

SUBJECT
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10 DOWNING STREET

File SKW
etc
Sir P. C. ...

THE PRIME MINISTER

20 May 1986

PRIME MINISTER'S
PERSONAL MESSAGE
SERIAL No. T 92/86

Dear Prime Minister,

I wish to express to you and the people of Zimbabwe my deep sympathy at the sudden and inexcusable attack by South African Defence Forces on 19 May. The attack is the more to be deplored because of the loss of life and injuries which it has caused. I made clear in the House of Commons this afternoon that I totally and utterly condemned the South African action. We have also summoned the South African Chargé to make clear our condemnation of South African behaviour and to emphasise our view that such actions can only set back the process of finding a peaceful solution to South Africa's problems which we all so earnestly desire. It is even more deplorable that the attacks should have taken place while the Commonwealth Group of Eminent Persons were in South Africa on a mission aimed at achieving a suspension of violence on all sides and the start of dialogue.

Despite this very serious setback, I believe that the COMGEP process is still the best available means of promoting peaceful change in South Africa, and avoiding the bloodbath which none of us wish to see. The immediate need is to consider how best to keep it alive. A major effort of will and imagination is going to be required, first and foremost from the South African Government, if we are to succeed in

ALB

this. But I am sure that the effort must be made: there is still a worthwhile chance of making progress, and we must not let it slip.

With best wishes,

Yours sincerely
Margaret Thatcher

The Honourable Robert Mugabe, M.P.

CONFIDENTIAL



File 116

10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1A 2AA

From the Private Secretary

21 May 1986

Thank you for your letter of 20 May enclosing draft messages from the Prime Minister to Presidents Kaunda and Masire and Prime Minister Mugabe.

I enclose originals of the messages signed by the Prime Minister. You will no doubt want to telegraph the text as quickly as possible.

CHARLES POWELL

Colin Budd, Esq.,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.



Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

20 May 1986

Dear Charles,

As he told the Prime Minister this morning, the Foreign Secretary believes that there is a strong case for her to send an early message to President Botha, making quite clear our disapproval of the South African raids on Botswana, Zambia and Zimbabwe. However, before putting forward a draft he wishes first to discuss yesterday's events and their implications with Lord Barber, whom he will be meeting on 21 May.

Meanwhile he thinks it important that the Prime Minister should send messages of sympathy to Presidents Kaunda, Mugabe and Masire.

Clearly the wording of the individual messages should be consistent with the public position we have already adopted and, in the case of Botswana, with the words the Prime Minister used to President Masire in June last year following the last South African attack on Gaborone.

I enclose draft messages.

*Yours ever,**Colin Budd*

(C R Budd)
Private Secretary

C D Powell Esq
PS/10 Downing Street

DRAFT: minute/letter/teleletter/despach/note

TYPE: Draft/Final 1+

FROM:
Prime Minister

Reference

DEPARTMENT:

TEL. NO:

SECURITY CLASSIFICATION

TO:

Your Reference

- Top Secret
- Secret
- Confidential
- Restricted
- Unclassified

Mr Robert Mugabe

Copies to:

SRWADV

PRIVACY MARKING

SUBJECT:

.....In Confidence

CAVEAT.....

I wish to express to you and the people of Zimbabwe my deep sympathy and ~~sense of shock~~ ^{indefensible} at the sudden and ~~indefensible~~ attack by South African Defence Forces on 19 May.

As you may know, later the same day in Parliament the Foreign Secretary condemned South Africa's action as a flagrant violation of the sovereignty of three fellow Commonwealth countries. The Minister of State, Lynda Chalker, had by then already summoned the South African Chargé. She made clear to him our total condemnation of South African behaviour and emphasised our view that such actions can only set back the process of finding a peaceful solution to South Africa's problems which we all so earnestly desire. It is even more deplorable that the attacks should have taken place while the Commonwealth Group of Eminent Persons were in South Africa on a mission aimed at achieving a suspension of violence on all sides and the start of dialogue.

Despite this very serious setback, I believe that

Enclosures—flag(s).....

*AS
Jim
Mr*



the COMGEP process is still the best available means of promoting peaceful change in South Africa, and avoiding the bloodbath which none of us wish to see. The immediate need is to consider how best to keep it alive. A major effort of will and imagination is going to be required, first and foremost from the South African Government, if we are to succeed in this. But I am sure that the effort must be made: there is still a worthwhile chance of making progress, and we must not let it slip.

With heart with.