raped and killed. There was increasing tension and one had the impression that the wood was very dry and merely waiting for a spark."⁵⁵ Here Botha references the threat of a "race war," where whites would be victims and therefore requiring South African military intervention. Botha also referenced the shifting futures of "black" and "white" Africa: "Black Africa was sinking and the White man was the stabilising force." Botha's argument was that if the Soviets could be kept out of South West Africa and Rhodesia, then "it would not be long before the African states would see South Africa, with its advanced technological development, in a different light."⁵⁶ Most important to Botha was the extreme financial costs the war in Rhodesia had for South Africa. Botha told Genscher that "[a]part from anything else, South Africa was having to supply Rhodesia with credits worth thirty to forty million rand per month."⁵⁷

A telephone conversation between Carrington and Thatcher on November 25, 1979 showed the extent to which the British were still looking for ways to have the PF break the Lancaster House talks. Thatcher told Carrington that she had received news that "the Dar es Salaam people [ZANU] absolutely refuse to congregate in groups inside Rhodesia, because that would be unfair." Carrington replied, "Well in which case there can be no ceasefire." Thatcher ruminated, "In a way I was not displeased because it puts them back into the wrong. So it pleased me quite a lot from the viewpoint of public opinion it looks to me as if they have gone absolutely into the wrong."

⁵⁵ South African Minister of Foreign Affairs, R. F. "Pik" Botha Meeting Vice Chancellor Hans-Dietrich Genscher Botha Meeting with German Vice Chancellor Hans-Dietrich Genscher, November 29, 1979, 1/156/7, vol. 2, Rhodesia Foreign Policy and Relations, vol. 2, 3 050, DFA Archive, Pretoria.

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ Ibid. These amounts are equivalent to approximately \$24–33.6 million or £16.6–22.2 million in 1979.

Carrington then told Thatcher that he had heard news of another Zimbabwe-Rhodesian bombing raid. Thatcher replied, "Oh no. On Zipra?" Carrington replied, "On Zipra, yes. And it is said to be a camp about 25 miles from Lusaka." Thatcher responded, "Oh Lord it is right inside." To which Carrington offered, "Well you know one despairs of them doesn't one." Thatcher replied, "Yes."⁵⁸ As Dumiso Dabengwa and Jeremy Brickhill have described, these air raids were part of the Zimbabwe-Rhodesian effort to destroy roads and bridges that ZIPRA was using to move their forces forward to take more positions inside Rhodesia before the ceasefire was complete. According to Dumisa and Brickhill, these bombing raids meant that much of the "turning point" plans of ZIPRA were unable to be carried out.⁵⁹

⁵⁸ "Telephone Conversation between the Prime Minister and the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary in the early evening on Sunday 25 November 1979," PREM 19/115, BNA, f. 87.

⁵⁹ See Dumiso Dabengwa, "Relations between ZAPU and the USSR, 1960s–1970s: A Personal View," *Journal of Southern African Studies* 43, no. 1 (2017), 215–24; Jeremy Brickhill, "ZIPRA the People's Army," Center for Innovation and Technology (October 27, 2020), <https://cite.org.zw/op-ed-zipra-the-peoples-army>. See also Jakkie Cilliers, *Counter-Insurgency in Rhodesia* (London: Croom Helm, 1985), 192–93. See also Pathisa Nyathi, "Lancaster House Talks: Timing, Cold War and Joshua Nkomo," in Sabelo Ndlovu-Gatsheni, ed., *Joshua Mqabuko Nkomo of Zimbabwe: Politics, Power, and Memory* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017), 149–72.