



New Year Releases 2001

Race, Sport and South Africa

Introduction:

In 1970 the issue of South Africa under the apartheid regime dogged both the Wilson and Heath governments. In particular, the question of arms sales to South Africa threatened a meltdown in the British Commonwealth. Protests against prejudice were becoming more of common in Britain, and in particular, demonstrations focused around sports tours by whites-only South African teams.

Document Reference: CAB 128/45

19th Cabinet Conclusions

Scenes of riots on pitches were embarrassing for any government, and the documents show that the Labour Cabinet was attempting to halt the 'Stop The 70 Tour campaign', which was led by the then radical Liberal, Peter Hain.

CC 19 (70)

now supporting a population of some 4 million. But in the face of the threat from China, increasing prosperity had brought with it no demand for increased participation by elected members in the processes of government.

The Caribbean
(Previous
Reference :
CC (70) 18th
Conclusions,
Minute 3)

The Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary said that the situation had eased over the past few days. In Trinidad the mutiny in the Trinidad and Tobago Regiment had been virtually brought to an end as a result of the negotiations with the mutineers conducted by the former commander of the Regiment, Colonel Serrette; but some mutineers had disappeared, taking their arms with them, and were still unaccounted for. Meanwhile HMS *Jupiter* remained off Port of Spain. In Grand Cayman, demonstrations had been instigated by land speculators, who had hoped to frustrate the Government's attempts to control their activities. There was some danger that Black Power agitators might attempt to take part in the agitation; but the authorities appeared to have the situation under control and HMS *Sirius* remained in the vicinity of the island. In Antigua the threat of disturbances associated with the strikes of dock workers and civil servants appeared to be receding.

Malta
(Previous
Reference :
CC (70) 12th
Conclusions,
Minute 5)

The Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary said that, following our refusal to modify our offer of aid covering the five years from 1 April, 1969, on the basis of 50 per cent loan and 50 per cent grant, the Maltese Government had defaulted on the servicing of the loans which we had made to them. The United Kingdom High Commissioner had protested. The Maltese Prime Minister Dr. Borg Olivier, had not laid undue stress on the dispute with the United Kingdom over aid in his Budget speech: and it was possible that discussions might be resumed. But the situation was unsatisfactory; and it might prove necessary for him to invite the Cabinet to reconsider the earlier decision on aid.

The Cabinet—

2. Took note of the statements by the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary.

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Threatened
African
boycott of the
Commonwealth
Games

*3. *The Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary* said that the General Secretary of the Nigerian National Sports Council, Mr. Ordia, who was also President of the Supreme Council for Sport in Africa, had recently informed the United Kingdom High Commission in Lagos of his intention, in the latter capacity, to announce that no African team would attend the Commonwealth

* Previously recorded in a Confidential Annex

Games to be held in Edinburgh later this year unless the Cricket Council's decision to invite a South African cricket team to visit England was reversed. Information from African Commonwealth countries suggested that not all of them would be in favour of a boycott of the Commonwealth Games if the South African tour took place: but few were likely to be willing to face the criticism they would incur by opposing it.

The Prime Minister said that the Cricket Council's decision to persist with the South African tour had created a difficult situation. Expenditure of some £2½ million, of which £½ million was from public funds, had been incurred in Scotland on preparations for the Commonwealth Games. Though some African Commonwealth countries might be unenthusiastic about a boycott, they were unlikely to oppose it. On the contrary, support for the boycott might spread to other non-white Commonwealth members; and the final outcome might be a Commonwealth Games meeting at which representation would be preponderantly from the white members of the Commonwealth. This raised implications which went beyond the sphere of sport. He had accordingly directed that developments should be kept under the close review by the Departments concerned; and an interdepartmental committee under the chairmanship of the Minister of State, Ministry of Housing and Local Government, had already considered certain aspects of the problem, in particular ways and means of applying indirect pressure to the Cricket Council with a view to persuading them to reconsider the South African tour.

The Home Secretary said that he had already had a discussion on this subject with the Opposition spokesman on home affairs, Mr. Hogg. In the course of this he had been at pains to make clear to Mr. Hogg that the difficulties which had arisen stemmed from the Cricket Council's decision to let the tour proceed and not from any action by the Government. The Council were now attempting to blame the Government for the consequences of their own obduracy; but this should be resisted. The Commissioner of Police for the Metropolis was confident that the Metropolitan Police could deal with any demonstrations against the South Africans arising out of matches played in London. But this might be too optimistic a forecast, since, although the main organisations opposing the South African tour had disclaimed any intention of violence, demonstrations initiated by them might be exploited by others who were less scrupulous. At Lord's, a charge would be made to the Marylebone Cricket Club (MCC) only in respect of those police who were actually on duty inside the ground. The maintenance of order outside the ground was a normal police commitment and chargeable to public funds. The charge would be

at the full rate of £11-£12 per man per day; and, since some 100 police would be required inside the ground, this would represent a strain on the resources of the MCC and of other cricket clubs, which might induce them to reconsider the desirability of proceeding with the matches which were envisaged. Some police forces outside London had indicated that they would charge less than the full scale; but the Commissioner for the Metropolis would discuss the matter with the Chief Constables concerned with a view to securing the maximum of uniformity of practice with London. It would be legally and administratively possible to ban the tour. But the necessary amendments to the instructions to Immigration Officers, though they would not require the formal approval of Parliament, would have to be laid before the House of Commons; and it would be difficult to avoid a major debate, with unpredictable consequences. Meanwhile, he had received from the organiser of the "Stop the 70 Tour Campaign", Mr. Peter Hain, a letter asking for assurances that the police would not adopt discriminatory methods in dealing with any demonstrations. He proposed to return a firm reply, pointing out that police policy for the control of demonstrations was well known and that no such assurances were necessary.

In discussion there was general agreement that it would be inadvisable to take direct Government action with a view to stopping the South African cricket tour. Although it was perhaps unlikely that the Cricket Council would now cancel the tour, public opinion seemed to be moving against it. The police, however, would have a difficult task; and it was important that insinuations such as those contained in Mr. Peter Hain's letter to the Home Secretary should be firmly rebutted. It was suggested that, if evidence came to light suggesting that the Stop the 70 Tour organisation or other bodies opposed to the South African tour were concerting plans to interfere with cricket matches against the South Africans, this might lay them open to prosecution for conspiracy, even before such plans had actually been put into operation. It was therefore important that nothing should be said in correspondence with Mr. Hain or any of the other parties concerned which might prejudice this possibility. On the other hand a prosecution for conspiracy was less likely to be effective than one based on an actual breach of the peace.

In further discussion reference was made to the employment by the MCC and other cricket clubs of personnel and guard dogs from private security agencies. While there was no objection to such measures for the protection of grounds and premises which were the property of the clubs, the control of crowds and the

maintenance of order at matches should be enforced by, or under the direction of, the police and there should be no question of their being supplanted for these purposes by private agencies.

The Cabinet—

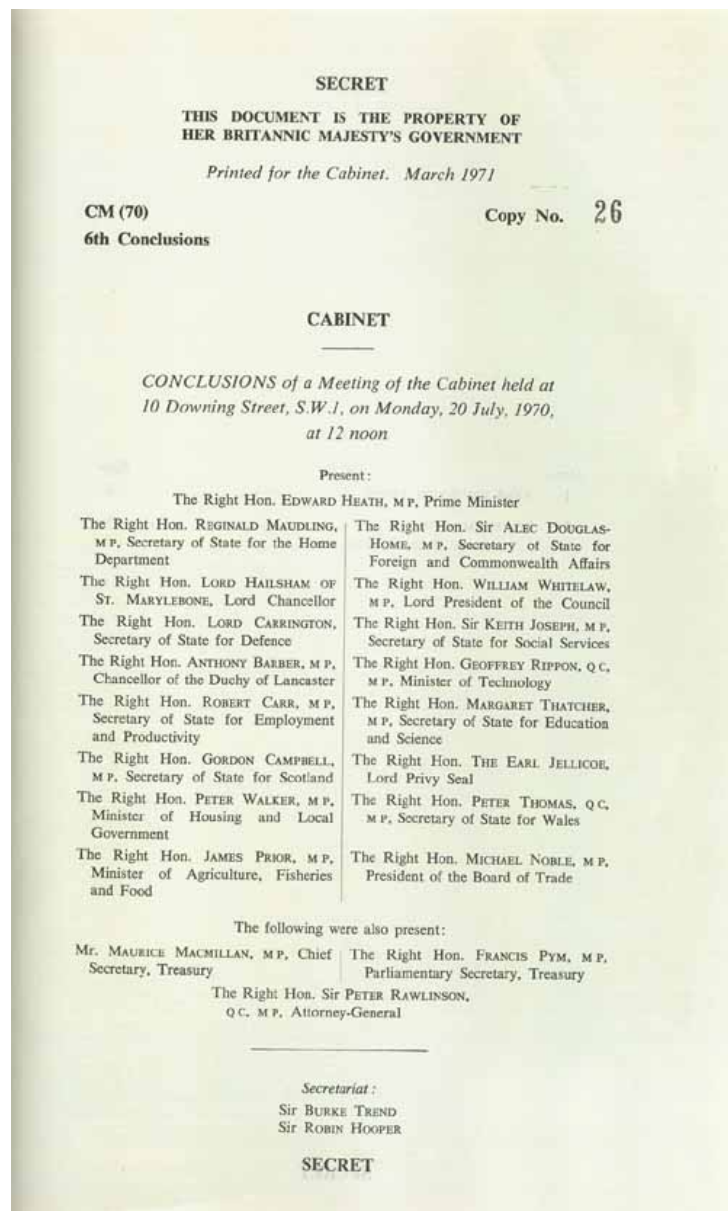
Took note of the statements by the Prime Minister, the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary and the Home Secretary and of the points made in discussion.

Hain and his protests caused genuine consternation for the government. The Cabinet records show that the Cabinet planned its response with a view to prosecuting him for conspiracy.

The 1970 South African cricket tour was abandoned when it became clear that black Commonwealth countries would boycott the upcoming Edinburgh Commonwealth games.

Document Reference: CAB 128/47
6th Cabinet Conclusions - 20th July 1970

During Edward Heath's government a new apartheid issue arose when the government announced that it was planning to resume arms sales to South Africa. As soon as the new government came to power in June, South Africa's Foreign Minister, Dr Muller, arranged a meeting at the Foreign Office.



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Arms for
South Africa
(Previous
Reference:
CM (70) 5th
Conclusions,
Minute 3)

1. *The Prime Minister* said that, as a result of developments since the Cabinet had last discussed the question on 16 July, it had seemed advisable to modify the formulation of the draft statement on the export of arms to South Africa which was to be made in the House of Commons that day by the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary.

The Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary said that replies were still outstanding from 14 Commonwealth Governments to the messages on this subject which the Prime Minister had sent them. But the President of Tanzania, Mr. Julius Nyerere, had threatened that Tanzania would leave the Commonwealth if the British Government decided to resume the supply of arms of any kind to South Africa; and there was some danger that other Commonwealth Governments in East Africa and elsewhere might adopt a similar attitude. A further message had therefore been sent to Mr. Nyerere, as a result of which he appeared to be taking a more moderate view. But in the light of his reaction and of the fact that it had not yet been possible to complete the process of obtaining the views of Commonwealth Governments, there appeared to be some advantage in refraining from final decisions at this juncture and in modifying accordingly the wording of the draft statement which he would be making in the House of Commons that day. A further consideration in favour of this course was that the South African Foreign Minister, Dr. Muller, had now asked for clarification of the existing obligations implicit in the various exchanges, correspondence, and undertakings relating to Simonstown, and of the spirit in which both parties would approach their responsibilities; and this request would clearly entail further discussion with the South African Government. In the light of these developments a revised draft of his statement had been prepared.

The revised draft was then distributed for the Cabinet's consideration.

The Attorney-General said that he had examined the Government's legal obligations under the Simonstown Agreement. Although differing interpretations of the text of the Agreement could be argued, he inclined to the view that there was at any rate an implied obligation on Her Majesty's Government to supply arms in accordance with the purposes of the Agreement. If so, it would follow that over the past few years we had not been meeting the obligations imposed on us by the Agreement.

In discussion there was general agreement that the developments to which the Prime Minister and the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary had referred were not such as to require the Government

**Industrial
Affairs**

National
Docks Dispute
(Previous
Reference:
CM (70) 5th
Conclusions,
Minute 1)

2. *The Home Secretary* said that the Ministerial Committee on Emergencies would be meeting later that day to consider the situation. No applications for the use of troops had so far been received from any of the Port Emergency Committees. There was still some prospect that the dockers might be induced to unload perishable foodstuffs; and it was hoped that it would be possible to avoid the use of troops until all other expedients had been exhausted.

In discussion the following points were made:

(a) The position in regard to perishable foodstuffs was liable to become acute in two or three days' time, when a number of cargoes of bananas would become unfit for consumption unless they were unloaded. If the dockers were unwilling to deal with these cargoes,

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Document Reference: FCO 45/663

**Record of a Conversation between the Foreign and Commonwealth Sec
and Dr Muller. F&CO - 1st July 1970**

The Heath government maintained that its obligations to South Africa under the Simonstown Agreement of 1955 meant that it had to supply arms for defence of the Indian Ocean and the route around the Southern Cape. It was made clear that Britain would only sell weapons for defensive use at sea - not for internal use against black South Africans. The documents show that Dr Muller sought to reassure the British on this point.

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RECORD OF A CONVERSATION BETWEEN THE
FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH SECRETARY AND
DR. MULLER, HELD AT THE FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE
ON 4 JULY, 1970, AT 4.30 P.M.

Present:

Rt. Hon. Sir A. Douglas-Home,

Dr. the Hon. Hilgard Muller

Sir J. Johnston

Mr. P.R. Killen, Minister,
South African Embassy.

Mr. J. A. N. Graham

Mr. W. R. Haydon

Mr. W. Wilson

Dr. Muller congratulated the Secretary of State on the outcome of the Election and on his appointment. He said that he looked forward to increased co-operation between the two Governments who had many fields of common interest. Dr. Muller explained that his present visit to the United Kingdom had been planned about six months ago, when he had no idea that an election was likely to take place. The main purpose of his being here was to visit his only son, who was at present in England on an attachment with Leylands.

2. The Secretary of State said that he understood there had been a "reception committee" outside the Foreign & Commonwealth Office for Dr. Muller's arrival. Dr. Muller said that he had not been greatly disturbed by it.

3. The Secretary of State said that he was of course ready to talk about all matters of mutual interest, and he would like first of all to mention the problem of Simonstown and the arms embargo, which would need careful handling. Parliamentary and public opinion was emotional on the subject, and it would be necessary to explain what HMG proposed to do to Commonwealth Governments and to the United States Government.

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whose position was not identical with our own. The Secretary of State said that in the debate on the ^{Address} it was intended to say merely that the policy of the Conservative Party was well understood, but that before making any statement on steps to give effect to any new policy, HMG would wish to consult with friends and allies in the Commonwealth and elsewhere. A statement would be made in due course, and in practise he thought this would mean before the end of July.

4. Dr. Muller said that the South African Government was particularly interested in the date of a statement. The Parliamentary Session in Cape Town was due to begin on 17 July, and a Motion of No Confidence in the Government would be on the Order Paper for 20 July. He hoped that an announcement could be made before then. The Secretary of State said that he thought this should be possible: the House of Commons was due to rise on 24 July. He would take note of the dates of the South African Parliamentary Session. He thought that the announcement was likely to be made by HMG around 15 July.

5. Dr. Muller said he was hoping that the Secretary of State would give him some indication of HMG's thinking on the matter. The Secretary of State said that his present thoughts were that we should need to place an emphasis on the importance of the sea routes and the interests of both Governments in protecting them. Any change in policy in regard to arms supplies would need to be related to the Simonstown Agreements. Even so, there was likely to be a hell of a row. We should have to explain what we were doing to black African countries. He wondered how far the South Africans might be able to help in this. Would it, for instance, be possible for the South African Government to say that any arms supplied from the United Kingdom would never be used against

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other African countries? Could the South Africans approach Zambia or Kenya for example? Dr. Muller said that with regard to the African countries, the three former High Commission territories were not themselves interested in defence. They had no arms and left defence to the Republic of South Africa. South Africa had contacts with Zambia, but not with Kenya. The Secretary of State said that Dr. Kaunda was obsessed about the danger to Zambia from the supply of arms to South Africa. Dr. Muller said he would consider the suggestion just made and explore it in due course. South Africa had high level contacts with Dr. Kaunda, but had none with Kenya. The Secretary of State asked if the South African Government had ever said that African governments need have no fear/an attack by South Africa. Dr. Muller said that no such statement had ever been made: he thought it would be rather undignified. The South African policy of non-aggression went without saying. At present several black African governments were giving assistance to terrorists or allowing them to pass through their territories. He said that the South African Government did not need to ask the United Kingdom for arms for the oppression of the black population of South Africa: the South African Government already had enough arms of their own for that purpose. It would be helpful if an understanding could be reached with Zambia to be less aggressive towards South Africa. Dr. Muller wondered if HMG could help in this respect. Some of Dr. Kaunda's utterances were far from helpful. The Secretary of State asked how Dr. Muller thought it might be possible to remove Dr. Kaunda's anxiety. Dr. Muller asked if Dr. Kaunda's anxiety was not just a debating point. He said that the South African Government had once been asked by Dr. Kaunda to influence the Rhodesian régime not to attack Zambia. The South African Prime Minister had on one occasion, after very provocative statements by

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/Dr. Kaunda

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Dr. Kaunda, uttered a firm warning of possible South African reaction. After that warning Dr. Kaunda had kept rather quiet for some time. He doubted if the Zambians were really afraid of a South African attack. The Secretary of State said that Dr. Kaunda was saying in private exactly the same about his anxieties as he said in public. Dr. Muller said that he would be happy if the United Kingdom could influence Zambia to cool things down.

6. Dr. Muller then spoke of the Simonstown Agreements. He thought that the two Governments should have another look at them, and perhaps formally confirm them. There was no great hurry about this; it could all be done in due course. The South African Government had been in touch with the previous Administration on this matter, as he believed the Secretary of State would know. The Secretary of State said that he thought this would be more easily considered at a slightly later stage rather than immediately. Dr. Muller concurred. Dr. Muller went on to say that some resistance was building up in South Africa against trade with the United Kingdom. It would be helpful if doubts about HMG's position could be removed. He thought it useful to look at France and her relations with her former colonies. The South African Government were getting what they wanted from France and from Italy. The Secretary of State said that what HMG were expecting to say was that they would relate any relaxation in the arms embargo to maritime defence. The Government would exercise a control of the arms supplied to South Africa through the arms licensing system. Dr. Muller said that he was not briefed to ask for anything in particular; he had not brought with him any shopping list. But he knew that there were quite a few maritime items among those required. The South African Government was worried about a repetition of 1964 when he said Mr. Wilson, on

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taking Office, had refused to allow certain contracts to be carried out. If new contracts were placed by South Africa in the United Kingdom, could there be some guarantee of continuity? This was a matter for future consideration. He was not asking for an immediate reply. The Secretary of State said that he quite saw that the South Africans would hope to be able to ensure a continuity in the supply of spares, etc., but he said that it was important not to break-up the Commonwealth, and it would be easier if there was a limitation of arms to those required for maritime defence. Dr. Muller said that he felt that was indeed the important thing, and he would not expect any more. The Secretary of State said that even that much change in policy would cause difficulties for HMG. Dr. Muller asked if the Secretary of State did not think that the fuss would blow over. The Secretary of State said that may be it would, but the row might result in some country leaving the Commonwealth. He felt it important to relate the relaxation of the arms embargo to the communist threat and to the United Kingdom's own interests. Dr. Muller said that the South African Government appreciated HMG's problems; certainly international relations were not based on charity. He hoped that the Royal Navy would not be evacuated from the Indian Ocean. The Secretary of State said that he was confident that HMG would be able to retain a naval presence east of Suez.

Rhodesia

7. The Secretary of State asked Dr. Muller if he had any helpful ideas to suggest in the Rhodesian context. HMG wanted to get in touch with Mr. Smith, but were unsure how they could get him to move. Dr. Muller said that the South African Prime Minister and he had recently been in Salisbury. In his view, Mr. Smith would not sacrifice independence; it would be political suicide in Rhodesia. The Secretary of State said that he quite saw that the Rhodesians would not want to

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sacrifice independence, but would they be willing to sacrifice the new Constitution? Dr. Muller said that there was unanimity in Rhodesia about the new Constitution - to sacrifice it would be difficult. The South African Government had not discussed the matter. They were careful always to be correct about non-interference. If there was anything, however, that the South African Government could do to assist in the matter, they would be pleased to help. Some of the things that had happened in the last few years had not made a solution of the problem any easier. One of these was the decision to refer the matter to the United Nations. Another was the Beira blockade. If that could be relaxed or lifted it would undoubtedly create a good impression in the Republic and in Rhodesia, and would assist in getting a dialogue going. The Secretary of State asked what could a dialogue be about? Dr. Muller said that he did not foresee any changes in the Rhodesian position; he thought that the régime were just hoping that sanctions, etc. would all just peter out. Dr. Muller went on to say that the economies of the several countries of southern Africa were inter-related. There had been difficulties for some time over the Customs Union with Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland. There had been long discussions. The matter had eventually been settled between Ministers. The South Africans had made important concessions. In fact, when HMG cut off the grant in aid to Lesotho, that country had been able to keep going merely because of the money they had received from their increased share of customs' revenue. He noted that a resumption of British aid to Lesotho had been announced shortly before the Election. He welcomed that resumption.

8. Technical conferences took place from time to time in southern Africa; it would be much easier if Rhodesia could come in as a normal

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state. He thought there would be advantage to the Zambian economy too if things could become normal. The Secretary of State said that he quite saw the advantages of such a development. But Zambia felt strongly. FMS had not yet thought out just what they would want to do about Rhodesia, but he was any way grateful for Dr. Muller's offer to help.

9. The Secretary of State went on to say that as far as the question of the arms embargo was concerned, he would be grateful if the South Africans would not present any specific requests for arms before an announcement had been made in Parliament, and the situation had been settled. Dr. Muller said that he would be happy to let the matter rest until the second half of July.

Press

10. Some discussion followed on what was to be said to the press about Dr. Muller's call on the Secretary of State, and a line was agreed which both the South Africans and News Department would follow.

Father Bishop

11. The Secretary of State then raised the question of Father Bishop, the Superior of the Community of the Resurrection, and said that it would be an awfully good thing if he could be allowed to visit the Houses of the Community in South Africa. He believed that Father Bishop had incurred the suspicion of the South African Government because of his connection with Bishop Huddleston, but clearly as members of the same Community, they had a natural connection. Dr. Muller said that he knew nothing about the case; why could not Father Bishop just go to South Africa? It was explained that Father Bishop had first been told that he could not go to South Africa without a visa, and had then been refused a visa. Dr. Muller said that he was going back to

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Pretoria the following day and would look into the matter.

The Common Market

12. Dr. Muller said there was one little point he would like to raise; it was connected with the Common Market negotiations. There had in the past been talks between the South African and British Governments at ministerial level. If there were to be any special arrangements in the transition period for those developed countries who had been parties to the Ottawa Agreement, he hoped that HMG might assist the South African Government to get treatment similar to that accorded to Australia and New Zealand. Could HMG keep the South African Government informed of developments? The Secretary of State said he would look into the matter. Dr. Muller said that he did not yet know whether the South African Government would ask for discussion at ministerial level as in the past, but the matter was important for South Africa. The Secretary of State said that he would certainly look into it.

Sport

13. The Secretary of State asked whether any improvement could be expected in the matter of sporting contacts. Dr. Muller said that some Conservative members of Parliament had told him that Mr. Peter Hain's campaign had helped to win votes for them in the elections. He said that the present All-Black Tour of South Africa was going well. The Secretary of State said he wondered if there could not be some international conference that would allow coloured sportsmen to visit South Africa without a fuss. He understood that the Japanese were allowed to go there - what would happen about a team from the West Indies? Dr. Muller said that the South African Prime Minister had made a statement that if India wished to send a team they would be welcome. There had, moreover, been a visiting team from Iran. The Secretary of State

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asked about the case of Mr. Ashe. Dr. Muller said that Mr. Ashe, like Mr. d'Oliveira, had presented a difficult case. He had gone out of his way to attack South Africa. There were, however, three Maoris in South Africa at present. The South African Government was prepared to admit non-whites on an inter-state basis, but they had their trouble with their own right-wing extremists. The Secretary of State asked if it had been made clear outside South Africa that non-white teams would be accepted on an inter-state basis. Dr. Muller said that it had been made clear; the South Africans had been ready to send a mixed team to the Olympics, but this had not been accepted. He felt that these matters were not decided on their merits, but on the basis of prejudice. There were at the present time moves overseas to prevent mixed teams leaving their own countries to visit South Africa. There had been a fuss made outside the Republic about the brawl which took place between a few drunks after a recent All-Blacks rugby match. The Secretary of State said that he felt that the problem was really one of the South African Government not having got across to the outside world what they were prepared to do. Dr. Muller said he thought they had made it clear. He himself had met the Iranian team when they visited South Africa.

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6 July, 1970



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Sale of arms to South Africa

You wrote on 1 July to say that you hoped we should not tie our hands unnecessarily by the form of words used to cover the restriction of arms sales to South Africa. I am glad that you agree that it is right to place the emphasis on sales of maritime defence equipment. You will remember that in summing up the discussion at the D.O.P., the Prime Minister agreed that we should explain to Commonwealth African and other governments that the policy we intended to pursue was based primarily on our own defence interests and not on those of South Africa. The words suggested in the third paragraph of your letter might perhaps seem to put South Africa's interests first.

2. I am in fact recommending that the Prime Minister should send a message to Commonwealth Heads of Government, which would explain the policy we intend to pursue as being "a willingness to consider applications from South Africa to purchase equipment for maritime defence directly related to the security of the sea routes as provided for in the Simonstown Agreements". I think that my wording would not preclude our considering requests for surface-to-air guided weapons systems which were, for example, intended for the defence of the Simonstown base or for protection against sea-borne attack. There might be difficulty however about supplying such weapons if they were sufficiently mobile to be switched from the coast to positions inland, e.g. on the Limpopo or even on the Zambezi, or could for other reasons be alleged to be not part of a maritime defence capability. I hope that you will think that these words are wide enough.

3. I am sending copies of this letter to our colleagues on D.O.P.

A. J. DOUGLASSHOME

The Right Honourable Geoffrey Rippon, Q.C., M.P.,
Minister of Technology,
Millbank Tower,
Millbank, S.W.1.

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FCO 45/667 Memo on implications for British interests from Douglas Home to the Cabinet Defence and Overseas Policy Committee 11th September 1970

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DOP(70)18

11 September, 1970.

CABINET

DEFENCE AND OVERSEAS POLICY COMMITTEE



IMPLICATIONS FOR BRITISH INTERESTS OF
UNITED KINGDOM ARMS SALES TO SOUTH AFRICA

Memorandum by the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary

Speaking Notes

(7) The paper on the implications for British interests of United Kingdom arms sales to South Africa was prepared on the basis of the known and expected reactions of Commonwealth and other governments to the intention of Her Majesty's Government as stated in the Prime Minister's message of 9 July. This assessment shows that on the basis of those reactions a decision by H.M.G. to go ahead forthwith with a relaxation of the arms ban would have carried the serious risk of considerable damage to U.K. interests.

(7) 2. The ideal solution, of preserving intact our interests in Black Africa and South Africa, ~~might~~^{may} still be attainable if the meetings the Prime Minister and I are having with individual Commonwealth leaders enable us to persuade them to accept that what we wish to do in our interest does not in fact threaten their interests. If, however, they remain unconvinced, we ~~might~~^{may} wish to take another look at our intended policy in the light of what they have said to us. I believe that a final decision on our policy and a decision on the best time to announce it must await the conclusion of Commonwealth consultations. The

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most important discussions will I believe be that which the Prime Minister hopes to have with President Nyerere on 11 October, and the visit (still to be arranged) of Dr. Kaunda, who has meantime undertaken the leadership of an O.A.U. Mission.

--- (Other interviews already arranged are listed at Annex.)

3. In the meantime, the South African Foreign Minister has sent me a message indicating the sort of items of equipment which the South African Government have in mind to order from the United Kingdom. These indications are set out in a separate paper (DOP(70)19) which I have also circulated. I shall be seeing Dr. Muller in New York on 26 September and I propose to discuss the matter further with him then.

4. The South African list has clearly been drawn up with an eye on the statement I made in the House of Commons on 20 July. Even if we had however decided to proceed on that basis, we might have wished to look closely at some of the specific items in the list bearing in mind the possible political repercussions that supplying them would produce. As regards the various items:-

(a) * Corvettes are so clearly related to maritime defence that we could logically have included them in any package of arms we agreed to sell within the framework of my statement.

(b) Wasps. Helicopters generate a good deal of emotion in particular because of the use which they could be put to in a counter-insurgency role. But the South Africans have already acquired a number of French Alouettes for internal use and it is not likely that they would wish to use Wasps for

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counter-insurgency. It would be possible to ask for a specific undertaking from the South Africans about the use to which helicopters would be put. There may in any case be a prima facie obligation to supply Wasps as integral parts of the weapons systems of the frigates already supplied. Foreign and Commonwealth Office legal advisers have been studying the matter and the papers have been sent to the Law Officers for further consideration. The Ambassador in Cape Town considers that the South Africans will regard a decision on Wasps as a touchstone of our intentions in their regard.

- (c) Buccaneers also produce emotional reactions. It has been widely alleged (but not confirmed from any sources of our own) that the South African Government has used Buccaneers in the Caprivi Strip for the suppression of guerrilla activity. If we were to decide to supply further Buccaneers we should have to expect a loud reaction, both in Africa and in this country; but in Dr. Muller's message he said, "As you know these are essentially maritime aircraft earmarked in the South African defence forces for a maritime defence role". If we did decide to supply Buccaneers, I think the words used in Dr. Muller's message would make it easier for me to seek an explicit undertaking from him about limiting their use.

- (d) In the long term a replacement for existing Shackletons could logically be provided by the
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supply of Nimrods. But the South African Government has not specifically asked for Nimrods and the sum of money they mention seems unlikely to be sufficient for their purchase. There is, moreover, I understand some difficulty about a possible Canadian connection in the production of Nimrods. The Canadian Government vigorously enforces the arms ban against South Africa and their own decision to buy Nimrods might be affected if we were to agree to sell Nimrods to South Africa. There is indeed some question of joint production plans involving the manufacture of certain parts in Canada, and this would be likely to cause difficulties about licensing the export of Nimrods.

(e) Electronic equipment. This appears to be the Cymbeline mortar locating radar equipment which the previous Administration agreed to licence, plus further equipment in the same context. The equipment does not come within the terms of the United Nations' Resolution and its nature is clearly defensive. I do not think it need offer us any difficulty.

(f) Spares. There has, I believe, been a constant flow of spare parts for equipment supplied from the U.K. although this has been, and will no doubt have to continue to be, subject to the licensing procedure.

5. If we succeed in dispelling African suspicion of our intentions and decide that we can safely proceed with the policy originally outlined, it might well be possible to agree to supply all the items in Dr. Muller's list. But I think that we have to

/examine

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examine closely the reactions which we encounter in the course of pursuing Commonwealth consultation and must keep open our options until consultation is complete. We may find in talking to Commonwealth leaders that while some of them will prove irreconcilable and will remain determined to leave the Commonwealth with or without other measures against our interests, others can be deflected from following suit by a fairly rigorous limitation on the arms to be supplied. Subject to the agreement of my colleagues, I think therefore that I shall have to tell Dr. Muller when I see him in New York that I cannot give him any firm answer until we have concluded our discussions with Commonwealth leaders.

6. Dr. Muller said nothing in his message about a revision of the Simonstown Agreement. It may be that the South African Government have decided to drop this matter or it may be that they intend to raise it with us separately. The last paragraph of Dr. Muller's message to me, which is in itself somewhat obscure, has been glossed for us by the South African Ministry of Foreign Affairs in conversation with the Ambassador presaging the desire of the South African Minister of Defence, Mr. Botha, for a meeting at Ministerial level to cover the whole field of co-operation. I certainly do not think that we could agree yet to engage in such discussions but later it may be possible, when our policy is decided, to have discreet talks with Mr. Botha, avoiding publicity.

7. In paragraph 11 of the main paper circulated under cover of my memorandum, officials estimated that sales of Wasps, frigates and Nimrods might produce £20-£40 million over 5-6 years, plus a similar figure for spares. Dr. Muller's list suggests that some £60 million over the next 5 years might be

/earned

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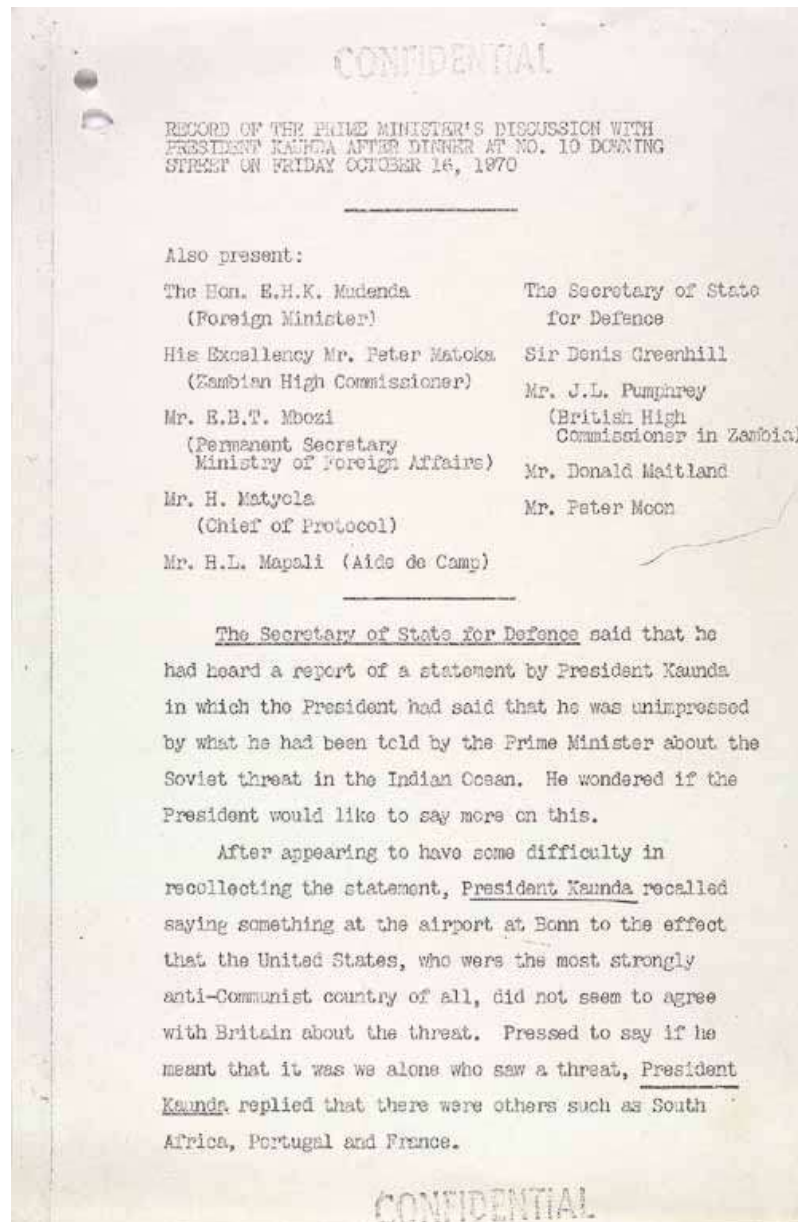
SECRET

earned if it were agreed to supply all the items he has mentioned. The figure he has put on what he calls "Wasp-type" helicopters suggests that he may have in mind a newer and more expensive type than the Wasps currently in service with the South African Navy. In the same paragraph there is a note of the British Aircraft Corporation's claim that the South Africans might be willing to buy an air defence scheme for Simonstown. B.A.C. continue to insist that they can get this contract, which they value at some £70 million, and which they are keen to land in view of their recent loss from the cancellation of a Libyan contract; but the Embassy in Cape Town tell us that they can obtain no official South African confirmation of the B.A.C. claim, and it is clearly not included in Dr. Muller's shopping list.

SECRET

**Document Reference: FCO 45/737 Record of Conversation at Dinner
17th October 1970**

Amid vocal protests from the leaders of the Black African states in the Commonwealth, Heath attempted to placate the Commonwealth. This did not work on Kenneth Kaunda, President of Zambia, who flew to Britain and came to No 10 for dinner, only to have his suspicions increased.



CONFIDENTIAL

- 2 -

Mr. Mudenda referred to events at the time of the illegal Declaration of Independence in Rhodesia in 1965. President Kaunda had then told the Zambian people that the British Prime Minister would act at the right time. They had been disappointed. Zambia now had racist security forces operating just over its border in Rhodesia and there had even been incursions into Zambia. This was the background against which British actions had to be looked at. He urged that we should not make greater difficulties for the Zambian Government.

President Kaunda said that actions were taking place inside his country designed to destroy Zambia. He referred to the blowing up of petrol tanks and bridges, the existence of spy rings and the sending of anonymous letters. It was in this atmosphere that the British were proposing to sell arms to South Africa. The Zambian Government could not defend this to their people. People in Zambia knew about South Africa; they knew about the South African alliance with Rhodesia and Portugal and the campaign which was being waged against Zambia. Even taking into account the pressures resulting from the East West conflict, President Kaunda said that he could not comprehend the failure of the British Government to understand the problem of southern Africa.

Mr. Matoka paid tribute to the Conservative Party's record of achievement in Africa in the field of decolonisation. Referring to the proposal to sell

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

- 3 -

arms to South Africa, he expressed the hope that there was still opportunity to rectify the situation. He urged that the British Government should weigh the gravity of what they were proposing and take careful account of the views which had been expressed to them.

The Secretary of State for Defence said that if, as appeared to be the case, the Zambian Government accepted our good faith, and accepted that the British Government was not racist motivated, he could not understand why the Zambian Government had to make such an issue of this question. Why was it necessary for them to react in the way they said that they had to react?

President Kaunda said that the answer was quite simple. What we were proposing "meant death" for Zambia. He went on to refer again to the threat to Zambia from Rhodesia and South Africa. He cited, as an instance of the threat, that two weeks before the Non-aligned Summit Conference, white troops had moved into Zambia and fired shots. South African planes overflew Zambia, and he knew also that, at one time, there had been South African plans to conduct a raid on a military camp only eighteen miles south of Lusaka, which the South Africans wrongly suspected to be a training camp for guerillas. President Kaunda said that it had to be understood that our sale of arms would be regarded as moral support of South Africa.

(X) Mr. Mudenda asked if there was no alternative way by which our defence and security requirements could be met. He referred almost inaudibly to Tanzania, India and Mauritius.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

- 4 -

President Kaunda interrupted to say that Zambia attached importance to the Commonwealth. They regarded the Commonwealth as the embodiment of many of the things they stood for. He went on to imply that the British Government's policy on arms sales was incompatible with the principles of the Commonwealth. He accepted, however, that it was for the British Government to take its own decision.

Mr. Matoka referred to the internal political difficulties in Zambia. If Britain sold arms to South Africa, it would be difficult to resist extreme elements in the United National Independence Party who would wish to have nothing more to do with Britain. The Zambian Government did not blame Britain and they did not say that Britain was siding with South Africa, but that was how some people would make it appear.

Mr. Pumphray asked if there was not some way in which the Government's policy could be presented to the People of Zambia. Could it not be presented as the absolute minimum necessary in the light of Britain's defence and security requirements? Mr. Mudenda again asked if we had considered alternative arrangements.

The Secretary of State for Defence pressed Mr. Mudenda to say whether he really thought that, for example, President Nyerere would grant Britain facilities in Dar es Salaam. Mr. Mudenda made no reply but said that Britain had reached the point where she must choose between going ahead and her relations with Africa.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

- 5 -

The Prime Minister said that what Mr. Mudenda had said bore no relation to the facts. There was no question of an inevitable choice. If the African countries thought that Britain was racist, then they might be right to act as they were apparently proposing. But if they accepted, as they said they did, that Britain was not racist, then it was their duty to explain this to their people. Moreover, African leaders had repeatedly said that Britain had the right to take her own decisions. We were not concerned with Communism in African states. What was at issue was the growing threat of Soviet naval power. The Government could not leave the country exposed to that threat and do nothing. With regard to the Commonwealth, it could not continue to exist unless it was recognised that all members equally had the right to look after their own essential interests. There were a great many things in other Commonwealth countries which we did not like. Some of these were racist, such as the treatment of Asians in East Africa, the Chinese in Malaysia and the Tamils in Ceylon, but we accepted that these were matters for the countries concerned.

The Prime Minister went on to say that the British Government continued to wish to do all it could to help the developing countries. The Chancellor of the Exchequer would shortly be announcing serious economic measures, but one thing which would not be cut would be technical assistance and aid to the developing world.

2 / The Prime Minister expressed surprise that Africa seemed

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

- 6 -

(Z)

to be so affronted by the British proposal to sell very limited categories of arms to South Africa. Africa did not seem to be similarly affronted by the sale of arms by France, Italy and Germany, even though some of those countries were selling arms suitable for internal use, as well as arms for external defence. President Kaunda replied on this point that he had himself written to General de Gaulle. He said that approaches had also been made to General de Gaulle by President Sekou Touré, President Nkrumah, President Nyerere and President Obote.

Referring to the press interviews which President Kaunda had given, the Prime Minister reminded him that he was appealing to the British people over the heads of the elected Government. This could not be regarded as a constitutional procedure in the case of a visiting Head of State and one which he did not think would be tolerated by President Kaunda in Zambia. President Kaunda did not deny this but said that he had acted similarly in Italy and Germany. The Italian Government had indeed complained to him in May that he was putting pressure on them because he knew they were a weak Government.

Taking up the Prime Minister's reference to the treatment of Asians in East Africa, President Kaunda said that in Zambia the Asians had aligned themselves with the whites by insisting on retaining British passports and refusing to take their place in Zambian life on a basis of equality. They had been encouraged in their attitude by the British Government. The Zambian

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

- 7 -

Government would, however, do all it could to maintain a non-racial society.

Returning to the main question of the sale of arms, President Kaunda said that the British Government had to realise that there was already a war going on in southern Africa. If the British Government sold arms to South Africa, they were involved in that.

The Secretary of State for Defence said that he understood President Kaunda's view point although he might not agree with it. What he did not understand was that President Kaunda did not seem to comprehend our position at all.

Drawing attention to the fact that all countries were sometimes faced with situations in which their essential interests required them to take unpalatable action, the Prime Minister referred to Zambia's continuing trade contacts with South Africa and Rhodesia.

President Kaunda appeared to interpret this as a reproach and expressed shock that such a remark should be made. He responded hotly that Zambia had made great sacrifices.

The Secretary of State for Defence pointed out that we were not questioning this and we had great sympathy with Zambia. We were merely saying that Governments sometimes found themselves compelled by circumstances to do what they would otherwise prefer not to do. The Prime Minister confirmed that this was what he was saying and that President Kaunda had entirely misunderstood if he thought that any criticism was intended.

October 17, 1970

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

- 8 -

Distribution:

Private Secretary to the Foreign &
Commonwealth Secretary

Private Secretary to the Secretary
of State for Defence

Sir Burke Trend

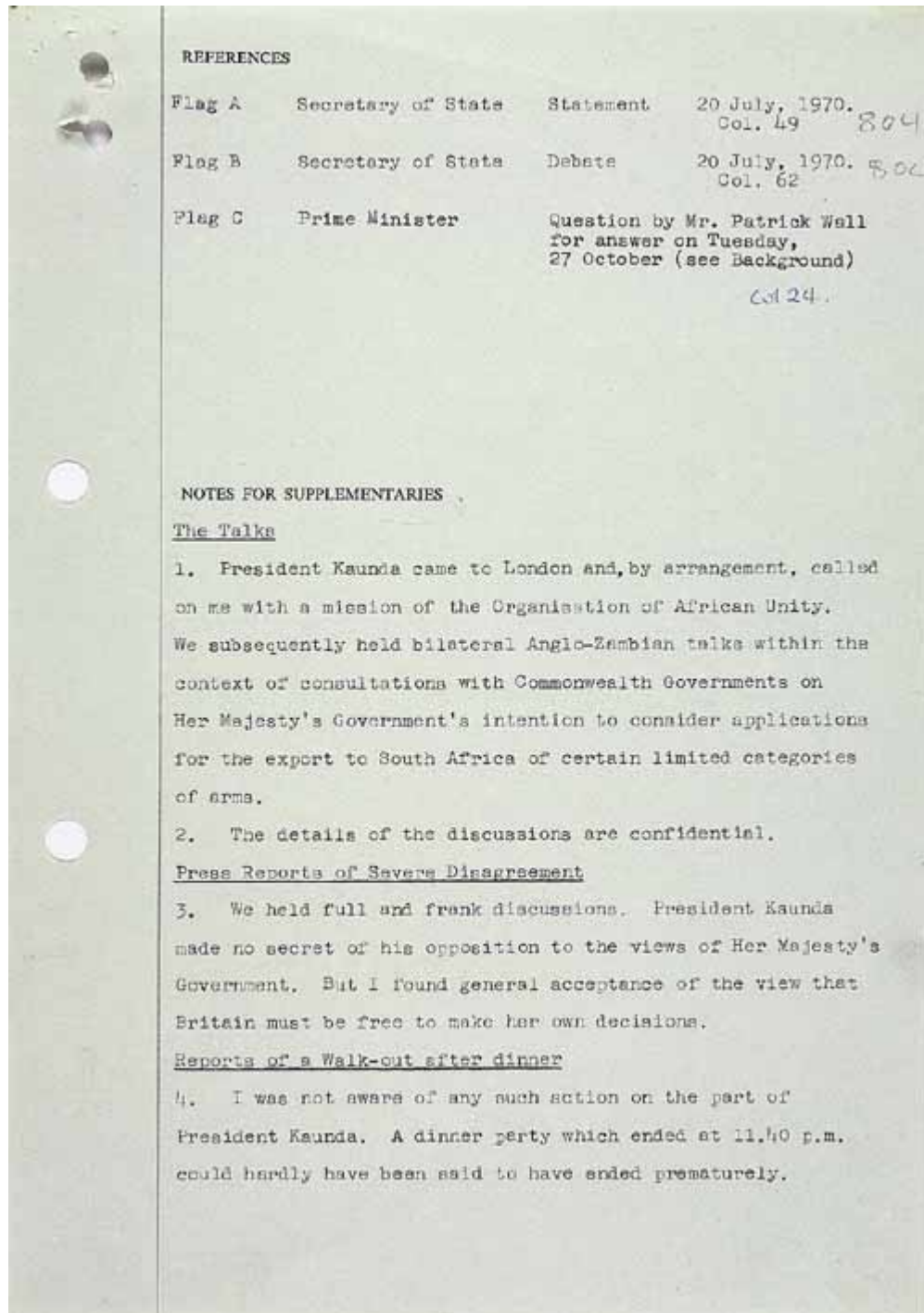
Sir Denis Greenhill

Mr. J. L. Pumphrey

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**Document Reference: FCO 45/549 Secretary of State; Notes for
Supplementaries - 20th July 1970**

The government was then faced with the embarrassment of dealing with Kaunda's outburst. The Foreign Office advised playing it down as much as possible.



High Commissioner's breakfast-hour visit to
President Kaunda on 17 October

5. Mr. Pumphrey called on President Kaunda at my request to make certain there was no misunderstanding about our point of view.

Apartheid

6. I did make clear to President Kaunda that what we were contemplating did not betoken any sympathy for apartheid or racialism.

Compensation Claims Against Zambian Government
by U.K. Citizens expelled from Zambia in 1966

7. This matter was outside the immediate scope of my talks with President Kaunda. *The hon. Member should put down a question.*
~~The question is one for my Rt. hon.~~

~~Expand the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary.~~

Threats to interfere with trade or remove sterling
balances for London

8. It is for the Zambian Government to decide its policies in any future circumstances. In making a decision we shall naturally take into account all relevant factors.

Document Reference: CAB 164/412

Record of the PM's Meeting with Pres. Nixon - 18th December 1970

When Heath met President Richard Nixon at the end of the year, the issue of the South African arms and the emotions they had caused came up in discussion. The record of the conversation also reveals attitudes on the topic of race which are perhaps characteristic of the period, and possibly go some way to explaining why Britain found this issue so hard to deal with.

SECRET

41

Africa: The supply of arms to South Africa

25. *The Prime Minister* said that he had now discussed the supply of arms to South Africa with practically all the Commonwealth leaders except those of the Australasian countries, who would probably support the United Kingdom anyhow. All those with whom we had debated the problem understood that the British Government did not support apartheid; that they did not endorse racialist policies; that the trade routes across the Indian Ocean were of major concern to Britain; that we must continue to trade with South Africa (as many of the Black African countries did); that the Simonstown Agreement must remain in force and that we must therefore continue to supply South Africa with spare parts and to take part in naval manoeuvres with the South African forces. Why, then, should the Black African Governments object to our supplying South Africa with new frigates, submarines and anti-submarine helicopters? To this question we had received no logical reply; we had merely been told that in the eyes of Black Africa the supply of arms to South Africa would confer on her a degree of additional international "respectability" to which they took the strongest objection. But why did we make South Africa "respectable" by supplying her with arms if we did not do so by our normal trade with her? Again, there was no rational reply to this question. The emotional attitude of the Black Africans had been vividly illustrated by his exchange with President Kaunda of Zambia during his visit to London, when the Prime Minister had been concerned to emphasise to him that we were surely as entitled to supply arms to South Africa in our own defence interests as Zambia was to continue to trade with South Africa (and, indeed, Rhodesia) in her economic interests. Both President Kaunda and President Nyerere of Tanzania had been impervious to this line of argument. But in fact, by threatening to leave the Commonwealth if we fulfilled our obligations under the Simonstown Agreement, they had got themselves on a hook from which they could not now get off. It was difficult to say how far they were being driven by the force of their own public opinion, further than they really wished to go. And it was equally difficult to judge how much weight to give to their threat that, if we "sided with South Africa" as they saw it, they themselves would be driven into the arms of the Soviet Government. If they really believed this, why was it only the British sales of arms which would compel them to adopt this extreme course? Why did not the French arms sales drive them in the same direction? Once again there was no rational answer to these questions. In fact, of course, the Soviet and Chinese penetration of Black Africa had already made considerable headway.

26. The most disturbing feature of the situation was the way in which the Black African countries regarded themselves as already being at war with South Africa. But what chance had they of winning? The Western world was not going to get itself involved in fomenting a racial war. The truth was that—as President Houphouët-Boigny had pointed out—the isolation of South Africa was more likely to yield to the steady pressure of contact with the liberal world outside than to any attempt to overthrow the régime by force. Some of the Black African countries—e.g. Malawi and the former High Commission Territories—already realised this; and we should have to press this argument at the Meeting of Commonwealth Heads of Government at Singapore. The British Government's decision on the supply of arms to South Africa would not be announced, in Parliament, until after that Meeting. But it had in fact already been taken by the Cabinet, who had agreed that we should be ready to supply South Africa under the Simonstown Agreement with the arms which were required for the purpose of fulfilling the provisions of that Agreement. But we should, of course,

SECRET

seek from South Africa an assurance that they would not use these arms for internal repression or for external aggression against any Black African Government.

27. A new element had recently been introduced into the situation by a proposal which Presidents Kaunda and Nyerere had asked Mr. Trudeau to convey to the British Government, namely that the Singapore Meeting should endorse a declaration on the non-racial ideals and purposes of the Commonwealth. We should have to consider carefully whether such a declaration would be useful or not—i.e. whether it was primarily a device by the Black African countries to get themselves off the hook or whether it was an attempt on their part to limit our freedom of action under cover of a general profession of faith in non-racialism, etc. But somehow or other we had to try to get rid of the theory that Black Africa was in a state of war with South Africa. The fact that the Black African Governments had rejected any suggestion that they might conclude a non-aggression pact with South Africa was very disquieting. Admittedly, they were non-aligned in their foreign policies; and they might not therefore react very positively to the offer, which we intended to make at Singapore, of further collective discussions about the security of the Indian Ocean area. Nevertheless we should make this offer; and we must see how we got on.

28. *President Nixon* asked how far economic considerations entered into the matter.

29. *The Prime Minister* replied that the aid and technical assistance which we gave the Black African countries were certainly important to them; and, if they threatened to leave the Commonwealth or to withdraw their sterling balances, they might be given pause if they were reminded that in those circumstances we for our part might discontinue aid.

30. *President Nixon* said that his African experts were always very keen to give their African clients all that they wanted. But he himself agreed with the Prime Minister that isolating South Africa—like isolating the Greek Colonels—would only make things worse rather than better. The British Government must judge for themselves what course they should adopt both in their own interests and in the interests of the Commonwealth. But he wanted to repeat his assurance to the Prime Minister that "you will get the least possible amount of flak from us". Moreover, although some of the Black African leaders had indicated that they would welcome further American involvement in Africa, he would leave them in no doubt that, if they cut adrift from Britain, it would be no use their turning to Washington in the expectation that the United States would take Britain's place. Personally, he judged that British policy in this matter was right and was calculated to reinforce the defence of the Indian Ocean. The American Government would not embarrass Britain in this matter—any more than they would embarrass the Portuguese Government about Guinea.

Africa: Rhodesia

31. *The Prime Minister* said that the discussion at Singapore would be liable to be complicated by the question of Rhodesia. The initial reaction to Mr. Smith to our first attempt to discover whether negotiations were possible had not been encouraging. He had tried to insist that no discussions about the future of Rhodesia were possible unless we accepted that the régime in Salisbury were an independent sovereign Government operating on the basis of the Constitution which they themselves had introduced. We had not expected this rebuff; but we were continuing to explore the possibilities of negotiation in the hope that

Mr. Smith might eventually be persuaded to enter into serious discussions. If he was not, a major domestic political problem would arise in Britain when the Southern Rhodesia Order became due to be renewed once again in November 1971, since it was very doubtful whether at that point the Government would be able to carry its renewal in Parliament. If so, however, a very complicated international legal position would arise, particularly in relation to the United Nations as regards the maintenance of sanctions; and the British Government had not yet decided what course they should adopt in these circumstances. But the first thing was to get over the Singapore hurdle. That would be difficult enough, since the Black African countries had been committed, ever since the Lagos Conference in 1966, to the concept of "no independence before majority rule"; and this was something which we could never hope to impose on Rhodesia. We should have to continue to adhere to the alternative concept of "uninterrupted progress towards majority rule". But there was liable to be a good deal of trouble about this at Singapore, as well as about arms for South Africa.

32. *President Nixon* said that he understood this. We had to remember that the Black African States were ruled by emotion to a greater extent than most other countries. So far in human history there had been no genuine Black civilisation. The White countries had taken a good deal of time to achieve their own civilisations; and they would have to continue to be as patient with the Black States as possible. But there was no point in refusing to recognise that the Black States were different from the White States and were going to continue to be so for a long time to come. It would be wrong of the White countries, in assessing their own interests, to let their policies be influenced too much by the instinctively emotional reactions of Black Africa. It was true that, if we rebuffed the Black African States too lightly, they might fall under Soviet influence. But in that case the Soviet Government would find no less difficulty in "assimilating" them than the West had done.

Nuclear policy

33. This part of the discussion is recorded separately.

CONFIDENTIAL

RECORD OF THE PRIME MINISTER'S MEETING WITH VICE-PRESIDENT AGNEW IN THE WHITE HOUSE ON FRIDAY, 18 DECEMBER, 1970, AT 3 p.m.

Present:

The Right Hon. Edward Heath, M.P. Prime Minister	Vice-President Spiro Agnew Ambassador Annenberg
The Right Hon. John Freeman, Ambassador	Ambassador Mosbacher
Mr. R. T. Armstrong	

The Middle East

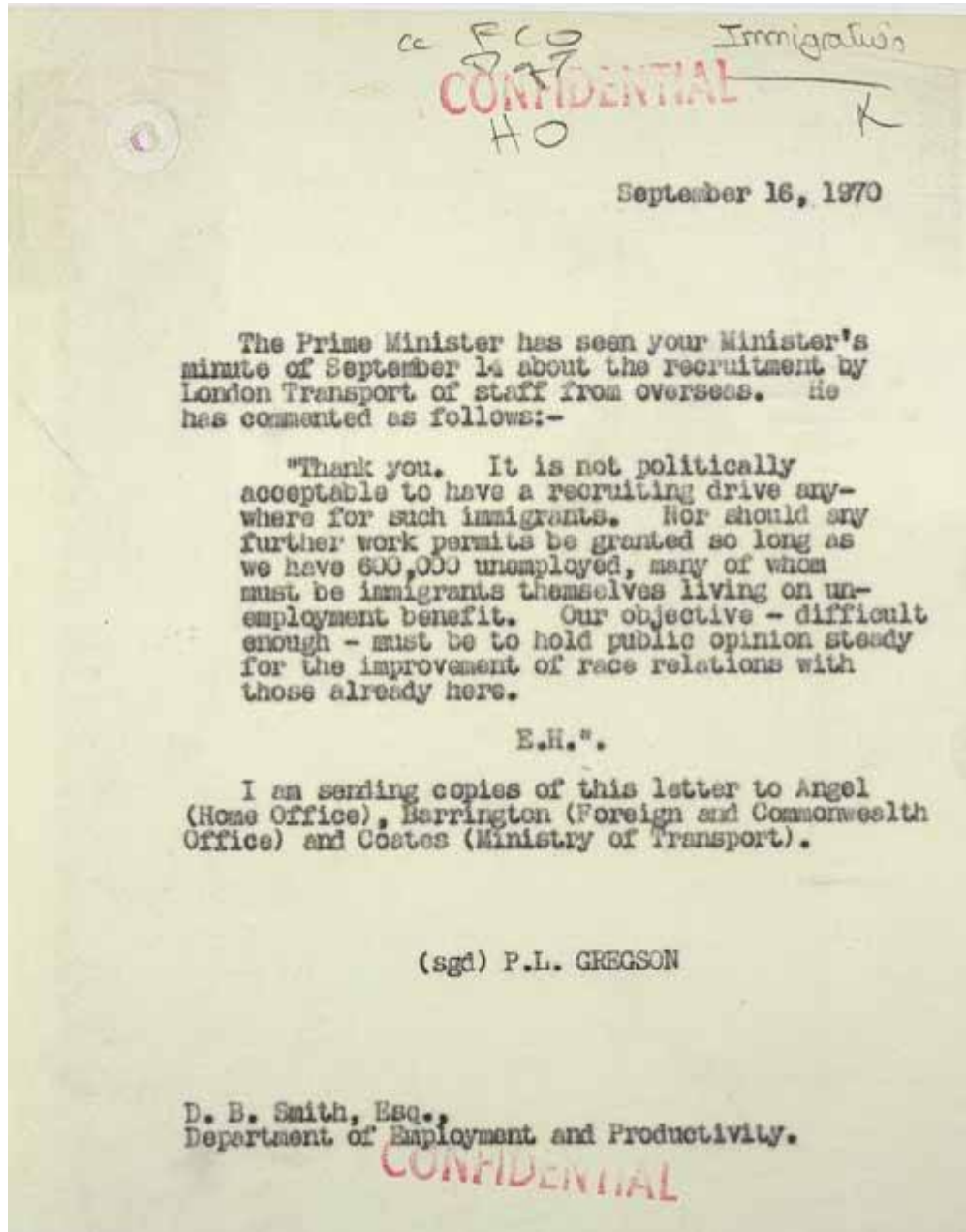
Mr. Agnew invited the Prime Minister to voice his thoughts about the Middle East. *The Prime Minister* said that he was most worried about the progress of

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Document Reference: PREM 15/88

Letter from P L Gregson - 16th September 1970

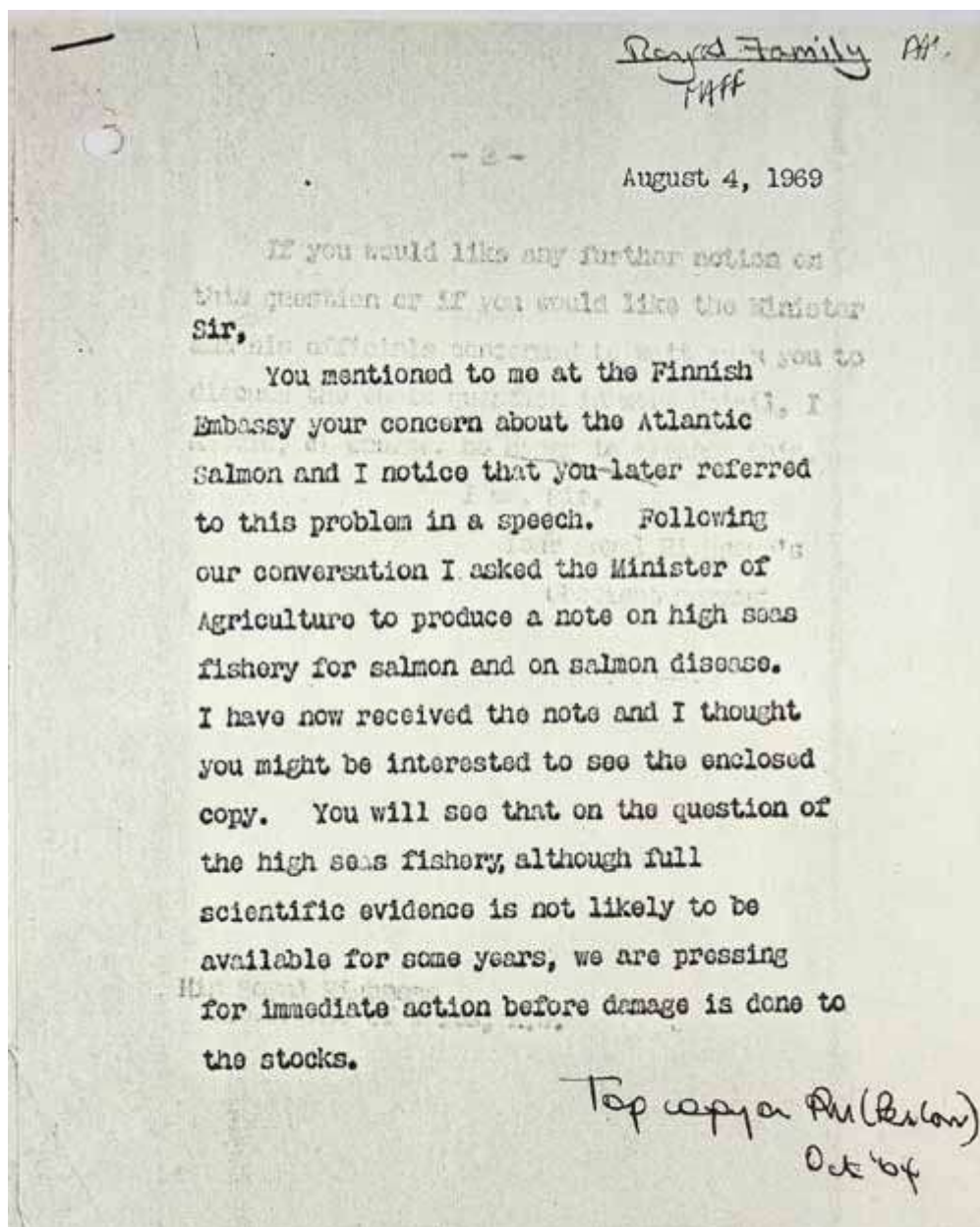
The government went ahead with the arms deal, but only supplied seven helicopters. African countries' threats to quit the Commonwealth were not carried out. The final document shows that race was an ever present issue in 1970, particularly when it came to employment.



New Document Releases
Prince Charles and Salmon Fishing

Document Reference: PREM 13/3450
Letter from PM, 4th August 1969

In July 1969 the Prince of Wales became involved in environmental politics. The press picked up on a speech he had made at the London Welsh Association in which he staunchly defended the fate of the Atlantic salmon, over-fished and suffering from disease. The Prime Minister felt he ought to know more, and was given a three-page report. Wilson forwarded this to Prince Charles, reassuring him that the government was now leaping into action.



Placed in file
7/11/39

- 2 -

August 4, 1939

If you would like any further action on this question or if you would like the Minister and his officials concerned to wait upon you to discuss the whole question in more detail, I should, of course, be happy to arrange this.

I am, Sir,

Your Royal Highness's

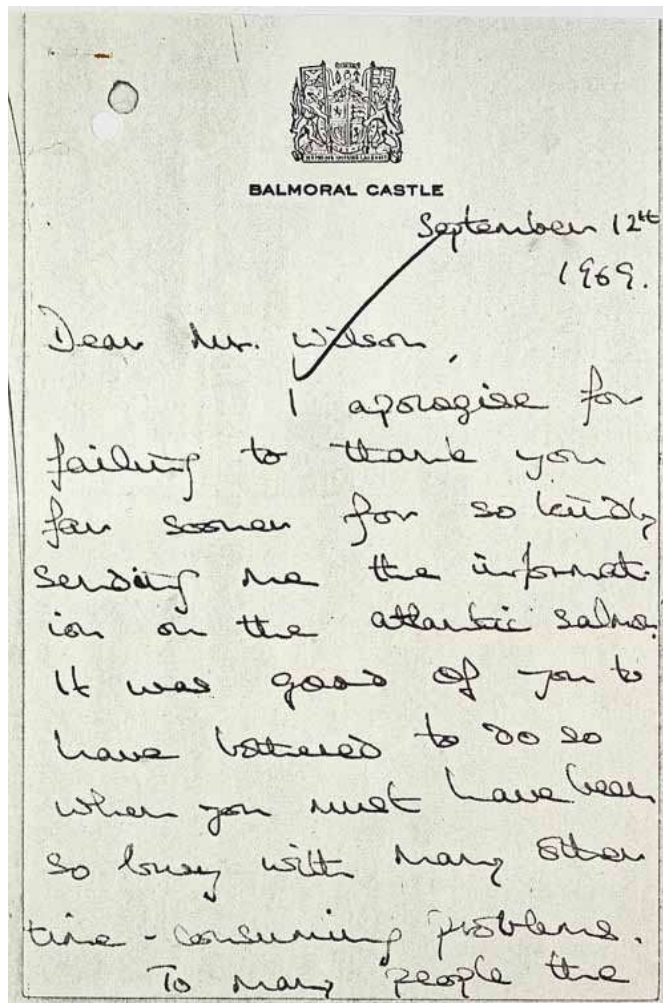
obedient servant,

to this problem in a speech following
our conversation I asked the
agriculture to produce a note on high land
directly for Wilson and on behalf of
I have now received the note and I thought
you might be interested to see the enclosed
You will see that on the question of
the high land inquiry although full
the high land inquiry is not likely to be
in the next few years, we are pressing

His Royal Highness
The Prince of Wales, K.G.

Letter from Balmoral, 12th Sept 1969

Prince Charles responded with his thanks, but warned Wilson that he would not let the subject drop.



present controversy over the
salmon + their ~~catching~~^{letting}
off Greenland may appear
rather exaggerated, but
people are notoriously
short-sighted when it
comes to questions of
wildlife + several species
have been wiped out
because no-one has
woken up in time to the
danger. I don't want
to say that the same
will happen to the salmon,
but modern methods of
fishing seem to allow
the fish absolutely no



BALMORAL CASTLE

chance + the numbers
taken each year increase
rapidly.

You may not have
fished yourself, but
to go so far salmon is
incredibly exciting. The
sport, + fishing - general
has a huge following
= this country + as a
result I would have
thought that there is
great value to be gained

from cod - fishing; ^{usually} when lot to
Americans + other foreign
fishermen.

The main problem
at the moment seems to
be that if everyone
waits for scientific
research - to the salmon
herring etc. the stocks
will be severely depleted
before any regulations are
imposed. And this
would be tragic for
herring + fishermen
alike. When you



BALMORAL CASTLE

Come up here next
weekend I shall attack
you on the subject
again!

I hope you had
as enjoyable a holiday
- the Scillies as possible,
even though -tempted
by Irish problems.

The golf course +
your tee trap awaits

For Love.

→
Love Sincerely

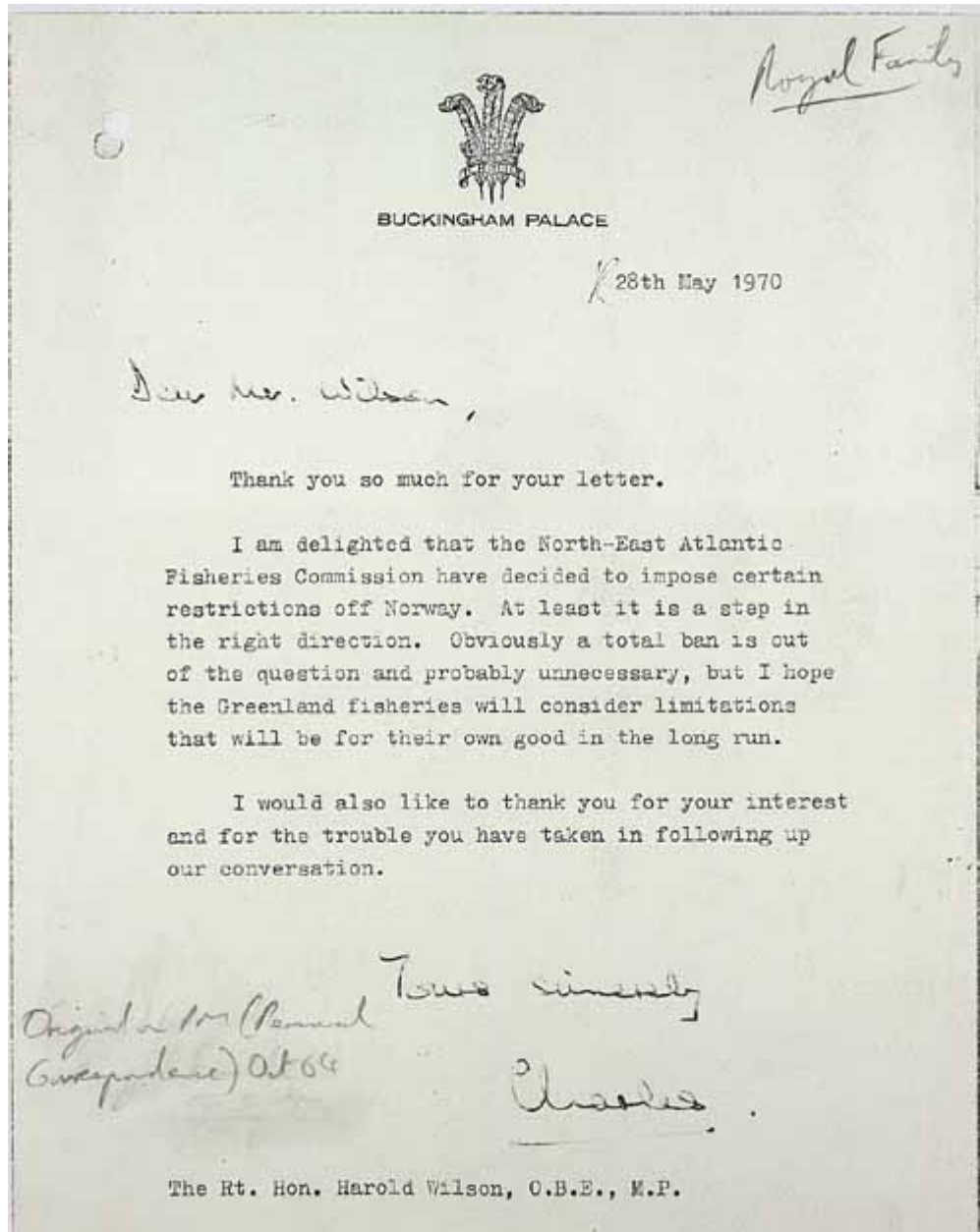
Charles.

Top copy on
Pm (Pers. Com)
Oct '64

The Prime Minister was briefed further his advisors letting him know the pros and cons of a partial ban on Atlantic salmon fishing. By May 1970, action had already been taken. The North-East Atlantic Fisheries Commission unanimously agreed to impose two closed areas for fishing and a closed season from July to May outside national fishery limits. The Prince of Wales was delighted that action had been taken so swiftly.

Letter from Buckingham Palace, 28th May 1970

An issue which might have taken years to resolve, appears to have been accelerated by the personal intervention of the Prince of Wales.



New Document Releases

Hijack Story

Introduction:

On 6th September 1970, four airliners were hijacked by the PLFP - the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine. Two of the planes were taken to Dawson's Field, a former RAF airstrip in the middle of the Jordanian desert; a third was blown up in Cairo because it was too large to land on the Dawson's Field runway.

The fourth of the hijacks was aborted when Leila Khaled, the commando in charge of the operation, was overpowered by El Al security guards and the plane was diverted to the nearest airport - Heathrow. Leila was taken into British custody at Ealing police station. Her presence forced Britain into a major international crisis that month which was later to become known as Black September.

Document Reference: CAB 128/47

(Cabinet Conclusions) CM (70) 13th Conclusions, 9th September 1970
As the first image shows, the Cabinet Conclusions of the 9th September, available in file CAB 128/47 sum up the dilemma faced by the British government.

SECRET

THIS DOCUMENT IS THE PROPERTY OF
HER BRITANNIC MAJESTY'S GOVERNMENT

Printed for the Cabinet. June 1971

CM (70)
13th Conclusions

Copy No. 23

CABINET

CONCLUSIONS of a Meeting of the Cabinet held at
10 Downing Street, S.W.1, on Wednesday, 9 September, 1970,
at 10.45 a.m.

Present:

The Right Hon. EDWARD HEATH, M.P., Prime Minister	
The Right Hon. REGINALD MAUDLING, M.P., Secretary of State for the Home Department	The Right Hon. SIR ALEC DOUGLAS- HOME, M.P., Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs
The Right Hon. LORD HAILSHAM OF ST. MARYLEBONE, Lord Chancellor	The Right Hon. ANTHONY BARBER, M.P., Chancellor of the Exchequer
The Right Hon. WILLIAM WHITELAW, M.P., Lord President of the Council	The Right Hon. SIR KEITH JOSEPH, M.P., Secretary of State for Social Services
The Right Hon. GEOFFREY RIPPON, Q.C., M.P., Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster	The Right Hon. ROBERT CARR, M.P., Secretary of State for Employment and Productivity
The Right Hon. MARGARET THATCHER, M.P., Secretary of State for Education and Science	The Right Hon. GORDON CAMPBELL, M.P., Secretary of State for Scotland
The Right Hon. THE EARL JELlicoe, Lord Privy Seal	The Right Hon. PETER THOMAS, Q.C., M.P., Secretary of State for Wales
The Right Hon. JAMES PRIOR, M.P., Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food	The Right Hon. MICHAEL NOBLE, M.P., President of the Board of Trade

The following were also present:

The Right Hon. FRANCIS PYM, M.P., Parliamentary Secretary, Treasury	LORD BALNIEL, M.P., Minister of State for Defence
The Right Hon. SIR PETER RAWLINSON, Q.C., M.P., Attorney-General	

Secretariat:

SIR BURKE TREND
SIR ROBIN HOOPER
Mr. T. D. O'LEARY

SECRET

CM 13 (70)

SECRET

Acts of
Violence
Against Civil
Aircraft

The Prime Minister said that the Cabinet faced a difficult and complex decision as the result of a series of incidents in which representatives of the Arab Fedayeen terrorist organisation, the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), had taken possession by force of several civil aircraft and were detaining two of them at Dawson's Field, an airfield in Jordan, together with the American, German and Swiss nationals among their passengers, as hostages for the release of Fedayeen imprisoned in the Federal German Republic, Switzerland and Israel. Although no British nationals seemed to have been involved in these incidents, our interests were affected in two ways. One of the aircraft concerned had been the property of the Israeli airline, El Al; and, when the attempt on it had been made en route from Amsterdam to New York on 6 September, the pilot had been able to make a forced landing at Heathrow Airport, where one of the PFLP terrorists, a woman named Leila Khalid, had been taken into custody, her male accomplice having been killed by the Israeli security guards during the struggle in the aircraft. She was now being held in this country; and it was clear that her release was an essential element in the bargain which the PFLP leaders were trying to strike as the price of the surrender of the aircraft and the individuals whom they were detaining in Jordan. But the position had been still further complicated by the fact, of which news had reached London only a few minutes before the Cabinet assembled, that the PFLP had just seized a BOAC aircraft in the course of a flight from Bombay to Beirut. Pending the receipt of more detailed information, we could only suppose that we too were now in the same position as the United States, Germany and Switzerland in that the Arab terrorists now held one of our aircraft and a considerable number of our nationals as additional hostages.

We must assume that the PFLP were capable of carrying out their threat to destroy the aircraft and the individuals whom they controlled if their demands were not satisfied, and in these circumstances we had endorsed a United States initiative that we, they, the Swiss Government and the German Government should co-ordinate our response to the Fedayeen ultimatum by discussions at Berne. We had agreed to use the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) as our intermediary with the Fedayeen and had acquiesced in a United States proposal authorising the ICRC to offer the release of Leila Khalid, together with the terrorists held by the Swiss and German authorities, in exchange for the hostages and aircraft held at Dawson's Field. The Government of Israel were not at present a party to this proposed transaction, although many of the hostages were Israeli nationals and the PFLP ultimatum had

SECRET

made contingent demands for the release of Fedayeen held by Israel. The Red Cross, however, were only prepared to negotiate with the Fedayeen for the release of all the hostages, including the Israeli nationals. A Red Cross representative, M. Rochat, had already made contact with the Fedayeen; but the only significant report from him so far was that he believed that the 72-hour time limit attached to the Fedayeen ultimatum might be extended. The Government of Israel's intentions in relation to the ultimatum were, probably deliberately, being kept obscure. But, although they had so far refused to countenance any exchanges with the terrorists, they might ultimately be ready to participate in the negotiations. In addition they might fear that their hostages might be sacrificed in the interests of the other nationals concerned; and this might account for an approach which they had made to us that morning for the "provisional arrest", in the context of our Extradition Treaty, of Leila Khalid.

As regards the legal position Leila Khalid was at present simply being detained; and no charges had so far been preferred against her. It would be the duty of the Attorney-General to decide, in the light of the reports which he received from the police and the airport authorities about the circumstances in which the aircraft made a forced landing at Heathrow Airport, whether an offence had been committed within British jurisdiction and, if so, whether he should prosecute Leila Khalid. The Cabinet should bear it well in mind that the Attorney-General, in reaching his decision on these issues, was constitutionally required to act solely on the basis of his own judgment of the evidence laid before him, although he was entitled, in his discretion, to take account of such wider considerations of public policy as might be relevant.

The Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary said that the ICRC representative, M. Rochat, was due to meet the Fedayeen representatives again at 4 p.m. that day. He had already indicated that he doubted whether the Fedayeen would in fact implement their threats on the expiry of the present ultimatum. There were now some indications that the Government of Israel might eventually be prepared to take part in the discussions at Berne. The German authorities, on the other hand, were showing signs of wishing unilaterally to release the Arab terrorists whom they held; and we were seeking to dissuade them from doing so. We had not yet taken formal cognisance of the request of the Israeli Government for the "provisional arrest" of Leila Khalid; and it would be desirable to ask them forthwith that this request should be suspended in view of the negotiations for the release of the hostages which were now in train and the danger that, if the Fedayeen suspected that we might surrender Leila Khalid to Israel, those negotiations might be gravely endangered.

CM 13 (70)

In discussion the Cabinet were advised that it was beginning to become questionable how much longer Leila Khalid could be detained without charges being laid against her. Moreover, if extradition proceedings were instituted, even this element of discretion would be removed, since such proceedings could be stayed only by action instituted in the British courts, even if that action were subsequently abandoned or withdrawn. On the other hand it might be possible, under the Aliens Order 1953, for her to be held for five days before being charged; and the Home Secretary and the Attorney-General should seek to clarify the position in this respect, pending developments in M. Rochat's negotiations in relation to the PFLP ultimatum.

Meanwhile we should seek to promote a debate in the Security Council of the United Nations, on the basis of an appropriate Resolution, despite the risk that this might merely exacerbate relations between Israel and the Arab States. It was also very urgent to decide whether there was any action which could be taken in relation to the BOAC aircraft which had been seized by the PFLP shortly before the Cabinet met and was now within 30 minutes' flying time of Beirut, where the terrorists intended to have it refuelled before proceeding elsewhere. The Fedayeen had apparently occupied the control tower at Beirut Airport and were threatening to destroy the aircraft if refuelling operations were impeded. It could be argued that we should not appear, by remaining wholly inactive in this situation, to be ready to concede to any measure of blackmail which might be brought to bear upon us. On the other hand it would be dangerous to try to limit or control the discretion of the captain of the aircraft in judging what course of action would be most likely to ensure the safety of his passengers and crew. On balance, the wisest course would be to send an urgent message to Her Majesty's Ambassador at Beirut and, if possible, directly to the aircraft through BOAC wireless channels, advising the captain that he should be guided by his own judgment; and the Lebanese authorities should be requested by Her Majesty's Ambassador to comply with the wishes of the captain so far as possible. BOAC might also suggest to the captain that he should try to persuade the terrorists that it might well be unsafe for him to attempt to land the aircraft at Dawson's Field and that he should be allowed to take it to some recognised airport. Meanwhile, the Corporation should take urgent action to divert other British aircraft from Beirut or from any airport in the area which might be under the control of the terrorists.

The Cabinet then considered means of providing additional protection for aircraft and airports in this country. *The President of the Board of Trade* said that it would be virtually impossible and

prohibitively expensive to try to ensure total security against sabotage at London Airport. But within the limits of available manpower and security services our precautions had already been intensified, particularly as regards the control of passengers boarding aircraft, although traffic was inevitably being delayed as a result of the additional measures now being taken.

In discussion it was agreed that the security of other airports in this country, especially Prestwick and Gatwick, should be urgently reviewed. It was also for consideration whether in present circumstances British air services to the Middle East should be maintained and, if so, whether Arab passengers should continue to be accepted. Any action in this connection, however, might preferably take the form of critical examination of passenger lists rather than a general boycott of air services to the Arab States as a whole. The question of security aboard British aircraft should also receive urgent attention; in particular we should seek to clarify the attitude of British airlines and aircrews to the introduction of armed security guards. Such guards had apparently foiled several attempts to take forcible possession of El Al aircraft, although the risks involved were amply illustrated by the most recent case at London Airport, when the use of armed force by the Israeli security guard might have caused a major disaster if a hand grenade carried by one of the terrorists whom he was overpowering had not accidentally failed to explode.

The Prime Minister, summing up the discussion, said that further action must now wait on the progress of M. Rochat's negotiations in Berne. But all members of the Cabinet should hold themselves available to resume discussion of the situation at short notice; and in the meantime the action which the Cabinet had approved should be put in hand without delay.

The Cabinet—

- (1) Invited the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary, in consultation with the President of the Board of Trade, to arrange, as a matter of great urgency, for appropriate messages to be conveyed to the Government of the Lebanon and to the captain of the British aircraft which had been forcibly seized while approaching Beirut, designed to ensure, so far as possible, the safety of the passengers and crew.
- (2) Invited the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary to request the Government of Israel to suspend their application for the provisional arrest of Leila Khalid under our Extradition Treaty with Israel.

CM 13 (70)

- (3) Invited the Home Secretary and the Attorney-General to give further consideration to the period for which it would be permissible to hold Leila Khalid in detention.
- (4) Invited the President of the Board of Trade to give urgent consideration to the various measures which had been suggested in their discussion for the intensification of the security of British aircraft and airports.

*Cabinet Office, S.W.1,
9 September, 1970.*

Document Reference: CAB 164/795

Sir Burke Trend - The 72 Hour Ultimatum 7th September 1970

Three days later, yet another plane was hijacked - this time a British VC10. The Palestinians wanted to pressure Britain into releasing Leila Khaled. By this time the guerrillas had over 300 hostages, 65 of them British citizens. Although Britain signed the 1963 Tokyo International Convention on Hijacking, which specifically stated that governments should not negotiate with hijackers, the files show that the Heath government never ruled out this option.

SECRET 28

SIR BURKE TREND

The 72 hour ultimatum

News received at the beginning of this afternoon from American consular sources is that a PFLP representative Abu Omar has laid down the following conditions for the release of the passengers aboard the Boeing and DC 8 aircraft at present held captive at Dawson Airfield in the Jordan.

W/Amc

UK Nationals
These will be released in exchange for Leila Khalid the lady detained from the El Al aircraft yesterday.

Swiss Nationals
These will be released in exchange for the terrorists now serving sentences in Switzerland following the incidents at the beginning of this year.

American Nationals
Those holding dual nationality will be treated as Israelis. Other American nationals will be released in exchange for 50 Polesia held in captivity in Israel.

Our understanding is that these three bargains are separate, i.e. we could secure the release of the United Kingdom nationals in exchange for Miss Khalid affecting the other passengers. IF the conditions laid down are not met Abu Omar claims that both aircraft and the passengers aboard them will be blown up. Abu Omar moreover claims that a representative of the Jordan armed forces has seen the aircraft with the explosives already in position. The position on the ground so far as we know is that the aircraft are surrounded and controlled by the terrorists and they in turn are surrounded by the Jordan armed forces. The time of expiry of the ultimatum would be 0500 hours BST Thursday, 10 September.

In the light of discussion among officials the following appear to be the courses open to us.

Course 1
Release the girl and send her back to Amsterdam, whence she embarked for this country, without laying any charges. This should be done before receiving an Israeli request for her extradition and action would have to be taken tonight or at latest tomorrow morning.

Document Reference: PREM 15/202

Telex Conference with Amman 12th September 1970

The ultimatum was extended. However, rescuing the hostages was not feasible, and Britain felt it had little choice but to negotiate with the hijackers, through both official and its own secret channels.

The negotiations had some initial success when six days into the crisis, some of the hostages - mostly the women and children - were released unconditionally.

The hijackers were impatient to have their demands met, and with Britain holding on firmly to Leila Khaled, the PLFP, as a warning signal, blew up the British plane at Dawson's Field. As the following images show, the British Ambassador reported this development to London in the first of a series of telex exchanges that was to become ever more frantic throughout that day.

TELEX CONFERENCE WITH AMMAN.
LONDON 1530 Z on 18/ix.

MINISTERS ARE STILL MEETING. THEY HAVE ALL SEEN THE TRANSCRIPT OF OUR LAST TELEX CONFERENCE. BUT I SHOULD WARN YOU THAT THE LIKELIHOOD ~~WAAA~~ IS THAT WE SHALL MAKE A FURTHER EFFORT TO GET A CONCERTED LINE IN THE BERBE GROUP ON THE BASIS OF
(1) PRESSING THE ICRC NOT TO THROW IN THE TOWEL
(2) URGING SPEEDY ACTION
(3) SAYING THAT THE NEXT MOVE MUST BE TO TELL THE FEDAYEEN THAT WE STILL WANT A PACKAGE DEAL, BUT THAT THE ISRAELIS ARE IN PRINCIPLE PREPARED TO DISCUSS EXCHANGING SOME OF THE FEDAYEEN THEY HOLD IF THE PFLP WOULD MAKE A PRECISE DEMAND

YOU WILL HAVE SEEN THAT BOTH THE GERMAN AND THE SWISS GOVTS HAVE RESTATE^D TODAY THEIR SUPPORT FOR A MULTILATERAL APPROACH. FAILING ICRC AGREEMENT TO RESUME THEIR MISSION, WE WOULD WISH THE FIVE TO CONSIDER A NEW SPOKESMAN POSSIBLY CHOSEN FROM AMONG THE FOUR HEADS OF MISSION IN AMMAN. THE SWISS OR THE AMERICAN MIGHT PERHAPS BE DESIGNATED. WHOEVER WAS CHOSEN COULD DEAL WITH THE RED CRESCENT OR CENTRAL COMMITTEE OR POSSIBLY PFLP. HAVE YOU ANY COMMENTS ON THIS POINT.

AMMAN

MY COMMENTS ON THIS POINT ARE THAT THE AMERICANS HAVE NOT IN ANY CASE GOT AN AMBASSADOR HERE AND THEY ARE OBVIOUSLY NOT PERSONRE GRAT AE WITH THE PEOPLE WITH WHOM THEY WOULD HAVE TO DEAL, TO SAY NOTHING OF THEIR SPECIAL INTERESTS. THE SWISS AMBASSADOR FROM BEIRUT IS WORKING ENTIRELY ALONE FROM AN HOTEL BEDROOM. THE GERMAN IS A 1ST SECRETARY AND THE ONLY GERMAN NATIONAL IN THE MISSION AT THE MOMENT APART FROM HIS SECRETARY. I AM NOT VOLUNTEERING BUT DRAW YOU OWN CONCLUSIONS. I WOULD ADD THAT WE ARE PROBABLY BETTER INFORMED THAN OTHER MISSIONS AND MY KNOWLEDGE OF ARABIC MIGHT COME IN USEFUL, BUT IF I WERE TO BE GRABBED I SHOULD EXPECT AN IMMEDIATE DEAL.

I HAVE TWO CORRECTIONS TO MAKE IN OUR ANSWERS TO YOUR QUESTIONS OF THIS MORNING

1. I SAID JACQUINET⁸ OF RED CROSS WOULD HAVE NOTHING TO DO WITH POLITICAL BUSINESS. HE HAS SAID THIS AFTERNOON THAT HE WOULD BE PREPARED TO DEAL WITH THE MECHANICS OF AN EXCHANGE BUT NOT TO NEGOTIATE TERMS.
2. IN DESCRIBING THE FEDAYEEN TERMS AS CONVEYED TO US BY THE RED CRESCENT WE MENTIONED A TOTAL FIGURE OF 1⁰⁰ FEDAYEEN PRISONERS THIS SHOULD READ 2⁰⁰.

IF THE AMERICANS SHOULD ALSO GIVE YOU A FIGURE OF 1⁰⁰ THIS IS BECAUSE THEY GOT IT FROM US.

3. ACCORDING TO THE SWISS AMBASSADOR WHO HAS IT FROM THE RED CRESCENT THE HOSTAGES ARE BEING HELD IN A NUMBER OF PLACES IN THE SOUTHERN PART OF AMMAN. ACCORDING TO DE KONING THE DUTCHMAN WHO HAS JUST BEEN RELEASED HE WAS HELD ORIGINALLY IN THE MAHDAT CAMP AND LATER IN A BUILDING ON JEBEL ASHRAFIYA.

LONDON

1. IT WOULD BE HELPFUL TO HAVE YOUR ASSESSMENT OF THE MOTIVES FOR THE AMERICAN ATTITUDE ON THE BASIS OF YOUR CONTACTS WITH YOUR US COLLEAGUE. IT SEEMS TO US THAT THE AMERICANS ARE BEING SURPRISINGLY RELAXED AND WE ARE TRYING TO DECIDE WHY. WE EXPECT AN ASSESSMENT FROM WASHINGTON SHORTLY. (2)

AMMAN

THE RELAXATION OF THE AMERICANS MAY BE DUE TO 2 FACTORS

A..THEY ARE AT PRESENT WE BELIVE LESS WELL INFORMED THAN OURSELVES ABOUT THE HOUR BY HOUR SHIFTS IN THE MOOD OF THE EXTREMISTS FEDAYEEN AND THE EXTENT OR RATHER LACK OF FATAH CONTROL OVER THEM.

B..UNLIKE OURSELVES THEY DO NOT HAVE A QUID PRO QUO TO OFFER OR AT LEAST HAVE NOT BEEN ASKED FOR ONE (UNLESS ONE BELIEVES STORIES ABOUT SIRHAN WHO ^{ASS}ASSASSINATED KENNEDY) OR THAT THEY ARE UNDER LESS IMMEDIATE PRESSURE THEY ARE IN FACT TO A LARGE ~~EXTENT~~ EXTENT ~~AND~~ ACTING FOR THE ISRAELIS.

LONDON

FINALLY, COULD YOU GIVE US A BRIEF REPORT ON THE SECURITY SITUATION IN AMMAN??

AMMAN

THE SECURITY SITUATION IS AT THE MOMENT CALM AND HAS BEEN SO SINCE LAST NIGHT. I DO REALLY BELIEVE THAT THE STATEMENT ABOUT LEILA KHALID HAS BEEN MOST HELPFUL BUT YOU KNOW AMMAN AS WELL AS I DO AND THE CHIEF DANGER WHICH IS EVER PRESENT IS OF A SUDDEN OUT-BREAK OF ~~MOVEMENT~~ FIRING LEADING TO A GENERAL BATTLE

THE KING AS I HAVE OFTEN SAID IS UNDER HEAVY PRESSURE FROM DISLOYALISTS AND NEITHER SIDE IS BY ANY MEANS IN FULL CONTROL OF ITS HOTHEADS

(EFFECT IS BOUND) REVERTING TO THE STATEMENT ABOUT LEILA KHALID ITS TO WEAR OFF IN A ~~DAY~~ DAY OR TWO AND WE HAVE BEEN WARNED OF THIS BY ASSOCIATES OF HIGHLY PLACED AND WELL INFORMED PERSONS SUCH AS MASHHUR HADITHA AND THE RED CRESCENT

(3)

ADMIN MAY I NOW REVERT TO THE OPENING PARA OF THIS CONFERENCE FROM YOUR
(cont'd) SIDE.

PRESSING THE ICRC NOT TO THROW IN THE TOWEL SEEMS TO US A PRETTY FORLORN HOPE AND EVEN IF THEY DID RETURN TO THE ARENA THEY HAVE FORFEITED MUCH CONFIDENCE LOCALLY

WE ARE AS YOU KNOW ENTIRELY WITH YOU OVER THE NEED FOR SPEEDY ACTION IN PARTICULAR WE FEEL THAT JUST AS THE PFLP GRABBED (AND DESTROYED) AN AIRCRAFT WHEN IT WAS QUITE UNNECESSARY TO DO SO THEY MAY WELL SOON BE TEMPTED TO TAKE FURTHER HOSTAGES.

AS REGARDS THE PACKAGE DEAL IT IS QUITE ~~AND THE ISRAELIS HAVE TWO DISTINCT SPEEDS IN MIND~~
(AND HAD THE ISRAELIS HAVE TWO DISTINCT SPEEDS IN MIND
HERE AGAIN

1. CLEAR THAT THE FEDAYEEN HAVE TWO DISTINCT SPEEDS IN MIND
1ST THE QUICKEST POSSIBLE SWAP OF THE BRITISH HOSTAGES FOR BRITISH AND OTHER HOSTAGES FOR LEILA KHALID AND THE OTHER CAPTIVE FEDAYEEN IN EUROPE

2ND. MORE LEISURELY PRISONER OF WARTYPE OF EXCHANGE FOR THE OTHERS

I CANNOT ~~OVERSTRESS~~ STRESS TOO STRONGLY THE EXTENT TO WHICH LEILA KHALID HAS BECOME A SYMBOL OF PALESTINE RESISTANCE AND A FOLK HEROINE

London

YOU SHOULD KNOW THAT LEILA WILL NOT REPEAT NOT NOW BE MOVED TODAY FROM PLICE STATION.

TRIP CONFERENCE WITH AMMAN AT
1600Z ON 12/14.

AMMAN
GOOD EVENING.

AS MY H.C. HAS THIS MOMENT RETURNED FROM A MEETING WITH FREYOND
VIC PRESIDENT OF THE ICRC AT WHICH THE FEDAYEEN TERMS WERE
COMMUNICATED I SHALL LET HIM MAKE THE FIRST CONTRIBUTION FROM
US HIMSELF.
I HAVE HOWEVER A VERY URGENT COMMUNICATION TO MAKE MYSELF IMMEDIATELY
RPT IMMEDIATELY AFTERWARDS.

H.C. IS NOW SPEAKING....

THE FEDAYEEN TERMS ARE:-

- A.. NON ISRAELI AND NON AMERICAN PASSENGERS
ALL WILL BE RELEASED UNCONDITIONALLY EXCEPT 6 SWISS CITIZENS
6 GERMANS AND 6 BRITISH WHO WOULD BE KEPT AS HOSTAGES
PENDING THE ARRIVAL IN AMMAN OF THE 7 FEDAYEEN
PRISONERS. IF THE PALESTINIAN PRISONERS SHOULD BE RELEASED
TO AMMAN IMMEDIATELY NO HOSTAGES WOULD BE KEPT.
- B.. ISRAELI CITIZENS WITH MILITARY STATUS WILL BE DETAINED PENDING
AN EXCHANGE WITH PALESTINIAN PRISONERS IN ISRAEL.
- C.. ALL AMERICAN PASSENGERS WILL BE FREED UNCONDITIONALLY WITH
EXCEPTION OF THOSE CONSIDERED TO BE DUAL U.S.-ISRAELI NATIONALS
WHO HAVE MILITARY STATUS IN ISRAEL. THE LATTER WILL BE DETAINED
IN THE SAME WAY AS THE ISRAELIS WITH MILITARY STATUS.

(FREYOND SAID THAT HE HAD BEEN GIVEN A FIGURE OF \$ TO COVER ALL

AMMAN
(cont'd)

ISRAELIS AND DUAL NATIONALS WITH MILITARY STATUS AND HAD BEEN PROMISED A LIST LATER TONIGHT. THE BRITISH SCHOOL CHILDREN ARE FREE TO LEAVE IMMEDIATELY AND UNCONDITIONALLY.

FREMOND SAID THAT HAVING RECEIVED THIS OFFER, WHICH HE REGARDED IN ANY CASE AS THE ONLY POSSIBLE SOLUTION HE CONSIDERED THAT THE MANDATE OF THE ICRC WAS FINISHED AND HAD TOLD THE FEDAYEEN SO. HE SAID THAT HE COULD NOT NEGOTIATE A DIKTAT THEY HAD BEEN SURPRISED AT THIS DECISION SINCE THEY HAD WANTED HIM TO STAY TO NEGOTIATE THE EXCHANGE OF PRISONERS WITH ISRAEL.

FREMOND MADE TWO EXCEPTIONS TO HIS DECISION TO WITHDRAW

1. HE PROPOSED TO LEAVE A MEDICAL TEAM HERE TO LOOK AFTER THE REMAINING PASSENGERS

2. HE FELT THAT THE TWO ICRC PLANES IN AMMAN COULD NOT LEAVE EMPTY AND WAS THEREFORE PREPARED TO TAKE OUT OF AMMAN ALL PASSENGERS WHO WERE FREE TO GO. THE BRITISH SCHOOL CHILDREN WERE CLEARLY THE FIRST IN THIS CATEGORY, AND IT WAS SUGGESTED THAT THE SICK, AND ALL WOMEN AND CHILDREN SHOULD LEAVE. THE PLANES WILL NOT BE ABLE TO TAKE OFF UNTIL EARLY TOMORROW MORNING AND FREMOND HAD HEARD FROM THE PFLP THAT THEY WOULD GIVE US PASSPORTS AT THE HOTEL NOT EARLIER THAN 9 PM TONIGHT.

THE AMERICAN REPRESENTATIVE SAID THAT WHILE HE COULD NOT QUARREL WITH FREMOND'S DECISION HE APPEALED TO HIM NOT TO LEAVE AMMAN UNTIL THE FIVE COUNTRIES CONCERNED HAD HAD A CHANCE TO MEET AND CONSIDER IT.

ON A MECHANICAL POINT FREMOND ASKED WHETHER WE COULD PASS THE LATEST FEDAYEEN TERMS TO BERNE AND GENEVA THROUGH OUR COMMUNICATIONS.

KKKKKK

Don't
copy
12/18/50
1600 hrs.

AMMAN (cont'd)

(3)

AS YOU WILL HAVE SEEN FROM MY TELNO 527 SOME OF THE MORE RESPONSIBLE AND VIOLENT PFLP HAVE GOT THE IDEA THAT WE ARE NOT GOING TO RELEASE LEILA KHALID THEY HAVE TOLD US THROUGH AN ~~BY~~ INTERMEDIARY THAT IF WE DO NOT WITHIN A FEW HOURS AT LEAST GIVE AN ASSURANCE THAT WE ARE PREPARED TO DO SO SOMETHING VERY SERIOUS WILL HAPPEN THESE PEOPLE ARE QUITE CAPABLE OF KILLING HOSTAGES OR TAKING SOME OTHER LETHAL ACTION HERE OR ELSE WHERE AND ALTHOUGH THIS WOULD DOUBTLESS HAVE THE OPPOSITE EFFECT TO THAT INTENDED BY THEM THEY ARE NOT LOGICAL THEREFORE RECOMMEND MOSCOW MOST EARNESTLY THAT WE SHOULD WITHIN AN HOUR OR TWO ISSUE AND WIDELY PUBLICISE AN OFFICIAL STATEMENT ALONG THE FOLLOWING LINES:

QUOTE IN ORDER TO PREVENT MISUNDERSTANDING LEADING TO POSSIBLE LOSS OF LIFE M.G. ARE PREPARED TO LET IT BE KNOWN THAT THEY INTEND TO RELEASE MISS LEILA KHALID WHEN AGREEMENT HAS BEEN REACHED ON THE RELEASE OF THE HOSTAGES HELD BY THE PFLP UNQUOTE.

THIS MAY SOUND MELODRAMATIC BUT THE ATMOSPHERE HERE AND PARTICULARLY AT THE PFLP HEADQUARTERS WHERE MICHAEL ADAMS HAS JUST BEEN IS VERY EXPLOSIVE ARTLY BECAUSE SOME PFLP FEEL THAT THE TERMS OF THE CER CENTRAL COMMITTEE ARE TOO MODERATE.

Low Down

YOUR TEL 527.
FINAL APPROVAL FOR REPLY STILL BEING SOUGHT. RECOMMENDATION IS
(A) NO PUBLIC STATEMENT.
(B) INSTRUCTION THAT YOU ASK ICRC TO CONFIRM TO PFLP THAT OUR ATTITUDE REMAINS WHAT IT HAS BEEN THROUGHOUT M. ROCHAT'S MISSION. YOU COULD ALSO CONFIRM THIS THROUGH YOUR CONTACT.
WE PROPOSE TAKING STEPS TO PREVENT FURTHER UNHELPFUL BBC BROADCASTS ON THIS SUBJECT.

YOUR MESSAGE JUST RECEIVED OBVIOUSLY MEANS THAT WE SHALL HAVE URGENTLY

URGENTLY TO RECONSIDER THE ABOVE. WE WILL COME BACK TO YOU WHEN OUR MINISTERS HAVE MET AT 1645Z HOURS.

VO
YOU MAY ASSURE ICRC REPS AND PFLP CONTACTS THAT THERE IS NO ~~change~~ ^{change} CHANGE IN HMGS ATTITUDE FOLLOWING THE BLOWING UP OF THE AIRCRAFT

XXXXXX

Amman

4

~~At 1500~~ YOU MAY FURTHER LIKE TO KNOW THAT THE PFLPMA HELD A PRESS CONFERENCE AT 1500ZAT WHICH THEY SAID THAT THEY WERE RELEASING ALL PASSENGERS EXCEPT 40 WHO WERE ISRAELI, GERMAN, SWISS AND AMERICAN CITIZENS.

THESE WOULD BE HELD AS HOSTAGES FOR THE EXCHANGE OF PRISONERS HELD BY THESE COUNTRIES.

NO BREAKDOWN WAS GIVEN BUT 10 OF THE ISRAELIS ARE BELIEVED TO BE FEMALE MEMBERS OF THE ISRAELI ARMY.

THE PFLP SAID THAT THE HOSTAGES WOULD BE TRANSFERRED TO "A MORE COZY PLACE" THAN THE ~~STRIP~~ AIRSTRIP OR A REFUGEE CAMP.

THERE WOULD BE NO REPRISALS AGAINST THEM IF THEIR DEMANDS WERE NOT MET. THEY WOULD SIMPLY BE HELD AS PRISONERS OF WAR.

BEFORE I CLOSE I SHOULD LIKE TO REPEAT WITH ALL THE EARNESTNESS AT MY COMMAND THAT WHATEVER THE DECISION ABOUT THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE'S DEMANDS WE SHOULD MAKE A STATEMENT ABOUT LEILA KHALID. THIS MIGHT GO ALONG WAY TOWARDS DEFUSING THE SITUATION AND PREVENTING SERIOUS VIOLENCE HERE.

THE ISRAELIS ARE AFTER ALL RESIGNED TO HER RELEASE.

FINALLY WE ARE TOLD THAT IN ADDITION TO SCHOOL CHILDREN ALL WOMEN AND OTHER CHILDREN ARE FREE TO GO PLEASE PUT TO MINISTERS THAT THEY SHOULD BE ALLOWED TO DO SO TOMORROW MORNING. HERE ARE NOW BIG CONCENTRATIONS OF FEDAYEEN IN THIS AREA AND THE AUTHORITIES THINK THAT THIS IS CONNECTED WITH THE LEILA KHALID ISSUE WHICH MAKES AN URGENT ANNOUNCEMENT ALL THE MORE VITAL.

London

THANK YOU VERY MUCH. THIS IS NOW BEING COMMUNICATED TO MINISTERS.

THE FOLLOWING OTHER POINTS WERE PREPARED BEFORE YOUR TRANSMISSION AND I WILL SEND THEM NOW.

2. GRATEFUL LATEST DETAILS OF WHEREABOUTS OF PASSENGERS AND CREW SINCE BLOWING UP AIRCRAFT.

3. EVACUATION. WE PROPOSE AFTER SEEING YR TEL. TO KEEP ARRANGEMENTS ON ICE, AT LEAST UNTIL MONDAY. WE ARE DISPERSING SOME SUPERFLUOUS AIRCRAFT. GRATEFUL YOU CONTINUE TO GIVE US NUMBERS OF DEPARTURES.

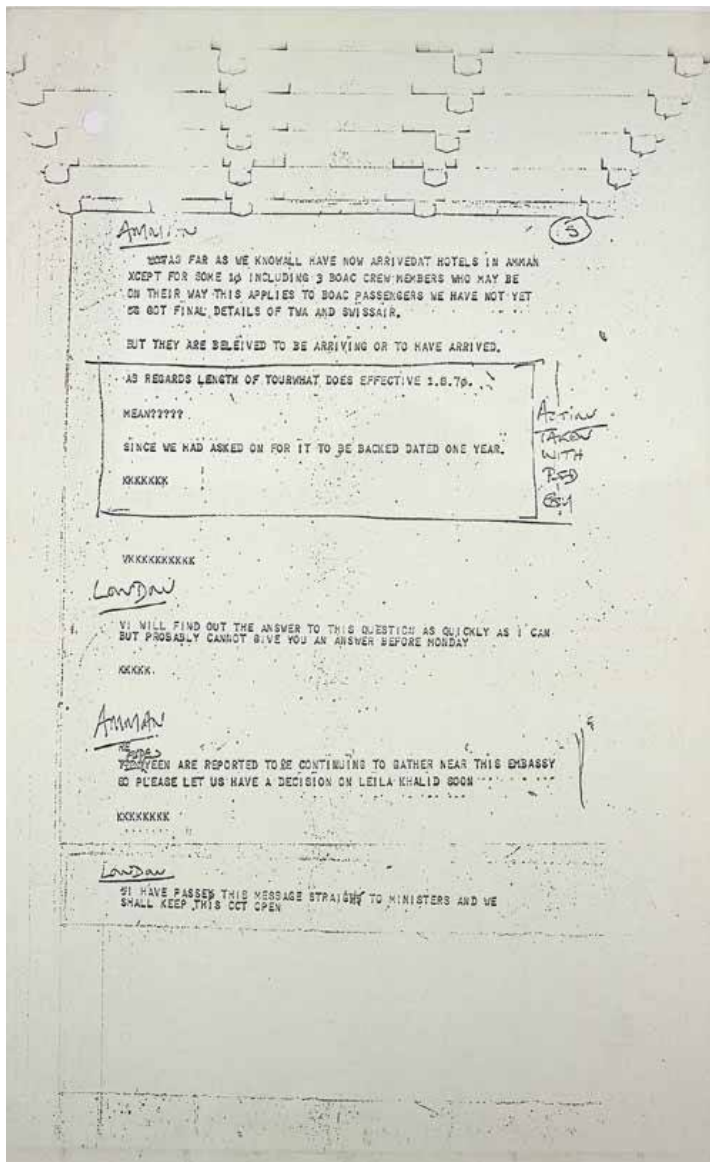
4. FAMILIES REASSURED YESTERDAY ABOUT POSITION IN AMMAN. ON LENGTH OF TOUR (YR TEL 521). CIVIL SERVICE DEPT HAVE NOW AGREED TO US SHALL BE ONE YEAR, EFFECTIVE 1/8/70. LETTER FOLLOWS.

Document Reference: PREM 15/202
Telex Amman-London 13th September 1970

All this was taking place against a background of escalating violence in Jordan. The Fedayeen or Palestinian national extremists, of whom the PLFP hijackers were a sub-group, were in constant clashes with the Jordanian forces of King Hussein. They claimed Hussein had done too little to help them attack Israel. The hijack incident proved to be the spark to an already incendiary situation, and the violence began to escalate.

Heath eventually agreed that Britain had no choice but to go public on their intentions and the Cabinet later approved this decision. At 7pm on the 13th, BBC World Service broadcast a government announcement in Arabic to the effect that Britain would swap Leila Khaled for hostages.

The files show that for King Hussein, fighting the Fedayeen and humiliated by their hijacking exploits in his own country, Britain's public offer to strike a deal with his enemy only undermined him further.



KKK

London

(6)

AS REQUESTED LATEST FEDAYEEN TERMS HAVE BEEN TELEGRAPHED TO BERNE, GENEVA AND ALSO TO WASHINGTON BONN TEL AVIV

WE HAVE ALSO SENT ~~THE~~ H OF C'S SUBSEQUENT REPORT OF MEETING WITH FREYMOND FOR THE INFORMATION OF POSTS ONLY

KK

AMMAN

THANK YOU

IT IS VERY IMPORTANT THAT IF WE PROPOSE TO REJECTOR ~~REJECT~~

RADICALLY MODIFY THE CENTRAL COMMITTEES PROPOSALS (OR DIKTAT) THAT WE DO NOT PUBLICLY ANNOUNCE THIS UNTIL ALL HOSTAGES UNCONDITIONALLY RELEASED HAVE LEFT JORDAN. ANY NEWS ON LEILA KHALID ???

London

BYR FIRST POINT NOTED V
YR SECOND POINT, NO NEWS YET I'M AFRAID
#

AMMAN

HAVE JUST HEARD THAT ~~THE~~

ITS ~~PROBABELY~~ PROBABLE THAT THE SIX BRITISH HOSTAGES WHO ARE TO REMAIN HAVE BEEN SELECTED BY THE FEDAYEEN WHO ARE HOLDING THEM SEPARATELY.

WE SHOULD THEREFORE BE ABLE TO GET THE OTHERS AWAY FAIRLY SOON

~~PROVIDED~~

PROVIDED THE SITUATION IS NOT AGGRAVATED AND PROVIDED THAT WE MAKE NO PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT BEFORE THEY GO OF REJECTION OR SERIOUS MODIFICATION OF THE CENTRAL & COMMITTEES ~~PROS~~ TERMS.

KKKKKKKK

London

(7)

V
WE ARE PASSING YR COMMENTS ABOUT PUBLICITY FOR THE CENTRAL
COMMITTEES PROPOSALS BY TELEPHONE DIRECT TO THE MINISTERIAL
MEETING RA WHICH IS NOW TAKING PLACE

WE ARE OF COURSE GLAD AT THE PROSPECT HAT AT LEAST SOME
OF THE BRITISH HOSTAGES MAY SHORTLY BE ABLE TO GET AWAY
KXXXX

Amman

ON EVACUATION. IT MAY INTEREST YOU TO KNOW THAT 8 MORE BRITISH
LEFT TODAY AND 11 PROPOSE LEAVING TOMORROW WITHIN
WE HAVE ALSO HEARD OF 6 BRITISH TOURISTS IN AD AKADAR WHO WILL
REMAIN THERE FOR THE TIME BEING.

London

V
GOOD
THE DEPARTURES ARE STEPS IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION

V
WE HAVE NOW EAR FROM DOMING ST THAT MINISTERS HAVE ALMOST
REACHED AGREEMENT ON A FORM OF WORDS VERY CLOSE TO THOSE PROPOSED
BY YOU
KEEP THE CCT OPEN SO THAT I CAN LET YOU KNOW AS SOON AS THIS
IS RECEIVED FROM NUMBER 10

Amman
HAVE YOU ANY MORE NEWS ABOUT THE SITUATION AROUND THE EMBASSY

Amman I HAVE JUST SENT ONE MORE TO RECONDOIRE, AND IT SEEMS THAT
THE 3L BULK OF THE FEDAYEEN ARE MOVING OFF IN THE DIRECTION
OF THE HOTEL AND THE 2ND AND 3RD CIRCLE.

IN OTHER WORDS SLIGHT EASING OF TENSION.

KXXXX

London

(9)

MINISTERS HAVE AGREED THE FOLLOWING FORM OF WORDS WHICH YOU MAY USE AS OF NOW IN WHATEVER WAY YOU THINK FIT. TEXT IS BEING GIVEN TO THE BBC AND TO THE PRESS AND THE BBC ARE BEING ASKED TO PUT IT OUT ON THE ARABIC SERVICE AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

TEXT BEGINS
QUOTE TO AVOID ANY MISUNDERSTANDING OR POSSIBLE LOSS OF LIFE
WYG WISH TO LET IT BE KNOWN THAT THEY ARE PREPARED TO RETURN MISS LEILA KHALID TO AN ARAB COUNTRY AS PART OF A SATISFACTORY SETTLEMENT OF THE PROBLEM OF THE DETAINED PASSENGERS AND CREWS OF THE THREE AIRCRAFT. TEXT ENDS

Amman

THANK YOU VERY MUCH.

I AM SURE THIS WILL BE MOST HELPFUL.
I AM URGENTLY CONSIDERING THE BEST WAY OF RELAYING IT TO THE GENTLEMEN ON THE STREETS AND TO LOCAL CORRESPONDANTS

~~London~~

WE MAY WELL WISH TO HAVE ANOTHER TELE CONFERENCE. WHAT IS THE MOST CONVENIENT TIME FOR YOU ?????

Amman

AS EARLY AS POSSIBLE.

KKKKK

~~London~~

VV
1945 Z OK ????

Amman

THAT'S ALRIGHT

London

VVVCURTAINS

Amman

CURTAINS FOR WHOM????

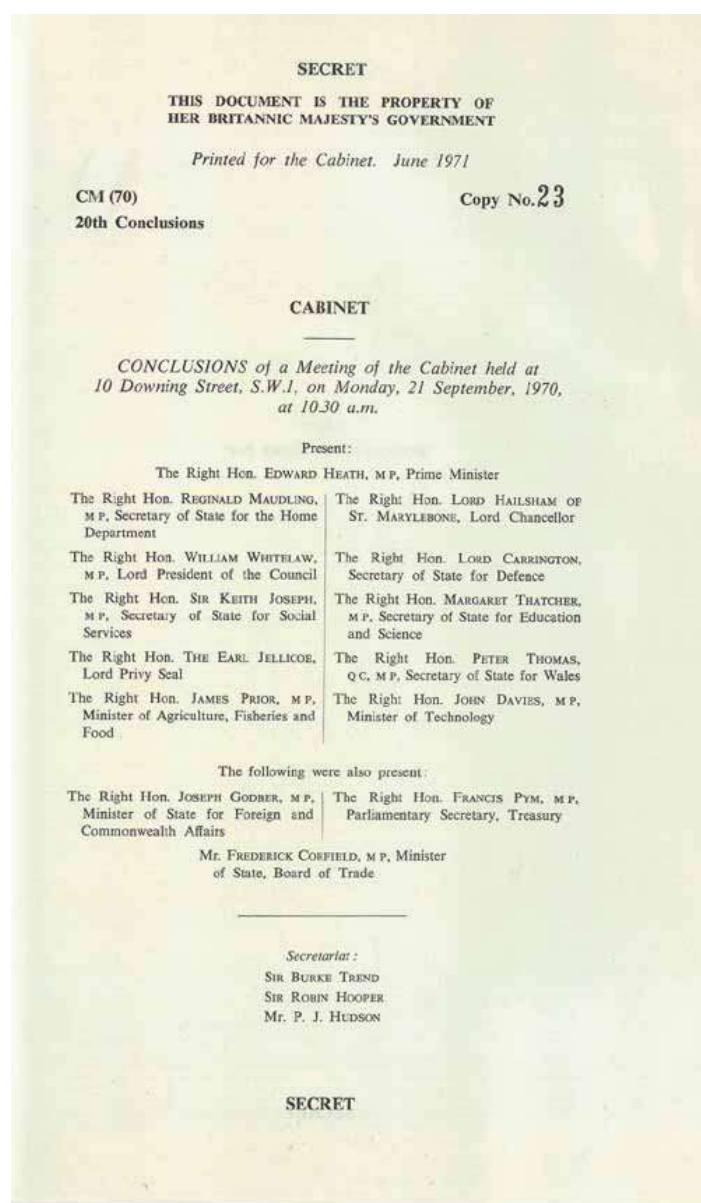
E THINK SHUTTERSAPROPRIATE.

Document Reference: CAB 128/47
Cabinet Conclusions 21st September

The King's situation deteriorated further when, on the 20th September, a Syrian armoured division, which had been gathering near the border, crossed into Jordan. The civil war became an international conflict, with dire implications for King Hussein's throne.

Through its embassy in Amman, the British government received several messages from King Hussein over the next few days, revealing his desperate situation, asking for the unprecedented support of Israel in what had become an inter-Arab war.

British files show that the government had calculated that on balance it would be better to stand aside. Hussein's regime was felt to be increasingly precarious and probably not worth prolonging. Britain declined to pass on his request for assistance from Israel.



CM 20 (70)

SECRET

Situation in
the Middle
East
(Previous
Reference:
CM (70) 19th
Conclusions,
Minute 1)

*The Prime Minister, summarising developments since the Cabinet's last meeting, said that the situation in the Middle East gave cause for increasing anxiety.

So far as the hostages were concerned, the representatives in Berne of the United Kingdom, the United States, Germany, Israel and Switzerland (the "Berne Group") had reached agreement on 19 September on the terms of a joint statement declaring that they held responsible for the safety of the hostages all those in whose hands they might be, calling upon those holding the hostages to provide information on their whereabouts and well being, requiring them to bring the hostages to a safe place as a prerequisite for an orderly transfer and stating that the five Governments stood ready to consider at any time proposals for the release of all the hostages. The text ended by reaffirming the mandate given by the five Governments to the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) for this purpose. This statement, which represented a considerable measure of progress in so far as it indicated that the Government of Israel were now willing to consider making a contribution towards a solution on a five-Power basis, had been repeatedly broadcast to Jordan. But owing to the hostilities between the Fedayeen and the Jordan Army it had been impossible to establish contact with the Fedayeen leaders in Amman. Meanwhile, although there had been conflicting reports about the hostages, their whereabouts remained unknown.

The military situation in Jordan was unclear; and reporting by HM Embassy in Amman had been impeded by the fact that their communications equipment had been damaged during the fighting. But, so far as could be ascertained, the position in Amman itself was reasonably secure in the sense that the Jordanian Army appeared to be holding their own, although the Fedayeen still controlled a number of areas. In the north, however, Syrian forces had now crossed the frontier and appeared to have gained control, in conjunction with the Fedayeen, of Irbid, Ramtha and a considerable part of north-western Jordan. The latest reports suggested that they were now consolidating their position around Irbid and that the Jordanian Army had withdrawn in the face of superior numbers. The situation around Mafraq, where the Fedayeen appeared to be in control and there were also substantial Iraqi forces, was uncertain. It was not known whether the withdrawal of Iraqi troops which had been initiated over the past two days was continuing or had been halted.

* Previously recorded in a Confidential Annex.

In these circumstances we had been concerned to maintain close contact with the United States Administration; and, on the assumption that the Syrian action had been taken without consultation with the Soviet Union and was contrary to their wishes, the Soviet Ambassador had been asked to convey our anxieties to the Soviet Government and request them to use their influence to secure a Syrian withdrawal. The reaction of the Soviet Ambassador had been to suggest that the position in Jordan was less grave than our information indicated it to be; and we had therefore re-emphasised the dangers which we believed to be latent in the situation. The United States Government had made similar representations to the Soviet Ambassador in Washington. Meanwhile, a series of messages had been received from King Hussein of Jordan, reflecting the extreme anxiety with which he now regarded the situation. The clearest of these, whose content, in view of its extremely sensitive and dangerous implications, should on no account be disclosed, had not only appealed for the moral and diplomatic support of the United Kingdom and the United States, coupled with a threat of international action, but had also asked for an air strike by Israel against the Syrian troops. We had received this last message at a moment when King Hussein's normal channels of communication with both the United States Embassy in Amman and the Israeli authorities had evidently been interrupted and he had therefore had no means of keeping in touch with the Governments of the United States and Israel except through HM Embassy. We had received confirmation that he wished us to convey his appeal to the Israeli Government; and we had been faced with a difficult decision whether to do so. After discussion between the Ministers most closely concerned, it had been decided to transmit the message to the United States Government only, on the ground that they might most appropriately convey it to the Government of Israel not merely because the Israeli Prime Minister, Mrs. Meir, was at that moment at the United Nations in New York but also because the United States Government, being closest to the Israeli Government, would be best placed to advise them whether to accede to King Hussein's request or not. Shortly thereafter we had been informed that the United States Government had already received a similar message from King Hussein, appealing for air strikes and air cover "from any quarter", and that the substance of this appeal had been passed to the Israeli representatives in Washington.

The King had also appealed, on 19 September, for relief supplies and medical assistance; and, in the light of the reports of heavy casualties in Amman and the increasing disruption of public services in the city, we had immediately announced that we would be ready to contribute to any international relief effort which could be mounted under the auspices of the ICRC. Medical personnel and

CM 20 (70)

supplies were already being flown to Cyprus, where they would be available to proceed to Amman as soon as the ICRC were able to organise the operation.

Meanwhile, the Jordanian representative at the United Nations had been instructed to raise the question of Syrian aggression as a matter of urgency in the Security Council. The United States Government had so far advised against this course, on the ground that time was needed for the representations which they and we had addressed to the Soviet Government to take effect. Our own delegation in New York were also doubtful of the effectiveness of any action in the Security Council, in view of the probable opposition of the Soviet Union and of Syria herself, who was at present a member of the Council. On the other hand, the issues involved were too grave to be decided solely by reference to tactical considerations in the United Nations; and the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary, who had left for New York on the previous afternoon, would therefore explore the possibility of promoting a satisfactory resolution in the Security Council, pending receipt of the Cabinet's considered judgment on this subject.

The Cabinet must now consider whether they were prepared to endorse the action which had so far been put in hand and whether there were any further steps which could be taken. We faced a difficult situation, which might deteriorate still further and was very different from the position which had confronted us when we had last intervened in Jordan in 1958. At that time it had been possible to send troops to Jordan before hostilities had begun and so to forestall the outbreak of fighting. Now, however, fighting was already in progress and a large part of the country was under the control of the Fedayeen. Both we and the United States were under pressure from King Hussein to intervene; but we had to ask ourselves what the long-term objectives of such an intervention could be and whether they would be worth the risks entailed. Moreover, although our limited resources clearly precluded any unilateral intervention on our part, the United States Government might ask us to intervene jointly with themselves; and we must be ready to decide our attitude if they asked for our active assistance or for the use by their own forces of British facilities, whether in the United Kingdom or, for example, in the Sovereign Base Areas of Cyprus.

In discussion it was thought to be unlikely that the Security Council would be able to take effective action in the face of Syrian, and probably also of Soviet, opposition. Instead of condemning Syria's action and calling on her to withdraw her forces from Jordan, the Security Council might well adopt a compromise resolution

merely calling for a cease-fire; and this would leave the Syrian forces in possession of north-west Jordan and the Fedayeen still in a position to defy the authority of King Hussein. On the other hand the Syrian invasion of Jordan was precisely the type of situation for which the procedures of the Security Council had been devised. They might fail to deal with it; but we should be in a stronger position to face criticism from the uncommitted countries and to take action, if necessary, outside the framework of the United Nations if the matter had first been referred to the Security Council than if we had attempted to dispense with discussion in the Council completely. As regards intervention in Jordan, however, there was general agreement that our limited resources and the damage to our interests in the Arab world which would inevitably result were conclusive arguments against our intervening on our own and that similar considerations applied to any British intervention in conjunction with the United States. The latter had the capability of unilateral action; and it was arguable that in the eyes of the Arab world they were already so deeply committed to the support of Israel that they had little to lose, in terms of their credit with the Arab Governments, by active intervention in support of King Hussein. But this was not our position; and since, in relation to our total resources, we had a larger stake in the Middle East than had the United States, we were entitled to argue strongly that the damage which United States intervention might inflict on Western interests as a whole outweighed any advantages to be derived from prolonging, possibly for only a short time, the increasingly precarious régime of King Hussein. A difficult situation would arise, however, if the United States accepted our arguments against British intervention but asked us for facilities in the United Kingdom or Cyprus in support of unilateral action of their own. Although we no longer had any formal obligation to come to the assistance of King Hussein, he still commanded considerable sympathy in this country. Moreover, a refusal to afford facilities for the United States in the circumstances envisaged might seriously damage Anglo-American relations; and the Government would need to weigh this risk very carefully. On the other hand, if we provided facilities for United States intervention in Jordan, the Arab countries would regard us as having thrown in our lot with the United States and Israel; and we should forfeit their goodwill no less surely than if we intervened actively ourselves. Nor could we underrate the risk that the Fedayeen might react to any Western intervention by putting to death the hostages whom they still held.

In further discussion the following main points were made:

(a) Urgent consideration should be given to the possibility of evacuating British nationals in Jordan, who were thought to number about 140 and were believed to have come to no harm so far. Any

operation for this purpose might best be arranged under the auspices of the ICRC.

(b) It would be prudent to put in hand a confidential examination of the possible effect on our oil supplies if the situation deteriorated sharply.

(c) We had no information as yet which would justify our issuing a warning to British airlines to suspend their operations in specific areas of conflict. But we should keep in close touch with the airlines and ensure that they were informed without delay of any developments which might affect their Middle Eastern routes.

(d) Although the airline authorities and the pilots were still opposed to the introduction of armed guards in civil aircraft, there were some indications that their views were being modified by events. The examination of this subject, and other security precautions for British aircraft and airports, should be accelerated.

The Prime Minister, summing up the discussion, said that the Cabinet agreed that we should concentrate on promoting a discussion in the Security Council, despite the risks and disadvantages involved. In no circumstances could we ourselves intervene in Jordan by military means; and the damaging consequences for Western interests in the Middle East as a whole which might result from United States intervention entitled us to represent forcefully to the United States Government that they, too, should refrain from intervention of their own. At the same time it was important, not least in terms of domestic public opinion, that we should not part company with the United States on any fundamental issue if we could possibly avoid doing so; and we should therefore suspend judgment for the time being on the attitude which we should adopt if, despite our strong representations to the contrary, the United States Government decided to intervene in Jordan and sought our help for this purpose particularly as regards the provision of support facilities in this country or, *e.g.* in Cyprus.

Meanwhile, prompt action should be taken to pursue the other topics which had emerged from the Cabinet's discussion.

The Cabinet—

- (1) Took note, with approval, of the Prime Minister's summing up of their discussion and agreed that the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary should be invited to be guided accordingly in the discussions in the Security Council of the United Nations.
- (2) Invited the Minister of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, in consultation with the other Ministers

concerned, to consider, as a matter of urgency, the evacuation of British nationals in Jordan.

(3) Invited the Minister of State, Board of Trade, to arrange for British airlines to be warned immediately developments in the Middle East made it desirable that they should suspend their services or modify their routes; and, in consultation with the other Ministers concerned, to accelerate the study of security precautions for British aircraft and airports.

(4) Invited the Minister of Technology to arrange for an examination of the probable impact on our oil supplies of a further deterioration in the situation in the Middle East.

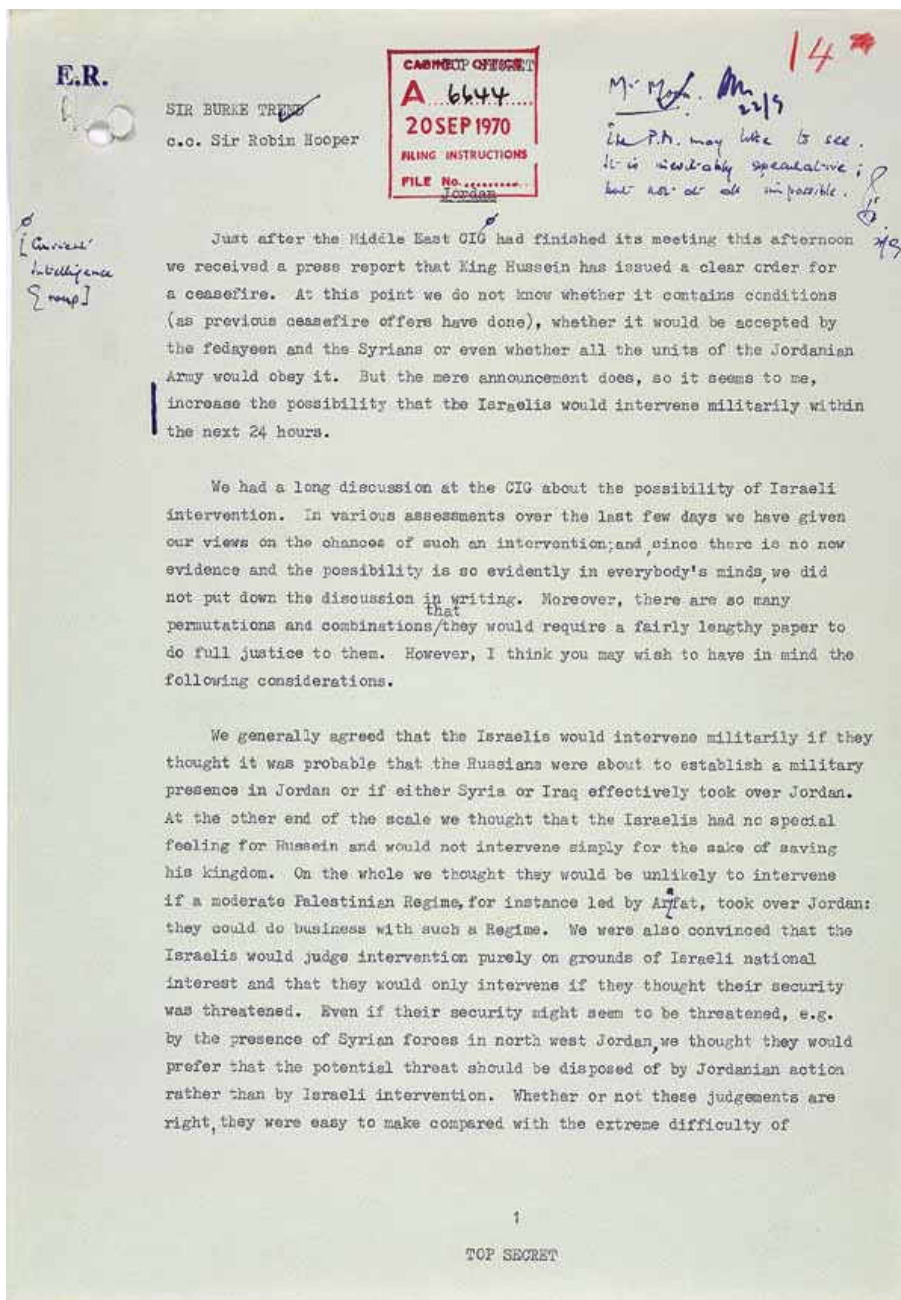
*Cabinet Office, S.W.1,
21 September, 1970.*

Document Reference: PREM 15/124

21st Sep Gov Intelligence Group, J A Thomson. Top Secret to Sir Burke Trend

Britain was hedging its bets, waiting the outcome of the battle between King Hussein and the newly emergent Palestinian leader, Yasser Arafat. The files contain an assessment of the prospects that would follow an Arafat victory, suggesting that Britain was prepared to view such as outcome positively.

In the end Hussein's forces proved the stronger and the Fedayeen were short of ammunition. The King and Arafat negotiated a ceasefire and the following year Hussein was strong enough to drive the Palestinian Liberation Organisation under Arafat out of Jordan altogether.




E.R.

TOP SECRET

judging how the Israelis would balance conflicting conditions viz the desirability of giving the Jordanians or others the time and opportunity to dispose of any potential threats to Israel against the possibility that delay in action might lead towards an even worse situation for Israel than would otherwise have occurred. We thought that their inaction so far was largely to be explained, firstly by their belief that the Jordanian Army would probably win, secondly, by their readiness to acquiesce in what seemed the most likely alternative, namely a moderate fedayeen victory, and thirdly, by their knowledge that delay was most unlikely significantly to affect their ability to take decisive military action against Syria, Iraq or even the fedayeen.

Although we thought the delay would not affect the Israeli military capability, we thought that in certain circumstances it might make the political situation harder for them. We had a discussion on the basis of an informal piece of paper which I circulated and which is attached. We thought that, if the Israelis assessed that the situation described in paragraph 2 of the paper was on the point of coming about, ~~that~~ the likelihood of their military intervention would considerably increase. We also thought that, if there was a ceasefire at present, the Israelis would be likely to assess that the situation described might occur fairly rapidly. We all agreed that there was nothing to prevent the Israelis intervening militarily in the immediate future if they so decided. In the light of this discussion the news of a possible ceasefire suggests rather strongly that there could be an Israeli military intervention soon, perhaps early tomorrow.

Finally, it is worth noting that the American representative at the discussion suggested in a rather pointed way that the Israelis might try to argue that, if they were to intervene, they should do so in company with their friends. I continue to doubt, however, whether the Americans would agree to this.


J A THOMSON

21 September 1970

2
TOP SECRET

New Document Releases
Imelda Marcos' Visit to London

Document Reference: FCO 15/1291
Letter to Donald Gordon, 17th July 1970

The imminent visit of Imelda Marcos to England, to deliver her young son to school, threw the Foreign Office into rather a panic. The British government did not seem to be entirely looking forward to this event.



(3/15)

CONFIDENTIAL

Mr. W. [unclear] X (15)
Once the principle of who is briefed
the programme is decided, the actual
arrangements will clearly have to be fixed
BRITISH EMBASSY
MANILA

A.R.H. [unclear]
24/7

17 July, 1970.

RECEIVED IN
RECIPT No. 14
28 JUL 1970
fap2012

Dear Donald,

Mrs. Marcos's Visit to the
United Kingdom (12)

My telegram No. 160 of 16 July.

I'd take this
with some
reservations.
(X)

You may have smiled at my saying in my letter
3/15 of 13 July that Mrs. Marcos would be bored at
being briefed, when at present her principal interest
in England seems to be a briefing from someone like
Sir William Armstrong over the luncheon table about
the way in which the British Government functions.
I should also add that in our talk, which lasted an
hour and a half and of which I am sending you a
record under cover of a separate letter since it
dealt with other issues as well as her forthcoming
visit, she made it quite clear that her visit was
private and that she was not expecting anything to
be laid on for her, though suitably grateful for
offers of help and hospitality. She mentioned that
she would have liked to pay her respects to the
Royal Family but quite understood that they would be
away from London. My letter of 13 July was no doubt
based too much on her public persona, which is what
I have mostly been exposed to hitherto and which is
definitely that of a spoilt beauty queen, and on the
rather horrifying blow by blow account which we had
just had of her visit to Japan. (I have not reported
this in detail, but can do so if you would be
interested.)

3. That being said, however, I think that most of
my previous letter still holds good. Though
intelligent, she has not got a disciplined mind and
the ends do not tie up: for instance, she kept
/talking

D. McD. Gordon, Esq., C.M.G.,
South-East Asian Department,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office,
London, S.W.1.

100
10

CONFIDENTIAL

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|| talking about "colonial government" whilst making it clear that what she was interested in was the smooth change of administration in Whitehall; and after firmly telling me that she would arrive on 3 or 4 September and stay until at least the 13th to put Bongbong into school, she added as an afterthought that she might only stay a week, depending on the situation here. I shall of course do my best to pin her down on dates nearer the time: and insofar as she has any interest in the government of Hong Kong, perhaps Mr. Royle could cover this if he lunches her. I also have the impression that her attention switches fairly rapidly from one theme to another: I cannot guarantee that the workings of the British Government will still be her main preoccupation when she gets to London.

4. You no doubt have your own lines out to suitable hosts at Oxford or Cambridge. I could, if you wish, write direct to William Hayter at New College, but will not do so unless I hear from you.

Yours ever,
J.N.S. Curle

(J.N.S. Curle)

CONFIDENTIAL

Mrs Marcos Visit, 31st September 1970

One of the sensitive issues was whether the Queen should break her holiday to come and receive her guest, as both Nixon and the Pope were rumoured to be doing. Would failing to do so risk Anglo-Philippine commercial relations - currently rather good?

Mrs Marcos was clearly a guest to be reckoned with. Her own brother did not seem to have too high a view of her public behaviour.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~ 3/15

H.R.

Mrs. Marcos's Visit

I spent six hours yesterday at Malacañang in the company of Kokoy Romualdez, Rafael Gonzalez and Mrs. Lourdes Tinio, with sporadic interruptions from the First Lady and President Marcos. Romualdez, for all his faults, has the virtue of being completely unashamed and explained the background to Mrs. Marcos's visit without any inhibitions about my presence.

2. The most important point which he wished to get over to all of us is that his sister is completely uncontrollable. After the restraints of Manila she tends to behave impulsively and thoughtlessly when abroad, showing neither consideration, nor social discipline nor even an elementary awareness of public relations. Romualdez advised Mrs. Tinio not to attempt to restrain or caution Mrs. Marcos since this would aggravate her mood. She must be indulged in all her whims and the host government made to co-operate with her. "The more demanding and unreasonable you are, the more we will get and the better Mrs. Marcos will be satisfied."

3. Romualdez explained to me that Mrs. Marcos had shown interest in various aspects of Britain not in order to pursue them in her programme but simply out of "courtesy"; her natural inclination was to agree to anything suggested by us and then to renege at the last moment. He felt that it was preferable to do the hatchet work as early as possible and to produce a programme which could be followed more or less to the letter without inconvenience or boredom.

4. Romualdez spent much time debating aloud whether Mrs. Marcos should accept the invitations from the Chartered Bank, Shell and Unilever. Here his calculation was not the benefit to Philippine interests in the U.K. but simply the probable size of each guest list and the image which each reception would project in Manila. In the end, Shell was eliminated because it was too colonial and Unilever because it was not important enough in Manila. The Chartered Bank was accepted since it fitted into the banking angle which Mrs. Marcos is /trying

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

CONFIDENTIAL

trying to give to the visit. Romualdez explained that part of our suggested programme was too cultural in bias; the First Lady had to shed her predominantly cultural image and show that she could achieve results in other areas of government. (Shades of the 1973 Presidential Election!)5

5. It is clear from these conversations that, apart from two or three fixed items, Mrs. Marcos's programme will be improvised to suit her mood. Mrs. Tinio will have a sheaf of theatre tickets, a list of restaurants, museums etc., and a list of Filipinos who can be invited to the outings which Mrs. Marcos chooses. Although we have emphasised that H.M.G. will not be responsible for arranging these private enterprise activities, the Filipinos will, when in difficulty, shout for help from the F.C.O. Their reliance on us will be increased by the fact that they dislike Ambassador Reyes and distrust his staff, one of whose members is at present having an affair with the Manila Times columnist Max Soliven.

6. Romualdez explained candidly that, although the Filipinos have begged for the various items in Mrs. Marcos's programme, he hopes that we can present the visit as a joint venture. He even suggested that we might insert into the press statement a sentence implying that the initiative for the Audience at Buckingham Palace had come from The Queen.* In these and the other unreasonable whims which will no doubt come out during the visit, I think it is important that we should take a very firm stand from the start. Romualdez and Mrs. Marcos thrive on other people's weaknesses but, if confronted by a firm negative attitude, they will have no option but to concede. Mrs. Marcos is already extremely worried about the press aspect of the visit and cannot afford to call our bluff by publicising any disputes between herself and H.M.G. She has one major hostage to fortune in the form of her large entourage, whose membership, although assiduously disguised, will leak out as soon as there is a fracas. I do not think therefore that we will be placing Philippine-British relations publicly in jeopardy if we refuse to put up with any more nonsense from the Marcos's.

CONFIDENTIAL

(P.J. Goulden)
31 August, 1970.

.....

CONFIDENTIAL

* He suggested further that the F.C.O. should put pressure on Cardinal Heenan to give Mrs. Marcos a private mass during her call on 14 September; the F.C.O.'s role in this could be mentioned in the press statement, to avoid the impression that Mrs. Marcos had to request these things for herself.

Cc. Mr. Mayall, Protocol and Conference Dept.
Mr. Watts, S.E.A.D.

CONFIDENTIAL

Protocol and Conference Department, 7th September 1970
An audience with the Queen was granted - but all sorts of issues of protocol had to be investigated.

(55)

John 8/9
I should satisfy
Mr Clark. He may detect
a touch of irony in Y!
but this is not unjustified!
11/11
8/9

Protocol and Conference Department

7 September, 1970

R.

I enclose two copies of the brief programme which has been arranged for Mrs. Marcos.

I am most terribly sorry about the change of arrangements, allowing Bong Bong to come to the Palace. Owing to your strong representations in your telegram I felt I must ring Balmoral and ask the Private Secretary to ask the Queen herself whether she would like Bong Bong to come to the audience and to our intense astonishment Her Majesty agreed to this request. This has never been done before and I cannot understand why it has been allowed in this case. However, I will take care to make sure that Mrs. Marcos knows that it was owing to your strong representations that we went back to the Queen and her request was acceded to.

X

Scotland Yard felt as the Security Guards were arriving with guns it was safer to give them the documents and allow them in. I quite agree with you, it does make it very difficult when one is told one thing categorically at one moment and it is changed two minutes later, but as we have been instructed to allow Mrs. Marcos to do what she likes, within reason, we have bent over backwards to be reasonable - I hope you don't feel too far.

Y

I will be in attendance on her throughout the visit and will let you know how it has gone.

RECEIVED IN
REGISTRY No. 14
- 8 SEP 1970
FAP 22/2

(Miss Makgill)

His Excellency Mr. J.N.O. Curle, C.M.G., C.V.O.,
Her Majesty's Ambassador,
MANILA.

PA.
AS
7/9

Copied to: Mr. W.J. Watts (South East Asian Department)

New Document Releases
Mini Skirts in Malawi

Document Reference: FCO 45/775

Confidential, Office of the Commissioner, HQ Malawi Police Ref no. C/158/1/4

On the 2 May 1968, a serious issue in Malawi was brought to the attention of the British High Commissioner by the Commissioner of Police. Certain subversive elements in the European community in Malawi were exhibiting western arrogance in the face of traditional culture. A diplomatic file on miniskirts was started.

CONFIDENTIAL

C O P Y

Office of the Commissioner,
Headquarters,
Malawi Police,
Zomba.

Ref.No. C/150/1/4

2 May 1968

H.E. The British High Commissioner,
Private Bag 10,
Zomba.

Dear High Commissioner,

RACE RELATIONS: SKIRT LENGTHS

I am taking this opportunity of advising you of the action I intend to take in the interest of law and order.

I am compelled to take cognisance of what, if it continues, can only be regarded as conduct likely to lead to a breach of the peace contrary to Section 183(A) of the Penal Code. I refer to the matter of ladies' skirt lengths. There is in fact a power of arrest by warrant for conduct likely to lead to a breach of the peace, and power of arrest without warrant if a breach of the peace is committed in the presence of a Police Officer.

I mention these points in law only to show the legal position. Whilst there is no law regarding the length of skirts, disregard for a national policy, which has been well publicised, can be provocative, and may lead to unfortunate consequences which it is my duty to prevent.

In order to safeguard ladies who still act unwisely, in their own interests, and to save them embarrassment, I have issued instructions to my Officers - a copy of which is attached hereto.

P. Long
COMMISSIONER OF POLICE

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

Ref.No. C/158/1/3

2 May 1968

FROM: The Commissioner of Police, Zomba

TO: The Officer in Charge Southern Division
The Officer in Charge Central Division
The Officer in Charge Northern Division

c.c. The Officer in Charge Urban Command
The Officer in Charge Limbe
The Officer in Charge Blantyre
The Officer in Charge Zomba
The Officer in Charge CID
The Officer in Charge CID, Urban Command
The Officer in Charge Special Branch
The Secretary to the President and Cabinet.

RACE RELATIONS: SKIRT LENGTH

It is the responsibility of Police to maintain law and order at all times and to prevent breaches of the peace. Despite all the publicity which has been given to the question, there appears to be, amongst certain elements of the European community in particular, a complete defiance in regard to skirts. If it is not outright defiance, then it is a misapprehension that the subject is merely a flash in the pan. Whatever the attitude, women who persist in wearing abbreviated skirts, are asking for trouble and are in fact guilty of provocative conduct which is purely and simply conduct likely to lead to a breach of the peace. Under the new Criminal Procedure Code there is no power of arrest without warrant for conduct likely to lead to a breach of the peace, but under section 25(B) of the Criminal Procedure Code there is a power of arrest without warrant if a breach of the peace is committed in a Police Officer's presence.

2. It is in the interest of all concerned that Police should take more positive action and I should be grateful if you would select members of the Force who are noted for their tact and diplomacy to take such action to prevent the situation getting out of hand, as it could well do.

3. Two steps should be taken. Firstly, as discreetly but as positively as possible, offending ladies should be warned that there are definite views expressed by Government on the length of skirts, and that anything above the knee-bend may be provocative, leading to a breach of the peace in which they could well be a victim. If necessary they should be further warned that if they choose to ignore Police advice they may find themselves subject to arrest for an actual breach of the peace. Naturally, if a lady

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becomes abusive or obstructs Police in their duty, she immediately places herself in a worse position. Nonetheless, tact must still be employed, and an immediate report made of the lady's conduct for my information, unless it is essential to arrest on the spot, particularly in the interest of the individual's safety. Careful note for immediate advice from this office as to whether arrests should be made must be taken of all persons who continue to defy Police warnings.

4. Whilst there must be positive Police action, I am aware of the risks in the open streets where certain types may be encouraged to take the law into their own hands. Officers, therefore, are free to use their utmost discretion on the understanding that Europeans in particular, must be made fully aware of the consequences if they continue to place themselves in jeopardy by their own ignorance or defiance.

5. All Officers should use every opportunity when speaking to friends, or at social gatherings, to let people know of the risks they run.

6. I should be grateful to receive immediate, confidential reports of European reaction.

P. Long
COMMISSIONER OF POLICE

CONFIDENTIAL

Zomba to FCO. Tel no 1252 14 September 1970

By 14th September 1970, Foreign Office diplomats had not managed to bring the issue to a successful conclusion, and Hastings Banda prepared to take the matter further.

4/01/31 Office of the President and Cabinet, 23rd October 1970

It is clear from the documents that the issue was not a trivial one and the wearing of miniskirts was actively offensive to traditional Malawians, causing considerable resentment.

Office of the President and Cabinet,
P. O. Box 53,
Zomba.

4/01/31

23rd October, 1970.

To: ALL PERMANENT SECRETARIES
(DISTRIBUTION LIST "C" -
with extra copies for distribution)

WEARING OF SHORT DRESSES BY WOMEN

Three and a half years ago the Malawi Government prohibited the wearing of mini-skirts and other short dresses by women throughout the country in public streets, Government and commercial offices, hotels and restaurants, and other public places. This policy was not designed as an arbitrary interference with freedom of dress amongst people residing in and visiting the country, but reflected the desire of the Government and the people that customary and traditional national standards regarding dress should generally be respected and complied with.

As far as the vast majority of people living in the country are concerned, the wishes of the Government have been respected in this matter. From time to time, however, isolated examples of violations of the ban have been observed, some of which have caused a justifiable feeling of resentment that certain inhabitants or visitors in Malawi were not prepared to show proper respect for the wishes and traditions of the people of the country and their Government.

At the recent Annual Convention of the Malawi Congress Party held in Mauzu, delegates at every level spoke strongly of their dissatisfaction that some women were still showing contempt for the country and its Government by openly flouting the established ban on short dresses and skirts. This feeling culminated in a unanimous Resolution being passed at the end of the Convention requesting the Government immediately to introduce legislation to enforce the ban on short skirts in the country by penal legislation.

The Malawi Government have given very careful consideration to this request. They have come to the conclusion that legislation in a sphere of this nature should only be adopted as a last resort, when all other means of obtaining compliance with the wishes of the Government have failed. The Government feel that all reasonable, responsible and well-mannered inhabitants and visitors in Malawi would wish to honour the customs and conventions of the country from a sense of ordinary courtesy and respect. The Government would therefore be most reluctant to legislate in a sphere where compliance with Government policy is really a matter of polite and decent behaviour.

The Government has therefore decided that before giving any further consideration to the demands of the Convention that legislation on this matter should be introduced, they should provide a last opportunity for people to show general respect for the ban on short skirts, by appealing to all women throughout the country voluntarily to observe Government policy in this matter.

Accordingly, an appeal is now made to every woman and girl in the country, whether a citizen, a resident or a visitor, to ensure that she refrains at all times from giving offence by wearing in any public place dresses or skirts which violate the ban on mini-skirts or other short dresses.

For the purposes of clarity, opportunity is taken to remind members of the public that in order to comply with the rule, every skirt or dress must be long enough to cover the knee-cap entirely when the person wearing it is standing upright. The ban also prohibits the wearing of trousers by women and girls in public.

The ban on the wearing of short skirts and trousers in public does not extend to participants in any sport or recreation where a short skirt or trousers are traditionally worn, e.g. tennis, riding, swimming, yachting, boating, mountain-climbing, etc., nor to the garments covering the legs worn by the women of certain Asian communities in Malawi in accordance with their own custom.

It is appreciated that in many cases compliance with this request will involve at any rate temporary inconvenience and additional expense. Nevertheless, the Government sincerely hope that as a result of this new appeal all women and girls living in or visiting Malawi will co-operate courteously and willingly in respecting the wishes of the people and Government regarding their mode of dress.


I would be grateful if you would give as much publicity to this matter as possible.

B. C. Roberts,
ATTORNEY GENERAL
and
SECRETARY TO THE PRESIDENT AND CABINET

British High Commission, Malawi, 6 November 1970

The issue was apparently also an economic one - longer skirts were more expensive. One British couple even had to leave the country.

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British High Commission,
Zomba, Malawi.

6 November 1970

Mr Madden!

(1/25)

RECEIVED IN
REGISTRY No. 30
12 NOV 1970
CS4 18/7

Mini-Skirts in Malawi

Dear Name,

Once more mini-skirts (and now trousers as well) have become a political issue in Malawi. I enclose a copy of the Attorney-General's announcement of 23 October, which sets out clearly what is required and to which extensive publicity has been given.

2. Since March 1968 the President's views on "modern dress" have been well-known and there have been cases of expulsion where individuals have not complied. It seemed that some of the heat had gone out of the issue which has not left simmering point for long but at the Party Conference in Muzu the delegates, partly echoing the President's own views and partly reflecting their own distaste at the way a few expatriates and more particularly more modernised Malawians were ignoring the Government's wishes, passed a resolution calling on the Government to legislate against the mini-skirt. In his closing speech (our tel. 1219) President Banda endorsed the resolution. Roberts' announcement is a compromise reached after he had convinced the President that legislation would make Malawi appear ridiculous before the outside world.

3. Expatriates have reacted strongly to the announcement: very few wear pure minis but all are now compelled to wear long-skirts, involving not inconsiderable expense and what to most seems an avoidable inconvenience and interference with personal liberty. Tourism may be affected adversely as could expatriate recruitment. Most expatriates recognise, however, that despite the absurdity of the decision itself, they should conform to the decreed customs and traditions of the country in which they live but there is a danger that there could be unpleasant incidents.

4. Already one British couple, Mr. and Mrs. Dobson, have had to leave the country (under a Presidential threat that they would be declared prohibited immigrants if they did not do so) weeks after a distasteful incident involving the head of the Women's League in Lilongwe, brandishing an open razor. This was a clear case of injustice and the High Commissioner personally told Mr. Dobson he

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copy attached

A. B. Moore, Esq., MBE,
Central and Southern African Department,
FCO.

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would intervene if he wanted him to. Mr. Dobson had, however, decided that he and his wife would leave the country in any case. There have even been incidents over wearing maxi-skirts with MCP officials complaining that they mock the mini-skirt ban. The High Commissioner immediately took this up with Bryan Roberts who confirmed that long dresses do not contravene the requirements and that anyone molested for wearing a long dress should report the incident to the Police or President's Office. Roberts has also spoken to Mr. Kuwalo, the Administrative Secretary to the MCP who has undertaken to call off the Party activists.

5. The police have been instructed (see the enclosed copy of a letter from the Commissioner of Police) to "advise ladies ... and seek their co-operation" and this ought theoretically to prevent incidents but the danger is a constant one. Expatriate residents should now be fully aware of the issues involved, but visitors, school children and students on holiday especially could easily get into difficulty. On a matter as close to the President's heart as this and on which he is appealing to the African personality as well as to the distaste and envy that many of the older generation of Malawian feels towards the more educated, westernised groups, there is no scope for us to affect the policy as such but while trying to play the matter down among our own citizens, we hope that it will subside of its own accord. In the meantime, we must be prepared for awkward incidents to occur and continue to protect British citizens to our full ability. The High Commissioner has written to each of his correspondents in the region, enclosing the Attorney-General's statement and the instructions issued to police officers, asking them to pass the word around and to report any developments. We shall continue to keep a close watch ourselves, and urge conformity whenever occasion offers.

*John ...
B. Rose*

(B. Rose)

(1) THE SEN- ...

(1) TO SUGGEST THAT MALAWI CONFIDENTIAL ...

New Document Releases Battle for The Sun

Document Reference: PREM 13/3410 Maxwell letter, 2nd June 1969

The ailing Sun newspaper - in its broadsheet form - was desperately in need of a buyer. Robert Maxwell wrote to Wilson to express his interest. Worker's welfare was to be a priority - including pensions.

Robert Maxwell MCMP
4 Fitzroy Square London W1
EUSTON 4455

IRM/JB 2nd June 1969

Hugh Cudlipp, Esq., O.B.E.,
Chairman,
International Publishing Corporation Ltd.,
33 Holborn,
London E.C.1.

Dear Hugh,

The Future of The Sun

Further to the correspondence exchanged between our respective legal advisers on the above matter, and as promised last week at the meeting I had with Mr. Ellis Birk and Mr. Keith Davenport, herewith in general terms an outline of the proposals that I have in mind for the future of The Sun.

1. The newspaper under its new ownership will continue to be published six days a week as 'The Sun'. It will be produced as a complete, lively and exciting national daily newspaper giving clear and loyal support to the Labour movement.
2. The newspaper will have the same page size as the Evening Standard with between 24 - 48 pages (depending on the amount of advertising) printed daily in three editions for the North, outlying South and Greater London area. The last edition will go to press at 3.00 a.m. It will be priced provisionally at 6d. per copy and our research indicates that we can count on an initial circulation of not less than 600,000.
3. I am currently negotiating with Beaverbrook Newspapers Limited for the use, on commercial terms, of the printing and distribution facilities of the Evening Standard at Farringdon Street, London. The Editorial Offices and staff of The Sun would also be housed in the Standard building. For economic reasons it is regrettably quite impossible, for the time being at any rate, to continue to print in Manchester, though we do intend to have a small news reporting staff there.

Robert Maxwell MCMF
4 Fitzroy Square London W1
EUSTON 4455

Our detailed investigations confirm that, subject to our plans as outlined herewith being implemented, The Sun can be run as a viable newspaper and that it will, under its new proprietorship, provide - to start with - employment for a minimum of 80 editorial and 180 production and ancillary staff.

4. The Editor will naturally have the right to select his own staff but he will be required so far as may be practical to draw them from the existing employees of The Sun. The same principle of job opportunity shall apply to production and ancillary staff now employed by Odhams and IPC.

5. The new company owning The Sun would be a company limited by guarantee whose members would not participate in its profits. Profits will be used first to provide an adequate pension scheme for the employees and then to establish reserves for continued publication and development.

6. Prominent members and supporters of the Labour Party, the Trades Unions, and Co-operative Societies - and Women's and Youth Organisations as well - will be invited in their personal capacities to become members. Some of those members will also be invited to form the Board of Directors who will elect the Chairman of the Board except that if the Labour Party is in opposition the Leader for the time being of the Party will automatically be the Chairman of the Board.

7. Members will take up guarantees of nominal amounts but I shall procure up to £500,000 as working capital to enable the company to continue publishing The Sun for a period of between 12 - 18 months from the date when IPC's existing obligations to the members of the respective Unions concerned cease.

8. The Board will be responsible for the business management of the company. It will also appoint the Editor who will have sole and exclusive responsibility for the editorial content and policy of the paper. However, the Editor will be required to ensure that The Sun shall as stated give clear and loyal support at all times to the Labour movement.

Robert Maxwell MCMP
4 Fitzroy Square London W1
TELEPHONE 01-387 4455

9. The new company would agree formally to acquire the paper with effect from the date when IPC's existing obligations to publish it cease. However, the company will avail itself of IPC's kind offer and its appointed Editor will accept editorial control from the date of exchange of formal contracts.

I hope to submit formal proposals shortly for consideration by the IPC Board but my ability to do so depends upon:

- a) Obtaining the full help and co-operation of the members and officers of the Trades Unions concerned as far as they relate to the proposed change of printing and staffing arrangements
- b) Completion of satisfactory arrangements with Beaverbrook Newspapers Limited or elsewhere for the needed printing and distribution facilities
- c) Completion of satisfactory arrangements with British Rail for the transport of the paper; with leading wholesalers for its distribution; and with the Newspaper Proprietors' Association for membership of the new company in the Association.
- d) Confirmation by my investigating accountants, Messrs. Deloitte Plender Griffiths & Co., and by Lord Hirschfield, that the sales and advertising revenues and the operating costs after taking into account the guaranteed £500,000 working capital will make The Sun a viable economic proposition over the medium term and in any event for the guaranteed period of 12 - 18 months.

As IPC have recognised, it is clearly in the interests of our democratic way of life for the Labour Movement to have the loyal support of a national daily newspaper. I and my colleagues have been much heartened by the amount of support this idea has received. I hope that I may continue to receive the same degree of co-operation and

Robert Maxwell MCMF
4 Fitzroy Square London W1
EUSTON 4455

understanding in our forthcoming detailed discussions and negotiations both with the representatives of IPC and the Trades Unions concerned.

I have no objection to the contents of this letter being conveyed to members of the Odhams Chapels in London and Manchester, the General Secretaries of the Unions concerned and afterwards to the public.

Yours sincerely,


Robert Maxwell

Prime Minister: The Sun - 4th September 1969

But Wilson was suspicious of Maxwell's financial resources. Another possible buyer, with rather different politics, was also in communication - Rupert Murdoch. It seemed Wilson would rather see the paper swing to the political right than let it go to Maxwell. The Unions, too, were inclined towards the Murdoch proposal.

Press



Ambrose
PRIME MINISTER

The Sun

As of course you know, following the collapse of Robert Maxwell's bid for The Sun, Mr. Murdoch is to have talks with the I.P.C.

A Murdoch, unlike a Maxwell, acquisition of The Sun would bring into play Section 8 of the Monopolies & Mergers Act 1965 since Murdoch, unlike Maxwell, is already a newspaper proprietor. It would therefore require the consent of the Board of Trade, even if the acquisition were limited to the transfer of the right to use the name of the newspaper. Ordinarily we can give such consent only after an investigation by the Monopolies Commission (you will recall the Times/Sunday Times case).

But we do have discretion to dispense with a reference to the Commission in certain circumstances; and these include the transfer of a newspaper which is not an economic proposition to its present owners and where the transfer is a matter of urgency if the paper is to continue to have a separate existence - precisely the position of The Sun.

The outcome of Mr. Murdoch's talks is of course wholly unknown at present. But we should begin to take a preliminary view as to whether, if the talks are successful, we should exercise our discretion to give consent to the transfer without an investigation by the Commission.

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My own present view is that we probably should exercise our discretion and let the transfer through. True, the result of the transfer may lead to a slight and undesirable shift in the total newspaper balance from Left to Right.

But as against this we should, first, save a national newspaper which otherwise appears to have no hope of survival; whereas a reference to the Commission might result in Murdoch withdrawing his proposals. Secondly, as proprietor of a daily as well as a Sunday newspaper, Murdoch would be in no more dominant a position than several other newspaper proprietors. Moreover, it seems likely that Murdoch would in effect be taking over little except the name of the Sun. We should achieve nothing - and would simply make the legislation look ridiculous - if, the effect of making a reference to the Commission was to cause him to let The Sun die and instead to bring out an entirely new paper, perhaps called the Moon. Lastly, the Unions are favourably inclined to the Murdoch proposals.

I should add that there is only an indirect connection between this matter and the proposed increases in prices of certain national newspapers. What sort of new Sun Mr. Murdoch would launch, and its selling price, are matters for his commercial judgment. Our own impression is that the chances of re-launching the Sun would probably be better if the price level of popular national daily newspapers was 6d. As regards I.P.C., we understand that their decision to cease publication of the loss-making Sun was taken after careful consideration of various possible courses. We do not

/think



think there is any chance of our getting them to go back on this decision, either by persuasion or by use of Statutory Powers to delay increases in the prices of their other newspapers.

I am, of course, at your disposal to talk about this if you so wish.

CARC

BOARD OF TRADE,
1 VICTORIA STREET,
LONDON, S.W.1.

R/ 4th September, 1969